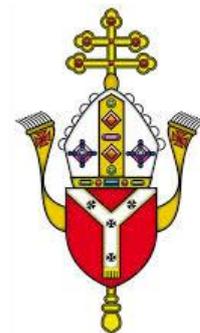


# Westminster Diocese Inspection Report

## St. Vincent's Catholic Primary School

St Vincent Street, Marylebone, London W1U 4DF

Date of inspection: 19 May 2016



### A. Classroom Religious Education

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

**Overall Grade I**

The overall effectiveness of classroom religious education is outstanding. Through the school motto, 'Together through Christ to grow and learn,' pupils are encouraged both academically and spiritually. Pupils respond enthusiastically in lessons, which are very well informed by the Curriculum Directory and enhanced by creative and imaginative resources, alongside the typically outstanding teaching. Achievement is very good and pupils make outstanding progress evident in their excellent attitudes to learning. Religious education is given high status and is at the centre of the curriculum. All teachers have high expectations, excellent subject knowledge and deliver well-planned imaginative, creative and stimulating lessons. Leadership of religious education is very good; the quality of teaching is regularly monitored and data regarding pupils' progress used very well to inform future planning. The assessment, monitoring and tracking is as robust and rigorous as for other core subjects. Checks on pupils' learning and the moderation of work are woven throughout the school year ensuring that pupils make rapid progress from their starting points. The headteacher, senior leaders and governors give a high priority to religious education and support the school well. The very accurate self-evaluation, in partnership with the governing body, ensures their strategic and visionary direction for the mission of Catholic education.

### 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 I**

The effective leadership team and governing body are outstanding in ensuring the distinctive Catholic ethos of this of this school. The extremely strong Catholic identity permeates the daily life of the school. The committed leadership of the headteacher and governors is instrumental in effectively promoting a strong spiritual purpose and developing the Catholic ethos. Prayer and worship are of pivotal importance in the school's life. The school has a dynamic and creative understanding of its call to 'human flourishing' and as a community recognises its duty to follow its Vincentian heritage in its charitable efforts on behalf of the poor. Staff are committed to the very high profile given to religious education. Staff create an environment where pupils are respected, listened to and where learning is exciting. The pupils' personal, spiritual and moral development is outstanding and this is reflected in their behaviour and positive attitudes. The self-evaluation of the school is accurate and comprehensive. The school is rigorous in its pursuit of the best possible Catholic education for its pupils. The school regularly seeks the views of staff, parents and pupils on all aspects of their Catholic vision. Relationships and behaviour are excellent within the school and pupils take advantage of the many opportunities available to serve the school and wider community. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school and express great appreciation of the way their children's faith life is nurtured.

## 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 8 lessons and an assembly, and carried out 5 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 St. Vincent's, Marylebone was carried out under the requirements of the Canon 806 and Education Act 2005, and in accordance with the Framework 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.

### Inspection Team

Mrs Ann Staunton	Lead Inspector
Mrs Sheila Nolan	Shadow Lead
Miss Elizabeth Doonan	Associate Inspector

### Description of School

This Voluntary Aided school is a one form entry in the LA of Westminster and the locality of Marylebone. The school serves the parish of St. James', Marylebone. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholic is 95%. The proportion of pupils who are from other Christian denominations is 2%. 3% have not declared their faith or are of none. The percentage of Catholic teachers in the school is 46%. There are 230 pupils on roll, with 4 pupils with statements of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)/ Education Health & Care Plans (EHC). The proportion of pupils from ethnic minority groups is well 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. Thirty-one pupils receive the Pupil Premium.

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DFE Number:	213 3610
URN Number:	101143

Headteacher:	Miss Marina Coleman
Chair of Governors:	Mr Patrick Moloney

Date of previous inspection:	10 January 2011
Previous Inspection grades:	Outstanding

<b>Key for inspection grades:</b>	<i>Grade 1</i>	<i>Outstanding</i>
	<i>Grade 2</i>	<i>Good</i>
	<i>Grade 3</i>	<i>Requires improvement</i>
	<i>Grade 4</i>	<i>Causing Concern</i>

## **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 previous inspection report had no recommendations for the school and was graded outstanding in all areas. However, the school has continued to seek ways to develop and strengthen their Catholicity and have fully embedded the chosen RE programme, with specific links to the Curriculum Directory. They have developed prayer life, links with the local parish, the study of other faiths and links with their partner school in Nepal. Since the last inspection the role of religious education coordinator has been distributed throughout various levels of leadership ensuring that the role can be given the fullest dedication and time needed for the core subject within the school.

