

Our Lady Catholic Primary School

Pratt Street, Camden NW1 0DP

Date of inspection by Westminster Diocese: 13 November 2019



Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

A. Classroom religious education is outstanding

- The school's scheme of work has been clearly mapped to the Religious Education Curriculum Directory.
- Pupils are fully engaged in their learning and clearly enjoy their religious education lessons. They are religiously literate and have a good knowledge of scripture.
- Excellent progress is made by the pupils, often from very low starting points. Attainment is in line with other core subjects.
- Behaviour during lessons is always of the highest standard.
- Lessons make full use of the excellent resources available including IT and art work. The school adapts its chosen scheme of work creatively in order to make it relevant, exciting and challenging for pupils of all abilities. The school has high aspirations for its pupils and these are reflected in their religious education lessons.
- Religious education is clearly seen as central to the identity of the school and this is reflected in the high standard of the many displays around the school.
- There are very clear structures in place which ensure that teaching is of a high quality. A thorough monitoring schedule means that there is a consistency of approach and standards throughout the school. Leadership is strong and good practice shared amongst all staff. The subject leader is supported strongly by the senior leadership team and experienced governors.

B. The Catholic life of the school is outstanding

- It is evident from first entering this school that you are entering a vibrant, Catholic community, a community where every member is valued and encouraged to share their gifts.
- Timetables show clearly that religious education receives the full 10% of curriculum time as required by the Bishops' Conference.
- Prayer and worship are central to the life of the school and are fully inclusive of the school's diverse community, whilst at all times remaining Catholic.
- The school is full of relevant iconography and displays which enhance the environment and provide pupils with a constant reminder of our Catholic faith.
- Pupils show an amazing generosity in supporting local and international charities on a regular basis. Pupils have a strong understanding of the Common Good and the theology behind this, linking their actions in supporting others directly to scripture.
- The school works hard to include children, parents and carers from all faith backgrounds and no-faith backgrounds and makes them part of the school community. There is a strong understanding of the call to human flourishing.
- New staff are supported well and quickly learn the 'Our Lady's' way of doing things.
- Governors and school leaders have a clear, strong vision of what they want for the school and its pupils and work tirelessly to make sure that each child makes the best of the gifts they have been given.

A. Classroom Religious Education

What has improved since the last inspection?

Presentation in books is of a very high standard and is consistent across all year groups. Displays follow a standard pattern, but reflect the age and abilities of the pupils in the class. They showcase work by the children themselves. There is a variety of resources used throughout the school to support and develop the learning in religious education (RE). There is a clear progression in what the pupils use, helping them to deepen their learning. Resources also enhance the displays around the school, especially those relating to other faiths.

The content of classroom religious education is outstanding

The scheme of work used by the school has been clearly mapped against the Religious Education Curriculum Directory (RECD). This is made explicit to the pupils through their lessons and in displays on the classroom walls which show the four areas of Revelation as outlined in the RECD. The scheme has been adapted extensively to meet the needs of the pupils in the school and is supported by other resources when necessary. There is a clear structure to the planning and one-to-one meetings with the RE coordinator ensure high standards are maintained. Pupils are presented with many different and creative approaches to learning. Art is used extensively as a focus for lessons; one class had studied different interpretations of 'The Prodigal Son' before creating their own response. Children in Reception class were keen to act out the story of the Baptism of Jesus. Pupils study Judaism and Islam in detail each year and learn about other faiths through their RE work.

Pupil achievement in religious education is outstanding

Pupils achieve well from their starting point and in line with other core subjects. Pupils' attainment on entering the school is low in comparison with national averages, yet the pupils make sustained progress over their time at the school. This is particularly evident over Key Stage 2. Tracking is being developed to help monitor this progress in line with the new Age-Related Standards in RE to ensure maximum progress for all children. The RE coordinator works closely with staff to ensure that planning is consistent and progress mapped across the key stages. Staff have high expectations of all the pupils, Catholic and non-Catholic alike, and a clear progression in planning means that the pupils are able to make links between their old and new learning. These links are made explicit in lessons. Pupils demonstrate a high level of engagement in their lessons and are interested in their learning. They are religiously literate and are able to back up their ideas with scripture. One pupil was able to link the work of St Vincent de Paul in feeding the poor with the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand. Other pupils, looking at the call of recent humanitarian workers referred back to the call of David. They are given many different learning experiences in RE; and art; music, including hymns, and IT are used to great effect to enthuse the pupils.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

