

St Joseph Catholic Primary School

Cadogan Street SW3 2QT

Date of inspection by Westminster Diocese: 18 October 2017



Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

A. Classroom religious education is outstanding

- The school fully meets all aspects of the Religious Education Curriculum Directory, as laid down by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.
- Achievement is excellent with challenging targets across the phases for continued and rapid progress. Consistent approaches to work in the books are a mark of the school's high expectations. The moderation of pupils' work is accurate and is used as a model of excellent practice by the diocese.
- Pupils are articulate, enthusiastic and demonstrate a real thirst and resilience for learning.
- Excellent teaching was observed and also evidenced over time from scrutiny of work in books. Pupils are confident to discuss their learning and parents greatly appreciate the teaching in religious education for their children.
- The internal monitoring systems ensure that the highest standards of teaching and learning are maintained and sustained.
- The leader of religious education is rigorous and dedicated to excellence. She is an excellent role model and supports all staff, particularly those new to the school and new to teaching Catholic religious education.
- The thorough and detailed self-evaluation document is an accurate record of the many strengths of the school and identifies clearly areas for further development.
- The governing body is pro-active and challenging to the school. The governors are fully involved in the self-evaluation process. They are regular visitors to the school, supporting all staff.

B. The Catholic life of the school is outstanding

- Religious education is at the heart of the school and is appreciated equally by staff, pupils and parents.
- Religious education receives the full 10% provision, across all key stages.
- Worship and prayer are integral to the day to day life of the school. There is evidence to show how pupils grow and develop their spirituality. They are well supported through pupil prayer leaders, who plan the informal class worship and more formal liturgical and sacramental celebrations.
- All pupils are equally valued, respected and nurtured by the caring and dedicated staff team, so that they in turn value and respect each other.
- Commitment to the Common Good and social justice is a hallmark of their dedication to those in need through a rich range of local, national, and international links.
- The rich diversity in the school supports the promotion of strategies to support social justice and the Common Good across the phases.
- Parents highly value the work of the school. They were glowing in their appreciation for the ways in which the school nurtures the faith and spiritual life of their children.
- There are exceptional systems in place to support the induction of new staff and to enhance the contribution of all staff, including those from other Christian traditions and faiths.
- The excellent leadership of the executive head, head of school, link governor and chaplain, is the key to the success of this happy and thriving school.

A. Classroom Religious Education

What has improved since the last inspection?

Mini plenaries are now an integral part of the lessons in religious education, with clear links to the success criteria, to guide and check levels of understanding. Pupils are also encouraged to self-assess their learning in religious education during the lessons. Partnerships with deanery schools have enabled the school to benefit from a range of models of good practice. New staff and those new to Catholic education are supported to model good practice across the school from more experienced staff. The school has addressed the issue of working as teams in religious education, to lead the drive for continuous improvement and excellence.

The content of classroom religious education is outstanding

The school has developed a range of resource materials to deliver religious education (RE). Their chosen scheme is well supported by a range of supplementary materials and activities. They also receive guidance and support from their local priests, regular visits to St Mary's Church, and the Royal Hospital Chapel. The school ensures that all aspects of the Religious Education Curriculum Directory (RECD) is covered and use every opportunity for additional learning points to support pupils in making the links in their learning and understanding. Rigorous and regular monitoring, including assessment, supports the planning for progression and greater depth of knowledge and understanding of key concepts, year on year. All staff have copies of, and are familiar with, the details in the RECD. This includes effective coverage of world faiths and on a three yearly cycle, (Islam/Hinduism/Sikhism). Pupils have had the opportunity to explore Islam in greater depth, including the visit from the local Imam, who talked to each class about the various aspects of the Islamic faith and answered questions. The pupils have just completed their exploration of Judaism across the phases. ICT is also effectively used to support independent research by older pupils. The executive headteacher is a member of the local Standing Advisory Committee for Religious Education (SACRE) through which she has been able to forge new links and develop deeper opportunities for pupils to explore a range of other faiths. The 'Big Question' is a focus in each class for AT2 (Learning from Religion) to be explored through 'awe and wonder' questions.

