

# St Margaret Clitherow Catholic Primary School

Quanton Street, Neasden NW10 0BG



Date of inspection by Westminster Diocese: 25 November 2016

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### A. Classroom religious education is good

- Religious education informs all aspects of the school's life and strongly reflects the school's mission statement.
- Good systems are in place to make sure that the teaching of religious education meets the needs of the children alongside the requirements of the Curriculum Directory.
- Teaching is at least good in all classes and staff plan lessons which are adapted to the needs of their classes.
- Children make good progress during their time at the school, especially given that many of them have a low baseline on entry.
- Lessons use a variety of different approaches to learning including drama and art in order to engage the enthusiasm of all learners.
- Homework clearly links with classwork and helps to inform parents of the learning taking place at school.
- Leaders support the staff well and expect the highest standards from them.
- Pupils' have an exemplary attitude to their learning which helps them make the most of every opportunity they are given.

### Classroom religious education is not yet outstanding because

- A new emphasis on marking is beginning to be take effect but needs to be more closely linked to moving children onto their next targets.
- Not every opportunity is taken to enable higher achieving children to make as much progress as possible.

### B. The Catholic life of the school is outstanding

- Catholicism is at the heart of this school; it is evident in its environment in which each child has the opportunity to flourish and the excellent relationships within the community it has built.
- School leaders present the children with a wide range of opportunities to experience the full richness of Catholic teaching and traditions and take a lead in many of these themselves.
- The leadership of the head teacher, ably supported by the teachers and governors, shows a strong vision for the school which is fully embraced by children and parents.
- The school has created a relationship with the local parish which supports the children in its care alongside their parents, and forms the backbone of the community.
- The school plays an active part in its local area, working with other Catholic schools to continually improve provision for its pupils.
- Many different experiences of prayer and worship are given and the children are involved at all levels of planning these.
- Whilst providing all pupils with a strong Catholic identity, the school recognises its local environment and ensures the pupils learn about other faiths.
- The children are given many opportunities to contribute to the Common Good of their school and parish. They talk with enthusiasm about the responsibilities they take on and show a deep understanding of why they are called to help each other.

## A. Classroom Religious Education

### What has improved since the last inspection?

Since the last inspection, the school has developed electronic tracking of religious education (RE) from Years 1-6 and is beginning to add Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) to this system. The school has a clear timetable for teaching other faiths which makes full use of the many different places of worship in the immediate area and draws upon the expertise of non-Catholic staff. Work scrutiny in RE is an established part of the school's monitoring and assessment cycle and the quality of displays greatly enhances the learning environment and confirms the Catholicity of the school.

### The content of classroom religious education is good

The scheme and supplementary resources used meet the requirements of the Curriculum Directory which is displayed in the classrooms. The school has invested in resources which enhance the teaching of RE, for example, the use of tablets which were observed being used to research 'The O Antiphons'. RE displays, prayer areas and prayer books are given importance in each class room and the school has maximised its inside and outside spaces to provide areas for RE. There is a clear plan to support the teaching of other faiths such as Hinduism and Judaism throughout the school, supported by visits to the places of worship of other faiths groups in the area. High quality displays enhance the place of RE in the curriculum. The children display a good level of religious literacy, with the children from Reception to Year 6 able to link new learning back to what they had already learned. The planning of the curriculum across the school allows children to revisit topics at greater depth, but not all opportunities are taken by staff to access the higher levels of attainment with the higher ability children.

### Pupil achievement in religious education is good

Children make good progress during their time at the school, despite a large number entering the school below the national average. Tracking is in place to measure this progress from Years 1-6 and the school has just begun to add EYFS data to this, which will further improve the monitoring already carried out by the RE coordinator and the school leadership team. This tracking allows targets to be set in RE for each pupil. Through careful internal moderation and by moderating with other schools in the deanery and the diocese, the school has shown that it is confident in judging the achievement of pupils. The school has developed a detailed portfolio of assessed work to help staff as they carry out assessment. The children display very positive attitudes towards their learning, whether it is individual, paired or grouped and this helps to maximise the opportunities they are given to progress. However, teachers should use every occasion to make sure high achieving pupils are given the chance to deepen their learning. Scrutiny of the current class books alongside those kept from last year show that the children are given a variety of tasks, including using art, design technology, music and drama. The children obviously enjoy these different approaches to learning and this helps to deepen their understanding in RE.

