



## DIOCESE OF BRENTWOOD



### Inspection Report

**Name of School:** St Winefride's Catholic Primary School

**LEA:** Newham

**Inspection Date:** 30<sup>th</sup> June 2015

**Reporting Inspector:** Pamela Brannigan

This Inspection was carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005.

**Type of School:** Primary  
**School Category:** Voluntary Aided  
**Age range of pupils:** 4 - 11  
**Gender of pupils:** Mixed  
**Number on roll:** 341  
**Appropriate Authority:** The Governing Body  
**Date of previous inspection:** 4th December 2009

**School Address:**  
Church Road  
Manor Park  
E12 6HB

**Tel. No.** 020 8478 0510  
**Headteacher:** Mr P. Underwood  
**Chair of Governors:** Mr T. Fernandes

## Information about the school

St Winefride's Catholic Primary is a voluntary aided 1.5 form entry school in Manor Park in the London Borough of Newham and part of the diocese of Brentwood. It serves the parish of St Stephen's Manor Park with a small number of pupils coming from adjoining parishes. There are currently 341 pupils aged 4-11 on roll and the school is over subscribed. The proportion of Catholic pupils is 95%. There is a well above average number of pupils from minority ethnic groups and over 50% of pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is above the national average as is the number of pupils who receive the pupil premium. St Winefride's is part of the Manor Park Soft Federation and benefits from good links with local secondary schools. Pupils from the school form the official Commonwealth choir, working with the Commonwealth youth orchestra and performing at seven royal occasions in the past two years including before the Queen at Buckingham Palace.

### Key grades for inspection

1: Outstanding      2: Good      3: Requires improvement      4: Causing concern

## Overall effectiveness of this Catholic school

**Grade 1**

St Winefride's is an outstanding school both in its pursuit of excellence in developing pupils' religious literacy and in its success in providing experiences in ways of Catholic living and believing. This is because of the hard work and dedication of the school leadership who are committed to the Church's mission in education. Pupil achievement and progress, the provision for Catholic life and the capacity for sustained improvement are judged to be outstanding. Prayer and worship are integral to all that the school does and opportunities for spiritual and moral development are interwoven through religious education and the wider curriculum. Pupils clearly understand and appreciate what it means to be part of a Catholic community. The headteacher and senior leaders are excellent role models and have a vision for the whole school community which includes the well being of parents and families as well as initiatives linked to the Catholic life of the school. Pastoral care is excellent and shared by all members of the school community. Links with the parish are excellent with many pupils acting as altar servers at Sunday Mass. Relationships are very good and pupils feel safe and well cared for. Pupils and parents greatly appreciate the very many opportunities offered to develop a wide range of interests through before and after school clubs and lunch time activities. Parents also welcome the high standard of care, the Catholicity of the school and the way their children's prayer life is supported and developed. By the end of Key Stage 2 standards of attainment are in line with and often exceed diocesan expectations.

## The school's capacity for sustained improvement

**Grade 1**

The school has an outstanding capacity for sustained improvement. The last inspection in 2009 identified no areas for development other than those already stated by the school in its self evaluation. Since then standards in religious education have continued to rise due to the implementation of the agreed understanding of levels of attainment which have informed lesson planning and assessment. The school has maintained a constant drive to move forward by developing the use of interactive resources, new ideas and technologies to further enhance classroom education. Very good relations with deanery schools have led to regular moderation meetings to share expertise and judgements with other Catholic schools. The school has put in place effective strategies to share good practice and support new teachers.

The headteacher, senior leadership team and governors have a clear vision for the Catholicity of the school and the central place of prayer, worship and religious education. The headteacher ensures that all staff are given opportunities to extend their knowledge and improve their skills through staff meetings and attendance at diocesan led training. Good support is given to new and non Catholic teachers. Four teachers hold the CCRS qualification and two more are currently undertaking the course.

The current leadership has an excellent capacity to maintain effectiveness. The experienced headteacher shows outstanding leadership of a Catholic community through his commitment to team building in all aspects of school life. Prayer and worship are woven throughout the school day and enhanced by the excellent level of support given by the parish priest who is also link governor for religious education. Governors are dedicated, well informed, have a wide range of expertise and are fully involved in the life of the school. Accurate self-evaluation enables the school to identify areas for improvement and strengthen initiatives which lead to good outcomes for all pupils. The religious education subject leader is well placed to support colleagues through monitoring and help with planning. She has attended diocesan training linked to the religious education scheme 'Come and See' which she has disseminated to colleagues.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Continue to implement areas identified in the School Improvement Plan.
- Continue to provide religious education curriculum information for parents so they can support their children's learning more fully.

