



Diocese of Westminster

St Anselm's Roman Catholic Primary School

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**Canonical Inspection under Canon 806 on behalf of the Archbishop of Westminster
and inspection of Denominational Education under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005**

Date of inspection: 5 July 2012
Date of previous inspection: 25 November 2008

Reporting Inspector: Mrs S Nolan

Introduction

The inspector would like to thank the governors, headteacher, staff, pupils and parents for their co-operation over the conduct of the inspection. The inspector spent a day in school, visited six part lessons, joined the school in an assembly and carried out several interviews with school staff, governor and chaplain as well as talking to pupils. Other evidence was gathered from scrutiny of a sample of pupils' work, observation of pupils in and out of lessons and the examination of school documents. The school regularly canvases parents' views and these provide a very positive evaluation of the school.

The Inspection of St Anselm's Roman Catholic Primary School, was carried out under the requirements of the Education Act 2005, and in accordance with the Framework and Schedule 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.

Description of School

The school is a one-form entry primary in the Local Authority of Ealing. It is situated in an area that is very diverse culturally and mainly serves one parish, that of St Anselm's, Southall. There are 249 pupils on roll of which 80% are baptised Catholics. The proportion of pupils who are from other Christian denominations is approximately 14%, and from other Faiths 7%.

One pupil has a statement of special educational need and a below average proportion of the pupils are designated by the school as having special educational needs. The proportion of pupils from ethnic minority groups is well above average. The number of pupils speaking English as an Additional Language is also well above average. There is a well -above average proportion of families claiming free school meals. Just under half of the staff members are Catholics and approximately 40% hold the CCRS or other Catholic qualification..

Key for inspection grades.

Grade 1: Outstanding;*

Grade 1: Very Good;

Grade 2: Good;

Grade 3: Satisfactory;

Grade 4: Inadequate.

A. Curriculum 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?

How well does the content of curriculum religious education meet the requirements of the Curriculum Directory?

Grade 2

Religious Education is at the heart of the school and is particularly well supported by the current senior team. Other staff, including those who are not Catholics, also greatly value the positive impact of the ethos generated on the spiritual, moral, cultural and social development of the pupils. The Curriculum Directory increasingly forms the basis for the content delineated in the scheme of work. With the publication of the new Curriculum Directory, the school has set aside planning time to adjust its current scheme of work. A good range of visual and interactive resources support the delivery of curriculum Religious Education so that it meets the requirements of the Curriculum Directory. The programmes of study and schemes of work for the Early Years Foundation Stage, and both Key Stages 1 and 2 illustrate clearly how and when the Curriculum Directory content is taught and assessed. There is an on-going good attempt to link the content directly with children's experiences and needs. The diocesan initiative to promote the Year of Faith is reflected in the school's well-considered efforts to plan for the coming academic year so that it can live up to what is expected of a Catholic school.

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

Grade 2

From a good start in the Nursery, pupils typically achieve soundly in Religious Education at both Key Stages 1 and 2. Their attainment in Religious Education is similar to their performance in English and is regularly at least average. Pupils make steady progress throughout their time in the school. Their attainment in lessons and in their written work is also average. Pupils are enthusiastic, keen to learn and take pride in their work. Assessed work is increasingly well tracked against diocesan attainment targets but the school has yet to compile exemplars for staff against which to moderate the work of their pupils. The school takes seriously its target setting and tracking of Religious Education and monitors progress as rigorously as in other key curricular areas through robust systems and procedures put in place this academic year.

The quality of teaching

Grade 2

The school is working assiduously to model effective teaching in Religious Education. The profile of staff in the school means that currently around half are Catholics or have a Catholic qualification in Religious Education. The school is aware of the challenge of supporting the non-Catholic staff who have responsibility for teaching Religious Education. Three further members of staff will study for a Catholic qualification in the new academic year. The development of staff's subject knowledge is a priority for the school.

