

St Joseph's Catholic Infant School

Waverley Avenue, Wembley, Middlesex, London HA9 6TA



Date of inspection by Westminster Diocese:

19 May 2017

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

A. Classroom religious education is outstanding

- The content of the religious education curriculum fully meets the requirements of the Religious Education Curriculum Directory.
- Standards of written work in religious education are exceptionally high in this school. Speaking and listening skills for an infant school are equally of a very high order.
- Attainment of children on entry to the early years is broadly in line with the national average. Pupils leave at the end of Year 2 with skills, knowledge and level of attainment of a very high standard and well above the national average. Therefore progress in religious education is judged to be outstanding.
- The progress for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) was at times remarkable to analyse and observe. The higher attaining pupils are equally being stretched and challenged via highly effective teacher questioning and work that is well matched to their abilities.
- All teaching in religious education is judged to be at least good or better and this leads to the rapid progress that pupils of all abilities make. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils and are constantly seeking to further deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- The executive headteacher sets high expectations for her staff and challenges them effectively to meet these high standards. She is being well supported by a strong religious education leadership team.
- The governing body is being well led by a committed chair of governors and the parish priest also plays a key role in the work of the governing body.

B. The Catholic life of the school is outstanding

- The leadership of the executive headteacher and her senior leadership team in promoting the Catholic life of the school is outstanding.
- 10% of curriculum time is devoted to the teaching of religious education across all key stages and therefore meets the requirement of the Bishops' Conference.
- Prayer and worship are central to the life of this school and are judged to be outstanding. There are extensive opportunities within the school for daily collective worship and prayer.
- The celebration of the Eucharist is carefully planned both in school and in the local parish church and many other sacramental celebrations are offered at key times throughout the liturgical year. Pupils' spiritual development is carefully fostered in this school.
- The school genuinely understands the call to 'human flourishing'. Pupils are given a wide range of opportunities to develop and celebrate their gifts and talents both in school and also in the wider world at large. Their knowledge of the messages and teaching of Pope Francis is exemplary.
- Parents are very supportive of the Catholic life of the school as evidenced by a questionnaire sent out during this inspection and by the school's own regular surveys. One parent said the school was 'more like a family'.
- The governing body make a major contribution to the work and Catholic dimension of the school. Governors are rigorous in their strategic leadership, through their challenge and support to the leadership team.

A. Classroom Religious Education

What has improved since the last inspection?

The main area of improvement has been in the rigorous assessment systems now being used in Key Stage 1.

The content of classroom religious education is outstanding

The content of the religious education (RE) curriculum at St Joseph's Catholic Infant School fully meets the requirements of the Religious Education Curriculum Directory. The curriculum is closely tracked and planned by the religious education leadership team. It is both comprehensive and rigorous and gives the infant pupils an outstanding opportunity to begin to learn about their Catholic faith. The programmes of study for each key stage and in provision for the under-fives, illustrates where, when and how key aspects of content are taught and assessed. Lessons are being carefully planned and resources such as Bibles are being used effectively. Pupils are taught about other faiths in an age appropriate manner. The structure, planning and content of this school's RE curriculum is very thorough but is lacking in opportunities to enhance creativity in the subject. Aspects of the wider curriculum such as music, art and dance need further development here.

Pupil achievement in religious education is outstanding

Attainment on entry to the Nursery Year reflects a wide range of abilities and communication and language skills. Attainment overall on entry is broadly in line with the national average. Pupils leave at the end of Year 2 with skills, knowledge and level of attainment of a very high standard and well above the national average. Therefore progress is judged to be outstanding. Attainment of pupils recorded by the school and scrutinised by the inspectors equally confirmed that overall attainment is exceptionally high and therefore judged to be outstanding. Standards of written work are exceptionally high in this school. Speaking and listening skills for an infant school are equally high. However opportunities are missed in developing creativity in pupils through music, art and dance, for example. Children enter the Nursery to an environment that is beautifully laid out and is very rich in opportunities to learn and prosper. Children in the early years also quickly acquire a wide vocabulary and learn the names of Jesus, Mary and Pope Francis. The school is currently trialling an assessment system for RE in the nursery. Children in the reception class only start to practise their writing and recording skills in RE after a term and a half. This needs to be reviewed to ensure best practice. Progress is rapid in Key Stage 1 for all groups and for all abilities. This RE inspection particularly focused on pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and the most able pupils. The progress for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, SEND was at times remarkable to analyse and observe. The higher attaining pupils are equally being stretched and challenged via highly effective teacher questioning and work that is matched to their abilities.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

