

Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School

Wesley Road, Willesden, London NW10 8PP

Date of inspection by Westminster Diocese: 10 March 2017



Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

A. Classroom religious education is outstanding

- The school has put into effect the improvements suggested by the previous inspection.
- The school has made significant progress in providing differentiated teaching and tasks for pupils with differentiated needs.
- The school delivers outstandingly well a religious education programme which is demanding.
- The programme in religious education fully delivers the Bishops' requirements in the Religious Education Curriculum Directory.
- Pupils make very good progress in their knowledge and understanding of teachings of the Bible and the Church.
- The teaching of religious education is outstanding. All teachers demonstrated high subject knowledge, using it to challenge and inspire pupils.
- Higher order questioning was shown in teaching and in books to stretch and challenge pupils.
- Marking was consistent and constructive, ensuring consistency of high expectations of all pupils.
- Pupils enjoy their learning and are confident in the steps they need to take to make progress.
- Pupils can articulate very well their understanding of what they are learning.
- The school is successful in ensuring pupils who arrive mid-year or who have special learning needs are helped to catch up with the rest of the class.
- The governors and headteacher have a clear vision for the delivery and improvement of religious education.

B. The Catholic life of the school is outstanding

- Pupils are proud of their Catholic school and can speak to its identity.
- The headteacher and senior leadership are outstanding in ensuring the vision for the development of the school as Catholic is the priority.
- This vision ensures that religious education is at the core of the curriculum.
- The school fulfils the requirements of the Bishops' Conference to allocate 10% of classroom teaching to religious education.
- Pupils are taught to pray with confidence and trust.
- The children love to pray and really enjoy leading liturgies and class worship.
- The baptismal vocation to serve others is instilled and encouraged.
- Pupils know they are following the teaching of Christ as they collect money and goods for those in need.
- Parents are drawn into the partnership of home/school/parish very well.
- The parish clergy make a substantial contribution to the life and liturgy of the school.
- The governors take a keen interest in the Catholic prayer and life of the school, and provide unfailing support for its development.
- Establishing the Mini Vinnies has led to a greater sense of service to the community and is to be encouraged.

A. Classroom Religious Education

What has improved since the last inspection?

The previous inspection recommended a number of areas for improvement, including planned differentiation, opportunities for focused coaching, sharing outstanding best practice across the school and moderation skills to secure Levels 3 and 5. The school has responded effectively and successfully to these recommendations. The variety of approaches to differentiation evidenced during the current inspection was impressive while the focus on progress in Levels of Achievement is in place and sustained.

The content of classroom religious education is outstanding

The content of classroom religious education delivers the curriculum of the Religious Education Curriculum Directory (RECD) outstandingly well. The pupils make steady progress in their knowledge of God, the life and teaching of Jesus and the Church, and the relationship between faith and life. The demanding religious education (RE) programme used in the school for over more than four years ensures that the pupils are familiar in knowing the scriptural background to the teachings of the church. The pupils understand different genres of scriptural texts and how they are interpreted. The school uses the common half termly blocks of teaching to be effective in providing appropriate themes and topics. Other faiths are well taught and pupils are literate in their traditions and ceremonies. Teachers are well versed in understanding and using the Agreed Understandings so the goals of teaching religious education are achieved. The school has been creative in looking in ways of ensuring that RE has a cross curricular element, in particular with respect to art. The inspectors were impressed with the ease with which pupils could speak of and articulate what they had been learning regarding their beliefs and faith.

Pupil achievement in religious education is good

Pupil achievement is at least good across the school and indicates good progress. Pupils have positive attitudes towards their learning and in all lessons observed they showed their enthusiasm and good levels of engagement. Pupils are proactive in their learning and are well versed in religious language and understanding. Pupils in the older classes drew on previous knowledge to support their views. Pupils have targets listed in their books and know what they have to do to improve their work. The introduction of separate strands and levels within them will ensure they have an excellent understanding of Levels of Achievement and what they need to do to move up and/or across strands of ATI (Learning about Religion). A moderation folder is available and all teachers are supported by an experienced RE coordinator who ensures consistency and clarity in judgements. The school has recognised the need to continue to address and support staff in accurate levelling. In the Early Years pupils are introduced to a wide and appropriate range of religious language and activities which help them to make excellent progress. There is clear evidence of active monitoring of RE, including book looks, regular lesson observations and moderation sessions. Teaching assistants play an important role in supporting individuals and groups of children to achieve well. Overall pupil achievement is at least good and sometimes outstanding. This view is also supported by the parents and governors.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