Teaching seen during the inspection was mainly well planned to engage the pupils who showed keenness and enthusiasm in their work. This was well demonstrated in a session for Nursery children where the lively storytelling and the good use of artefacts enabled the children to understand at their own levels the message of the account of Zaccheus and his efforts to see Jesus.

The deepening of pupils' understanding year by year is managed well through the spiral of themes and shared planning across the year groups. However, there are still classes where the work reflects good provision for the pupils' spiritual and moral development without any deep reference to the traditions or teaching of the Church.

In the part lessons observed during the inspection, warm respectful relationships between staff and pupils, and between pupils, allowed children to express their feelings, pray together and appreciate the different talents among their peers. Assessment procedures are improving rapidly as staff are now guided effectively as to how work should be marked to help pupils improve their work. However, because of the on-going staff training in target setting and levelling work, it is not always clear in written tasks that pupils know how well they are attaining as opposed to the effort they have made.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of religious education

Grade 2

The leadership and management of Religious Education is good. There is a strong focus on the school's Catholic mission, on improving Religious Education and setting high standards. The senior team are currently providing excellent support to the coordinator, particularly in relation to the planning and assessment for Key Stage 2. The staff have a shared understanding of the school's mission statement. There is a real drive to ensure that pupils achieve as well as they can. Regular monitoring procedures are now in place to ensure quality with frequent classroom visits and scrutiny of children's work. There is a determination to improve teaching and learning through a range of professional development activities, particularly subject knowledge enhancement. The subject leader works collaboratively with diocesan personnel, with the Chaplain and members of the governing body. The impact of this close collaboration is reflected in the carefully planned liturgical celebrations. The subject leader is aware that assessment procedures require further development to inform more fully future target setting and progress tracking.

What has improved in curriculum religious education since the last inspection and what should the school do to further improve in curriculum religious education?

At the last inspection, the school was asked to improve assessment practice, and provide more opportunities for pupils to be more actively involved in planning liturgical celebrations.. There have been significant improvements in assessment practice. Effective tracking systems are now in place across all phases. Marking much more consistently provides students with opportunities to reflect on their work although moderated levelling of work is still at an early stage of development. Besides this, the scheme of work has been developed to make explicit links to the Curriculum Directory. Pupils are much more actively involved in the liturgy and in celebrations across the year. This was well demonstrated in the peace assembly where the pupils not only led prayers and singing but also participated in the release of peace balloons.

The school has agreed the following areas for improvement in curriculum Religious Education:

- develop even further the school's assessment procedures by providing for exemplar portfolios that empower staff to assess pupils' on-going performance and underpin the validity of the school's tracking processes
- provide further extensive support for all staff, especially for those teaching Religious Education to deepen their knowledge and understanding of

Catholic faith, tradition and of the scriptures.

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

Overall Grade: 2

Curriculum Religious Education is good overall in developing pupils' religious literacy. The implementation of the Curriculum Directory is developing well and supports provision at each Key Stage. Pupils have a sound knowledge of the religious education curriculum and understand well how it must be witnessed in daily life. They are encouraged to reflect on what they believe and why they believe. Pupils' achievement is average but they are not yet really clear as to their targets and Levels of Attainment and in how to make the best progress. There are now robust structures in place to support teaching and very good senior leadership support for the coordinator. The shared leadership between senior staff and the coordinator communicates well to the staff a shared vision and a desire to be even better in providing a Catholic education for the children of St Anselms. Self-evaluation is increasingly rigorous and accurate.

B. The school as a Catholic Community

How well do pupils experience the richness of a Catholic way of living and believing through all areas of school life?

The place of religious education as the core of the curriculum - time, resources, budget

Grade I

The school fully meets the requirements of time of the Curriculum Directory. Pupils spend 10% of the available curricular time in Religious Education. The school rises well to the challenge of managing with over 50% of non-catholic staff and rejoices in their willingness and commitment to engage with the school's Catholic mission. Religious Education also benefits from a generous budget that matches that of other core areas. The priority of its Catholic ethos is seen in all classes with their prayer tables in liturgical colours and in the many high quality displays and artefacts around the school. The senior leadership team, very well supported by governors, offers very good support and guidance to the coordinator in promoting the religious life of the school and the religious education of the students. Staff, whatever their backgrounds, receive thorough induction and training on the Catholic practice of the school but this has not yet been fully coordinated into a handbook of guidance, a further task senior managers plan for the coming year. Support for liturgical events is strong and all staff appreciate the spiritual opportunities within the school.

