



Our Lady of Muswell Catholic Primary School

URN: 102142

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Archbishop of Westminster

13–14 February 2025

Summary of key findings

Overall effectiveness

The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school

2

Catholic life and mission (p.3)

How faithfully the school responds to the call to live as a Catholic community at the service of the Church's educational mission

1

Religious education (p.5)

The quality of curriculum religious education

2

Collective worship (p.7)

The quality and range of liturgy and prayer provided by the school

1

The school is fully compliant with the general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishops' Conference

Yes

The school is fully compliant with any additional requirements of the diocesan bishop

Yes

The school has responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection

Fully

Compliance statement

- This school is compliant in relation to the general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishops' conference.
- This school is compliant in relation to any additional requirements of the diocesan bishop.
- The school has met all previous areas for improvement.

What the school does well

- Leaders, including governors work conscientiously to ensure Our Lady of Muswell is an inclusive environment with an authentic sense of belonging, where everyone is valued and nurtured.
- There is a calm and respectful atmosphere in which the school mission of 'One Community, Love of Learning, Making Time for God' has an effective impact throughout the school and local community.
- This welcoming school provides a sanctuary for many families and cares for the most vulnerable in society.
- Relationships throughout the school are based on the highest levels of care and respect, leading to exemplary pupil behaviour and attitudes.
- Pupils are religiously literate and confident in sharing their knowledge and understanding in religious education.

What the school needs to improve

- Continue to support teachers in developing a high level of confidence in subject knowledge and expertise in the teaching of religious education.
- Ensure assessment for learning processes enable pupils to clearly articulate the progress they have made, understanding how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.
- Plan for the progression of prayer across the school and provide further opportunities for pupil independence when planning and leading acts of worship.

Catholic life and mission

How faithfully the school responds to the call to live as a Catholic community at the service of the Church's educational mission.

Catholic life and mission key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

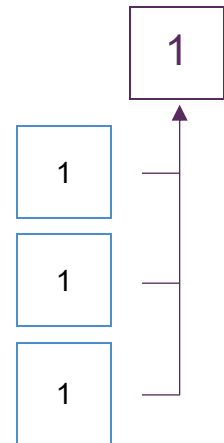
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

Provision

The quality of provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school



The mission statement of Our Lady of Muswell, 'One Community, Loving to Learn and Making time for God (OLM)' is owned and shared by pupils, families, staff and governors. Pupils can explain how their mission statement helps them care for each other every day. They take their responsibility of looking out for others seriously and support many charities including the Muswell Hill Soup Kitchen, Children in Need and The Advent Giving Calendar. One pupil said, 'By doing these things, we follow in Jesus' footsteps'. Pupils are happy, confident and feel secure in their daily experience of the school. They greatly enjoy being part of the community and value the support of adults around them. Pupils are confident in articulating the fundamental principles of Catholic social teaching and this is supported and reinforced during class worship and in assemblies. The school has a tangible culture of inclusivity. Pupils of all faiths play a full role in the life of the school whilst also being encouraged to explore their own beliefs more deeply. They told inspectors, 'Children in our school are all welcomed; from the Catholic faith, other faiths or no faith at all, and we know how to treat each other equally'. Pupils show a deep and consistent respect for themselves and others, and consequently behaviour around the school is exceptional.

Staff are exemplary role models for the pupils. Staff shared with inspectors that they feel privileged to be a part of this school community. This is evident through the high levels of care and support they show for one another and the pupils. Parents were overwhelmingly positive about the Catholic life of the school. One parent commented, 'This school fosters a respectful and enriching environment where faith, values, and learning come together, ensuring that all children feel engaged and valued in their spiritual and moral development'. The chaplaincy team spoke enthusiastically about the responsibility they have in school and how they enjoy helping people. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are given regular opportunities to engage in all aspects of school life; they are nurtured and supported well by the adults in school. This inclusivity for all is also shown through the 'Each One

of Us is Unique' week. Displays around the school are celebratory and vibrant. The annual 'One Community Week', culminating in an International Evening is another example of how the school celebrates the presence of those from various cultures and belief traditions, going the extra mile to understand their needs and enabling them to live and pray in fidelity to their own commitments. The programme for relationships, sex and health education meets diocesan requirements and contributes to the school's commitment to their pupils' human flourishing in faith.

