



Diocese of Westminster

St Francis de Sales Catholic Primary School

Brereton Road, Tottenham, London N17 8DA

Telephone: 0208 808 4432

e-mail address: head@federation.sfds.tottenham.sch.uk

DFE Number: 309 3501

URN Number: 102149

Headteacher: Dr J. Lane

Chair of Governors: Mr U. Jacobs

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: 25th March 2013

Date of previous inspection: 23rd April 2010

Reporting Inspector: Mrs P Brannigan

Associate Inspector: Mrs J. Goring

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 twenty lessons, attended one Stations of the Cross liturgy and carried out six 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 Francis de Sales Catholic Primary School Tottenham 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 recently amalgamated three form entry primary school with nursery in Tottenham in the local authority of Haringey. The school serves the parish of the same name. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholic is 93%. The proportion of pupils who are from other Christian denominations is 7%.

There are 685 pupils on roll, with 11 pupils who have a statement of Special Educational Need. 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 rate of families claiming free school meals.

Key for inspection grades:

Grade 1: Outstanding;*
Grade 1: Very Good;
Grade 2: Good;
Grade 3: Requires improvement;
Grade 4: Causing Concern.

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

Overall Grade: 2

The overall effectiveness of curriculum religious education is good and meets the requirements of the Curriculum Directory which forms the basis for the programmes of study supported by the 'Year of Faith' units. The quality of teaching and pupils' attainment and progress are generally good. Pupils make good progress through the challenge and expectations of their teachers. In recent times effective structures have been put in place to ensure quality teaching and monitoring. Self-evaluation is accurate and indicates a good knowledge of the school and development areas for religious education. Teachers generally have sound subject knowledge and there are good structures in place to support new members of staff. There is a commitment to on-going professional development to enable staff to improve and develop their teaching of religious education. The new headteacher, the deputy and subject leader, give the subject a high priority which permeates all aspects of the life of the school.

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

There were three areas for development in the last inspection report. These were: to take forward plans to develop a tracking system to better inform the school development plan; fully establish portfolios of levelled work to support the moderation of pupils' attainment; to provide further training for staff to encourage the creative use of resources. School staff now use resources in a creative manner and there are current plans to further develop the tracking system and revise the portfolios of pupils' work. While aspects of the previous recommendations have been addressed, the school has rightly recognised further work to be done. To further improve curriculum religious education in the light of the new framework, the school should:

1. Put in place a programme of staff development to ensure all teachers are conversant with the revised Curriculum Directory.
2. Develop the tracking system to ensure all groups of pupils make good progress across the key stages.
3. Embed the Diocesan Agreed Understandings as a means of assessment and levelling of pupils' work.

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

Grade 1

The content of curriculum religious education meets the requirements of the Curriculum Directory. The four strands are used to very good effect and are clearly identified in lesson planning. The school is using the 'Year of Faith' units which are cross referenced to the areas of the Curriculum Directory being covered. Staff are very well supported by the subject leader in their medium term planning. She identifies the links to the Curriculum Directory and the resources used. There is regular monitoring of the curriculum, planning, workbooks and pupil learning. There is evidence of imaginative planning to meet the needs of all groups of pupils.

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

Grade 2

Pupil achievement, attainment and progress in religious education are generally good. Pupils enter the school below the national average and make good progress from Foundation Stage onwards. This has been achieved by careful monitoring, a significant investment in resources, staff training and very good use of support staff. By the end of Key Stage 2 standards generally meet diocesan expectations. Lessons observed provided evidence of very well motivated pupils who are actively engaged in their own learning. There is evidence that pupils are attaining a good standard in knowledge and understanding of religion and are developing an ability to reflect on meaning.

The quality of teaching

Grade 2

The quality of teaching is generally good. Lessons observed across the school during the inspection gave evidence of high teacher expectations for all groups. Teachers generally demonstrate good subject knowledge and use a variety of strategies to engage the full range of ability. Nine teachers hold the CCRS certificate or equivalent. All teachers have good access to in-service training both in house or provided by the Diocese. Pupils make good progress and are encouraged to become independent learners who are able to develop their understanding of scripture and religious concepts. Class teachers use time well and pupils are given opportunities to develop new skills and build on previous learning. Workbooks are very well presented; marking is positive and interactive, with targets set for further improvement. Regular monitoring of teaching is in place followed by discussion and support as necessary. Good assessment procedures have enabled teachers to plan well to meet the needs of all pupils. Parents are able to support their children's learning through invitations to liturgies, assemblies and other events, the 'Wednesday Word' and regular curriculum newsletters.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of religious education

Grade 1

The leadership and management of religious education are very good and have a positive impact on the life of the school. The subject leader is very well supported by the headteacher and all staff. Together they ensure that clear vision and direction for religious education is shared by the whole school community. The mission statement, 'Be the best that you can be and be that well,' is well known by pupils and central to all that is done. School leaders ensure that very good support is given to new teachers and teaching assistants. High expectations for staff and pupils ensure that religious education is at the core of the curriculum. Staff are very well supported in their teaching through in-service training and frequent continued professional development. There is a good range of resources and the learning environment for religious education is very good. Religious education is given priority in the school improvement plan which is detailed and comprehensive. Members of the governing body have shown a willingness to engage in training which has enabled it to become familiar with current developments in religious education. All Eucharistic celebrations are held in the nearby church and the parish priest is invited to school celebrations and events.

