

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Lanark Rd, Maida Vale W9 1DF

Date of inspection by Westminster Diocese: 23 November 2016



Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

A. Classroom religious education is good

- The leadership team has worked hard to improve the quality of teaching and learning since the previous inspection.
- The religious education leader is committed to the improvement of teaching and learning and is well supported by the deputy headteacher.
- Staff demonstrate good subject knowledge.
- Teaching is good in most classes and support staff are deployed well to enhance learning.
- Pupils get a good start to their learning in Early Years.
- Pupils are interested in religious education and are eager to share their faith experience.
- Pupils achieve well in religious education however, although pupils attain well, progress is not consistently good across all groups.
- The SEF is mostly accurate and the leadership team support staff through training.

Classroom religious education is not yet outstanding because

- More effective use of progress data is needed across the school.
- In some lessons activities were not sufficiently matched to the needs of the children.
- The most able pupils do not make as much progress as they should. Challenge in lessons is not sufficient to fully develop the religious literacy of pupils.

B. The Catholic life of the school is outstanding

- Leaders and governors lead by example. They clearly demonstrate their firm commitment to the Church's mission in education and are the driving force in the school's commitment to the religious education of the pupils.
- The school mission statement permeates the school and its community.
- Under the strong leadership of the newly appointed headteacher and the religious education subject leader clear plans for further school improvements are in place.
- Pupils increasingly take on responsibilities and participate constructively in the Catholic life of the school. They understand the importance of key celebrations throughout the Church's liturgical year both in school and in the wider parish community.
- Worship is central to the school's commitment to its Catholic faith.
- The school has a dynamic and creative understanding of its call to human flourishing.
- Pupils' work with Mary's Meals, The Passage and St. John's Hospice supports a deeper understanding of the social teachings of the church.
- Pupils clearly articulate their understanding of their call to social justice.
- Parents are overwhelmingly supportive and celebrate all that the school provides for their children.
- The parish priest regularly supports the liturgical and prayer life of the school.

A. Classroom Religious Education

What has improved since the last inspection?

Leaders in the school have worked hard to ensure that all areas from the last inspection have been addressed. The appointment of a new religious education (RE) leader has led to more effective, rigorous and effective self-evaluation and monitoring strategies in order to improve the quality of teaching and its impact on learning and progress across the school. A detailed RE action plan is in place which leaders monitor and evaluate to ensure continuous improvement in RE and also the Catholic life of the school. As a result of monitoring and support, marking is now more informative to pupils and teachers are providing challenge questions to extend and reinforce learning. There has been an increased focus on questioning in RE and support given to teachers to ensure pupils are given opportunities to actively develop their thinking and ideas. Teachers are now encouraging and empowering more active participation of learners and have high expectations of attitudes to learning in RE across the school.

The content of classroom religious education is good

The content of the religious education curriculum fully meets the requirements of the Religious Education Curriculum Directory (RECD). The four areas of study within the Curriculum Directory are covered within the planned units and topics. This includes the coverage throughout the liturgical cycle. The range of cover of the other faiths, including Judaism, Islam and Hinduism, is evident from work on display, in the portfolios, evidence supplied and from discussion with the pupils. Key vocabulary is highlighted very well for pupils to encourage them to talk and write about their knowledge and understanding of their faith. The religious education curriculum is crucial to the pupils' spiritual moral and cultural development giving them models of positive behaviour and relationships as well as specific moral guidance.

Pupil achievement in religious education is good

Achievement in religious education is broadly in line with that for other core subjects. From their starting points, most pupils achieve well in religious education. Data is used to some extent to track pupils' learning but it is not always used effectively and so lead to sufficient challenge. Good achievement is evident where pupils were challenged to think deeply and to reason through a range of strategies. There is some evidence to show creativity in the teaching and learning of RE but this needs to be developed across the school. Pupils are taught about other faiths with evidence of Judaism being taught in an age-appropriate way. Pupils have positive attitudes towards their learning in RE and are eager to share their knowledge and faith. The pupils see RE as a very important part of their day and appreciate its importance in their daily lives. This is supported through displays of religious vocabulary throughout classrooms and common areas across the school. Behaviour in lessons is very good. There is evidence in the books and those books available from the previous academic year, to demonstrate the range of progress in religious education, across the school, from their starting points. More effective use of progress data is needed to ensure that pupils are achieving their full potential and this is an area for further development. Increased moderations are taking place for RE and these are strengthening teachers' interpretation of the agreed understandings and assessment in RE. The school fully participates in both the deanery and diocesan moderation process.

