



St James's Catholic Primary School

260 Stanley Road, Twickenham, TW2 5NP

Date of inspection: 27th June 2014

A. Classroom Religious Education

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

Overall Grade I*

The overall effectiveness of classroom religious education in developing pupils' religious literacy is outstanding. The curriculum is based on the delivery of the Curriculum Directory supported by the school's own scheme of work which includes the 'Year of Faith' units. Pupils make excellent progress in their subject knowledge of the Catholic faith through the challenge and high expectations of their teachers and thorough, detailed tracking. Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and appreciate the wide range of teaching methods used by staff. Attainment is excellent and progress is similar to that in other core subjects. Self-evaluation is up to date, detailed and illustrates an excellent awareness of development areas for religious education. Outstanding leadership of religious education supports the setting of challenging targets for pupils and provides opportunities for new staff to see excellent teaching. There are very good systems in place for monitoring all aspects of teaching and learning as well as regular participation in deanery and diocesan moderation.

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 I*

The school is outstanding in its effectiveness in developing pupils' experience of the richness of a Catholic way of living and believing. The vision of the headteacher, school leadership team and governing body, supported by local clergy, are instrumental in ensuring that worship and prayer are central to the life of the school and are well planned and resourced. The Catholic life of the school underpins all activities and pupils are explicitly taught how they may follow in Jesus' footsteps. Celebration of the Eucharist and Reconciliation are offered at key times of the year with pupils' active participation in the preparation. Religious education is valued and recognised as the core of the curriculum and is given an excellent range of resources, which are kept under constant review. Pupils have an excellent understanding of the social teaching of the Church. They have very many opportunities to develop personal responsibility and engage in action to support those in need locally and in the wider world. There is an appreciation of being part of the local deanery and Diocese of Westminster. Governors make a highly significant contribution to the work and Catholic dimension of the school. They have a high level of expertise and fully understand their role as governors of a diocesan Catholic school.

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 and one assembly, and carried out seven 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 James Catholic Primary School, Twickenham was carried out under the requirements of the Canon 806 and Education Act 2005, and in accordance with the Framework 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.

Inspection Team

Mrs Pamela Brannigan	Lead Inspector
Mrs Catherine Bryan	Associate Inspector
Mrs Ann Staunton	Associate Inspector

Description of School

The school is three form entry with two nursery classes and a centre for Autistic Spectrum Disorder in the LA of Richmond upon Thames in Greater London. The school serves the parishes of St James, Twickenham, St Francis de Sales, Hampton Hill, St Theodore's Hampton and St Margaret's, Richmond. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholic is 99%. The proportion of pupils who come from other Christian denominations is 1% with none from other faiths. The percentage of Catholic teachers in the school is 75%.

There are 668 pupils on roll. There are 3 pupils with statements of Special Educational Need. The proportion of pupils from ethnic minority groups is below average. The number of pupils speaking English as an Additional Language is above average. There is a well below average rate of families claiming free school meals. Fifteen pupils receive the Pupil Premium Grant and ten pupils receive pupil premium plus.

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Headteacher:	Mrs CJ Webber
Chair of Governors:	Mr S Beckman

Date of previous inspection:	1 st May 2008
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Key for inspection grades:	<i>Grade 1*</i>	<i>Outstanding</i>
	<i>Grade 1</i>	<i>Very Good</i>
	<i>Grade 2</i>	<i>Good</i>
	<i>Grade 3</i>	<i>Requires improvement</i>
	<i>Grade 4</i>	<i>Causing Concern</i>

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 has improved in classroom religious education since the last inspection?

There were two areas for development identified in the last inspection. Both have been very well addressed. The first was to make explicit levels of attainment in the planning and delivery of religious education. Since then there has been a major review of the curriculum in the light of the agreed understanding of levels of attainment and the Curriculum Directory. This has involved a focus on higher order thinking skills and an increased level of challenge for all groups. Levels of attainment are now recorded in medium and short term plans as well as targets for individual pupils.

The second area was to ensure pupils are familiar with the traditional prayers of the Church. These prayers now feature in the school's own prayer book and are well known by pupils. They are used frequently in assemblies and classroom liturgies.

In addition, the subject leader has attended diocesan training in accurate monitoring which has been shared with all staff. Currently, moderating sessions take place each half term which is leading to an increase in teachers' confidence in levelling pupils' work accurately. Self-assessment for pupils is now a feature of many lessons and is leading to an awareness of the steps needed for further improvement.