Leaders, including governors, work conscientiously to ensure Our Lady of Muswell is an inclusive environment where all are valued and nurtured. They have a clear understanding of their mission, both in the local community and beyond and are inspirational witnesses to Catholic social teaching. Leaders across the school embody the Church's preferential option for the poor by ensuring that resources are consciously and effectively targeted at those in greatest need, providing a sanctuary for many families and going the extra mile for the most vulnerable in their community. Leaders, at all levels, have accessed support for their families from a variety of sources including the local food bank, Trailblazers, Solace and The Catholic Children's Society. Staff value the leadership team - staff retention statistics are evidence of how well supported and valued they feel. Leaders and governors work hard to ensure a flourishing partnership with the local parish which is central to the Catholic life and mission of the school. Governors are highly ambitious for the Catholic life and mission and lead by example by consistently emphasising this as a school improvement priority.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

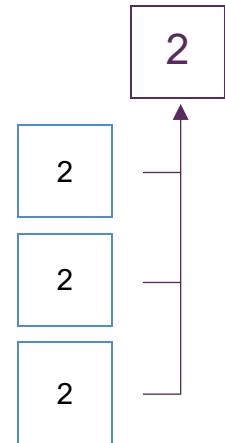
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

Provision

The quality of teaching, learning, and assessment in religious education

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for religious education



Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, generally make good progress across the school in religious education and this progress is evident in books and in discussions with staff and pupils. Children across the Early Years Foundation Stage are happy and settled in their classes and it is clear it is an inclusive and welcoming environment. Their 'Balloons of Hope' project linked to the Jubilee Year is displayed in the outside area and celebrates their partnership with families. Pupils are religiously literate and can speak confidently about key concepts using subject specific vocabulary. Across the school, pupils were studying the theme of Eucharist and progress could be tracked from Year 1 children understanding that 'going to Mass helps us remember Jesus' special meal' through to Year 6 working collaboratively and explaining to inspectors that 'receiving the Eucharist helps people to live in communion with each other'. In the strongest learning, focused activities supported pupils in meeting the learning outcomes. More opportunities to take ownership of their learning by taking the initiative and working independently will support pupils in becoming more curious, deeper thinkers. However, pupils have a desire to do well in religious education and value this subject. They are very proud of their religious education books and can recall their learning over time. In some year groups, there are inconsistencies in achievement and in feedback.

Teachers and support staff are enthusiastic and committed to the value of religious education. They communicate this effectively to their pupils. Staff are keen to further develop their own subject knowledge and appreciate the professional development opportunities offered including the recent training on deeper learning in religious education. A regular feature of learning in Our Lady of Muswell is that pupils recap previous learning in lessons. Pupils explained that this practice helps them link their learning and to carry this knowledge forward to new topics. Pupil effort is often celebrated leading to good levels of motivation. In the best lessons, teachers use questions skilfully, adapting tasks to lead pupils to a better understanding of their faith. Pupils would now benefit from greater

consistency in the use of probing questioning during lessons to extend pupils' understanding and encourage deeper learning. Inspectors observed adults effectively supporting pupils with high levels of need using a range of scaffolds and therefore enabling them to achieve learning success alongside their peers. Teachers provide pupils with some verbal and written feedback though this can be inconsistent and does not enable pupils to understand how well they are doing. Consequently, pupils can talk about their work in religious education, but they are not yet able to articulate what they need to do to improve.

Leaders and governors have ensured that the religious education programme faithfully delivers the curriculum set out in the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*. Sufficient resources are provided to ensure curriculum delivery. Leaders and governors have ensured that religious education enjoys parity with the other core subjects in terms of staff training, resources and accommodation. Non-Catholic staff members commented on how professional development and support from the subject leader and other senior colleagues had helped improve their knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith. Leaders, including governors, are keen to develop the skills and knowledge necessary to implement the new *Directory*. The religious education subject leader gives generously of her time to support planning and delivery of the scheme of work. Senior leaders regularly monitor teaching and learning and give effective feedback to teachers. The executive head teacher, head of school and subject leader work closely together to improve teaching and learning in the subject, resulting in teaching that is consistently good. Leaders and governors share a strategic vision for religious education, using the outcomes of self-evaluation to set clear improvement targets for the subject.

