

# Westminster Diocese Inspection Report

## Our Lady of the Visitation Catholic Primary School

Greenford Road, Greenford, Middlesex UB6 9AN

Date of inspection: 2 March 2016



### A. Classroom Religious Education

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

**Overall Grade 2**

The overall effectiveness of classroom religious education (RE) in developing pupils' religious literacy is judged to be good. The school is being very well led by a determined and hardworking headteacher who has a clear vision for school development. She is being well supported by her religious education leader and also by a strong and committed governing body who provide a good balance of challenge and support. The school is not yet outstanding because there are inconsistencies in the marking of pupils work and also in the quality of teaching and learning in different phases of the school. Teachers need further guidance in both these key areas. Pupil achievement is judged to be good and by the time pupils leave they are mostly at or above national averages so progress is equally judged to be good. All teaching in the school is at least good with some outstanding aspects also seen. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provides an outstanding start to the religious education of young children. One key feature of this school is its creativity in the use of art and design to enhance the RE curriculum. Some of the pupils work in this area is a joy to behold and is to be commended. Pupils are very articulate and respond well to some very good high level questioning from teachers. Behaviour in classes and around the school is consistently outstanding and pupils are very engaged and enthusiastic during lessons. The school's own self-evaluation is relatively accurate but requires more objectivity in the future.

### 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 school's overall effectiveness in this area is judged to be outstanding in all areas of its Catholic life. The accommodation and care and attention given to displays of art and design around the school is of an extremely high standard. All areas of the school are utilised and the school continues to develop its grounds with a new prayer garden and other initiatives. The pupil led acts of prayer and worship are equally outstanding and are clearly embedded in the life of the school. Pupils' knowledge of the theology that underpins the call to serve and the Common Good is equally of a very high standard. Parents are very supportive and confident of the school and greatly value the start it gives to the formation of their children's Catholic life. The head and her staff have a shared and collaborative vision of where they want the school to be and have been highly successful in implementing their vision within the school in the last few years. The governing body and parish priest equally play a key role in this community as all aspects of leadership work very well together. Catholic life deserves to be judged as outstanding.

## 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 1 day in school, visited 14 lessons, observed 3 class acts of worship and carried out 4 interviews 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.

The Inspection of Our Lady of the Visitation Catholic Primary School 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 inspector is 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

Mr Sean Flood                      Lead Inspector  
Mrs Mary Ainger                  Associate Inspector

## Description of School

The school is a two form entry Catholic primary school in the London Borough of Ealing and the locality of Greenford. The school serves the parish of Our Lady of the Visitation, Greenford.. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholic is 96.2%. The proportion of pupils who are from other Christian denominations is 2.8% and from other Faiths or no Faith declared is 1%. The percentage of Catholic teachers in the school is 78%.

There are 468 pupils on roll, with 4 pupil with a statements of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)/ Education Health & Care Plans ( EHC). The proportion of pupils from ethnic minority groups is above average. The number of pupils speaking English as an Additional Language is above average. There is a below average rate of families claiming free school meals. 38 pupils receive the Pupil Premium (8.1%).

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DFE Number:                            307 3503  
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Headteacher:                            Miss Kathleen Coll  
Chair of Governors:                    Mrs H Mackenzie

Date of previous inspection:         14<sup>th</sup> October 2010  
Grade from previous inspection:     1

<b>Key for inspection grades:</b>	<i>Grade 1</i>	<i>Outstanding</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?**

The main area of improvement since the last inspection has been in the introduction of a new RE scheme of work. The school has also expanded its teaching of other faiths and cultures by introducing a third faith, Islam. Since the last inspection the school has introduced a programme of developmental marking and assessment, this work is now on-going. The school also uses art and design, music and dance extensively to further enhance the teaching and learning of RE in highly imaginative and thoughtful ways.

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

#### **Grade 2**

The content of Our Lady of the Visitation Catholic Primary School's religious education curriculum fully meets the requirements of the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*. The curriculum is being well planned for by the subject leader of RE and care and thought goes into ensuring that the four areas of study are being well covered. A wide range of resources are being used to enhance the curriculum and this is particularly evident in the extensive use of religious art and design within the school. Progress and development of content is well planned for at all phases of the school.