### The quality of teaching is good

During the inspection, the quality of teaching was never less than good. Teachers sought to give pupils opportunities to deepen their religious literacy through the teaching of the Magnificat and the O Antiphons at levels which were relevant their age; for example, Year 2 created actions to go with the Antiphons whilst Year 6 researched them on tablets. Tasks and resources are differentiated and the children's understanding frequently checked during the lessons. Support staff are deployed well to support children with particular needs which creates very inclusive learning environments. Pupils' work is regularly marked and it is clear that there are opportunities for oral feedback. Whilst next steps questions are developing, more opportunities should be taken to let children know what they

need to do to reach the next level of attainment, especially those of higher ability. Teachers displayed good subject knowledge and were able to introduce the new vocabulary of the O Antiphons well and link it to the preceding work on the Jesse Tree. The children were all engaged in the work which captured their interest. Children in EYFS were delighted to recognise the characters of Noah and Joseph to add to their Jesse Tree and Year 6 the link between the names given to Jesus in the O Antiphons and their knowledge of the Old Testament. Homework is used to develop understanding of RE and is linked to the work done in class. The children are confident in asking questions and the good subject knowledge of the staff means that they are confident in answering these and addressing any misconceptions there might be.

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

**are good**

Self-evaluation shows that leaders have a clear understanding of where the school is and what they need to do to move it forward. That this is shared by all staff is clear in the consistency in planning, assessment and feedback to the children. The head, senior team and RE coordinator have shown that they can identify areas for development and put procedures in place to address them. RE is covered in the school development plan separately from the other subjects and sets out clear objectives to continue to improve the delivery of RE. The active and supportive governing body are kept up to date with attainment in RE and the parish priest, who is also a governor, is able to support the teaching of RE in the school. Parents are kept informed through subject specific pages on the website which include links to all the prayers used in the school and the RE handbook. The head and leadership team have put good structures in place which support all the staff to provide quality education for the children, including support by the RE coordinator for non-Catholic staff. There is regular monitoring in place across the school, the deanery and diocese. Full advantage is taken of the training provided by diocese and the RE coordinator also provides in house training. High expectations are shared by all staff and pupils. There is a strong feeling within the school that the learning in RE supports the Catholic mission of the children.

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

- To ensure children are provided with the necessary opportunities to attain the higher levels where appropriate.
- To implement and evaluate a new system for assessment in Early Years Foundation Stage.

## B. The Catholic life of the school

### What has improved since the last inspection?

The school had no improvements highlighted in the last report which referred to the Catholic life of the school. However, the introduction of 'Pupil Chaplains' has clearly been a great step forward as the children take on responsibility for planning and leading prayers during lunchtimes. All children are now planning and leading class worship on a regular basis.

### The place of religious education as the core of the curriculum

**is outstanding**

It is clear from first stepping into this school that it is Catholic; not only does the environment reflect that from the spaces set aside for prayer, but also in the way prayer and commitment to the Common Good are built into every part of the day. The building reflects the importance of prayer in each class where displays include books of prayers from the children and also in the dedicated prayer room and outside areas with original statues focal points. The statue of Margaret Clitherow is particularly beautiful. Alongside the parish, the school forms the centre point for the local community and the two work closely together to ensure the best outcomes for all the children. RE is given 10% of curriculum time and its generous funding is reflected in the high quality resources and artefacts in the school. The school comes 'off timetable' for events like 'Spirituality Week' which gives all children different experiences of prayer. One child commented, 'We all have our own ways of praying'; the school ensures the children have time and opportunities to discover their own ways.

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

**is outstanding**

Worship is central to the rhythm of the school. Students regularly attend Mass and are given the opportunity each week to pray personally, with their class and as part of the whole school community. Key events in the school and liturgical calendar are marked with liturgies and displays. Students are encouraged to plan and facilitate prayer and the 'Pupil Chaplains' champion this. They run lunchtime sessions either outside or in the prayer room for other children to join in with and one remarked, "children like to take time out of their play to pray." Each class has a family prayer book in which children are encouraged to share prayers in their own languages and prayers in home languages were also used during class worship sessions. The children experience the different prayer of the faith communities around them by visiting local places of worship but also travel further afield; Year 4 travel to York to pray at the Shrine of St Margaret Clitherow and to visit York Minster. During 'Spirituality Week', the children were given direct experiences of different ways to pray. The school has been able to send children to Don Bosco Summer Camps and on the Easter Pilgrimage to Lourdes.

