Our Lady and St John's Catholic Primary School

Boston Park Road, Brentford, TW8 9JF

Date of inspection by Westminster Diocese: 27 April 2022

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

A. Classroom religious education is outstanding

- The curriculum, based on the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*, is engaging and dynamic.
- Pupils show a positive and enthusiastic commitment to their learning resulting in excellent progress at each key stage.
- The typicality of teaching is outstanding and never less than good.
- A wide variety of teaching strategies ensure that lessons are well paced and matched to pupils' learning needs.
- The standard of written work in pupil books is exemplary.
- Staff have high expectations resulting in excellent achievement and a strong work ethic amongst pupils.
- Leadership in religious education models outstanding practice and ensures that RE has a central place in the life of the school.
- Self-evaluation demonstrates an accurate and incisive awareness of the school's strengths and areas for development.
- RE is well resourced and school displays demonstrate how pupils engage effectively with their work.
- Religious literacy is excellent and pupils are confident in their use of religious language in both discussion and written work.
- Pupils are attentive, respectful and engaged, and behaviour is excellent.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is strong.
- Governors are strongly committed to developing RE and work hard to support the leadership team.

B. The Catholic life of the school is outstanding

- Our Lady and St John's is an outstanding community based on Catholic values and practice.
- RE is central to the work of the school and permeates all aspects of daily life.
- The staff team and governors have a strong vision of service and discipleship.
- A rich variety of innovative and creative worship opportunities are provided.
- There is frequent and regular pupil-led prayer which is well planned and engaging - a key strength of this school.
- Pupils understand the importance of social justice and provide strong support for local, national and global charities.
- The staff and pupils are confident in expressing and living the school's Catholic identity.
- The gifts and talents of pupils are frequently affirmed and celebrated.
- The school is welcoming and inclusive, and pupils feel safe and valued.
- There is strong support for pupil and staff well-being; pupils who are struggling are well supported.
- Parents and carers actively share and support the mission of the school.
- The headteacher demonstrates a dedicated and dynamic commitment to the Church's mission in education.
- There are strong and productive links with the local parish and the diocese.
- Governors make a strong and valued contribution to the Catholic life of the school.

A. Classroom Religious Education

What has improved since the last inspection?

Both recommendations from the previous inspection have been successfully implemented. Firstly, good practice has been shared across the school and high quality CPD has enabled staff to share resources and expertise. Secondly, school self-evaluation has improved considerably. The Self Evaluation Form is a working document with contributions from all key staff and governors; it is comprehensive and analytical.

The content of classroom religious education is outstanding

The content of classroom religious education throughout all key stages meets the requirements of the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*. The curriculum meets pupils' learning needs in a highly creative and engaging way. Well planned and well-resourced lessons ensure pupils are responsive, actively involved and keen to share their knowledge and understanding of their faith, thus enabling them to make rapid and sustained progress. Pupils are attentive, respectful and engaged. There was clear evidence of a variety of differentiated tasks throughout the school and pupils were both supported and challenged. In an observed lesson, role play was used effectively to help pupils understand what happened after Jesus rose from the dead. Support staff were very well deployed to support pupils with additional needs. The age-appropriate teaching of other faiths was evident in pupils' books. Pupils were very positive about their RE lessons and were eager to share their learning.

Pupil achievement in religious education is outstanding

The achievement of pupils in religious education is outstanding, in line with, and in some cases better than in other core subjects. Pupils in this school are confident and enthusiastic which results in excellent progress across all key stages. High-quality resources and provision are evident both indoors and outdoors. Teachers are very creative in the way these resources are used to support the pupils' learning and provide for a range of learning styles, needs and abilities. Pupils show high levels of curiosity, imagination and concentration and are proactive learners. They are able to work independently and collaboratively and are given opportunities to reflect on their experiences. Teachers have high expectations and pupils demonstrate very positive attitudes to their learning which has a clear impact on the progress they make. Pupil responses in class, along with work in books demonstrates the range of progress from their starting points. There are good systems in place to ensure that those students for whom English is an additional language make good progress in line with their peers. Religious literacy is excellent and pupils are confident in their use of religious language in both discussion and written work.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

