

Gumley House Convent School FCJ

St John's Road, Isleworth. Middlesex. TW7 6XF



Date of inspection by Westminster Diocese: 30 November - 1 December 2017

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

A. Classroom religious education is outstanding

- The school's strong Catholic identity permeates all aspects of the learning environment.
- The content of curriculum religious education meets all the requirements of Religious Education Curriculum Directory.
- Religious education programmes are used creatively and supplement and enhance the delivery of the Religious Education Curriculum Directory resulting in a progressive and cohesive programme.
- Pupil achievement in religious education is outstanding. When joining the school, pupils' level of attainment are typically above average and they continue to make rapid and sustained progress as they move up through the school.
- Pupils are given the opportunity to explore and apply their understanding of Christian teaching and ethics to everyday situations.
- Pupils are enthusiastic learners and exceptionally well versed in religious literacy and understanding.
- Teachers create a positive climate for learning in their lessons and pupils are interested, engaged and eager to do well.
- Pupils are confident users of religious language vocabulary and illustrate excellent knowledge and understanding appropriate to their age and ability.
- Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their faith across all key stages.
- Pupils make rapid and sustained progress as they move up through the school.
- Leaders and governors have a very clear vision for religious education and a commitment to the mission of the Church.
- The school's self – evaluation is accurate and provides an excellent picture of the strengths and areas for development.

B. The Catholic life of the school is outstanding

- Gumley House is a warm and welcoming community which recognises the gifts and talents of each individual pupil.
- Religious education meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference for curriculum time in all key stages.
- Prayer and worship are central to all that the school does and it excels in offering daily opportunities for pupils to pray and reflect.
- The pupils willingly volunteer to take part in liturgies and use their talents to create reflective and meaningful prayer experiences which include dance, music, drama and art.
- The Church's call to action for justice and peace is fully appreciated and the commitment to social justice and Common Good is well understood by pupils.
- Relationships and behaviour are outstanding and pupils take advantage of the many opportunities available to serve the school and the wider community.
- The governors and the leadership team all share and fulfil their role as leaders of this Catholic school, and actively work to put faith into action.
- Pupils recognise the values of their founding order, the Faithful Companions of Jesus (FCJ): companionship, hope, excellence, gentleness, dignity and justice.
- The pupils spoke eloquently, confidently and with immense pride about the importance of Catholic education and being a 'Gumley girl'.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school and express great appreciation of the way their children's faith is nurtured.

A. Classroom Religious Education

What has improved since the last inspection?

Pupils respond to marking in green pen in line with the school policy. Marking is carried out by the department; it is frequent and moderated regularly. Assessment for learning has been significantly developed and there is now a consistent approach across the department. Attainment at Key Stage 4 has been consistently outstanding as evidenced in the GCSE results for the last three years.

The content of classroom religious education is outstanding

In all key stages the content of the religious education curriculum meets all the requirements of the Religious Education Curriculum Directory (RECD). The school has a unique Key Stage 3 programme which covers a catechetical set of narratives, the Old Testament and world religions. The curriculum provides a systematic study of God, the life and teaching of Jesus and the Church, the central beliefs that Catholics hold and the relationship between faith and life. Pupils are given the opportunity to explore and apply their understanding of Christian teaching and ethics to everyday situations. There is evidence of topics being revisited in lessons to test pupils' understanding and progression. All teaching staff know and understand the broad areas of the RECD, how the current programme addresses them and in what ways progress in learning from year to year is developed. The religious education curriculum allows numerous opportunities for pupils to develop religious literacy. GCSE skills are taught at Key Stage 3 so pupils are able to make a smoother transition between the key stages. The skills developed in Key Stage 4 link very well to skills taught at A level.

Pupil achievement in religious education is outstanding

Pupil achievement in religious education (RE) is outstanding. When joining the school, pupils' level of attainment are typically above average and they continue to make rapid and sustained progress as they move up through the school. At the end of Key Stage 3 pupils' achievement is in comparison to other humanities subjects. At Key Stage 4 pupils make excellent progress, which is based on a thorough assessment system, consequently GCSE results are significantly and consistently above the national average. Pupils progress better in religious education than other similar subjects. Those who require additional support or who are disadvantaged make very good progress, at least in line with their peers as a result of well-planned intervention. Pupils also benefit from high quality revision materials to assist them in preparation for their exams. Their attitudes to religious education are very positive. Pupils have a good understanding of their target grades and can clearly articulate next steps to improve their work. Attainment overall at A level is in line with national average and the RE department have put a plan in place to improve results further.

