



Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Primary School

Park Avenue, Staines, Middlesex TW18 2EF

Date of inspection: January 30th 2014

A. Classroom Religious Education

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

Overall Grade 2

The overall effectiveness of classroom religious education in developing pupils' religious literacy is good. The school has recently adopted a new scheme of work, Come and See which meets the requirements of the Religious Education Curriculum Directory. The school supplements this scheme for higher ability pupils by also using Diocesan units of work. Pupils' behaviour and engagement during lessons is of a very high standard and they are always eager to respond and answer questions posed by teachers.

Achievement and progress overall are very good especially in pupils verbal and oral responses. Pupils have developed a very good level of religious literacy. The presentation and coverage of written work is an area that needs to be addressed as it is not of the same high standards as the pupils' spoken word. Teaching overall is good with some very good and even outstanding teaching in the school. The children get a very good start to their school life in the Reception Year. In order to raise standards of teaching and learning the school needs to have a more systematic approach to the monitoring of lessons and outcomes. The long serving headteacher is very committed to high standards of religious literacy and is ably assisted by the subject coordinator.

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 school's overall effectiveness of the Catholic life of the school in developing pupils' experience of the richness of a Catholic way of living and believing is very good. 10% of curriculum time is devoted to religious education. The experience provided for Catholic worship, prayer and liturgy are judged to be outstanding in this school. The parish priest plays a key role in the liturgical formation of the pupils and is a frequent and welcome visitor to the school. A rich and varied number of opportunities are provided for spiritual and moral development and parents are actively encouraged to support their children in these areas. The commitment to the Common Good and to service and social justice is good within the school, local area and the Diocese but is equally an area for further development as the school has no long term sustainable overseas projects at present. There are ample opportunities for pupils to develop their skills and talents within the school. Parents are very supportive of the work of the school and partnerships at all levels are outstanding. Governors provide a good oversight of the life, work and mission of the school.

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 has improved in classroom religious education since the last inspection?

The school has made good progress in most areas outlined in the previous inspection. Assessment procedures have been revised and the school is now able to track the individual progress of pupils more closely. The recording system currently used however may need to be adapted and further reviewed to make information more readily accessible for analysis. The school now has a child friendly version of its Mission Statement. This is proudly displayed all around the school and every child can recall that they are: "Learning together in God's Love". The religious education books in Key Stage 2 all have the longer version of the Mission Statement inside the front cover of the books. The school has made substantive improvements in this area.

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

Grade 2

The school is making good progress in developing classroom religious education in accordance with Diocesan guidelines. In the previous year the school used a variety of schemes of work and in 2013 adopted the Come and See scheme of work. This scheme shows links to the Religious Education Curriculum Directory and this is now being seen in the planning of lessons. For higher ability pupils the school is using the Diocesan units of work provided and there is evidence of this in some of the written work produced by the pupils in Year 6. The school now needs to embed this core scheme of work into its practice and provide more training for staff in its effective use. There is evidence of creativity in using the core scheme and some of the art work seen is of a high standard. Resources are mostly adequate but could be updated and enhanced especially in the area of ICT. Library resources are good. Progress of pupils is clearly evident across the school and key stages.

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

Grade 1

Pupil achievement overall is very good as the pupils are very keen and positive about their religious education lessons. The response and engagement of pupils in some of the older classes was very evident and pupils' religious literacy is very good by the end of Key Stage 2.

The school does moderate its own standards and this is progressing quite well. The RE coordinator has attended and arranged both school and deanery moderation sessions of pupils' work. There is moderation being undertaken in order to ensure consistency of judgements and levels across the school.

Pupils in many classes do take ownership of their own learning as evidenced by research projects on famous and inspirational people such as Maximillian Kolbe, Mother Theresa and St John Bosco. Work is differentiated by ability in some classes but is mainly differentiated by outcome. Pupils enter the school with overall average ability and leave with standards mostly above national averages therefore progress is deemed to be very good. Children get a very good start to their school life in the Reception Year and quickly learn about important people in the Bible.