Teaching in all key stages is outstanding and never less than good. Pupil engagement in every class is of the highest standard. A wide variety of teaching strategies are used across the school, including role play, prompt cards, art and design, paired and group work thereby ensuring the needs of all pupils are met. Teachers' expert subject knowledge, used alongside skilful higher order questioning, is used to good effect to develop pupils' religious knowledge and deepen their theological understanding. Creative teaching using a wide variety of pedagogy ensures pupils are fully engaged and challenged to think more deeply about their faith across all key stages. In Reception pupils were actively involved in learning about the Resurrection story and were able to confidently talk about

and name the characters saying that "Jesus had risen and was alive". In Year 5, pupils used Renaissance paintings of the story of Emmaus to very effectively describe how the disciples were feeling about the loss of Jesus. Support staff are very well deployed and play an essential role in supporting the learning for all abilities. Behaviour of pupils in lessons and around the school is exemplary. The learning environments are bright, engaging, well-resourced and of the highest quality.

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

The leadership and management of religious education is outstanding. Leaders have ensured that RE is at the heart of the school and the curriculum. The RE lead has a strong focus on improving teaching and learning, modelling good practice whilst supporting and encouraging staff. Excellent subject knowledge is developed through continuing CPD. The RE lead and the leadership team have a strong understanding of the strengths of classroom RE and the areas needed for improvement. Regular evaluation of progress takes place through rigorous monitoring and self-assessment. There is a strong understanding throughout the school of the centrality of RE in the mission of the Church. This results in excellent progress being made across all the key stages. Governors are active in supporting and challenging the leadership team to demonstrate the impact that RE has on the daily life of the school. Our Lady and St John's is a Hub school for the RE Framework and is actively engaged with the diocese and other local schools.

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

- Further refine and develop the 'no-marking' policy across Key Stage 2.

B. The Catholic life of the school

What has improved since the last inspection?

Since the last inspection the school has worked hard to ensure that pupils are more aware of the Church's global mission. A Mini Vinnie group has been established which is very active in supporting the charity work of the school. Support for charitable activities including CAFOD is strong and pupils are aware of how the Church offers support to those in need.

The place of religious education as the core of the curriculum is outstanding

Religious education receives the 10% curriculum time required by the Bishops' Conference. RE is at the heart of the school and permeates all aspects of it from the welcome received to the way the mission statement is lived out by all stakeholders in words and actions. Several outstanding displays, most including pupil work of differing levels of ability, cover aspects of pupil achievement as well as anti-bullying messages and 'One Kind Word'. Relationships are strong in this school and a high level of mutual respect was observed. Discussions with parents as well as an exceptionally strong response to the parent survey show how pleased parents are with the religious education their children receive. The leadership of RE is well supported and there is effective support for staff through regular training and co-planning across paired year groups. RE is well resourced in this school and the budget is in line with other core curriculum areas. The parish priest who is a regular visitor supports pupil learning and teacher planning. Governors play an active role in the school. Governing body meetings have a regular focus on RE and the school leadership is effectively supported and challenged. The link governor makes regular visits including lesson observations, 'book looks' and pupil voice interviews and the findings are fed back at governor meetings

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

Liturgy and prayer are central to the life of the school, enabling worship to be a real celebration. Opportunities for a variety of prayer experiences, individual, whole class, traditional and spontaneous ensure that pupils have a good understanding of the role of prayer in their faith. Pupil led prayer is regular and well conducted; it is a key strength of the school. An observed Gospel assembly, led by pupils, was outstanding, enabling high levels of participation by the children. During an observed teacher led Key Stage1 assembly there were excellent opportunities for pupil contribution including spontaneous prayer; it was clear that such opportunities are a part of pupils' everyday experience. The prayer time at the start of the observed Nursery lesson was reverent and reflective. All classes have a prayer tree with high quality pupil prayers displayed. Children were reflective and respectful in prayer and clearly saw it as an important part of their lives. They reported having regular class Masses which they enjoy; parents are often invited, building community links. One parent commented, 'My son has improved his relationship with God and has made good progress in his prayer life.' During the pandemic, prayer continued to be supported with the Wednesday Word shared online, as well as other resources and assembly power points. The parish priest works closely with leadership, staff and pupils in supporting their prayer life and collective worship. It is clear that this is an area under continuous development by the school and leaders are not afraid to try out new and imaginative ways of enhancing the prayer experience for pupils.

