

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School

St Mark's Road, Teddington, Middlesex TW11 9DD

Date of inspection by Westminster Diocese: 22 March 2017



Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

A. Classroom religious education is good

- The religious education curriculum is planned effectively so that pupils grow steadily in their understanding of the Catholic faith.
- Pupils experience a wide range of Catholic practices and learn very well to manage their daily lives in the light of what they are learning about their faith.
- Pupils achieve well in religious education given their starting points when they join the school.
- The impact of teaching on children's learning about, and from, the Catholic faith is good overall. However, there are missed opportunities to deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding, particularly for the most able.
- The religious education coordinator, together with the headteacher, is taking forward developments in religious education to encourage staff to deepen their knowledge and understanding of the Religious Education Curriculum Directory.
- Self-evaluation is accurate and used honestly to improve all aspects of practice.

Classroom religious education is not yet outstanding because

- The progress of the most able pupils is slower in religious education than in other core areas
- Links to the Religious Education Curriculum Directory are not explicit in the schemes of work.

B. The Catholic life of the school is outstanding

- Religious education is at the heart of the school. Classroom provision meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference.
- Resources and accommodation match that available to other core areas.
- Senior leaders and governors, together with the local parish priest, promote excellently the Catholic life of the school.
- All children participate in learning and worship whatever their home faith traditions.
- Worship and prayer are built into the school year and follow closely the liturgical calendar.
- Daily and weekly practice promote many and varied opportunities for prayer, liturgical worship, and quiet reflection.
- Children thrive at Sacred Heart. They understand why it is important to help others, especially those worse off than themselves. They contribute very well to the Common Good, locally nationally and internationally.
- Partnerships with the diocese, the parish and above all parents are especially strong. Governors evaluate the impact of the school's Catholic life through regular visits.
- School leaders and governors are fully committed to the Catholic education mission of the Church. The school's self-evaluation is honest and accurate.
- School leaders at all levels give high priority to ensuring that there is a vibrant Catholic ethos throughout the school.

A. Classroom Religious Education

What has improved since the last inspection?

The school was asked, at the last inspection, to strengthen its assessment practice in religious education. In particular, it was asked to ensure that the information gathered on pupils' progress was robustly analysed so that learning in lessons was closely matched to the needs of all groups but especially to those of the most able. The school has made good progress in encouraging active learning in classrooms so that motivation and participation has increased. Opportunities for pupils to develop their communication skills are more regular than previously, particularly through discussion of the 'big questions'. However, the school recognises that the most able pupils are still not achieving as well as they could in religious education and that more needs to be done. Continuing professional development has also focused on how staff use questioning to develop and assess pupils' understanding in the course of lessons. Teachers' planning is geared more carefully than previously to match pupils' needs. Formal monitoring of pupil and staff performance is helping staff to review pupils' progress. Other than the requirements of the last inspection, much has been done to enhance the quality of the provision for religious education. School leaders have introduced a formal timetable of assemblies with topics carefully chosen to interweave Catholic and British values with the liturgical calendar. The budget for religious education has doubled to match that of other core subjects.

The content of classroom religious education is good

Although schemes of work do follow generally the Religious Education Curriculum Directory (RECD), these links are not made explicit, either on teachers' planning or in the religious education documentation. The school follows a published scheme with additional extension material that ensures the expected coverage. The religious education curriculum also provides for the study of other faiths, including Judaism, Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism and Islam. There is evidence from pupils' work on Judaism, for example, in corridor displays following a week-long project. There are planned visits to other places of worship throughout the year. Cross-curricular work across other areas complements and re-enforces learning in religious education. The children's work on the 'Take one picture' project exemplifies this well. Progression is built into religious education well but not enough attention has been given in the past to building up the skills of the most able pupils to enable them to achieve at the highest available levels. Nevertheless, children do already make very good links from their in-class learning to their daily lives.