### **Outcomes for pupils**

### **Grade 1**

Pupil attainment and progress in religious education is outstanding. The school carefully evaluates progress and standards and indicates that from a low base pupils make good progress year on year so that by the time they reach Year 6 attainment reaches and often exceeds diocesan expectations. All lessons observed during the inspection had outstanding elements and pupils worked with interest and commitment. Cross curricular links are evident especially in Early Years where teachers provide a good foundation which is built on throughout the years. In Key Stage 1 tasks are carefully differentiated so higher achievers are given opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge. This is built on in Key Stage 2 where pupils are confident in finding bible references and using them in their written work. The school's 'Behaviour for Learning' policy results in well motivated and responsive pupils. In conversation pupils said they enjoy their religious education lessons and like the wide range of activities involved. They are eager to participate and work well together whether in groups or pairs. They have a very good knowledge of the Catholic faith appropriate to their age and are able to apply religious ideas to their own lives. Workbooks show coverage of the curriculum and indicate excellent progress made by all groups although presentation can be a little untidy.

Pupils are polite and thoughtful to adults and each other. They make an excellent contribution to the Catholic life of the school through the way they help and support each other both in and out of the classrooms. The mission statement, 'We celebrate God's love for everyone. We enjoy learning and growing together in our caring and welcoming family. Jesus said, 'Let the children come to me.' is sung enthusiastically and well known. Pupils are given many opportunities to understand the needs of others in school and the wider community. They are keen to take on responsibilities including membership of the School Council, 'Mini Vinnies' peer mediators and as playground friends. Pupils are involved with several local, national and international charities including Cafod, Anchor House and Macmillan Cancer Trust. Pupils are encouraged to see themselves as part of a global community with responsibilities for other people and the environment. They have close links with a school in Harlow which has a very different environment from St Winefride's. Pupils show respect for adults and each other. Behaviour is excellent and pupils value the sense of community and belonging created within the school. Conversations with pupils indicated that they appreciate the many opportunities offered by the school and the help given by their teachers and other members of staff.

Prayer and worship are central to school life at St Winefride's. Liturgies, masses and celebrations are open to parents and parishioners and are carefully planned by pupils and staff. There are many opportunities to participate fully in assemblies and class acts of worship for all classes. Older pupils also plan and lead liturgies for groups of younger children. Singing is exceptionally good with an enthusiastic school choir which plays a major part in worship. Pupils have a good knowledge of the Church's liturgical year with its seasons and celebrations. They are also able to make links between the sacraments and the life of Christ through their understanding of the gospels. The environment for prayer and worship is excellent. Each class has an attractive prayer table which is used as a focus for

class worship. Pupils are developing the ability to pray in different ways and at different times. They can use scripture, the traditional prayers of the church, meditation and their own prayers, many examples of which were seen during the inspection. Pupils in Key Stage 2 pause for the Angelus each day at noon. Pupils' own prayers are used in masses and assemblies. Older pupils are able to apply aspects of Jesus' life and teaching to their own lives and understand that a sense of service is part of being a member of a Catholic community.

Pastoral care is very good and given a high priority by staff and governors who work closely together to promote the spiritual development of pupils and the Catholic life of the community. All pupils feel safe, well cared for and know that all members of staff are there to help. Pupils are involved in decision making and citizenship through the school council and value their school and all it offers. A number of children are trained as playground friends and take an active role in helping at break and lunch times. Pupils know they are respected, listened to and encouraged to help each other. Parents speak very highly of the school, the headteacher and the care given to their children. They praise the excellent quality of education, the support given to their children's prayer life and the commitment and approachability of staff.

## **Leaders and managers**

## **Grade 1**

The effectiveness of leadership at all levels is outstanding. The dedicated headteacher is well supported by his deputy and subject leader as he demonstrates excellent leadership of the school through the way he inspires and promotes the provision for Catholic life. He is deeply committed to excellence and achieves this by regular monitoring and a balance of challenge and support. He communicates a clear vision to the whole community which is affirmed by staff and governors who are all committed to providing the best possible environment for the pupils. The partnership between school, home and parish is excellent and families have been helped to access appropriate support for their needs. The leadership team give priority to Catholic Life and religious education in the school improvement plan and have developed a system of self-evaluation which is detailed and accurate. Together they have a very good knowledge of areas for development in religious education and are well placed to support colleagues.