The quality of teaching is good

Teaching and learning of religious education is generally good across the school. Pupils are no longer passive learners, as teachers are now more skilled at ensuring both good questioning and interesting tasks engage all pupils in their learning. Good relationships among pupils and with adults are used positively by teachers to create an atmosphere that promotes learning. In lessons which demonstrated good or better learning, all pupils were engaged because the good subject knowledge of teachers enabled thoughtful planning of a variety of approaches to the topic and range of activities which were well matched to the needs and interests of the pupils. There was good pace and balance between teacher input and pupil activity which took many forms including role-play, talk partners and individual and group work, which was well focused and advanced learning. Differentiation is variable across classes and not always reflected in outcomes and is seen as a further area for development. There are clear expectations in lessons, which supports children and leads to them achieving good outcomes. Pupils demonstrated good attitudes to their learning, including their response to some next steps in their 'green pen' marking process. Pupils are keen to do well, generally apply themselves diligently in RE lessons and work at a good pace. Most pupils seek to produce their best work and are interested in, and enthusiastic about their learning in RE. Pupils say they enjoy being at St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School; they enjoy their RE lessons and speak positively about their teachers and how they are supported in their learning. One pupil stated, 'I love RE lessons and learning more about Jesus and his family.' Support staff are well deployed and are effective in enhancing the learning opportunities for pupils across the school. They are experienced in using their own initiative to engage pupils in active learning in line with the lesson's learning objectives. New and non-Catholic teachers are well supported by the RE leader in the planning and assessment of RE.

The leadership and management of religious education are good

Leadership and management of RE are good. The RE leader has worked hard to ensure that teaching is monitored regularly, evaluated and developmental feedback provided to staff by carrying out regular learning walks and work scrutinies to inform professional development needs. She supports staff well and ensures that professional training is linked to individual staff needs and the school improvement plan. A termly cycle of RE lesson observations is established. This monitoring cycle informs professional development which is provided on a regular basis by the RE leader and by diocesan training. This should now be followed up to ensure that it is having an impact on further improving the quality of teaching and learning. Leadership in the school ensures that religious education is part of staff appraisal and all staff have an RE target. The governing body is kept informed through a combination of reports and visits to the school. Leaders and governors recognise that the educational mission of the Church is at the heart of the school's work. The school leadership is fully committed to enabling all staff to obtain the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies (CCRS) qualification and support them in this process. The RE curriculum receives a budget allocation in line with other core subjects, reflecting its importance to the school.

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

- Implement a robust system for analysing progress data across the school to ensure that all groups are making expected progress.
- Provide appropriately challenging learning experiences through clearly differentiated tasks
- Continue to improve outcomes for all pupils in RE, particularly for the more able.

B. The Catholic life of the school

What has improved since the last inspection?

All areas from the previous inspection have been addressed. The RE leader supported by the deputy headteacher have worked hard to address areas identified at the last inspection. Staff are actively encouraged and supported to attend training and the school is now sending home the 'Wednesday Word' for parental information which is central to supporting liturgy and assembly practice across the school. Pupils are now actively involved in planning and leading worship across the school. The Justice and Peace group along with 'Mass monitors' take great pride in their roles. The very vibrant partnership between the home, school and parish are evident when talking to pupils, staff and governors and through the response to the parental survey.

The place of religious education as the core of the curriculum

is outstanding

Religious education receives its full allocation of 10% of taught time at each key stage. Religious education is evident at the heart of the school and influences the overall quality of provision for this Catholic community. Classrooms and shared spaces reflect the importance of religious education as at the core of the curriculum. The installation of the Mass altar and lectern in the school hall reflect the importance placed by the school on their faith. The parish priest is a welcome and regular visitor to the school supporting both pupils and staff. Senior leaders and governors play a key part in the development of religious education and support the staff well.