Attainment overall is very good especially in pupils' oral and verbal responses in class and to questions posed during lessons. In the Year 6 class pupils were able to articulate to a high standard what the "Cardinal Virtues" meant and how to relate them to everyday life. In interviews the pupils talked about how much they enjoyed their religious education lessons and appreciated the opportunity to express their thoughts and ideas. Achievement is not yet outstanding because in

many cases the presentation and also coverage of work in books is not up to the standard of pupils' abilities and potential and could be much better. This is a key area for development for the future.

The quality of teaching

Grade 2

The quality of teaching seen across the school is mostly good with some very good and outstanding lessons seen. Where teaching was best, teachers were confident in their subject knowledge and gave pupils time to respond to effective questioning. Teachers have good expectations of their pupils and individual lessons are well planned and teaching assistants play an effective role during lessons.

The behaviour of the pupils during lessons and around the school is quite outstanding at all times. The school should be very proud of the exemplary behaviour and politeness of its pupils. They are enthusiastic and confident learners in class.

Assessment and marking are developing quite well and next steps marking can be seen in many of the pupils' books. The subject leader does observe lessons and standards of teaching in religious education but this needs to be developed and structured to a much greater extent to ensure even higher standards of teaching and learning across the school. Homework is evident from Year 2 onwards and pupils said they enjoyed this aspect of school life.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of religious education

Grade 2

The leadership of religious education is good. The long serving headteacher places a high emphasis on trying to provide a very good standard of religious education in the school and has been very successful over many years in this goal. He is ably assisted by a very committed RE coordinator who also works hard and strives for high standards in the school. Teachers generally have high expectations of pupils and plan well. The monitoring of teaching and learning needs to be consistent and further developed as do systems to support new teachers. Performance Management targets for religious education are given to staff every year. Resources are good especially with regards to books and the library. An appropriate budget is allocated to the subject every year. The learning environment is good with some imaginative displays seen in classrooms.

The school self-evaluation is a thorough, concise document and is reasonably accurate in most areas. The school is clearly very committed to the educational mission of the Church and is keen to provide a high quality of education for its pupils.

What should the school do to improve further in classroom religious education?

- Embed and further develop training for delivering the core scheme of Come and See so that teachers are confident in its use
- Develop strategies to ensure a higher standard of presentation in written work across the school
- Monitor the quality of teaching and learning in a more structured and systematic manner to ensure consistently good teaching and learning in all classes.

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 has improved since the last inspection?

The school has changed its name, documentation and signs to Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic school in compliance with the previous inspection.

The programme of liturgy and worship is now much more varied throughout the school and is currently judged to be outstanding.

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

Grade 1

10% of curriculum time is devoted to the teaching of religious education across all key stages every week. Teachers have good subject knowledge of religious education in accordance with the Religious Education Curriculum Directory for England and Wales.

Other faiths, especially Judaism, are studied in appropriate detail and for the appropriate amount of time.

The school allocates a good budget to teaching about the Catholic faith and books are plentiful and well chosen to cover all areas of the curriculum. The accommodation of the school is very good with extensive well maintained grounds.

There is currently no outside prayer area and the school is keen to develop this in the near future. Governors play an effective role in developing the quality of religious education in the school. The subject leader plays a key role in driving standards forward in the school and new teachers do receive support and training.

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

Grade 1*

This area of school life is outstanding. Prayer and worship are clearly central to the life of the school from the day children start in the reception class. Upon starting in the school Reception Year pupils are given a book of prayers. The local parish priest is a key figure in the school and is present in the school on an almost daily basis. Every class has a visible prayer corner with appropriate liturgical colours for the year. Praying together takes place in classrooms, assemblies and in a wide range of liturgies. Every day begins and ends with prayers throughout the school. Pupils are also given ample opportunities to compose their own thoughts and prayers in written and spoken form.

Reconciliation is an integral part of school life for all junior children with opportunities provided for children to take part in this Sacrament during Advent and Lent. A whole school assembly and a liturgy seen during this inspection on the life of St John Bosco and the Feast of the Presentation was of a very high standard.

