

# St Pauls' Catholic Primary School

Bradley Road, Wood Green, London, N22 7SZ



Date of inspection by Westminster Diocese: 29 April 2022

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### A. Classroom religious education is good

- The overall effectiveness of Religious Education in the school is good.
- The content of the curriculum meets the requirements of the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory* and is beginning to show evidence of increasingly creative elements.
- Despite challenges around the pandemic, leaders have been clearly focused on keeping Religious Education at the heart of the curriculum.
- Systems for demonstrating pupil attainment and progress are well considered and used effectively.
- Pupils are engaged in lessons and demonstrate positive attitudes to learning across the school.
- Teaching is typically good and pupils are generally religiously literate.
- Teaching is monitored well and good systems are being established by leaders to support new teachers.
- The influence of RE permeates all aspects of the learning environment and is evident throughout the school.

### Classroom religious education is not yet outstanding because

- Pupils, especially the more able, are not challenged sufficiently to enable them to broaden and deepen their religious understanding.
- A lack of differentiation in planning does not fully support the progress of less able pupils.
- Opportunities are limited for independent research and for pupils to take responsibility for their learning.

### B. The Catholic life of the school is good

- The school's mission, '*To love God and love one another, to respect ourselves, respect one another and respect the world around us*' is clear and contributes positively to the way the school expresses itself as a Catholic community.
- The leadership and management promote the Catholic life of the school effectively and have a range of actions to embed practices further, post pandemic.
- Pupils are proud of their school and can celebrate its inherent Catholic ethos enthusiastically with visitors.
- A variety of initiatives and strategies shows a considered vision for school improvement.
- Parents are very positive and appreciative of the school's impact on their children's faith journey.
- Governors play an active role in the school and are very supportive of the Catholic life of the school.

### The Catholic life of the school is not yet outstanding because

- Pupil engagement and pupil voice is not yet an integral part of the worship of prayer and liturgy.
- Although pupils have a good understanding of the Church's call to action and the theology underpinning the actions, their engagement and active involvement is not fully developed across the school.

## A. Classroom Religious Education

### What has improved since the last inspection?

The school has made concerted efforts in improving the use of scripture to make links and embed the knowledge and understanding of meaning and purpose in exploring the examples of Jesus in their lives today. This is evident in lessons, in collective worship and in displays around the school. Marking strategies have been developed and set clear expectations in line with school policy. Pupils could say how this supports them with their progress in RE. Staffing challenges during the pandemic have made the embedding of subject knowledge for all staff problematic, however the subject leader has a clear vision and strategy for continuing to develop this.

### The content of classroom religious education is good

The content of the RE curriculum at St Paul's meets the requirements of the Religious Education Curriculum Directory. The subject leader has a thorough knowledge of the curriculum and continues to work rigorously to ensure that units of work show progression to build a solid foundation on which to deepen the pupils' religious literacy. There is a clear strategy for staff training although this has been hampered by staffing challenges due to the pandemic. As a result, the knowledge and understanding of all staff is not as developed as it could be.

There is emerging evidence showing creativity in the teaching and learning of RE in some classes and this will continue to be developed as staff become increasingly confident in teaching the scheme of work. The school needs to continue to develop the teaching of other world faiths in every year group, and give further consideration to embedding this now that visits to places of worship and visitors to the school are permitted.

### Pupil achievement in religious education is good

The school's own self-evaluation demonstrates the commitment to continue raising standards. There is generally a good standard of written work and there is evidence of pupils being exposed to a variety of tasks. A lack of differentiation in questioning and challenge across the school, however, limits the quality of work for the most able and does not always support fully the progress of less able pupils. Pupils respond well to teacher's questions in their books although there now needs to be a focus on increasingly challenging questions to stretch the pupils to think more deeply.

Progress can be seen in the content of children's written work throughout the year as well as between year groups. Pupils' progress is monitored through moderation and this continues to be increasingly effective through the school's involvement in both deanery and diocesan moderation. Teachers are dedicated, through continuing professional development, to ensuring pupils continue to achieve well in RE. Pupils enjoy their lessons, they behave well and are eager to learn.