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

**Grade I**

The religious education curriculum is fully compliant with the requirements of the Curriculum Directory and is well delivered through the Agreed Understanding of the Levels of Attainment in religious education. Planning shows teachers understand the requirements of the directory and books evidence the creative approaches such as artwork and drama that are used well to enhance delivery. There is a strong emphasis on children reflecting on the four areas of revelation, which further enhances the children's understanding of the central beliefs that Catholics hold. Teaching on other faiths is well delivered and enhanced by use of outside speakers from the community. The well planned use of resources is relevant and appropriate to meet the needs and challenge to pupils across all phases. Through very high expectations there is a clear and shared vision of the importance of promoting religious literacy among pupils. New staff are provided with a high level of support throughout each section of the programme to make sure that they are secure in all aspects.

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

**Grade I**

Achievement in religious education is outstanding. Teachers accurately and confidently use the Agreed Understandings of the Levels of Attainment. Regular data tracking provides sufficient detail to monitor progress not only across classes but also against other core areas. As a result, attainment in religious education is at least as good, and at times better than in other core subjects. The school moderates internally as well as at deanery and diocesan level. Moderated work is updated regularly. Different groups of pupils make excellent progress in religious education, including those entitled to Pupil Premium funding. Teachers have high expectations and stretch pupils of all abilities through differentiated tasks. Aspirational mottos, such as, 'Resilience' displayed across the school, encourage pupils to consistently aim high. Pupil books and displays demonstrate that pupils value religious education and are proud of their achievements.

## **The quality of teaching**

### **Grade I**

Teaching is never less than good and often outstanding. This ensures pupils make excellent progress over time and learn exceptionally well. Teaching seen across the school and evidenced in workbooks and the school's own moderation is never less than good with many examples of outstanding practice. In Early Years Foundation Stage practical activities and well scaffolded tasks keep children highly motivated and engaged. Support staff play a critical role in lessons, ensuring that pupils with additional needs are well catered for. Reference to scripture is used very effectively to engage pupils' interest and enhance learning. Clear and consistent marking across the school, with constructive feedback, ensures that higher levels of attainment in religious education are evident throughout the school. Very subtle higher order questioning is used to stretch pupils' knowledge and understanding and this allows them to reflect on the deeper significance and of religious belief and practice. Pupils really enjoy their RE lessons. A pupil in Year 3 said, "I really love RE lessons, they help me learn more about God." Planning is very systematic and detailed to take account of pupils' prior learning. The impact on the pupils' progress is evident in their books and in the lessons observed. Resources throughout the school are excellent, creative and imaginative and there is detailed attention to vocabulary and language development.

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

### **Grade I**

The leadership and management of religious education is outstanding. This is due to the creative leadership of the head teacher and her commitment to excellence in all areas of religious education. Leadership at all levels within the school community share a dynamic and creative vision for religious education, which has ensured that religious education continues to be a strength of the school. In recognition of the importance of the subject, the head teacher has mentored new religious education subject leaders until they are confident to lead the subject. They are well equipped to play a leading role in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning of religious education and evaluating the Catholic life of the school making the most of training opportunities provided by the diocese including regular attendance at religious education subject leader meetings. Carefully planned training, teachers' outstanding subject knowledge and on-going assessment techniques ensure there is an excellent level of challenge for the more able pupils. This ensures that all staff are fully able to support pupils in religious education lessons. The school leadership is fully committed to enabling all staff to obtain the CCRS qualification and support them in this process. The detailed school improvement plan clearly identifies issues for action and evaluates current provision for religious education. Governors are fully committed to the school and know it well. All staff new to Catholic schools and newly qualified teachers, are well guided and supported to deliver highly effective religious education for all pupils.

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

- Ensure that guidance to parents about homework, including the investment in Wednesday Word, allows it to be accessed at age appropriate levels by all pupils.

## **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 previous inspection report had no recommendations for the school and was graded outstanding in all areas. However, the school has continued to seek ways to develop and strengthen their Catholicity and as a school have continued to set targets for themselves. They have further developed international links with Nepal, reviewed their creative curriculum and linked it to global issues with more parental involvement. The school has developed an exciting and comprehensive website improving links with the local community and celebrating the Catholic life of the school.