Parents are regularly invited to both school and parish Masses and the response is very good.

Children are very involved in preparing events for the liturgical year and the school and parish priest are eager to develop this work even further. The children take part in a wide range of processions during the year linking school and parish even closer.

The school is highly evaluative of its opportunities for worship and liturgy is constantly looking to evolve its practice. Recent innovations have included the new Word on Wednesday and the Celebration of the Year of Faith.

Worship, prayer and liturgy for the whole school community is quite clearly outstanding in this school.

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

Grade 2

The school engages in a wide range of charitable projects both at home and overseas. They raise money for different projects every year but are unsure about whom many of these projects benefit or of the countries that funds go to. The work of Cafod, for example, is actively promoted but there are currently no long term or sustainable overseas projects that the school is engaged in. This is an area for development and would further assist pupils in understanding the theology underpinning this area.

Children are taught the values of respect and tolerance towards other faiths and the school has done some good work on teaching children about Judaism and recently Hinduism. Pupils have also visited several local places of worship.

Pupils are given a wide and varied range of opportunities to develop acts of service within the school. During this inspection, the example of St John Bosco was very well used to teach children about how we can help others less fortunate than ourselves. The school helps a wide range of charities in the Diocese and locality and every year raise considerable sums of money for different organisations. The school council is very committed to charity work for among others Mission Together, the Catholic Children's Society, Shelter, Help the Heroes, Marie Curie, the Cardinal Hume Centre and the St Vincent de Paul Society. The Armistice Day service is always marked by the school at the local War Memorial and the Royal British Legion greatly appreciates this support. Older pupils are also given opportunities to serve as playground buddies and friends and to help younger pupils who are upset or troubled. Pupils greatly enjoy helping out in school in a wide variety of ways.

The school strives to be fully inclusive in its provision.

Pupils and also parents are really keen and eager to participate in areas such as Fairtrade and disaster relief such as the recent Typhoon Haiyan Appeal. Opportunities are being missed however to broaden children's knowledge of the wider world and the call for social justice, this is an area that needs to be developed much further.

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*

This is a major strength of the school. The links with the parish are very close indeed and are integral to the success of this school. Parents are very role supportive of the work of the school as evidenced by the 81 responses to the Diocesan questionnaire and also from the school's own surveys. Parents are actively invited and encouraged to participate in the religious and spiritual life of the school throughout the year. The school provides homework for pupils that parents can help with and are now trialling the Word on Wednesday in the school.

The school religious education leader engages regularly with the Diocese in moderating work and also by attending two recent conferences. The school in general attends training sessions and share developments with their Diocesan adviser. The school regularly attends Masses at the cathedral to celebrate special events such as for example the Good Shepherd Mass in June.

Governors avail of training opportunities and support the work of the Diocese in the local area by linking up regularly with other local Catholic schools.

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

Grade 1

The leadership of the headteacher in promoting the Catholic life of the school has clearly been very good over many years. He has provided strong direction and commitment in developing every aspect of the Catholic life of the school. The exemplary behaviour, enthusiasm and engagement of the pupils is a clear indication of how successful he has been.

The religious education leader works hard to support and influence the Catholic life of the school. The mission statement of the school has now been simplified and all pupils now know the shortened version "Learning Together in God's Love". They are not so confident in the longer version and this needs to be revised with the older pupils. Staff are encouraged to reflect upon their practice and are set some challenging targets. Monitoring of the Catholic life of the school has proved very effective and led to significant developments in recent times.

Governors provide a good balance of challenge and support for the school.

What should the school do to develop further the Catholic life of the school?

- Develop an area in the school's extensive grounds to enable outside worship and liturgy to take place as appropriate throughout the year
- Work with the pupils to provide even more opportunities for them to develop their own liturgical formation in partnership with the school and parish
- Provide the pupils with opportunities to support some sustainable overseas projects for their extensive charity work and engage in greater discussion about the reasons and theology of why they commit and contribute to the Common Good in the wider world.