The subject leader together with senior leaders and the parish priest from St Stephen's Manor Park monitors religious education by means of lesson observations, work scrutiny and joint planning which is followed by feedback to individual teachers. She has produced a school wide data base on attainment in religious education which enables tracking and effective resource provision. She supports colleagues through demonstration lessons and meditations. There is currently a very strong focus on planning and assessment as the school consolidates the implementation of the 'Come and See' religious education programme and the updated Curriculum Directory. The school has put in place strategies to give further challenge to all groups of pupils. Staff development has a high priority and includes teaching assistants who play a key role in the school.

Governors are very active in the life of the school and are involved with the review of policy and procedure. They work closely with senior leadership and have a very good understanding of strengths and areas for development. They are very well informed about the life of the school through the headteacher's report, feedback from the link governor and frequent visits. They are in a good position to challenge and support effectively. The local parish priest who is also link governor for religious education plays a major role in the life of the school by observing and evaluating provision as well as providing guidance and support to teachers. An annual staff/ governor retreat day is held to re-affirm the school's Catholic vision, evaluate provision and plan future improvements. All governors share the strong sense of the vision and educational mission of the school.

Leaders ensure that the school is a welcoming community where everyone is respected and valued. Other faiths are well taught and supported by teaching assistants and visits to other places of worship, including the nearby Hindu temple. There are very good links with other deanery schools as well as local authority run through participation in debates, sporting and cultural events. The headteacher and deputy have supported other diocesan schools through secondment and presentations to the deanery. The school choir has performed at the Commonwealth Christmas Carol Concert at St Martin in the

Fields as well as entertaining elderly parishioners at a Christmas lunch. Pupils are given very many opportunities to develop a sense of service within school and to show compassion for others through charitable fund raising and involvement in the local and wider community. Older pupils are developing an understanding of the theology underpinning this work. Opportunities for spiritual development ensure that pupils are able to reflect on their own lives and experiences. Regular retreat days are held for Year 6 pupils there are plans to provide something similar for Years 4 and 5. Parents are welcomed to many school events and are kept well informed about their children's welfare and progress. They appreciate the good level of contact with the school which includes regular questionnaires and curriculum information letters which enable them to support their children's education and faith journey.

## **Provision**

## **Grade 1**

The quality of teaching and learning in religious education is excellent. During the inspection lessons observed were good or outstanding. They are planned carefully with clear learning intentions and a varied range of activities. The school has made a major investment in resources including sets of bibles for Key Stage 2 which has led to very good familiarity with scripture. Pupils benefit from the high profile given throughout the school to religious education lessons. In all classes observed pupils were fully engaged and made very good progress. Teachers respond well to pupils' comments and take every opportunity to develop understanding. Higher order questioning was evident in lessons observed. Very good support by teaching assistants enables all groups of pupils to make progress. This was a feature of lessons especially in Early Years. Marking is positive, interactive and enables pupils to identify next steps in their learning. Very good monitoring, assessment, planning and tracking supports the attainment and progress of all groups of pupils.

The quality of the religious education curriculum is outstanding. At least 10% of curriculum time is devoted to religious education. The religious education programme 'Come and See' has been in place for two years and is now embedded. The headteacher gives religious education a central place in the life of the school and this is demonstrated by the budget devoted to it and the current level of resources. Vibrant religious education displays around the school emphasise the centrality of faith to the work of the community. The curriculum enables pupils to become aware of their responsibility for each other and their environment. It contributes very well to their spiritual and moral development. The support given to families through a wide range of extra curricular activities gives a strong sense of community to the school. There is every indication that current high standards are likely to be maintained or improved.

Provision for prayer and worship at St Winefride's is outstanding. Eucharistic celebrations, prayer and liturgies are central to the life of the school. They are very well planned and contribute greatly to pupils' spiritual development. They often include visual presentations, bible readings drama, singing and music. During the inspection a range of reflections and meditations were observed including one planned and led by Year 6 pupils, one by the headteacher and one by the parish priest. In class pupils were observed reading and writing their own prayers on the themes of social justice, currently being studied in religious education lessons. St Stephen's church is used for whole school assemblies each week further strengthening the excellent links with the parish. Pupils take part in Reconciliation services at key times of the year and older pupils receive the sacrament. The learning environment is vibrant and colourful. Each classroom has a very attractive prayer focus with religious artefacts and display boards which include children's work. Parents, families and parishioners are invited to masses which take place either in school or in the church and many other celebrations. Pupils are given many opportunities to develop their knowledge of Catholic traditions through participation in the Stations of the Cross, the Angelus and Rosary groups. The enthusiasm which pupils show during collective worship indicates that they understand that faith is at the heart of the school.

The inspector would like to express her thanks and appreciation to all members of the school community for their welcome and openness during the inspection.