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

is outstanding

Pupils and staff live the school's mission statement in their rich daily prayer life. Display boards, religious artefacts and prayer corners all contribute exceptionally well to reminding the school community of the mission of the church. The Eucharist, prayer and worship are central to the life of the school. This is enhanced by the very strong provision of school-based celebrations and complimented by the attendance at the parish church for weekday Mass. The appointment of 'worship monitors' to support the preparation for Mass has ensured that pupils play an active part in liturgical celebrations. The school marks events in the liturgical calendar as a community through attendance at Mass, assemblies and other opportunities for collective worship. Pupil led worship has been embedded across the school and in a Year 3 class pupils were able to demonstrate a reverent and reflective act of worship based on the Wednesday Word gospel reading. Daily prayers in classrooms and in religious education lessons are linked to the Church's calendar but pupils also write their own prayers and relate them to the artefacts and photographs they bring to school. The prayer tables in each classroom reflect the colours of the season but also include the pupils' contribution to the prayer displays. There is a strong partnership with the local parish and the parish priest has supported the school with 'teaching Masses.' This has ensured a deeper understanding of the celebration of the Eucharist and for both pupils and staff.

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

are outstanding

The school's commitment to the Common Good is outstanding. There is a very clear understanding of the underpinning of their actions through the Church's call to justice and peace. 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 support charities locally, national and internationally and understand clearly how this links to their Catholic beliefs. The Peace and Justice group are instrumental in recognising their call to support the church in its mission and can clearly link it to the theology that underpins their faith. A pupil explained that Jesus had said, "whatever you do to the least of my brothers, you do unto me," and that this was why they had a commitment to supporting their chosen charities. Pupils actively engage in acts of service and have an excellent understanding of why they are doing it.

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

is outstanding

St. Joseph's School has excellent links with parents. A very high number of parental questionnaires were returned and almost all were overwhelmingly positive. The partnership with parents is strong and typified by the very high parental participation at school events. Parents have many opportunities to engage and support the school through a variety of activities and celebrations as well as liturgical events. The school participates in all diocesan events by ensuring attendance at the Good Shepherd Mass and were actively involved in the Year of Mercy. The school has excellent links with the local parish and the parish priest has led 'teaching Masses' in school to which parents are invited. During the liturgical seasons pupils take prayer packs home such as the Mary prayer pack, Travelling Crib, and Lenten packs to enhance the home school link. The school website needs to be updated to ensure that parents and the community are able to access information that will enable them to keep up to date with news and information to support their children. The school participates in diocesan training and follows all diocesan recommendations on the Curriculum Directory.

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

is outstanding

The effectiveness of the leadership and management in developing and promoting the Catholic life of the school is outstanding in the way that Catholicity permeates all areas of school life. The governing body works very closely with senior leaders to ensure the whole school community shares the clear vision of Catholic education. The senior leaders are excellent role models who lead by example. Leaders of the school set performance management objectives for all staff that are focused on the Catholic life of the school and the religious education of the pupils. These targets reflect the priority that the leaders and governors give to the Catholic life and teaching of RE within the school. 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. Governors fulfil their responsibilities and are influential in determining its Catholic direction.

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

- Update the school website to ensure that information is more easily accessible to the whole school community.
- Continue to support staff in obtaining CCRS
- Continue to revise and update the school SEF to ensure it reflects accurately the current school strengths and areas for development.

Information about this school

- The school is a one and a half form entry Catholic primary school in the locality of Maida Vale.
- The school serves the parish of Our Lady's, Maida Vale.
- The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholic is 99.3 %.
- The proportion of pupils who are from other Christian denominations is 0.6%.
- The percentage of Catholic teachers in the school is 60 %.
- There are 26 pupils in the school with special educational needs or disabilities of whom 8 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 below 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.
- 21 pupils receive the Pupil Premium (7 %).

Department for Education Number	2133472
Unique Reference Number	101133
Local Authority	Westminster

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils	3 -11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on roll	289
The appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Andrew Heffernan
Headteacher	Mrs Violet Richardson
Telephone number	020 7286 3518
Website	www.stjosephsschool.org.uk
Email address	head@stjosephsschool.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	18 September 2014
Grades from previous inspection:	
Classroom religious education	Requires improvement
The Catholic life of the school	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 10 lessons or part lessons were observed.
- The inspectors attended 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 Team

The inspectors are appointed by the Archbishop.

Mrs Ann Staunton

Ms Evelyn Ward

Mrs Florence Collins

Lead Inspector

Associate Inspector

Associate Inspector

Diocesan inspection has four grades:

- outstanding
- good
- requires improvement
- causing concern

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