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 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 school is very effective in developing pupils' experience in the richness of a Catholic way of living and believing. The leadership and vision of the new headteacher, subject leader and senior staff are instrumental in ensuring that worship and prayer are central to the life of the school and are well planned and resourced. Religious education is valued and recognised as the core of the curriculum. Pupils are encouraged to reach their full potential academically, spiritually and morally by all staff. They are involved in the planning and preparation of liturgies as well as given opportunities to become involved in social justice issues. The governing body includes members who have a strong commitment to the school's vision of itself as a Catholic community. Good links with parents, parish and Diocese demonstrate the school's commitment to partnership and its clear identity as a diocesan Catholic school.

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 infant and junior schools have amalgamated and there has been a high turnover of staff including the headteacher and deputy head. However, the Catholic life of the school has remained central. Led by the headteacher and deputy, the Mission Statement has become well known by pupils and seen as a reflection of the vision and values of the school. Pupils have been given increased opportunities for reflection and meditation as well as more occasions where they can contribute to school and classroom liturgies. All staff have been well supported as the school implements the new Diocesan Framework and the requirements of the Curriculum Directory. To further develop the Catholic life of the school pupils should be made more aware of the importance of the gospel call to justice and service.

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

Grade I

Religious education receives 10% of curriculum time and has the same budget as other core subjects. Resources are good and teaching assistants play a significant role in supporting pupils. There is a very good learning environment through attractive displays in classrooms and other areas of the school. Each classroom has a prayer focus. The leadership team offer strong support in developing and reviewing the quality of religious education. All staff receive in-service support and training relating to the Catholic life of the school. Members of the governing body are receiving training to enable them to provide support in reviewing and developing the place of religious education. The priest from the local parish liaises with the school for a planned programme of masses and liturgies and is invited to celebrations.

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

Grade 1*

The school's provision for prayer and worship is excellent. Pupils are given many opportunities for prayer, meditation and reflection within the Catholic tradition and examples were seen during the inspection. Pupils are enabled to participate and contribute to a wide range of worship. The liturgical year forms the basis for many of the prayer and worship opportunities. During the inspection a powerful interpretation of 'The Way of the Cross' was enacted by all of Key Stage 2 and included prayer, music, drama and gospel readings as pupils moved from class to class. They participated with respect, reverence and enthusiasm. Religious education lessons often include prayers and sometimes end with a simple liturgy. Parish led sacramental preparation is supported by the school. Pupils are engaged in the preparation of liturgies and masses which are part of the school's provision. Their spiritual development is nurtured through religious education which permeates the wider life of the school. The parental questionnaires indicated that parents were very positive about invitations to Masses, liturgies and other school celebrations.

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

Grade 2

The school has a good understanding of the importance of service and support for those in need. Pupils are given a wide range of opportunities to support local and national charities including Cafod, Westminster Catholic Children's Society and Mission Together as well as raising funds to educate a child in Kenya. They support the local Senior Citizens club and the choir sings at local events to raise funds for charities. Conversations with members of the school council and older pupils indicate that they are given many opportunities to support their school including assisting in the playground. They are beginning to grow in their understanding that responding to the call to justice and service is part of being a member of a Catholic community. Behaviour and relationships within the school are very good.

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 1

Governors, headteacher and staff see partnership between parents, school and parish as a central part of the school's understanding of itself with its immediate and wider community. Parish links are good and pupils visit the church frequently for Masses and to deepen their faith and understanding. The school works closely with parents and carers who are appreciative of all that is done to enable their children to develop. There are also very good links with the Diocese through participation in training offered through the Westminster Education Service for both staff and governors. Senior staff attend diocesan conferences and have participated in local and diocesan moderation sessions.

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

Grade I

The leadership of the school is committed to the Church's mission in education and demonstrates this by providing a curriculum with spiritual and moral development at its heart. Headteacher, subject leader, governors, and senior staff ensure that the Catholic life of the school is central to all its work. Pupils are given many opportunities to know the life and teachings of Jesus and the traditions of the Catholic Church. Leaders share a vision of the nature of Catholic education and work with staff, pupils and families to move the school forward. All aspects of school life are underpinned by the mission statement. Each class has an attractive prayer focus and a display area which emphasises the importance of religious education. Governors have a clear understanding of their role in safeguarding and promoting the Catholic life of the school.



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A. Classroom Religious Education

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

Overall Grade 2

How well does the content of classroom religious education meet the requirements of the Curriculum Directory?	Grade 1
Pupil achievement (as well as attainment and progress) in religious education	Grade 2
The quality of teaching	Grade 2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of religious education	Grade 1

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 1

The place of religious education as the core of the curriculum – time, staffing, accommodation, resources, budget	Grade 1
The experience of Catholic worship – prayer and liturgy – for the whole school community	Grade 1
The commitment and contribution to the Common Good –service and social justice.	Grade 2
The 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 1
The effectiveness of the leadership and management in promoting the Catholic life of the school.	Grade 1