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

**Grade I**

The school fully recognises religious education as a core subject, which is given the highest priority. This is reflected in the generous budget devoted to religious education and the excellent quality of resources available to staff. Across the school at least 10% of curriculum time is devoted to religious education, which is planned, tracked and monitored with rigour. Teachers have excellent subject knowledge and are very well supported by the RE leader. All teachers, including those new to the school and non-Catholic, are being well supported in learning about the teaching of religious education. The accommodation is maintained to a very high standard with an imaginative landscaped prayer garden as part of the roof top playground. Displays and prayer focus areas are prominent and of good quality around the school. Religious education contributes widely to pupils' personal, spiritual, social, moral and cultural development.

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

**Grade I**

Prayer and worship are clearly central to life at St Vincent's, including daily class worship with special prayer bags. There is independent child led worship which is planned and led by pupils along with worship activities during lunch in the prayer garden, led by the school pupil chaplains. Pupils experience a richness of Catholic tradition of prayer, worship and the celebration of the Eucharist by celebrating whole school Masses at key times throughout the liturgical year. Family Mass occurs regularly at the parish church; teachers, pupils and parents help prepare and take an active part in the Sunday Family Mass with the wider parish community. During the inspection a whole school assembly focused on the special devotion to Mary in the upcoming Marian procession. Pupils were confident in sharing the meaning behind the recent giving of an immaculate medal to all pupils and the singing of traditional hymns to honour Mary. Pupils are regularly involved in planning pupil led class worship and recently Year 6 arranged and planned activities for a whole school Spirituality morning. The recently introduced meditation sessions are a favourite part of the children's day as they find it a good way to have moments of calm and time to talk to God. The school has embraced the Year of Mercy and is providing opportunities to celebrate it in many ways.

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

### **Grade I**

The school has a dynamic and creative understanding of its call to 'human flourishing' and as a community recognises its duty to follow its Vincentian heritage in its charitable efforts on behalf of the poor. There is a strong commitment to supporting those in need and the children understand that this is an important part of their Catholic faith and living out the school mission statement. Pupils are committed to supporting fundraising efforts and are actively involved in planning these events. They actively engage in acts of service and have an excellent understanding of why they are doing it. During World Week where pupils learnt about the lack of education within their world and empowered by this knowledge pupils created awareness of these issues in a variety of ways from organising a sponsored run to creating art work to highlight the key issues. There are many opportunities for the children to serve: including Pupil Chaplains, Trust buddies, Green Team, School Council, Playground Patrol and the Wallace Collection Young Curators panel. There are many opportunities for children to develop and celebrate their gifts and talents through assemblies, rewards and extra-curricular activities, in particular music and singing which is a notable strength of the school.

## **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 I**

The very well established links through the partnership of home, school and parish, is evident and described by one of the parents who met the inspectors, the 'Catholic ethos of the school is superb.' The partnership with parents is strong and typified by the very high parental participation at school events. The annual Religious Education Open Morning where parents and governors are invited to school to find out about the Catholic life of the school and have the opportunity to observe the teaching of religious education is indicative of the priority placed on the subject within the curriculum. The parish of St James and the strong relationship with the parish priest, who is a regular visitor, are evident when talking to both pupils and parents, who value his involvement within the school and community. The excellent and very informative website keeps parents up to date on all aspects of the school, on a weekly basis. The headteacher's skills and expertise are used throughout the diocese to support other schools.

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

### **Grade I**

The effectiveness of the leadership and management in developing and promoting the Catholic life of the school is outstanding in the way in which Catholicity permeates all areas of school life. The governing body works very closely with the headteacher to ensure the whole school community shares the clear vision of Catholic education. The headteacher and senior leaders are excellent role models who lead by example. They ensure that all staff participates fully in the religious life of the school, which includes class Masses, religious assemblies, religious events and class visits. The leadership understands very well the school's strengths and development needs through their thorough and accurate self-evaluation. Governors fulfil well their responsibilities and are influential in determining its Catholic direction.

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

- Sustain the rich and vibrant Catholic community on offer to all who belong to St Vincent's by providing even further opportunities for pupils to contribute to the development of liturgical and sacramental life of the school.