The quality of teaching is good

Teaching is good with pupils achieving well over time. Teachers have high expectations, plan and teach lessons that deepen pupils' religious literacy. Teachers create a positive climate for learning in lessons and pupils are interested and engaged and eager to do well.

At Key Stage 3, the RE programme offers pupils the opportunity to deepen their understanding of religious concepts and beliefs in a variety of ways. Pupils engage well with the story narrative method of teaching and learn to empathise with characters in the stories. Consequently they explore the truths of their faith at a deeper level. Pupils have a very positive attitude to RE and enjoy their learning. In a Year 7 lesson on forgiveness there was evidence of effective questioning and some good responses from the pupils. The pupils enjoyed their RE lesson as part of the narrative and were engaged in their learning. In a Year 9 lesson on understanding the significance of the

incarnation students learned about the 'religious literacy' connected with the incarnation. There was a good use of the traffic lights system to check pupils' understanding throughout the lesson.

The effectiveness of leadership and management in promoting religious education

is outstanding

The quality of leadership and management of religious education is excellent and there is a very clear vision and commitment to the school's key mission of the Church. The headteacher is an inspirational leader, who is passionate and committed to the importance of religious education influencing all aspects of the school. The department has recently been restructured to support the subject leader. The department strives to provide the highest quality RE to enable pupils to grow and flourish and put their faith into action. Highly effective systems and structures are in place to frequently monitor, track and ensure pupil progress in religious literacy through the teaching and promotion of RE and the FCJ ethos. Subject knowledge is continually developed through on-going professional development and staff are well supported in this.

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

- Ensure all teachers in the department use teaching strategies to match pupils' learning needs and assess pupils' progress regularly and accurately.
- Raise achievement at Key Stage 5.

B. The Catholic life of the school

What has improved since the last inspection?

The requirement for 10% curriculum time for religious education, highlighted in the previous inspection, has been addressed. Each class celebrates Mass on a rota system throughout the year in addition to Masses held on their retreat days. A Bethany programme where each class works closely to deliver a prayer focus for the week in the chapel is also in place.

The place of religious education as the core of the curriculum

is outstanding

Religious education now receives the statutory 10% curriculum at Key Stages 3 and 4 and 5% at Key Stage 5 as required by the Bishops' Conference. Religious education is at the heart of the school and influences and enhances the quality of Catholic education offered as well as a rich experience of Catholic life and worship. Religious education is well respected by pupils and parents and is central to the Catholic identity of the school. Religious education is regarded as core in every sense from its status on the timetable; the allocation of curriculum time; the standard of its accommodation; the quality of its teaching staff and the resources allocated to it. Teachers have solid subject knowledge and are well supported by continuous professional development. Displays around the school and department are of an exceptional standard and promote learning. The leadership team and governors offer outstanding support and active guidance in developing and reviewing the place of religious education in the school.

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

is outstanding

Prayer and worship are central to the life of the school and a key part of every school celebration. The school excels in offering daily opportunities for pupils to pray and reflect. The chaplain produces a weekly leaflet with a morning prayer for each day. Assemblies take place on a weekly basis and prayers are also led by pupils and extend to other areas of school life; they are creative and imaginative. A Year 11 motivational assembly took place which was preparing the pupils for their mock exams and a special feature was that the younger Year 7 pupils were going to pray for the success of the Year 11 pupils who were to commence mock examinations in the school in the following week. There is a special liturgy for each year group and the chaplain linked the reflection liturgy in Year 9 to the topic incarnation which the pupils had been studying in their RE lessons. The pupils willingly volunteer to take part in liturgies and use their gifts and talents to create reflective and meaningful prayer experiences which include dance, music, drama and art. Pupils' spiritual development is enabled through the excellent opportunities they have for quiet reflection, sharing and discussion. Bethany is reserved as a centre of prayer, worship and reflection and it is kept open daily for pupils and staff to use it for prayer. Classes are invited and welcome to use Bethany for class prayer and other faith related activities led by the class teacher or chaplain. There was a special pilgrimage walk from Syon House on the founder's feast day. The quality and opportunities for prayer and worship are reviewed and evaluated regularly and action taken on areas of development.