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

Grade 1*

The content of classroom religious education meets all the requirements of the Curriculum Directory and is both creative and engaging in meeting the pupils' learning needs. Using a combination of materials from several programmes of study, along with curriculum resources from Westminster diocese the school has developed a rich and dynamic religious education curriculum. In Year 5 for example, an effective link has been made with the Cafod goals and the FIFA world cup taking place in Brazil. Coverage of the age related content of the Curriculum Directory is tracked by the subject leader and reference to the four areas of study and the attainment targets is made in planning which gives evidence of progression across the school; there are also strong links to the Liturgical Year. Religious education has been allocated a generous budget above that allocated to other core subjects enabling a wide range of key resources to be available as well as a dedicated resource room. The subject leader is given time to manage and monitor across the school.

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

Grade 1*

Pupil achievement, attainment and progress overall is outstanding in religious education. The school's own assessment systems are as robust and thorough as those for other core subjects. Both internal and external moderation are being used to ensure judgements are accurate and pupils are aware of the levels at which they are working. Rigorous analysis of data and detailed self-evaluation demonstrates that attainment and progress is outstanding at all key stages and pupils make rapid and appropriate progress. In all classes observed there were a variety of activities and pupils were enthusiastic, engaged and eager to discuss their learning. Behaviour is excellent. Pupils display a keen interest in religious education. In a Year 1 lesson pupils were able to make links with the Last Supper and Mass today. One pupil said, 'The disciples were at the Last Supper and we are the disciples at Mass today.' The school makes excellent provision for all groups of pupils and sets challenging targets for all. In Years 5 and 6, groups of pupils are working at level 5. Pupils' workbooks and

written work are of a high standard and very well presented with a clear sense of pride. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils' religious literacy is of a very high standard and reaches or exceeds diocesan expectations.

The quality of teaching

Grade 1*

The quality of teaching across the school in religious education is outstanding and never less than very good. Teachers have high expectations of pupils who rise to the challenge. The excellent subject knowledge of teachers ensures pupils receive imaginative and stimulating lessons that lead to very good learning. Teachers plan accurately and check pupils' work for understanding. High order questioning, especially at Key Stage 2 is embedded and pupils are encouraged to work independently. Pupils' understanding is monitored throughout the lessons through recapitulation of prior knowledge. Reference to scripture is widely used. Teachers use open ended and challenging questions and encourage discussion with talk partners to deepen and enhance learning. Written work is marked with helpful comments on ways in which improvements can be made. Pupils are beginning to respond actively to teachers' comments but this is not yet fully embedded across the school. Homework is set regularly and home learning is supported through curriculum information newsletters. Support for new teachers from the subject leader is very good. The George Tancred Centre is an autism unit closely linked to the main school with pupils joining classes as and when appropriate. The learning environment here is structured to minimise visual and auditory distractions and focus attention on tasks. Teaching observed here was outstanding and pupils were taught appropriate to their individual needs.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of religious education

Grade 1*

The leadership and management of religious education is excellent. The headteacher, experienced subject leader, curriculum co-ordinator together with the liturgy co-ordinator, music director and link governor for religious education have shared their vision for excellence with the whole school community, including the effective governing body. The excellent systems in place to regularly monitor, track and ensure pupil progress have enabled leaders to support new staff and ensure high standards are maintained. The subject leader has organised a series of moderation sessions to develop teachers' confidence in accurately assessing pupils' work and is aware of the need to continue with this. She has also participated in diocesan moderation and has an excellent understanding of the strengths and areas for development in religious education. The school improvement plan clearly identifies issues for action and evaluates current provision. Many governors are active in the life of the school and familiar with current developments in religious education. This enables them to challenge and support the school effectively.

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

- Continue to refine the assessment and levelling process to ensure all staff are confident in assessing achievement.
- Continue to embed the new marking policy to ensure all pupils respond to developmental comments.

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 has improved since the last inspection?

The last inspection report identified that pupils needed to have a greater understanding and knowledge of everyday Catholic prayers. The school responded to this by providing a school prayer book which included the traditional prayers of the Church as well as a number to be used at intervals during the school day, including the Angelus for pupils in Key Stage 2. In recent years there has also been much input into teachers' theological knowledge and understanding to enhance the Catholic life of the school. Monitoring of collective worship has ensured opportunities for spiritual development have been enhanced. The theology underpinning Catholic social teaching has been emphasised to enable pupils to reflect on the significance of the Common Good. All staff have been well supported as they implement the new Diocesan Framework and the requirements of the Curriculum Directory. The introduction of 'RE Captains' who lead liturgies has given pupils additional opportunities to develop the prayer life of the school. Links with the four parishes have been enhanced by the presence of a school choir at Sunday masses every year.

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

Grade 1*

Religious education receives 10% of curriculum time and has a larger budget than other core subjects. A separate room for religious education artefacts is well stocked and resources are constantly reviewed and replaced when necessary.