Teaching engages the pupils and provides them with a wealth of different ways in which to express their understanding and learning. Behaviour throughout lessons is exemplary; from the Nursery upwards, staff model positive relationships which are quickly learned by the pupils. Lessons move at a good pace, and pupils are challenged in their thinking by questions which stretch them appropriately. In one class, pupils were asked to back up their answers with examples and refer back to what they had previously learned. Teachers use assessment well to check the children's understanding during lessons. Teachers use modelling to support pupils to achieve the best work they can. High expectations are clear in all lessons, with pupils often given the chance to 'have a go at the next questions' to extend their work. Work is well scaffolded to support those who need it. Sometimes, pupils rely on the scaffolding too much, which can prevent them really showing what

they are capable of. Pupils with additional needs are supported well in the classroom by other staff and through adaptations made to their work. Marking is evident throughout the books and in the best cases this moves pupils on with next steps questions. Homework supports learning in the classroom.

The effectiveness of leadership and management in promoting religious education is outstanding

The subject leader, fully supported by the senior leadership team and governors, has a deep understanding of the place of classroom RE in the school. It is clear that learning about religion is not confined to lessons but is lived out in all other areas of school life. There is a strong schedule of monitoring and support in place which ensures that high expectations are shared across the school and every learning opportunity maximised. A well thought out programme of continuing professional development is in place for all staff which makes full use of the Diocese of Westminster Education Service for staff development, as well as using in-house expertise. This is clearly demonstrated in the way the new Age-Related standards have been introduced this term; it is clear that standards will not be allowed to drop while this transition is taking place. Governors have strong understanding of the place of RE in the school and are well aware of its strengths and also the areas in which it needs to develop. They visit regularly and meet with the subject leader and head of school in order to keep in touch with what is happening.

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

- Develop more rigorous tracking of pupils' progress across key stages.
- Provide pupils with more opportunities to demonstrate their RE knowledge more independently.

B. The Catholic life of the school

What has improved since the last inspection?

The previous inspection made three recommendations for improvement, all of which have been met. Pupils are very familiar with their mission statement; it is prominent around the school and they can refer to it in their lessons, showing a real understanding of it. Display around the school is of a consistently high standard, and children's work is an important part of this. The pupils are fully aware of the meaning of the Common Good and have a clear understanding of why they are called to behave in the way they do.

The place of religious education as the core of the curriculum

is outstanding

Religious education is clearly at the heart of this school; this is clear from the moment you enter the school site. The prominence of the resources used in class and in displays around the school show that time and money are used well to enhance the children's experience of Catholic life. Timetables show clearly that the full 10% of time required by the Bishops' Conference is met. The senior leadership team and governors are closely involved in the monitoring of Catholic life and this is reflected in their plans and minutes of meetings. One-to-one sessions each term ensure that the subject leader is able to support all staff. The way in which the new Age-Related Standards Framework have been introduced this term exemplifies the thoroughness with which staff are supported to deliver RE.

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

is outstanding

Prayer and worship are central to the life of the school and are fully inclusive of the school's diverse community, whilst at all times remaining Catholic. There is a wide variety of experiences of prayer for the pupils including class prayers, Christian meditation, whole school and key stage assemblies as well as Mass at the local church and the Sacrament of Reconciliation during Advent and Lent. Each class has a clearly defined prayer display, providing a focus for class prayers. Pupils enjoy taking part in Christian meditation. One said, 'If you want to, you can speak to God.' Another said, 'The aim is to listen to God if he speaks to you.' Pupils show great respect during prayer services, showing they understand and respect its importance. Prayer leaders from Year 1 upwards support in the prayer life of their classes and the school. 'Pupils leading Worship' is planned across the school during the spring term and the school has supported other schools in the delivery of this. The school fully supports its pupils of other faiths and celebrates the diversity that this brings. All pupils participate in school worship and parents are invited to attend school Masses and other events. Parents from other faiths often speak to the pupils about special celebrations in their own faiths.