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

is outstanding

The school has a dynamic and creative understanding of the call to 'human flourishing' and provides excellent opportunities for pupils to develop and celebrate their gifts and talents as individuals and as a community. Pupils recognise the values of the Faithful Companions of Jesus Society: companionship, hope, excellence, gentleness, dignity and justice. The school's unique Key Stage 3

curriculum incorporates citizenship and provides opportunities to put faith into action. The school's house system ensures that all pupils are actively involved in the service of others both within the local community and also globally. The Church's call to action for justice and peace is fully appreciated and understood by the students through their charity fundraising days supporting local charities such as Acton Homeless centre and Mary Meals, national charities such as the Catholic Children's Society and international charities such as the East Africa crisis and Project India. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about fundraising for Mary's meals in their tutor time and the opportunity for pupils to pray for these charities. There is an annual Sixth form pilgrimage to Lourdes with the Diocese of Westminster. Pupils have an excellent understanding of the theology underpinning their actions. The girls commented on the inclusive community and they celebrate diversity. One pupil said 'To be a Gumley girl is to be virtuous' and another pupil commented 'it is to be hopeful'.

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 works closely with parents and carers to develop a shared understanding of the mission of the school. Parents and carers are encouraged to participate in school events from helping with the school play to organising prizes for the Summer Fair. The school has a very active parents association and makes a contribution to the open day programme. The school recognises that the parish is the main experience of church for many of the pupils and has a very good relationship with the local parishes. The local parish is used to celebrate school mass. Parents are invited to the Year 7 welcome and the Year 11 celebration mass and school staff attend the annual deanery mass. The RE department devise and facilitate a retreat programme for a local primary school which takes place at the school and the school works with local primary schools on the Sports Leadership and Mandarin programme. There is an appreciation of being part of the diocesan community of schools and the chair of governors, headteacher, deputy headteacher and head of RE have all participated in diocesan professional development sessions. There is on-going cooperation with two other Catholic schools in the consortium and there is a very good working relationship with St Mary's University. There are close and effective links with other FCJ schools in the country.

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

is outstanding

The school's motto of "live that you may have life", together with the vision statement shared by all FCJ schools underpins all of the work of the school. It makes a significant contribution to and impacts on all policies and aspects of the school's daily life. The school is a warm and welcoming community which recognises the gifts and talents of each individual student. At the start of every term, staff are reminded or inducted into the Catholic nature of education and what it means to work in an FCJ School. The school's leadership team is fully committed to the church's mission in education and demonstrates this in a dynamic and consistent way in the quality of their daily interactions with the pupils. It is a vibrant, alive and engaging Catholic community. The chaplain works along with the school leadership team to review the experience of worship and prayer in the school community and through reflection and evaluation the school strives to ensure all pupils develop their spirituality and put their faith into action. Governors share in the strategic leadership of the school with energy and enthusiasm. They offer highly effective and excellent support to the leadership of the school.

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

- To continue to induct new staff and students into the FCJ vision of education and the Catholic faith.

Information about this school

- The school is a six form entry Catholic girls' school, an Academy, and part of the FCJ Educational Trust in the locality of the London Borough of Hounslow.
- The school serves 63 surrounding parishes (Hounslow, Ealing Upper Thames, Hammersmith and Fulham, Kensington & Chelsea, Southwark, Brent and Harrow) drawing from 60 Catholic feeder primary schools.
- The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholic is 87.6%.
- The proportion of pupils who are from other Christian denominations is 6.6 % and from other faiths is 5.1 %. The remaining pupils are from families who have not declared a faith.
- The percentage of Catholic teachers in the school is 39%.
- The number of teachers with a Catholic qualification is 7
- There are 6% of pupils in the school with special educational needs or disabilities of whom 11 have statements of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)/ Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP).
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is slightly above national averages.
- The number of pupils speaking English as an Additional Language is slightly below national average.
- There is a below average rate of families claiming free school meals.
- 195 pupils receive the Pupil Premium (18.4%).

Department for Education Number	313 5400
Unique Reference Number	I37928
Local Authority	Hounslow

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Voluntary Aided Academy
Age range of pupils	11-18
Gender of pupils	Female and mixed in the Sixth Form
Number of pupils on roll	1059
The appropriate authority	FCJ Educational Trust
Chair of Governors	Sr Jo Grainger fcj
Headteacher	Ms Caroline Braggs
Telephone number	020 8568 8692
Website	www.gumley.hounslow.sch.uk
Email address	general@gumley.hounslow.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	24-25 April 2013
Grades from previous inspection:	
Classroom religious education	Outstanding
The Catholic life of the school	Very Good

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 27 lessons or part lessons were observed.
- The inspectors attended 2 assemblies and 2 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.

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