Collective worship

The quality and range of liturgy and prayer provided by the school

Collective worship key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

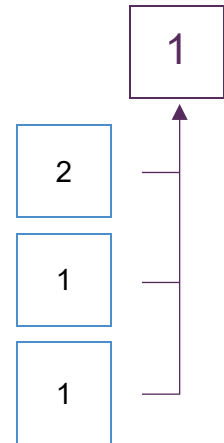
How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

Provision

The quality of collective worship provided by the school

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for collective worship



Prayer is experienced regularly by all pupils and staff promoting a calm, reverent and purposeful environment. This results in respect being shown to all, including those from other faiths and none. Pupils are able and confident in leading prayer sessions in their classrooms; they work with the adults and peers to plan them appropriately for their age group using the 'gather, word, response, mission' structure. Pupils are willingly involved in the prayer life of their class and school; they show confidence and eagerness in these sessions, evaluating them regularly. The next step is for there to be an increasing focus on awe and wonder, time for silence, contemplation and meditation. Pupils actively participate in Mass and enjoy undertaking different ministries. One parent commented on how proud their child is to come home and share his prayers with the family and how much comfort he finds from them. In a Gospel assembly, the head of school helped pupils make links between the beatitude of those who are persecuted, Racial Justice Sunday and how this scripture verse informs us how we should act today. A Year 2 pupil concluded that 'as we are all blessed by God, then we are all loved and so we should not accept injustice'. Pupils can readily make links between the liturgy, principles of Catholic social teaching and the wider life of the school. Pupils would now benefit from opportunities to plan, lead and evaluate worship independently and have expressed their keenness and readiness to do so.

At Our Lady of Muswell, prayer is a central part of the school day and calendar. Although this is a diverse community with many faiths and none, all feel included and welcome to join in and pray as members of this vibrant Catholic school. One pupil said 'Everybody has something they can contribute when we come together to pray for those in need. God will listen to all of us.' Staff recognise and appreciate the skill of senior leaders and experienced colleagues who model prayer and liturgy to a high standard. There is a clear understanding that liturgy offers a space for reflection and growth. Staff enhance this experience for all by providing focal prayer spaces, quiet music and artefacts that reflect

the liturgical year. Pupils are encouraged to use their gifts confidently to enrich prayer and liturgy. The parish priest is a welcome and familiar visitor and ensures pupils can avail of the Sacrament of Reconciliation during Advent and Lent. Pupils visit the church to pray the Stations of the Cross, and the pupil chaplains help lead the rosary in October and May.

Leaders and governors ensure that pupils in the school are offered a wide range of meaningful experiences of prayer and worship. Experienced colleagues support staff in leading appropriate liturgies through continuing professional development and by modelling and sharing best practice. As a result, most staff state they feel confident and competent in supporting prayer and liturgy in the classroom and in whole-school worship. Leaders, including governors, have a clear strategy for developing prayer progression and skills in pupil participation and are preparing well for the implementation of the *Prayer and Liturgy Directory* in September. The monitoring of classroom prayer has been very helpful in reinforcing expectations and developing a dialogue for professional development. Families are welcome to attend assemblies and Masses. Some families are keen to attend more liturgical opportunities if they were to be available. Leaders are exceptionally proud of their school and show a clear commitment to creating a vibrant community that provides high quality prayer and worship opportunities. Governors are ambitious for the school and provide both a supportive and challenging approach with energy and enthusiasm. The reciprocal relationship between the school and the parish ensures families are fully supported in their faith development.

Information about the school

Full name of school	Our Lady of Muswell Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	102142
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	3093500
Full postal address of the school	Our Lady of Muswell Catholic Primary School, Pages Lane, Muswell Hill, London, N10 1PS
School phone number	02084446894
Headteacher	Stephen McNicholas
Co-Chair of governors	Paul Byrne & Emma Brown
School Website	www.ourladymuswell.haringey.sch.uk
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	N/A
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Voluntary Aided School
Admissions policy	Non-selective
Age-range of pupils	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	May 2018
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

The inspection team

Mo O'Donoghue	Lead
Geraldine Hampton	Team

Key to grade judgements

Grade	England	Wales
1	Outstanding	Excellent
2	Good	Good
3	Requires improvement	Adequate and requires improvement
4	Inadequate	Unsatisfactory and in need of urgent improvement