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

#### **Grade 2**

Pupil achievement is good overall. Pupils enter the school at levels broadly comparable to the national average. They leave the school in Year 6 almost all at or above national averages therefore progress is also deemed to be good. Pupil progress is consistent throughout the school. The Nursery provides an outstanding start to the pupils in this school. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) as a whole provides a very rich and stimulating start to school life. Activities are very well planned and catered for and a wide and stimulating religious vocabulary is quickly acquired in this key area. Good progress is being made by all groups in the school and a good level of challenge is being provided in all classes. There are no weaknesses in achievement across the school as progress is steady in nearly all classes. Pupils are very enthusiastic learners and are very well versed in religious language and literacy. Their response to effective high order questioning in some classes was of a high standard. Pupils are articulate and confident in using religious language and this was especially evident in Years 5 and 6 with discussions centred around Lent and the idea of Sacrifice.

Pupils' work is generally well presented but there are inconsistencies evident between parallel classes in terms of coverage and expectation and this needs to be addressed. The presentation and watercolours produced by both the Year 4 classes were of a very high quality and the work around the story of Ruth and Naomi was a joy to observe. The school has started to use Bibles in class and analyse direct Scripture more and this is an area for further development and consideration.

### **The quality of teaching**

#### **Grade 2**

The quality of teaching across the school is judged to be good. All teaching seen was at least good with some classes displaying outstanding aspects during lessons and over time. The most noteworthy feature of the effective teaching was in those classes where higher order questioning was being well

used. Some good examples were seen right across the school and teachers all clearly have high expectations of their pupils. The pace and timing of lessons were good at all times and pupil behaviour for learning was outstanding in most classes. Teaching assistants generally played a valuable and effective role in ensuring good quality teaching and ensuring that all abilities were being catered for.

The school has introduced developmental marking but this needs much greater attention at present. Teachers lack guidance on how to mark and assess and as a result pupils often do not know how to improve their work. A wide variety of stamps, stickers and coloured pens is being used and this results in real inconsistency in marking in almost all classes. This is a key area for development. This written feedback is in marked contrast to the oral feedback pupils receive during lessons which is sensitive, thoughtful and leads to good learning and progress. Homework is set and the school is considering using the Wednesday Word to encourage parents to discuss religious learning and literacy with their children.

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

### **Grade 2**

The leadership and management of religious education are good with outstanding features in some areas. There is a very clear vision and commitment to the Catholic mission of educating children. This is led by a determined and successful head who has brought about great changes in recent years. She leads by example and hard work and communicates her drive and purpose to all members of the school community. The head teacher's work on enhancing the creative side of RE through art, design and music is exemplary. She is being well supported by a very effective subject leader who is knowledgeable and knows what needs to be done to bring about even greater improvement. The subject leader has done a great deal in the last year and now needs more time to be able to drive up standards of teaching and learning even more. The school is also being very well supported by a strong chair of governors and also by the link governor for RE who is the parish priest. Their knowledge and understanding of what goes on in the school are very impressive and underpinned by a will and determination to make things even better in the future. Opportunities for staff and professional development are plentiful. The school has started peer observations of teaching and learning and this needs to be enhanced and developed. The self-evaluation document produced is thorough, mostly accurate and realistic but requires more objective self-assessment in the future.

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

- Give staff clear guidance via the school's marking policy on what is expected in the marking of RE work and provide support on how to develop pupil's understanding even further
- Continue to use more direct Scripture links and Bible work during RE lessons
- Provide more opportunities for peer observations so that staff can observe each other teach and share best practice in the quality of teaching of RE

## **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?**

There have been many significant developments since the last inspection. The key ones are the introduction of pupil led acts of worship and liturgies right across the school. These are now firmly embedded in the life of the school and are of a high standard. The school has introduced a 'Be Spirited' week on an annual basis to encourage creativity and spiritual and moral development.

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

#### **Grade I**

10% of curriculum time is devoted to the teaching of religious education across all key stages every week. The school values and recognises religious education as a core subject in the curriculum and as such, time, money and resources are given in accordance with this status. A generous annual budget is allocated to the subject every year and is being well spent by the RE subject leader. Teachers have good subject knowledge of religious education and high expectations of pupils in accordance with the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory* for England and Wales. All teachers, including those new to the school and non-Catholic, are being well supported in learning about the teaching of religious education. The accommodation is quite simply outstanding in all aspects. Displays of the very highest quality are everywhere around the school. The corridors, the main hall and outside walls are all being superbly utilised to celebrate the Catholic and religious life of the school. There are mosaics, embroidery and murals, a prayer garden in development and a new prayer room. The whole community should be justifiably proud of the beautiful environment provided for the children of this school.