The quality of teaching in this infant school is outstanding. All teaching is judged to be at least good or better and this leads to the rapid progress that pupils of all abilities make. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils and are constantly seeking to further deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding. This happens constantly during lessons and also is evidenced by the informative marking that teachers employ in correcting the pupils work. Pupils in Year 2 in particular know how to improve their work and the systems employed by the school are effective and age appropriate. Planning is thorough and ensures that pupils of all abilities are able to engage with the lessons.

Teachers are all Catholic, clearly have excellent subject knowledge of RE and are committed to delivering a high standard of education. This is most clearly in evidence when one observes teachers using high order questions with pupils. This is a regular feature of lessons for all ages in this school. Support staff also play a key role in pupils' learning for all abilities. Behaviour of pupils in lessons, playgrounds and all around the school is equally outstanding. Homework is regularly provided and is appreciated by both parents and the pupils as it gives a chance for families to collaborate together and deepen their children's understanding.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of religious education is outstanding

The leadership of religious education is outstanding in this school. The executive headteacher sets high expectations for her staff and challenges them effectively to meet these high standards. She is very well supported by a strong RE leadership team which includes the associate headteacher and the subject leader who all play a key role in promoting religious education within the school. There are systematic structures in place to rigorously assess RE as a subject in this infant school. The school is mostly accurate in its own self-evaluation. The school is very active in moderating pupils work at a deanery level and staff attend all diocesan meetings relevant to the development of RE. The documentation and record keeping of the school is comprehensive and is of a high standard. Training and professional development for staff is plentiful and available to all staff as is seen by the large number of staff studying for or already possessing a higher Catholic teaching qualification. The governing body is being well led by a committed chair of governors and the parish priests also plays a key role in the work of the governing body.

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

- Review the current assessment arrangements for children in the nursery.
- Provide Reception class pupils with more time and opportunities to practise their mark making and early writing skills in the Autumn and Spring terms.

B. The Catholic life of the school

What has improved since the last inspection?

There were no areas for improvement in the previous report. The school itself has highlighted the increased opportunities for parents to participate in acts of worship as a key development.

The place of religious education as the core of the curriculum

is outstanding

10% of curriculum time is devoted to the teaching of religious education across all key stages every week. Teachers have very good subject knowledge of religious education in accordance with the Religious Education Curriculum Directory for England and Wales. This is evidenced in planning and the delivery of the curriculum. Other faiths such as Judaism and Hinduism, are studied in appropriate detail and also for the correct amount of time. Pupils keep separate folders to record their work in this area. Large numbers of staff either have or are working towards higher level qualifications in Catholic education. The school allocates a very large budget every year to enhance the teaching about the Catholic faith. RE resources, especially books are plentiful and have been carefully chosen to cover all areas of the curriculum. Staff development training is carefully planned for and is extensive in this school. Recent training has focused on the assessment and levelling of pupils' work.

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

is outstanding

Prayer and worship are central to the life of this school and are judged to be outstanding. There are extensive opportunities within the school for daily collective worship and prayer. The children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are quickly introduced to the prayer life of the school in a sensitive and age appropriate way. All classes have prayer areas, a prayer focus and appropriate liturgical colours. Displays of work and around the school are of a high standard. There are some very nice examples of stained glass windows and murals produced by the pupils. Children at all ages and all key stages play an active part in prayer and liturgy in a wide variety of ways. In every class, even in the infants there are two nominated prayer leaders who have an active and leading role in both choosing and leading prayers. Evidence of a highly developed prayer life in the school is also clear from the school's website. The infant classes can use the dedicated prayer room set up in the junior school. Prayer and worship are integral to the daily life of the school. The celebration of the Eucharist is carefully planned both in school and in the local parish church and many other sacramental celebrations are offered at key times throughout the liturgical year. Pupils' spiritual development is carefully fostered in this school. Parents are invited in to special focus events such the school's "Be Spirited" week or Mercy Pilgrimages. During this inspection a group of parents were saying the Rosary as it was the month of May.

