



# Diocese of Westminster

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Our Lady of Muswell RC Primary School  
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DFE Number: 309/3500  
URN Number: 102 142

Headteacher: Mrs. A Mc Nicholls  
Chair of Governors: Mrs. E Riordan-Sayers

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Canonical Inspection under Canon 806 on behalf of the Archbishop of Westminster  
and inspection of Denominational Education under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

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Date of inspection: 25<sup>th</sup> April 2013  
Date of previous inspection: 17 October 2013

Reporting Inspector: Mrs T. Cleugh  
Associate Inspector: Mrs C McMahon

## Introduction

The inspectors would like to thank the governors, headteacher, staff, pupils and parents for their co-operation over the conduct of the inspection. The inspectors spent one day in school, visited 13 lessons and an assembly, and carried out four interviews with school staff, pupils and governors. Other evidence was gathered from contacts with parents through a questionnaire, discussion with local clergy, scrutiny of a sample of pupils' work, observation of pupils in and out of lessons and examination of school documents.

The Inspection of Our Lady of Muswell, in Haringey, was carried out under the requirements of the Education Act 2005, and in accordance with the Framework and Schedule for Section 48 Inspections approved by the Archbishop of Westminster. The inspectors are appointed by the Archbishop. The inspection reviews and evaluates how effective the school is in providing Catholic education. This process begins with the school's own self-evaluation.

## Description of School

The school is a two form entry in the LA of Haringey and the locality of Muswell Hill. The school serves a number of parishes in the surrounding area, in particular the parish of Our Lady of Muswell. Their in-year admissions come from a variety of surrounding parishes, including non Catholic admissions. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholic number 88%. The proportion of pupils who are from other Christian denominations is 9% and from other Faiths 3%.

There are 443 pupils on roll, with 7 pupils with statements of Special Educational Need. The proportion of pupils from ethnic minority groups is above average. The number of pupils speaking English as an Additional Language is above average. There is a below average rate of families claiming free school meals.

### Key for inspection grades:

*Grade 1\*: Outstanding;*  
*Grade 1: Very Good;*  
*Grade 2: Good;*  
*Grade 3: Requires improvement;*  
*Grade 4: Causing Concern.*

## **A. Classroom Religious Education**

*How religiously literate are pupils in the teachings and traditions of the Catholic faith and how well do they know, understand and appreciate the importance of religious faith and practice in everyday life?*

### **What is the overall effectiveness of classroom religious education in developing pupils' religious literacy?**

**Overall Grade: 2**

The Curriculum Directory is the basis for Religious Education. The school plans to ensure the content is relevant. The teachers have high expectations of the pupils, evident in the planned challenges in lessons, resulting in Good progress overall. There is evidence that teachers support each other and work well together. The school has been moving forward through recent acting and now substantive appointments, including the leadership and management of religious education. The depth of pupils' knowledge and understanding of the teachings and beliefs developed through religious education is communicated through a variety of methods, including written and oral responses. These are then extended to pupils relating these concepts to their everyday lives and experiences.

### **What has improved in classroom religious education since the last inspection and what should the school do to further improve in classroom religious education?**

The school has implemented the areas identified from the previous inspection. There is now a strategy in place to ensure pupils are challenged towards achievement of Level 3 in key stage one and Level 5 at the end of key stage two. This is now also linked through the planned units used within the Year of Faith.

The school has identified the following areas for action:-

- The school will utilise the Target Tracker system to monitor and analyse progress to narrow the gaps in attainment in religious education;
- The school will continue to monitor consistency in delivery of religious education, within year groups and across the phases;
- The school will continue the network partnerships for moderation to achieving higher level 5 attainment at the end of key stage 2.

### **How well does the content of classroom religious education meet the requirements of the Curriculum Directory?**

**Grade 1**

The school is adapting the Diocesan Year of Faith Resources to links within the Curriculum Directory. There is evidence from the planning and outcomes in pupils' books and on display, that the school is fully meeting the requirements of the Curriculum Directory. The Curriculum Directory planning sheets for each key phase are recorded with colour coding to identify the termly coverage. These will be passed on annually to map the overall coverage over time. The school has adapted the Year of Faith resources covering the Liturgical Cycle. They have also planned the coverage of important events in our Church, such as the Conclave, its process, adopting a Cardinal per class and the election of His Holiness Pope Francis 1. The adaptation of the Curriculum Directory to meet the variety of pupils' needs includes the effective input from other adults in the classroom. This was evident where they planned a range of creative links effectively.

### **Pupil achievement (as well as attainment and progress) in religious education**

**Grade 2**

The school is introducing the Target Tracker electronic data installation system, which is updated termly. Moderation is carried out termly by the year group teachers against the revised agreed understandings. The school also shares samples of moderated work with Deanery colleagues and the

Diocesan Advisor for a Portfolio of moderated evidence. The Year of Faith guidance has supported the growing confidence of staff, supporting their subject knowledge, moderation skills and confidence in attributing levels across the phases. These strategies are enabling good progress overall to be made by pupils. There was evidence during the inspection that pupils work steadily and show an interest in their work, whilst developing their understating of how their faith and practice can grow.