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

#### **Grade I**

Prayer and Catholic worship are outstanding and is a major strength of this school. The distinctive feature of this particular school is the scope and opportunities for pupils to plan, lead and even evaluate their own acts of worship. This occurs from Nursery all the way through to Year 6. Catholic worship is clearly outstanding in this school. During this inspection two pupil led acts of worship were observed in Years 4 and 5 and one teacher led act of worship in Year 1. These were all outstanding and of very high quality and are equally clearly embedded in the life of the school. Art, music, drama and dance are used very effectively to enhance prayer and worship in this school. Pupils' liturgical formation is well planned from a very early age to ensure the widest possible experiences of the richness of the Catholic tradition of prayer and worship. Pupils' spiritual development is enabled through the excellent opportunities they have for quiet, reflection, sharing and discussion. Pupil and partner talk and challenge are highly advanced in this school. The celebration of the Eucharist and other sacramental celebrations are offered at all key times throughout the liturgical year and the parish priest and indeed all the local priests are frequent and welcome visitors to the school. Prayer and Catholic worship are a major strength of the school and are judged to be outstanding.

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

### **Grade I**

The school is outstanding in its work to promote the Common Good. The Gospel call to help and support those who are less fortunate is very effectively promoted throughout the school. This is evidenced through the curriculum, assemblies, acts of worship and through the many actions and example of everyone in the school community. Pupils make a significant contribution to the local and wider communities. Some key examples are through supporting local groups such as food for local homeless projects at Harvest and sponsored events to raise money for school projects. Key charities supported include MacMillan, Marie Curie, Help for Heroes and the British Heart Foundation, these are just a sample of some outstanding charity work done over the years. Recently the school has been involved with Mary's Meals and a new project called Free the Children, this gives pupils the chance to reflect on their global responsibilities. The school choir also play a key role in supporting the Common Good via community projects such as visiting the local 'Nursing Home' to sing Christmas Carols and inviting others into the school for tea and cake at various times during the year. This work has been greatly valued and appreciated by the local community. Pupils are very respectful of others, sensitive to differences and accepting of diversity. They are given ample opportunities to serve within their own school community. Particularly noteworthy was the way that a group of Year 5 and 6 pupils were able to articulate the theology that underpins the call to serve others and do good works. Their responses were of the highest standard one could wish to hear.

## **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**

Parents are very supportive of the life and the work of the school in developing Catholic education and are very proud of the Catholic Life offered to their own children. A recently completed questionnaire showed extensive support for the school and its leadership. The school sees good communication with parents as being very important and parents are given weekly newsletters and information via an informative website. They are also invited in to liturgies, assemblies and masses throughout the year. The teachers and staff work closely with the Diocese making full use of training opportunities and also regularly attend deanery meetings and work moderation meetings with other Ealing Catholic schools. Links with the parish are very strong and fruitful at all levels on a daily basis.

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

### **Grade I**

The leadership and management in promoting the Catholic life of the school are judged to be outstanding in every way. The headteacher leads by example, drive and commitment. She has a clear vision for the development of the school and has been highly successful in bringing about change in the last few years. The RE leader also provides good support to staff and equally wants the school to thrive in its Catholic life. The whole school community share a united and collaborative vision of the Catholic nature of education. The governors provide a strong balance of challenge and support and are being kept well informed of all developments within the school. The recently revised school Mission Statement encompasses the whole community and reflects that faith underpins all aspects of school life.

The Mission Statement 'We learn, love and grow through Christ' is known by every pupil in the school, including the Nursery and is a reality in children's daily lives. All staff in the school are encouraged to promote a broad and balanced curriculum to further the opportunities for the spiritual and moral development of the pupils. Provision for children with special educational needs is good and inclusion is a commitment of the school. Parents are justifiably very proud of the Catholic life of this school.

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

- Develop its plans to link with schools and charities overseas with some longer term and sustainable projects to further enable the pupils to promote the Common Good.