



Diocese of Westminster

St Lawrence Catholic Primary School
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DFE Number: 313 3503
URN Number: 102527

Headteacher: Mr R. McCormack
Chair of Governors: Mrs S. Kerrigan

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: 30th April 2013
Date of previous inspection: 1st October 2007

Reporting Inspector: Mrs M. Betts
Associate Inspector: Mrs K. Gilbert

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 inspectors spent one day in school, visited 14 lessons, one assembly and one act of class worship, and carried out 4 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 Lawrence 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. 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 two form entry in the LA of Hounslow and the locality of Feltham. The school serves the parish of St Lawrence, Feltham. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholic is 99.6%. The proportion of pupils who are from other Christian denominations is 0.2% and from other faiths 0.2%.

There are 503 pupils on roll, with no pupil with 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 well above average. There is below 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: [1]

Pupils are gaining religious literacy at a very good rate and becoming very aware of Catholic liturgical traditions and of how faith affects their daily living. Very good imaginative planning of learning promotes pupils' enjoyment of religious education lessons especially when discussing their own ideas and when undertaking practical activities to consolidate learning, such as drama and internet research. Pupils display a growing depth of thought which impacts very well on their spiritual and moral development. All staff are fully committed to the very high profile given to religious education and are willing to undertake training to improve their skills. Lessons have clear objectives, enabling pupils to effectively assess and reflect on their own learning. The school's accurate self-evaluation, achieved through regular monitoring, provides evidence of very good awareness of RE strengths and development needs.

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

The school has improved very well in the area highlighted during the last inspection. The school links assessments with national levels of attainment and moderates their judgements both internally and externally. Tracking of pupils highlights how different groups are achieving and how progress is monitored.

The school has identified future improvement strategies and the inspector concurs with these.

- To develop marking by giving pupils opportunities to extend and improve their work.
- Make use of assessment data to inform future planning to ensure each pupil is challenged to achieve his / her next level.
- Continue to embed the new RE programme and to ensure sufficient opportunities for the more able pupils to achieve the high levels in religious education.

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

Grade [1]

The school has trialled various RE programmes, evaluating their effectiveness, with the result that a new programme has been adopted very recently. All staff are aware of the Curriculum Directory objectives as the basis of the RE curriculum and they plan their RE topics against its key areas. The curriculum is checked to ensure coverage and balance between areas. Creative medium term planning adapts the Directory objectives, so that learning and resources are relevant to the age and abilities of the pupils. For example, younger children used the blowing of bubbles to illustrate the effect of invisible wind relating this to the work of the Holy Spirit. The school uses the church and clergy extremely well as extra resources for learning. For example, a pre-seminary candidate linked to the parish, undertakes an "awkward questions" workshop each week. Through this pupils gain more understanding of religious education by voicing and hearing replies to their queries. These sessions are very popular and informative to both pupils and staff.

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

Grade [2]

Pupils are gaining a good understanding of Scripture and of how the Christian faith influences people's actions and they display a growing depth of thought. This was evidenced during year 6 lessons when, after studying the Bible account of St Stephen's courage during his trial, pupils were challenged to compose questions to ask Stephen relating these to his beliefs, values, feelings and experiences. They responded with mature and knowledgeable ideas and queries. Pupils work steadily with interest and co-operate well when working together. Although pupils' attainment on entry is below age-related expectations, the standard gained in religious education is good. The school's data demonstrates that pupils make good progress throughout their time at the school. The assessment statements for the new RE programme are prepared and will link judgements well to National Levels of Attainment. Pupils' books are very well presented and evidence a full coverage of the curriculum with a good range of written activities.

The quality of teaching

Grade [1]

Teaching is good and better in all classes with many outstanding aspects observed. The best lessons very effectively use visual presentation, practical activities and challenging open questions, to motivate and inspire pupils' interest. Learning is linked very well with Scripture and to pupils' faith development. For example, in year 5 classes, the pupils were challenged, after reading St Paul's list of the qualities of the Holy Spirit, to discuss these in detail, suggest and then show through drama, how these fruits could manifest themselves in the pupils' daily lives. Teachers have a secure subject knowledge which they enhance by personal research if needed. Lessons are well planned with clear learning intentions. Pupils evaluate their own learning and often mention how the lesson has developed their thinking. Assessments are linked to the National Levels of Attainment and pupil progress analysed. Marking of work is thorough, giving appropriate praise and often including questions to extend the learning. However, opportunities are not always given to the pupils to answer the questions and so improve their work.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of religious education

Grade [1]

The headteacher, senior staff and RE subject leader have a clear, enthusiastic vision for the subject and support and guide staff very well. At the same time as introducing a new RE programme, the school is implementing recent developments in RE assessments, and embedding these well into school practice. The school's monitoring and evaluation of RE is rigorous and regularly undertaken. This includes "peer mentoring activity" which allows the RE subject leader time to discuss fully with staff their views and difficulties. This in turn leads to whole staff feedback and action planning. Training is encouraged by the school leadership and nine teachers hold the Catholic Certificate of Religious Studies (CCRS). The introduction of "Wednesday Word", as well as homework activities, promotes parents' involvement with their children's RE learning. The Reception children with their parents produced a range of attractive Easter gardens.