### **The quality of teaching**

#### **Grade 2**

The quality of teaching is Good overall. Where teaching was outstanding there was clear evidence of pupils being fully engaged. The questioning was purposeful, deepening their knowledge and understanding. The range of planned and scaffolded activities, including the use of the physical environment and role play, empowered the pupils to express their varied levels of understanding. Another example of this was where the pupils were encouraged to relate the portrayal of the impact on the disciples on the Road to Emmaus, linked to the new life experienced in the Risen Christ. These concepts were planned through a range of role play, puppets and physically “mapping out their route” to Emmaus.

Those lessons judged to be good or better had pace, which enabled the pupils to make good progress in the lesson. The role of the other adults in the learning process is worthy of note, especially their relationship with the pupils and how they empowered them to learn and develop within the context of the lesson. This is particularly significant with the wide variety of additional needs across the phases. Good teaching inspired pupils to reflect on their level of understanding, relating, for example, the recognition by the disciples of Jesus, sharing the “breaking of the bread” with them, linked to the Last Supper. This was further extended by the teachers exploring its impact on the pupils’ everyday lives and faith. There is evidence that pupils are familiar and confident to make links between Scripture and Tradition, which is expressed through ritual and celebration.

### **The effectiveness of the leadership and management of religious education**

#### **Grade 2**

The school currently has appointed two acting leaders of religious education, (EYFS/KS1 and KS2). They are working closely together under the guidance and mentoring of the previous substantive leader of religious education, who is currently the Acting Deputy Headteacher. The scrutiny of work in the books and portfolios, which are colourful and child-centred, depicting the variety of events, activities and celebrations across the phases, are carried out half-termly. These are recorded with feedback provided to teachers, and action points followed up to address areas requiring improvement or development. These are also shared with the senior leadership team. The Headteacher, recently appointed as substantive Head, has been carrying out observations of teaching in religious education. A termly report is prepared by her and presented to the Governing Body. The designated Governor, for religious education, is the Parish Priest. He has accompanied the leaders of religious education in “Learning Walks” to observe, evaluate and celebrate their progress through their identified priorities in the school development plan. All staff have a Performance Management objective in religious education, and the leaders attend relevant Diocesan in-service and Deanery network meetings.

## **B. The Catholic life of the school**

*How well do pupils experience the richness of a Catholic way of living and believing through all areas of school life?*

### **What is the overall effectiveness of the Catholic life of the school in developing pupils' experience of the richness of a Catholic way of living and believing?**

**Overall Grade: 1\***

The overall effectiveness of the Catholic Life of this school is Outstanding. The school ensures that religious education and the Catholic life of the school is valued and recognised as the core of the curriculum. The Governing Body has made a highly significant contribution to ensuring the continued importance of its development. During the inspection there is evidence from interviews, learning walks, observations and discussions that prayer and worship are central to its everyday life and worship. The whole school assembly enabled pupils to reflect and relate on the Risen Christ, through their "rejoicing" and submitting their "promises" to live their daily lives accordingly.

### **What has improved since the last inspection and what should the school do to further develop the Catholic life of the school ?**

The school has fully addressed the issues identified. The prayer life of the school is now monitored within the termly schedule. The pupils are actively leading worship in classes in key stage two. The year group Masses and liturgies are planned with pupils and parents invited to participate. The weekly issue of the "Wednesday Word," has facilitated parental involvement in reflection upon the Gospel and share the pupil's prayer time. This includes the development of the awareness of pupils on the Church's social teaching and the plight of those around the world.

Action Points:

- Continue to develop the lunchtime prayer experience with termly analysis of its use by pupils across all phases
- Develop teacher subject knowledge through the CCRS accreditation

### **The place of religious education as the core of the curriculum – time, staffing, accommodation, resources, budget**

**Grade 1\***

The school has identified RE as a key area for budget allocation. The appointment of two acting subject leaders in RE, supporting non Catholic teachers, is an example of the high status given to religious education as the core of the curriculum, including the "champion governor" for RE. The senior leadership team has supported these appointments. The high quality resources, evident during the inspection, empower staff to plan and deliver quality prayer experiences. The school fully meets the 10% Curriculum time. The learning environment across the school including the external grounds, is rich, stimulating and well respected by all. The school has effectively utilised the space and rooms available to widen learning experiences including music, drama and cooking. The investment in high quality materials, posters, (including the rich range from Turvey Abbey), depict the journey the school has travelled this year and recently, through focussed activities with the pupils. These have been recorded through powerful displays, such as the recent Conclave and

election of His Holiness, St. Therese's "Little Way" and the Mosaics in the external grounds and entrance areas. The ongoing commitment and investment is also targeted to the effective delivery of topics, such as the rich art work across a range of media and the spring flowers, plants and bulbs contributing to the learning environment and experiences of the pupils.