All lessons seen were good and many were outstanding. Pupils were challenged through key questions and prompts. This included scaffolding to support the less able pupils. Pupils frequently referred to scripture in their responses to substantiate their ideas about almsgiving, eg the

Beatitudes and Sermon on the Mount. The use of talk partners demonstrated how the pupils were enabled to think more deeply and also to make links with Laudato Si and the Common Good. Tasks were differentiated by varied scaffolding and by outcome. The book scrutiny confirmed the depth of knowledge and marking was consistent and constructive, ensuring consistency of high expectations of all pupils. Higher order questioning was shown in teaching and in books to stretch and challenge pupils, thus making comparisons between scripture and their actions as Catholic children. Behaviour was excellent in the class and around the school, evidence of the mutual respect between the teachers and the pupils. All teachers demonstrated high subject knowledge, using it to challenge and inspire pupils.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of religious education is outstanding

The governors, headteacher and the senior leadership team have a clear and explicit vision for the teaching of religious education. Their effectiveness in the leadership and management of it is outstanding. The concise school development plan ensures that religious education is at the core of the curriculum. The inclusion of reporting on religious education at governors' meetings is thorough and developmental. There is a sense that inclusive religious education features across the whole curriculum. New initiatives are encouraged and resources found in the generous allocation for religious education to support them, for example the introduction of 'Godly Play' in nursery and reception classes. The continuing professional development (CPD) of teachers in religious education is a focus of this vision and it is also found in the priority given to inducting new teachers in the school to the RE programme and the school's Catholic life. The pupils indicated that it was clear to them that RE teaching was very important in their school. The school prioritises the communication regarding the RE curriculum and topics in its letters and other messages sent home to the parents. Regular 'RE updates' are part of the daily staff briefing.

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

- Continue the review of the attainment and assessment procedures.
- Monitor the effective introduction of strands in the levels, and how they are communicated to the pupils.
- Promote further opportunities for the pupils to speak of and articulate their beliefs.

B. The Catholic Life of the school

What has improved since the last inspection?

The previous inspection highlighted two areas for continued improvement and development. They were to monitor the quality of class assemblies and to continue 'talking homework' related to the topics being delivered and the current gospel message. Both recommendations have been effectively taken forward. In particular the 'talking homework' has been developed even further enabling pupils be articulate in what they have learned and what they believe. RE assemblies are monitored by the RE subject leader who uses a form based on the inspection guidelines. The clarity of this monitoring across the school has led to high quality worship assemblies.

The place of religious education as the core of the curriculum

is outstanding

The school is remarkable for the outstanding way it ensures the place of religious education is at the core of the curriculum. Catholic teaching and values feed and influence every aspect of school life such that every pupil receives an education shot through with the teachings of Jesus. The school fully delivers the 10% RE curriculum time required by the Bishops' Conference. Its allocation of resources to RE is generous, above that awarded to other areas of the curriculum. The displays about the school in the entrance area and down the corridors all speak of the school's Catholic life and the priority given it. The governing body take a sustained interest in the development of both a Catholic milieu in the school as well as the steady improvement in the teaching and achievement in religious education. The school promotes regular in-service training and other opportunities for the continuing professional development of its staff in Catholic teaching and pedagogy. The status of RE is reinforced in many ways, leaving parents and pupils in no doubt about its priority in the life of the school. The governors and the parish clergy provide guidance and support for developing and maintaining the place of religious education in the life of the school and its curriculum.

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

is outstanding

Liturgy and prayer are integral part of the school's identity. There is much evidence to show that there are many opportunities provided that have developed the pupils' prayer life. Some of the class worship sessions are linked to the liturgical cycle and some lessons began with a reflection. The two members of the parish clergy are active visitors. The deacon comes in every Thursday and leads class worship sessions that are linked to the topic, feast or liturgical event. One child commented that he 'helped to expand our faith'. Parent questionnaire responses were very favourable indicating the growth in faith during the past years. The staff, parents and governors are extremely proud and passionate about the Catholic life of the school. This ethos is evidently visible and felt as soon as one walks into the school. The children from the 'Mini Vinnies' love to pray and really enjoy leading liturgies and class worship, feeling that the children really appreciate it. The behaviour is exceptional and shows the respect between staff and pupils. The awards assembly was heart-warming and affirming, with pupils being given awards for 'forgiveness, respect, fairness and courage'. The school prayer was created by the children and the 'Mini Vinnies' are excited and feel that they are following in Jesus' footsteps; that through prayer and action they are making such a difference to their local community.