The commitment to the Common Good – service and social justice

is outstanding

This area of school mission is equally outstanding. The school genuinely understands the call to 'human flourishing' in its broadest sense. Pupils are given a wide range of opportunities to develop and celebrate their gifts and talents both in school and also in the wider world at large. Some of the local links of which the school is proud of are with Cafod, Catholic Children's Society and Mission Together. The school also supports more secular group such as Marie Curie and hosts Macmillan coffee mornings. Year 2 pupils have visited a local Temple and celebrate British and

Gospel values via assemblies and displays. Pupils are developing understanding of some of the moral issues of the day and are eager and enthusiastic to do good works in the world, even at this early age. The messages of Pope Francis are shared widely across this infant school.

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

is outstanding

This area is also a strength of the school. The school is committed to partnerships and good relationships with parents, local schools, the parish and the Diocese of Westminster. The RE leadership team attend all relevant diocesan events and the school regularly participates in deanery meetings and training. Links with the local parish church are very strong and the parish priests are frequent and welcome visitors to the school, playing a key role in the Catholic life of the community. Links with parents are very effective and some new prayer initiatives are now bearing fruit. There is an active Parents Focus Group and Schools' Association that keep parents well informed. Assemblies regularly focus on the Gospel reading for the Sunday Mass. Parents are very supportive of the Catholic life of the school as evidenced by a questionnaire sent out during this inspection and by the school's own regular surveys. One parent said the school was "more like a family".

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

is outstanding

The leadership of the executive headteacher and her senior leadership team in promoting the Catholic life of the school is outstanding. Their vision to promote the Catholic life of the school is shared by leaders and staff at all levels. The governing body, led by an experienced and knowledgeable chair, make a major contribution to the work and Catholic dimension of the school. Governors are rigorous in their strategic leadership, through their challenge to the leadership team, while also providing highly effective support to secure the implementation of their plans. The schools' own self-evaluation is both informative and rigorous and is mostly accurate. Pupils own voices are very strong in this infant school and pupils loved talking about their school and were rightly proud and happy to be attending such a caring and nurturing Catholic school.

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

- Implement the plans for Caritas In Action across the school.
- Develop further the values based curriculum to support and promote Both Gospel values and fundamental British values in an age appropriate manner.

Information about this school

- The school is a two and a third form entry Catholic Infant school in the locality of Brent.
- The school serves the parishes of St Joseph's, Wembley and St Erconwald's, Wembley.
- The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholic is 100 %.
- The proportion of pupils who are from other Christian denominations is 0 % and from other faiths is 0 %.
- The percentage of Catholic teachers in the school is 100 %.
- The number of teachers with a Catholic qualification is seven.
- There are 19 % of pupils in the school who have special educational needs and/or disabilities of whom 6 have statements of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)/ Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP).
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well above average.
- The number of pupils speaking English as an Additional Language is well above average.
- There is a well below average rate of families claiming free school meals.
- 26 pupils receive the Pupil Premium (10.1%).

Department for Education Number	304 3509
Unique Reference Number	101546
Local Authority	Brent

Type of school	Infant Primary
School category	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils	3-6
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on roll	258
The appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Fabiola Marini
Headteacher	Mrs Amanda Whelan
Telephone number	0208 903 6032
Website	www.sjinf.brent.sch.uk
Email address	admin@sjinf.brent.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	5 th November 2009
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 there were 3 learning walks and 11 lessons or part lessons were observed.
- The inspectors attended 1 assembly 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 Team

The inspectors are appointed by the Archbishop.

Mr Sean Flood	Lead Inspector
Mrs Helen Lines	Associate Inspector
Mr Daniel Keane	Associate Inspector
Mr Michael Ross	Associate Inspector

Diocesan inspection has four grades:

- outstanding
- good
- requires improvement
- causing concern

Published by the Diocese of Westminster

This publication is available at: <http://rcdow.org.uk/education/schools>

Vaughan House
46 Francis Street,
London
SW1P 1QN

T: 020 7798 9005
E: education@rcdow.org.uk
W: <http://rcdow.org.uk/education>