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

Grade I

Prayer and worship are central to the life of the school. Liturgical events and daily prayers reflect the rhythm of the Church's calendar. Masses, both in the parish and on-site, follow a regular rota. Pupils are fully involved in planning such occasions both in the school and in the adjacent church of St Anselm. Regular assemblies, often led by senior leaders, emphasise the importance of the Catholic life of the school and focus on worship and reflection around liturgical themes. At the leaving Mass for Year 6, pupils were encouraged to go forward in the spirit of St Anselms through the presentation of individual crosses. All pupils have regular opportunities for the Sacrament of Reconciliation highlighted in both Advent and Lent. The school provides very good opportunities to promote the pupils' spiritual development through reflection and discussion at their own levels of what it means to be a practising Catholic. There is sensitive and well-considered provision for those students of other Christian and non-Christian faiths, none of whom opt out of any religious lesson or activity.

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

Grade I

The school's commitment to action for social justice is very good. Charity initiatives include Mary's Meals, CAFOD, Children in Need to name a few. Opportunities to serve others develop throughout pupils' school life. Pupils are encouraged to give freely of their talents as well as goods. Pupils are involved in links with a range of schools, including local schools of other denominations. Pupils, at their own levels, are very aware of the moral and social issues around them and are keen to share their views, listen to others and reflect on the impact of their actions and those of others.

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

There is a very strong commitment among senior leaders and the majority of staff to the school's mission as a Catholic institution within the Archdiocese of Westminster. Leaders and managers at all levels along with governors and the chaplain are regularly involved in diocesan events and meetings. Pupils mainly come from the local parish and see themselves as part of a 'big family' to quote Year 6., Attendance at deanery meetings, attendance at parish events and invitations to school events to the parish, all contribute to forming very good links between the school and its partner parish. Parents are involved in the life of the schools through a range of mechanisms, not least of which are the family learning and the home visits for the pre-nursery children.

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

Grade I

Members of the governing body and senior leaders ensure that Catholic life is central to the school. At recruitment, the nature of the commitment required within a Catholic school is made clear to staff and the willingness to contribute actively to the ethos is an important consideration. As a result, staff participation in the religious life of the school is willingly given. The parish priest, as chaplain, provides regular support and guidance as to what it means to be a member of this Catholic family of St Anselm's. Guided by the headteacher, senior school leaders have a clear understanding of their strategic role in sustaining and furthering its Catholic ethos, its place in the community, and its role in preparing children well for the next stage of their education.

What has improved since the last inspection and what should the school do to further develop the Catholic life of the school?

Since the last inspection, the school has made improvements in the areas highlighted in the previous report. Pupils play an increasingly active part in liturgical celebrations, in the planning of Mass and assemblies. They have many good opportunities for involvement in prayer and traditional Catholic practice.

The school has agreed the following area for development and improvement:

- develop all staff's understanding of the liturgical calendar through continuing professional development and through developing a handbook of good practice.

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

Religious Education is increasingly valued and recognised as the core of the curriculum both by adults and by many of the pupils. This is demonstrated in the priority given to the allocation of curriculum time, resources, staffing and accommodation. Worship and prayer are central to the life of the school and offer pupils a rich experience of Catholic tradition. Liturgical celebrations are well linked to the Church's calendar and pupils play a very active part in their preparation and planning. The school is committed to improving all facets of its provision. Governors are strong supporters of the Catholic ethos of the school and offer very good support to the leadership of the school as well as to the religious education department. Senior leaders are deeply committed to ensuring that there are sufficient Catholic staff to encourage the Catholic ethos of the school and that those teaching Religious Education are imbued with the Church's teaching and traditions.