**The experience of Catholic worship – prayer and liturgy – for the whole school community.**

**Grade 1\***

The centrality of prayer and worship is evident from the range of opportunities offered to staff, pupils and parents. These include, lunchtime rosary groups, Stations of the Cross publicly displayed and reflected upon by pupils, class visits to participate in Parish Masses, the opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation during Advent and Lent and the "One Community" homework, Wednesday Word, which includes the opportunity for families to pray with their children. The recent Lenten project, with the "Lenten Promise Tree" developed by the lunchtime play leader is yet another example of how the pupils are encouraged to develop their spirituality. The portfolios demonstrate a range of activities including drama and assemblies, many of which include the participation of the parish and local community. There was evidence in the EYFS of role play re-enacting the Passion stories, including the Last Supper and Palm Sunday's celebration of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. The high quality photographic evidence recorded in the portfolios, including how the youngest pupils are led in prayer, the range of CAFOD activities, with their careful attention to detail, was proudly outlined by the pupils during their interview with the inspectors. The rich, stimulating, colourful, learning environment produced by the pupils, displayed throughout the public areas of the school, is woven through their cross curricular activities. These include tributes to Our Blessed Lady, the patronage of their school, depicted through statues, art, displays and the story of Our Lady of Muswell.

**The commitment and contribution to the Common Good – service and social justice.**

**Grade 1\***

The weekly coverage of areas of Catholic Social Teaching in the assemblies empowers the pupils to consider their role as members of the local and global Catholic community. This regular focus is integral to the development of the "real life" experiences of the pupils, which is now becoming embedded across the school. Stewardship is strongly encouraged and developed including the range of activities covering the CAFOD programmes. The fundraising commitment, including the Catholic Children's Society, the Jesuit Refugee Service, in partnership with the Parish Lenten Appeal and the Children in Need appeal, provide a balance between the secular and Catholic agencies. The pupils outlined to the inspectors, with mature articulation, their respect, genuineness and deep empathy for the plight of those less well off than themselves. They understand that they are stewards also within their own school environment and beyond. This was evident in discussion with pupils related to playground duties, and sporting events with other schools in their area. This high level of respect was borne out through observation within class, through their co-operative participation in a variety of activities.

**Enabling the authentic partnership between parents, school and parish as an integral part of the Diocese, particularly through its relationship with the Diocesan Bishop and those acting on his behalf;**

**Grade 1\***

During the meeting with the Parish Priest and the Chair of Governors, the strong links and partnerships between school and Parish now developed, was confirmed. They expressed the way they are fully committed to taking the school forward through the Mission Statement, to ensure the school community can "encounter the person of Christ". The school successfully accesses a range of Diocesan support and guidance and professional development. The growing network within the local Catholic schools within the Deanery has provided invaluable professional support to the

leadership and management team. The parent interview celebrated the “innate Catholicity of the school”. Although a low response was received from the questionnaire, (5%), they were overwhelmingly supportive and “agreed strongly” that “Catholicism is ingrained in our school..., especially the way everyone interacts..., and that “no problem is too small...,” for the school to address. The behaviour, courteousness and manners of the pupils was exemplary.

**The effectiveness of the leadership and management in promoting the Catholic life of the school.**

**Grade 1\***

It is evident that the now substantive Headteacher has made the Catholic mission of the school a priority and central to the life of the school. The Mission Statement “**O**ne Community, **L**ove of Learning, **M**aking time for God, (OLM), is expressed through their ongoing dedication to the ancient shrine and devotion to Our Lady of Muswell. This is the hallmark of what the school is about. This was borne out by the pupils interviewed during the inspection, who are confident and proud of their school and how they are “well rounded in lots of things”, and how “we really enjoy our learning”. The Governing Body representative endorsed that the importance for them is that, “the Catholicity is sustained” as central to their commitment to this excellent school.



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### **Key for inspection grades:**

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### **A. Classroom Religious Education**

#### **What is the overall effectiveness of classroom religious education in developing pupils' religious literacy?**

**Overall Grade 2**

How well does the content of classroom religious education meet the requirements of the Curriculum Directory?

Grade 1

Pupil achievement (as well as attainment and progress) in religious education

Grade 2

The quality of teaching

Grade 2

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of religious education

Grade 2

### **B. The Catholic life of the school**

#### **What is the overall effectiveness of the Catholic life of the school in developing pupils' experience of the richness of a Catholic way of living and believing?**

**Overall Grade 1\***

The place of religious education as the core of the curriculum – time, staffing, accommodation, resources, budget

Grade 1\*

The experience of Catholic worship – prayer and liturgy – for the whole school community

Grade 1\*

The commitment and contribution to the Common Good – service and social justice.

Grade 1\*

The partnership between parents, school and parish as an integral part of the Diocese, particularly through its relationship with the Diocesan Bishop and those acting on his behalf

Grade 1\*

The effectiveness of the leadership and management in promoting the Catholic life of the school.

Grade 1\*