### The quality of teaching is good

The quality of teaching observed in the school, although good, is varied in terms of the level of challenge and independence offered to pupils. Pupils in EYFS and in upper KS2 have a stronger grasp of religious understanding than that observed in other areas of the school. This is mainly as a result of lessons being less teacher led and pupils being offered the chance to reflect on their learning and think independently. Best practice was observed in lessons where questioning challenged the children's understanding, assessed their prior knowledge, and provided opportunities for independent learning. An example of this, in a Year 6 lesson, encouraged the children to discuss the question, 'Should the Catholic faith be based on physical evidence alone?' In the Reception class, after pupils were challenged to answer thought provoking, open ended questions, they were then

encouraged to embed their knowledge in a whole class role-play on the Easter story. In some lessons, opportunities were missed to address misconceptions or to give pupils opportunities for offering opinions.

In all lessons, positive, encouraging relationships between staff and pupils supported pupils' learning very effectively.

### **The effectiveness of leadership and management in promoting religious education is good**

Leaders have worked hard during challenging times of the pandemic to ensure RE remains a priority. Due to various reasons related to the pandemic, staffing has been inconsistent in some year groups and the leadership and management of the school are to be commended on their commitment to providing ongoing support and development to new staff. The subject leader is a passionate advocate for the subject and participates in all opportunities provided at deanery and diocesan level and is confident in his knowledge about how to further develop RE in the school. The school's mission statement is well embedded and clearly lived through every aspect of school life.

The school's self – evaluation of classroom RE, although well considered, is currently over ambitious in some of its aims and areas for development. Leaders need to ensure that areas for immediate development are prioritised, planned effectively and embedded by all staff and pupils.

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

- Ensure planning as a whole school is rigorous, with a focus on differentiation to ensure pupils are both sufficiently supported and challenged.
- Provide opportunities for all pupils to take ownership of their learning by enabling them to develop enquiring minds, ask challenging questions, and to think more deeply about their learning.

## B. The Catholic life of the school

### What has improved since the last inspection?

All pupils have regular access to bibles and use them effectively, in most year groups, to explore Scripture. The 'Minnie Vinnie' team is well established; however, the school will need to continue the process for strengthening further pupil ownership on Catholic Social Teaching.

### The place of religious education as the core of the curriculum

is good

The requirement of the Bishops' conference that 10% of classroom curriculum is devoted to religious education is fully met. It is evident that Religious Education is given very high priority and is central to the life of the school. The school makes its mission clear to staff and pupils and this is reinforced in all aspects of school life. Staff, pupils, parents and governors recognise the status and importance of RE within the curriculum and the whole school community works hard to maintain and develop the religious ethos of the school.

The Catholic ethos of the school is also clearly identified through the wide and rich variety of displays in communal areas and classrooms, including the inclusive representations of Jesus displayed in the school, the opportunities for prayer and reflection throughout the school day and the links to the parish. Through their work and in discussion, the pupils could articulate that religious education is very special in St. Paul's school. Pupils show visitors around the school with great pride and highlight the thread of Catholicity evident throughout the school.

There is, however, inconsistency in the quality of teaching across the school and it is important that teachers have time to focus on developing this key area of their practice and ensure teaching in all phases of the school challenges and supports all groups of pupils and provides opportunities for children to work with increased independence.

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

is good

The experience of Catholic worship for the whole school community continues to develop post pandemic. The school is very much looking forward to welcoming parents and families back into school to participate in and observe acts of worship. During the pandemic, the school worked hard to involve parents as much as possible, even, for example, moving Nativity plays outdoors to enable parents to attend. As collective worship returns to its pre pandemic strengths and as new staff become increasingly familiar with catholic prayer and liturgy, pupils are beginning to lead worship in various ways. Reflections observed during remote learning periods were very prayerful and shared with the school community.

The Head of school's weekly Gospel assemblies link to the liturgical year and support the school's mission and values.

Pupils are very keen to begin contributing to assemblies and to lead in forms of collective worship across the school. Pupil voice is particularly strong in their contributions to the RE/Devotion 'floor' books which detail their involvement in collective worship from year to year and are of a particularly high standard.

The school avails of the close proximity of the church and attend mass regularly. They contribute to masses by singing in the choir, leading the readings and altar serving. The parish priest plays an instrumental role in the life of the school and is an excellent support to staff and pupils in the experience of Catholic worship.

Displays and classroom prayer areas are thoughtfully planned and reflect the liturgical cycle and prayer life of the school.