Pupil achievement in religious education is good

Pupils clearly enjoy their religious education classes and have very positive attitudes to learning. Their class records of such as the 'big question' show the depth of reflections and questioning from the youngest to the oldest year groups. Pupils show a good facility in the retelling of the Bible stories, in exploring their understanding of their faith in daily life and in the liturgical cycle. However, pupils do not always have enough opportunities for extended writing or for deepening their knowledge. This is particularly so for the most able pupils. As a result, not enough pupils yet reach the highest available levels by the end of Year 6. The school's efforts to address these issues have not had time to impact fully on the work of the current pupils. Teachers' evaluation of pupils' achievement is accurate. Pupils make good progress in developing their religious literacy, including those who have additional learning needs. Children in Year 2, for example, were able to recount fluently the story of Christ's entry into Jerusalem and link this to Palm Sunday in church. Work in religious education is moderated regularly internally and the school is involved fully in diocesan moderation activities.

The quality of teaching is good

The typicality of teaching at Sacred Heart School is good. Despite some turbulence in staffing, the school has managed to sustain its good practice overall. Pupils benefit from the more active learning styles that are developing as well as from the promotion of probing questioning and reflection through 'the big questions'. As a result, children are happy, engaged learners in religious education. They take care of their workbooks, their class displays and their prayer tables and books. The fostering of positive attitudes is a major strength of the teaching as is the contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Good resources engage pupils and generate real curiosity, often expressed through their records of their responses to 'big questions'. Pupils in Reception flourished during the activity of making bread as Mary did. Pupils' work is regularly checked although not all staff engage them fully in following up the next steps in their learning. Much work has been done to support teachers' planning. However, the intended learning outcomes planned do not always allow pupils to build systematically on their previous learning or extend their thinking so that they can reach the higher levels of the diocesan attainment targets. There is scope to develop pupils' learning further through more opportunities for extended writing and through tasks that challenge the most able pupils effectively.

The effectiveness of leadership and management in promoting religious education is good

The coordinator of religious education is relatively recent in post. The coordinator is enthusiastic and motivated to improve the teaching and learning of religious education. The coordinator recognises the issues still to be tackled to ensure that provision in religious education is outstanding. The coordinator is supported very well by the headteacher and other senior staff as well as by the parish priest. Much work has been done to develop the curriculum through a 'differentiation grid' and training sessions for staff to develop their knowledge and expertise. Self-evaluation is accurate. There is a clear recognition of where religious education provision and outcomes require improvement. The governors and headteacher support the development of religious education very well.

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

- Continue to develop the quality of teaching and learning in religious education across the school, particularly in relation to teachers' planning of intended learning outcomes so that pupils achieve in line with other core areas.
- Increase the proportion of pupils reaching the highest available levels in the diocesan attainment targets by developing the understanding of staff of what pupils are expected to achieve.
- Make explicit the links to the Religious Education Curriculum Directory in the scheme

B. The Catholic life of the school

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection, the governors were asked to put in place formal systems for monitoring its Catholic life. Governors are a very visible and active presence in the school and regularly provide reports of their formal monitoring of the school's Catholic life. Staff and governors are increasingly involved in evaluating the work of the school through their involvement in the self-evaluation document. Links with other local Catholic schools have been strengthened as have links with the adjacent parish and with other parishes from which children come.

The place of religious education as the core of the curriculum

is outstanding

Religious education receives its full allocation of 10% of taught time at each key stage, as required by the Bishops' Conference. The headteacher, senior staff and governors ensure that religious education is at the heart of the school. The school community does its best to live out its mission statement of 'growing in love....in a Catholic community'. Resources allocated to religious education are similar to that of other core subjects. All classrooms have their prayer tables. Displays and religious artefacts in corridors both demonstrate children's experiences and enhance the Catholic ethos of the school. The subject leader is supported very well by the headteacher and governors, with the headteacher taking responsibility for the school's Catholic life. Governors play an active part in the religious life of the school.

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

is outstanding

Prayer and worship have high priority throughout the school year. The parish priest plays a pivotal role in the school's liturgical and sacramental life. Pupils are active in the class prayers and in maintaining the class prayer tables. Assemblies are strongly rooted in prayer and rooted in Gospel values. The school lives up to its aims expressed through the mission statement with its many opportunities for prayer. Pupils pray daily, celebrate class and school Masses. These opportunities afford the pupils some occasions to lead prayers although not yet other liturgical celebrations. Year groups regularly celebrate Mass in the parish church and take part in traditional Catholic practices depending on the liturgical season. During the inspection, Year 5 prayed the Stations of the Cross following their class Mass. Parents and carers are encouraged to participate actively in assemblies and in the celebration of Mass. Houses are named after places of pilgrimage such as Walsingham although in discussion, pupils were vague as to the importance of these places and the meaning of pilgrimage.