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

**are outstanding**

The school works very closely with the parish to support the local community and the chair of governors, who is also the parish secretary, provides a vital link here. Pupils understood why they are called to serve and demonstrate love and respect for each other and those in the wider community and show empathy for the people they are trying to help. Talking about the work they are doing to support the homeless, one child said, 'if you were one of those people, you would want someone to help you' and another said, 'it helps bring us closer to God'. Locally the school supports the work of the nearby Food Bank, St Vincent de Paul group (SVP) and homeless charity and has trained parents and parishioners to become teaching assistants in the school. Nationally the school

fundraises for Macmillan Cancer Support, the Cardinal Hume Centre and the Catholic Children's Society and numerous international charities such as Ghana Special Needs School, CAFOD, Mary's Meals, Vision Aid, Sal's Shoes and Water Aid. The school also empowers their students to initiate and lead this work.

**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**

The relationship between the school and the local parish of English Martyrs is particularly strong and mutually supportive making full use of the services provided by parish groups, such as the SVP. The parish priest regularly visits and contributes to the life of the school and in turn the students and their families sing at Mass, are altar servers and help with fundraising. The school recognises and respects the diversity of the local community and utilises the many places of worship in the local area, which it takes its students to visit. There are close links with other local schools in the deanery. The governors are invaluable in supporting work of the school and parish and this is led by the dedicated chair of governors. The school also attends deanery and diocese meetings and training opportunities. The head teacher and staff lead by example and ensure every member of the school community is cherished and flourishes. As a result the school is a safe and happy place and the students enjoy learning. The parents are overwhelmingly supporting of the school and one told inspectors the students 'learn about God and Prayers'. A non-Catholic parent commented on how welcoming and supportive the school had been.

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

**is outstanding**

The head, leadership team and governors share a vision of discipleship which invigorates the children in their care to follow their example. The staff show great dedication to the school and the children in it and in this they follow the lead of the head. A number of staff at the school recently slept out in the playground, whilst carrying out Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, all night to raise money and now the children want to do the same. All aspects of the school's life are centred on the mission statement 'Love, Learn, Respect and follow Jesus' and anyone spending time in the school is able to see this enacted by the community around them. The head and RE coordinator take an active role in the local deanery group, using this to share their own good practice and learn from others, as they are constantly striving to improve what they do for the children. The leadership team provide a safe, Catholic environment in which each child can flourish, but at the same time uses the call to service of the church to educate the children in the world beyond their school in a highly effective way.

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

- Build on the legacy of the Year of Mercy work and to share this with a wider audience.
- Consider having common themes around which the children can plan their collective acts of worship.

## Information about this school

- The school is a one form entry Catholic Primary school in the locality of Neasden.
- The school serves the parish of English Martyrs, Wembley Park.
- The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholic is 97%.
- The proportion of pupils who are from other Christian denominations is 2% and from other faiths is 1 %.
- The percentage of Catholic teachers in the school is 86 %.
- There are 22 % of pupils in the school with special educational needs 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 below average rate of families claiming free school meals.
- 30 pupils receive the Pupil Premium (14 %).

<b>Department for Education Number</b>	3043511
<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	101548
<b>Local Authority</b>	Brent

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary Aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 -11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on roll</b>	228
<b>The appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Mary Boyle
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Ewa McSperrin
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8450 3631
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.clitherow.brent.sch.uk">www.clitherow.brent.sch.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	admin@clitherow.brent.sch.uk
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	18 <sup>th</sup> October 2011
<b>Grade from previous inspection</b>	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 7 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.

Mrs Catherine McMahon	Lead Inspector
Mrs Claire O'Neill	Associate Inspector
Mr James Stacey	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](mailto:education@rcdow.org.uk)  
W: <http://rcdow.org.uk/education>