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

In the school's self-evaluation, leaders aim for all pupils to recognise that 'acting in service' is a way of performing God's work. This is understood by the pupils who are now very keen, as systems are re-established post pandemic restrictions, to plan and lead charitable activities. In discussions with the Mini Vinnie team, they understand their contribution to the Common Good in replication of the works of St Vincent de Paul. One pupil explained, 'We are named after St Vincent de Paul and are asked by Jesus to be kind and help others in need as we follow his ways.' Pupils were less clear about why teachers chose certain charities and although they could name a few charities supported by the school, they were unsure of which charities they supported locally, nationally and globally. From conversations with pupils and Governors, it is clear that the pupils have certainly been very helpful, especially in their support of the St Vincent de Paul Society in the local parish during the pandemic, to make up beds and sort out food supplies for the homeless night shelter. A Governor said, 'The pupils wrote Christmas cards to parishioners to show care and to live out the message of love in the Gospels.' The newly established pupil 'Green Team' told the inspection team that they are going to be 'game changers' who want to 'change the world for the better.' From discussions with a variety of children, it is evident that they are ready to take on the challenge of service and social justice, to have their voice heard as they take the lead in various initiatives as part of their drive to embed Catholic Social Teaching.

**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 good**

School partnerships with parents, school, parish and diocese throughout the past couple of years through the pandemic have naturally been challenging. Nonetheless, the school have been able to provide very efficient, ongoing communication in many different ways. The weekly school newsletter has been used very effectively to update the school community on all relevant information. This includes detailed information on the Catholic life of the school. During various lockdowns, the school's online learning provision continued to improve with some innovative ways of involving pupils and their families, including a range of collective worship.

Parents are very supportive of the school and this was evident from the high number of responses to the parent questionnaire. Responses, for example, 'The Head of school's leadership of the fundamental knowledge and understanding in their faith is exceptionally good' and 'St Paul's teaches my child the correct religious teachings in the most clear way' show this support and trust in the partnerships between parents and the school.

The parish priest plays a pivotal role in his support of classroom RE and the Catholic life of the school and this has ensured excellent relationships between the school and parish. He, alongside other Governors, spoke highly of the school's role in supporting those in need, especially in the parish and local community.

The Governors are keen to re-establish meetings with pupils in the school council. Pupils were very keen to let the inspection team know that, as a result of discussions with the Governors, they were able to secure their much longed for new playground.

The Head of school avails of the opportunities for moderation within the deanery and the diocese and they will continue to benefit from moderation with staff from a variety of schools to inform their assessment judgements.

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

The leadership and management of the school are committed to promoting the Catholic life of the school and ensuring its position at the core of the curriculum. The RE subject leader/Head of school is ambitious in his aims for school improvement and is conscious that areas for improvement need to be prioritised to ensure that aims are well considered, planned and embedded before beginning new initiatives. Staff are well supported and given regular opportunities for ongoing professional development in the teaching of religious education. Governors share in the strategic leadership of the school by their supportive visits and commitment to the vision of the school's mission.

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

- Ensure pupils' planning and leadership of prayer and worship is consistently offered throughout the school and that Catholic Social Teaching themes are embedded within this.
- Afford more opportunities for pupils to take the lead and be the voice of the school in supporting charities locally, nationally and globally.

## Information about this school

- The school is a 1 form entry Catholic primary school in the locality of Haringey.
- The school serves the parish of St Paul the Apostle, Wood Green.
- The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholic is 86.5%.
- The proportion of pupils who are from other Christian denominations is 11.4 % and from other faiths is 1 %. The remaining pupils are from families who have not declared a faith.
- The percentage of Catholic teachers in the school is 64 %.
- The number of teachers with a Catholic qualification is 1.
- There are 17 % of pupils in the school with special educational needs or disabilities of whom 8 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 an average rate of families claiming free school meals.
- 24 pupils receive the Pupil Premium (12.4 %).

<b>Department for Education Number</b>	309/3504
<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	102 146
<b>Local Authority</b>	Haringey

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary Aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 - 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on roll</b>	179
<b>The appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ms Susan Bartlett
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Louise Fleming
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8888 7081
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stpaulswoodgreen.org.uk">www.stpaulswoodgreen.org.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:admin@st-pauls.haringey.sch.uk">admin@st-pauls.haringey.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	11 February 2016
<b>Grades from previous inspection:</b>	
<b>Classroom religious education</b>	Good
<b>The Catholic life of the school</b>	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 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 Monica McCarthy

Lead Inspector

Miss Jennifer O'Prey

Associate Inspector

Mr John Carrigy

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: [nancyconoboy@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:nancyconoboy@rcdow.org.uk)  
W: <http://education.rcdow.org.uk>