B. 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: [1]

St Lawrence's school is a very good Catholic school and provides pupils with rich experiences of the Catholic way of living and believing. Prayer, worship and sacramental celebration have a powerful role in school life and pupils are provided with a wide diversity of celebrations. The high priority given to the promotion of pupils' spiritual and moral development is reflected in their excellent behaviour and positive attitudes. Pupils say "we all try to follow God's way". Relationships within the school community are very good, with respect and care paramount. The dedicated leadership of the headteacher and senior staff and the close link with the parish priest is instrumental in very effectively maintaining and developing the school's Catholic identity and in fostering pupils' growing awareness of their Catholic faith and their understanding of how to live this in their daily lives.

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

The Catholic life development issue from the last inspection has been fully achieved. The Mission Statement is known and understood by pupils who can describe when it is seen in action in the daily life of the school. Since the last inspection, the school has increased worship experiences linked to the liturgical year and mission. The older children now prepare and plan their own class worship. The staff, pupils and school leaders need to evaluate this more formally so that development improvements can be identified and implemented.

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

Grade [1]

The leadership team together with the RE subject leader is strongly committed to the very high priority of RE in the school. Its importance is evidenced by the subject receiving 10% of curriculum time and by a budget that often exceeds that of other core subjects, as it did during the last two years. Visually, throughout the school, both inside and outside, and within classrooms, there is very good evidence of the high profile of RE. Teachers have a performance management objective linked to RE and undertake significant training to develop their skills. Governors offer the school firm support.

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

Grade [1*]

The school's worship, prayer and sacramental life is outstanding. It is central in the school's life and makes a very strong impact on pupils' spiritual and moral development. Worship is visually presented using artefacts and power point presentations and relates very well to the age of the pupils. For example, in the younger pupils' worship observed, the power and invisibility of the Holy Spirit was demonstrated using an electric fan, a windmill and the children's own breath. In the older

year group the pupil worship leaders posed thought-provoking questions. In both sessions time was given for pupils to reflect on the main theme and its application to themselves. During worship pupils show deep reverence and respect. They describe the impact worship has on them as affecting their thinking, attitudes and actions. Music, dance and drama are used to good advantage within worship. Pupils often write their own prayers, such as those of Year 3 who sent their prayers to Rome, and pray one of them daily for the new Pope. Pupils' liturgical formation is extremely well planned to ensure the widest possible experiences of the richness of the Catholic tradition of prayer and worship. Year 3 children were learning to pray the Rosary ready for the imminent May celebrations. Retreats and reflection days are planned for both staff and pupils. Older pupils plan and lead class worship. Mass is regularly celebrated. The parish priest makes a powerful contribution to the liturgical life of the school.

The commitment and contribution to the Common Good – service and social justice.
Grade [1]

Pupils are very aware of the importance of service to others and link this to their Catholic faith and to Scripture, quoting Jesus' commandment to love one another as He loves us. Charity and service have a high priority within the school and pupils actively engage with fund-raising events. The school's partnership with a Catholic school in Tanzania has ensured pupils' invaluable insight into a different culture and community. Pupils are extremely proud of their school and appreciate the care and support of staff who listen to them and help with problems. Relationships within the school are very good. The school employs a teacher of English as an additional language, who effectively provides support for children whose first language is not English. Pupils undertake responsibilities to help each other and develop leadership skills. For example the school council members are involved in giving rewards for exemplary behaviour observed. The headteacher and governors are aware of wider need within the parish and are actively pursuing means to increase provision so that all Catholic children can attend a Catholic school.

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]

Parents are invited to participate in all celebrations and events. The school has very good links with parents who value the contribution the school makes to the faith development of their children. This is borne out through the very high number of parents (93%) agreeing and strongly agreeing with all aspects of the school's RE and Catholic provision. Many parents commented that they really appreciate school's strong partnership with the parish which established very well the home/school/parish links. The school works in close partnership with the diocese and welcomes diocesan advice and training.

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

Grade [1*]

The school's leadership is outstanding. The headteacher is passionately committed to the clear vision of the Church's mission in education and very successfully inspires and engages all staff in implementing and developing the school's Catholic ethos and leading pupils to fullness of life. The Catholic identity of the school is pivotal to school life, evidenced by many and varied high quality displays and the very high priority attached to worship as well as to pupils' faith and moral development. The leadership understands very well the school's strengths and development needs through their thorough and accurate self-evaluation. Governors fulfil well their responsibilities and are influential in determining the school's Catholic direction.



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Overall Grade [1]

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 [1]

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 [1]

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*]