The contribution to the Common Good – service and social justice **is outstanding**

Pupils are highly aware the commitment and contribution to the Common Good. Some of the oral contributions and discussions seen and heard were of the highest order. The RE focus on almsgiving as part of their programme has been taken on board by the whole school and was evident throughout the inspection. Pupils can discuss a wide range of current issues from poverty to refugees in an appropriate and intelligent way. Pupils and their families engage in a wide range of charitable activities including Cafod, Sufra and visits to a local care home for the elderly. The Mini Vinnies have been recently set up and they are 'proud to be making a difference to our local community'. Pupils feel it is their responsibility to help others as 'this is what Catholics should do – to follow Jesus' example'. Children across the school displayed pride in the fact that their 'little actions made a big difference'. Mutual respect at all levels is very evident within the school and this comes through in the high standards of behaviour and in the good relationships between each other, staff, and visitors. Children are proud and grateful to be of service.

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 **is outstanding**

The emphasis on the importance of partnership with the parents, the parish and the diocese is an outstanding characteristic of the school. The school exemplifies its understanding of partnership by the internal partnerships it lives out in terms of staff and pupils in the school. There is a very strong outreach to the parents, inviting partnership at many levels. The parents both in the questionnaire responses and in the interviews in the course of the inspection spoke very highly of the good partnership they enjoy with the school, as well as the confidence with which they can approach staff and governors. There is a very strong relationship with the local parish, with both the parish priest and the deacon visiting the school regularly. There are also liturgical occasions where the school or classes attend at the local church. At the sacramental, catechetical and teaching aspects, this home, school, parish partnership is a particular strength. The school works cooperatively with the diocesan advisers and attends diocesan in-service meetings and conferences as a matter of course. The local partnership of the Catholic schools in Brent is a particular source of encouragement.

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

Headteacher, senior leadership, governors, parish clergy – they all unite to promote very effectively the Catholic life of the school. The school succeeds at being an effective anchor and haven for its pupils and parents by the strength of the Catholic community it builds. It is proudly a faith school which builds on its educational mission to be a trustworthy and effective partner with the parents in the education and formation of their children. Staff are provided good leadership so they too contribute effectively to the success of the school, especially in the context of its Catholic life.

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

- Continue to build up the confidence of all pupils to prepare and lead acts of worship.
- Develop the Mini Vinnies to be helpers and beacons to the Catholic life of the school.

Information about this school

- The school is a one form entry Catholic primary school in the locality of Willesden.
- The school serves the parishes of Five Precious Wounds, Stonebridge and St Patrick, Neasden.
- The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholic is 84%.
- The proportion of pupils who are from other Christian denominations is 11% and from other faiths is 4%. The remaining pupils are from families who have not declared a faith.
- The percentage of Catholic teachers in the school 80%.
- There are 63 of pupils in the school with special educational needs or disabilities of whom 1 have statements of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)/ Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP).
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups (96%) is well above average.
- The number of pupils speaking English as an Additional Language is well above average.
- There is a well above average rate of families claiming free school meals.
- 84 pupils receive the Pupil Premium (number %).

Department for Education Number	3043508
Unique Reference Number	101545
Local Authority	Brent

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils	4 -11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on roll	232
The appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Annette Broderick
Headteacher	Mrs Mary Bickerstaff
Telephone number	020 8961 5037
Website	http://www.lourdes.brent.sch.uk
Email address	admin@lourdes.brent.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	16 March 2012
Grades from previous inspection:	
Classroom religious education	Good
The Catholic life of the school	Outstanding

Information about this inspection

This inspection was carried out (i) under the requirements of the Canon 806 and (ii) in accordance with the Framework for Diocesan Inspections 2015 approved by the Archbishop of Westminster and (iii) under section 48 of the Education Act 2005.

- The inspectors would like to thank the governors, headteacher, staff, pupils and parents for their co-operation over the conduct of the inspection.
- During the inspection 7 lessons or part lessons were observed.
- The inspectors attended one assembly and three acts of worship.
- Meetings were held with school staff, pupils and governors.
- Other evidence was gathered from contacts with parents through a questionnaire, scrutiny of a sample of pupils' work, observation of pupils in and out of lessons and examination of school documents.

Inspection Team

The inspectors are appointed by the Archbishop.

Deacon Anthony Clark

Lead Inspector

Mrs Grace Anderson

Associate Inspector

Miss Maureen O'Donoghue

Associate Inspector

Diocesan inspection has four grades:

- outstanding
- good
- requires improvement
- causing concern

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