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

is outstanding

The pupils can articulate a strong understanding of their call to justice. One of them said, 'When Jesus was alive, he spent his time with the most vulnerable... and we should follow his example', another said, 'We are very lucky so we should help the less fortunate'. The pupils support a range of charities such as Mary's Meals, the St Vincent de Paul Society and the local food bank on a regular basis. Regular collections take place for the food bank and monthly non-uniform day raises funds for the others. This is particularly impressive given the high level of disadvantage in the school. The pupils also support a student in Indonesia. The school runs a programme of focus weeks which demonstrate the school's commitment to the Common Good and the call to social justice. These

have included Equalities week, Peace week and Catholic Social Justice week. The older pupils have also looked at 'Laudate Si' and the Pope's call to care for our common home. The 'My gifts wall' in each class celebrates the uniqueness of each child. The diversity of the school community at Our Lady's is truly celebrated and pupils have a real sense of the wider world, their role within it and their moral obligations to it through the teachings of the Church.

The partnership with parents, school and parish, and collaboration as an integral part of the diocese through its relationship with the diocesan Bishop and those acting on his behalf

is outstanding

Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. They receive termly RE newsletters and the 'Wednesday Word' each week to help support their children. Initiatives like the 'travelling crib' help strengthen the links between home and school. Collaboration with other schools is very strong; the executive head plays a large part in promoting these links. This sharing of good practice across the schools has enhanced the provision the school could provide on its own. The school works closely with the diocese. It engages with moderations at local and diocesan levels and accesses appropriate continuing professional development for staff. It has been working closely with the RE advisor to introduce the new Age-Related standards. The executive head is a member of the Diocese of Westminster Education Commission. Parish links are well developed. Pupils attend Mass at the church of Our Lady of Hal and were keen to talk about their visits there. The parish priest is well known to the pupils and makes regular visits to the school. This helps build an understanding of the physical church with the very many pupils who do not identify as practising Catholics.

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

is outstanding

The senior team and governors have created a vibrant community in which all pupils can experience the richness of a life lived in a Catholic community. Governors clearly support the executive head, the head of school and the senior team, including the subject leader, in making sure that this vision to teach, uphold and live out Christian values is made possible to all who are part of the school. Governors are regular visitors to the school, both formally and informally and are well placed to support and challenge the leadership team. Systems are in place to monitor and maintain the high standards shown around the school. New staff are supported well and quickly take on the 'Our Lady's' way of delivering RE, which leads to consistency for the pupils. The leadership team has a comprehensive understanding of the community the school serves and have made it their job to help that community become one in which each member can experience the fullness of life in Christ.

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

- To develop more opportunities for child-led worship throughout the school year.

Information about this school

- The school is a one-form entry Catholic Primary school in the locality of Camden.
- The school serves the parish of Our Lady of Hal, Camden.
- The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholic is 40%.
- The proportion of pupils who are from other Christian denominations is 26 % and from other faiths is 22 %. The remaining pupils are from families who have not declared a faith.
- The percentage of Catholic teachers in the school is 73 %.
- The number of teachers with a Catholic qualification is 4.
- There are 32% of pupils in the school with special educational needs or disabilities of whom 4 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 well above average rate of families claiming free school meals.
- 163 pupils receive the Pupil Premium (64 %).

Department for Education Number	2023655
Unique Reference Number	100048
Local Authority	Camden

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils	4 -11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on roll	227
The appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms Margaret Harvey
Head of school	Ms Moya Richardson
Executive Head	Mrs Juliette Jackson
Telephone number	020 7485 7997
Website	www.ourlady.camden.sch.uk
Email address	admin@ourlady.camden.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	13 November 2014
Grades from previous inspection:	
Classroom religious education	Very Good
The Catholic life of the school	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 9 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
Ms Robina Maher	Associate Inspector
Mr Fearghal Nash	Associate Inspector
Mr Tony Gorton	Associate Inspector

Information about inspection

The purpose of Diocesan inspection is to report to and advise the Archbishop on the quality of classroom religious education and the Catholic life of the school. The inspection report is also used to inform parents and carers, and the wider Catholic community. Inspection provides an opportunity to support, challenge, evaluate and promote the work of Catholic schools. It also assists schools in the work of self-evaluation and improvement, and enables the Diocese to celebrate with schools their sense of identity and their strengths as Catholic schools.

Inspection Grades

- Outstanding
- Good
- Requires improvement
- Causing concern

This report is published by the Diocese of Westminster and 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
W: <http://rcdow.org.uk/education>