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

is outstanding

Pupils understand at their own levels that they are part of a wider Catholic family with a responsibility to help others less fortunate than themselves. They know that they have a role to play in the wider community, based on the message of Christ. They offer practical help as well as prayer for those in need. Pupils support a number of local projects, including a local hospice. They support the education of a child in India whose parents have experienced the challenges of leprosy. The school is also involved in national organisations such as Cafod, and are expanding their international links through 'toy box' and 'shoe box' appeals. Pupils are happy at Sacred Heart and flourish. Their spiritual, moral and social development is promoted very well so that they thrive in all aspects of their learning and development.

The partnership with parents, school and parish, and collaboration as an integral part of the diocese through its relationship with the diocesan Bishop and those acting on his behalf**is outstanding**

The school has developed very good links with the parish and with parents. The parish priest, who is also the chaplain, speaks exceptionally highly of the school staff and their work to develop Catholic practice. He visits the school regularly. The school is working hard to establish close links with other adjacent parishes, not least to support the number of pupils applying to the school. Of the 79 parental responses to the school's Catholic questionnaire, the overwhelming majority were very positive about the school. There are also excellent diocesan links. The school participates in a number of activities at diocesan level, attending moderation and training events, and maintaining regular contact with diocesan advisers. There are good links with other Catholic schools as well.

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

School leaders and governors are fully committed to the Catholic education mission of the Church. The school's self-evaluation is honest and accurate. Rich opportunities enable staff and pupils to experience a Catholic way of life in their day-to-day living. The headteacher along with senior and middle leaders drive forward the mission of the school to develop the young people in its care. The induction of staff new to the school and to teaching is robust but supportive. Governors challenge and support the school very well in strategic matters and offer excellent support for the school's Catholic life. They visit regularly and are a visible presence in the school and at Mass and assemblies. As a next step, they have realistic plans to formalise the ways in which they monitor the school's Catholic life.

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

- Expand the opportunities for pupils to become involved in planning and leading acts of worship.

Information about this school

- The school is a one-form entry Catholic primary school in the locality of Richmond, West London.
- The school mainly serves families from the local parish of the Sacred Heart, Teddington and from the parishes of St Frances De Sales, Hampton Hill, St Theodore of Rochester, Hampton, and St James, Twickenham.
- The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholic is 80%.
- The proportion of pupils who are from other Christian denominations is 9% and from other faiths is 6%. Approximately 5% of pupils have no known faith.
- The percentage of Catholic teachers in the school is over 90%. Four teachers have a Catholic qualification.
- The proportion of pupils in the school with special educational needs or disabilities is below average. Five of these pupils have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP).
- The proportion of pupils from other than white British heritages is above average and the proportion from minority ethnic groups is 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 with 26 pupils eligible for Pupil Premium funding.

Department for Education Number

318/3320

Unique Reference Number

102196

Local Authority

Richmond

Type of school

Primary

School category

Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils

3-11

Gender of pupils

Mixed

Number of pupils on roll

239

The appropriate authority

The governing body

Chair

Mr Sam Hartley

Headteacher

Mrs Bernadette Smith

Telephone number

020 8977 6591

Website

www.sacredheart.richmond.sch.uk

Email address

info@sacredheart.richmond.sch.uk

Date of previous inspection

March 2012

Grade from previous inspection

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 5 assemblies and a number of 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 Grades

- Outstanding
- Good
- Requires improvement
- Causing concern

Inspection Team

The inspectors are appointed by the Archbishop.

Mrs Sheila Nolan

Lead Inspector

Mrs Florence Collins

Associate Inspector

Miss Tracey Peters

Associate Inspector

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Vaughan House
46 Francis Street,
London
SW1P 1QN

T: 020 7798 9005

E: education@rcdow.org.uk

W: <http://rcdow.org.uk/education>