The learning environment is outstanding with attractive classroom displays and prayer tables which reflect the Church's year and are used as a focus during classroom liturgies. School leadership, including the link governor, offer very good support in developing and reviewing the quality of religious education. All staff receive regular in-service support and training related to the Catholic life of the school. Governors play a major role and are involved in self-evaluation and school improvement. The priests from local parishes support the prayer and sacramental life and liaise with staff for a planned programme of masses and liturgies. The priest from St Francis parish visits every week and acts as an additional teaching resource.

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

Grade 1*

The school's provision for prayer and worship is outstanding and a key part of every school celebration. Prayer and worship are central to the daily life of the school through class prayer times and assemblies. Pupils are often engaged in the preparation and leadership of worship through choosing readings and writing their own prayers. Whole school and key stage Masses are regularly celebrated in school and the sacrament of Reconciliation is offered at key times. Pupils also visit the nearby church to develop their knowledge of Catholic traditions and practice. When space allows parents and families are invited to Masses and assemblies. They appreciate the opportunity this gives them to become involved in the prayer life of their children and the school. During the inspection an early years class assembly linked the story of Paul on the road to Damascus with their own journey in understanding on how they could live as Jesus teaches. Songs, role play, prayers and readings were included as well as intercessions from pupils. Catholic traditions are explored and experienced through daily Angelus in Key Stage 2, visits to Westminster Cathedral, Stations of the Cross and the

Rosary during the month of May. Families receive detailed information about the liturgical year through newsletters and the school website.

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

Grade I*

Pupils know and understand the Gospel call to justice and peace from a local, national and international perspective. Opportunities are available for pupils to actively engage in service within the school community and the wider world. Respect for the wide range of cultural backgrounds represented in the school underpins relationships and behaviour. Pupils are encouraged to share with others in acts of service to the school through well-established systems, including the school council, school ambassadors and House captains. A wide range of charities, some chosen by pupils include support for Children in Need, cancer charities, Catholic Children's Society and Cafod. Pupils also visit a care home for elderly people for carol singing and invite the residents to a 'Summer Symphony' concert. There are very good links with a school in a poorer part of London as well as schools in Quebec and Arkansas. Cafod resources have given pupils additional opportunities to have a greater understanding of different cultural backgrounds. Conversations with pupils indicate that they have a very good understanding of the theology underpinning their support for people in need. Older pupils also have a good grasp of moral issues in society and the ethics of the market place which are frequently discussed and examined in the light of Catholic social teaching. The school offers an excellent range of extra-curricular activities to support the interests and gifts of pupils. Participation in local and national events, including music and sports activities, also offer involvement in the wider world. The school ensures that pupils understand the call to justice and a sense of service are essential parts of their Catholic identity.

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*

Partnership between parents, school and parish is very effective and seen by governors and leadership as an essential part of the being a diocesan school. Parish links are very good. All four parishes are represented on the governing body with the priest from St Francis de Sales parish being a governor and actively engaged in the life of the school. School staff support the parish catechists as pupils are prepared to receive the sacraments. The school Chamber Choir sings at masses in all four parishes each year. Masses and informal visits help pupils and parents to see the Church as a vital part of school life as does the involvement of the governing body. The school works closely with parents and families and keeps them well informed through newsletters which have a section on 'Religious Life'. This includes information about the current religious education topic, plus parish and diocesan events. Questionnaires, curriculum meetings and consultations also enable the communication of a shared understanding of the mission of the school. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the provision offered by the school. Many thoughtful and appreciative comments were made on the diocesan questionnaires including, 'We are so impressed with the way our children's faith and knowledge are nurtured at this wonderful school.' Links with the diocese are very good. Senior leaders and governors attend diocesan conferences, in-service and courses offered by Westminster Education Service. The school has played a leading role in the local strategy group for the new curriculum which has involved outreach and support for borough schools. Advice and support is always sought when appointing new staff and diocesan policies are used to ensure the Catholicity of the school is maintained. The headteacher and subject leader participate in deanery meetings to share expertise with other diocesan schools.

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

Grade I*

Leadership is outstanding. The headteacher, governors and senior staff share a strong vision of the Catholic nature of education and are fully committed to the Church's mission. They demonstrate this by providing a curriculum with spiritual and moral education at its heart. Catholic life is central to the work of the school and leaders ensure that all aspects reflect the richness of a Christian way of life. The headteacher, subject leader and governors ensure that all staff have the skills and opportunities to contribute to the Catholic life of the school and there are excellent systems in place to induct and support new teachers. Pupils are given every opportunity to know the life and teachings of Jesus and the traditions of the Catholic Church. Governors make a highly significant contribution to strategic planning and development of the Catholic life of the school. They have a high level of expertise and fully understand their role as governors of a diocesan Catholic school.

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

- Further develop child initiated community service