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

This is an inclusive school valuing all pupils and supporting their development. One member of staff commented, 'We are a family, we all work together, we are never alone and everyone is valued'. Staff care about well-being and actively support pupils with class 'worry boxes', regular circle time and the 'Snug' room where children can have a quiet space to reflect. Two Emotional Literacy Support Assistants and a school counsellor are available, and these play their part in ensuring that pupils are able to flourish as happy, well-behaved learners. Regular celebration assemblies recognise pupils' talents and achievements. The school supports many charities on a local, national and global level. These include the local food bank, CAFOD, The Passage and Hope for India. Pupils are proud of the way they support those in need and have a good understanding of why the Church calls them to be active in the service of others. One pupil commented, 'As Catholics we want to help people, it means you follow in Jesus' footsteps'. They were particularly proud of recent fundraising for the Ukraine and the collection by the Mini Vinnies for the local food bank. The pupils are keen to take advantage of the wide range of leadership opportunities offered by the school.

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

The school has built outstanding relationships with parents evidenced by the excellent parent survey results. Parents and carers actively share and support the mission of the school and have a high regard for the work of the staff in developing the faith of their children. On parent commented, 'It's a very supportive and engaging school which delivers and role-models kindness.' Parents are encouraged to participate in school events at key times in the school year. There are good links with the local parish and with the diocesan community of schools. Senior staff and governors regularly attend diocesan courses and there are strong links with the diocesan education service through the RE advisor. During the pandemic the school worked in close collaboration with parents to ensure the pupils continued to learn and thrive, and strong support was offered to vulnerable families.

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

School leadership is outstanding. The mission statement, 'We live, learn and love with Jesus' informs all aspects of school life and is evident in all relationships and encounters in Our Lady & St John's. Leadership at all levels shows a dedicated and dynamic commitment to the Church's mission in education. The school's self-evaluation process is exemplary and shows a healthy commitment to continuous improvement. There is a real and living sense of community which comes from the leadership and permeates all aspects of the Catholic life of the school. This is an inclusive school and diversity is celebrated. Staff well-being is taken seriously, and effective systems are in place to develop and enhance the contribution of the staff team. New members of staff are given strong support during induction and in their delivery of the RE curriculum. Governors have a clear commitment to share in the strategic leadership of the school; they provide robust challenge to the senior leadership team and carry out their duties with energy and enthusiasm.

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

- Develop the retreat programme for both pupils and staff.
- Further develop and extend the existing good practice in pupil-led worship.

Information about this school

- The school is a one form entry Catholic primary school in the locality of Brentford, Hounslow.
- The school serves the parishes of St John the Evangelist, Brentford.
- The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholic is 95%.
- The proportion of pupils who are from other Christian denominations is 2% and from other faiths is 3%.
- The percentage of Catholic teachers in the school is 80%.
- The number of teachers with a Catholic qualification is 5.
- There are 6% of pupils in the school with special educational needs or disabilities of whom 5 have statements of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)/ Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP).
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is average.
- The number of pupils speaking English as an Additional Language is well above average.
- There is a below average rate of families claiming free school meals.
- 35 pupils receive the Pupil Premium (17%).

Department for Education Number	313/3502
Unique Reference Number	102526
Local Authority	Hounslow

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on roll	209
The appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Gary Padbury/ Mrs Tiffany Bolton
Headteacher	Mrs Sue Cunningham
Telephone number	0208 560 7477
Website	www.stjohnsrc.hounslow.sch.uk
Email address	head@stjohnsrc.hounslow.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	9 October 2015
Grades from previous inspection:	
Classroom religious education	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 7 lessons or part lessons were observed.
- The inspectors attended 2 assemblies 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.

Mr Paul Higginson	Lead Inspector
Mrs Dee Abbott	Associate Inspector
Ms Carol Maguire	Associate Inspector
Mr Adam Hall	Shadow Lead 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

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