Pupil achievement in religious education is outstanding

Rigorous and robust target setting procedures are clearly embedded. Pupils across the phases are encouraged to self-evaluate their learning. This includes evaluating their progress through their targets against success criteria within each topic. The aspiration and high expectations from staff ensure that pupils are supported and encouraged to exceed and to make rapid progress through the levels of attainment in religious education. Outcomes are recorded through a central system and are analysed to inform gaps in learning and to challenge more able pupils. This enables them to deepen their enquiry, levels of knowledge and understanding of the theology underpinning the different topics being delivered. They are encouraged to reflect on, 'what I want to improve' through the 'stepping stones' targets recorded in the back of their books as a regular reminder of how to challenge their own learning. The leader's thorough knowledge of the children and pupils ensures that the correlation of work produced in books matches the potential for all pupils and in particular, challenges more able pupils. Attainment in religious education over time is on an upward trajectory, with aspirational targets set for this academic year. All groups of pupils make accelerated progress with no significant gaps. RE is also tracked rigorously by the senior leadership team. Pupil achievement is supported by outstanding displays, including religious vocabulary and scripture throughout the classrooms and communal areas. Pupils know and understand what they should do to improve their work. Across the school pupils' responses and work demonstrates the range of progress in RE from their starting points. Pupils excel through high teacher expectation and engagement in their own learning. The scrutiny of the work in the books reflects the high quality teaching and learning, showing progression and challenge. An example of this is where the

effectiveness of the 'green pen question', encourages deeper thinking, and making links in their learning, including effective reference to scripture.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

In the early years, teaching is creative, inspiring and actively engages all children in their learning. In the outdoor learning environment children were 'making soup for the animals,' in Noah's ark. The children are confident learners who respond exceptionally well to the first hand experiences in an exploratory way. The extensive range of creative activities enabled the children to become immersed in their learning, for instance, in the 'Habitats' topic there were links to Noah's ark. In Key Stage 1 the planning, marking and constructive feedback is frequent and of a high standard. Higher order questioning is used to stretch pupils' knowledge and understanding in religious education. In one lesson pupils were encouraged to reflect on what they would like to say to Jesus. Responses included, 'can you tell me a story?' and 'thank you for blessing me and looking after me.' Pupils make rapid progress in their learning and can articulate and express their understanding of the work they are undertaking. They display a thirst for knowledge and are eager to complete challenges. This also applies to the 'homework sharing' process, which includes parents being invited to the classroom to look at their child's learning in RE and their projects. Where gaps in the quality of teaching and its impact on learning are identified, more experienced colleagues are used to support them. A key strategy employed is through team teaching approaches. Coaching and modelling for higher order questioning and challenges in the learning are used, in order to empower pupils and children to reach the higher levels of attainment in religious education. Teachers are encouraged to scrutinise the work produced across the phases, within the deanery network, the tri-partnership and across other diocesan schools. There were excellent examples of high level religious literacy, for example in a Key Stage 2 class pupils could relate the life of Maximilian Kolbe to Jesus' words in John's Gospel, ...'greater love has no man than to lay down his life for his friends.' Another example is when older pupils were able to demonstrate excellent knowledge of Jesus's Baptism and could reason the purpose of this at the start of his public ministry. The monitoring of teaching and its impact on learning is rigorous and robust. Areas for improvement are identified and swiftly followed up, including senior and more experienced staff guiding and coaching colleagues, through models of outstanding practice.

The effectiveness of leadership and management in promoting religious education

is outstanding

The quality of leadership and management of religious education is outstanding. The executive headteacher, head of school, and the leader for religious education, in partnership with the governing body, actively promote the mission of the school. They demonstrate faithful commitment to the development of religious education and actively support the leader in her role. There is a rigorous and robust action plan for religious education in place and progress is evaluated and reported termly to the governing body. The leader's high expectations of pupils and staff underpin the delivery of religious education, leading to strong attainment and progress across the school. The induction of new staff is well embedded and they are offered excellent support in the planning and assessment of religious education, as they settle into the school.

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

- Continued support for induction, including, coaching and modelling for new staff
- Maintain and increase the school's determination for the higher levels of attainment, at age appropriate levels across the school
- Provide continued opportunities for new and non-Catholic staff to further develop their knowledge and understanding of the theology under-pinning the topics being delivered, through the CCRS accreditation.

B. The Catholic life of the school

What has improved since the last inspection?

Children now assist the staff in leading prayer and class worship and are empowered to develop the prayer areas and displays using home languages. An excellent example of this is where, in upper Key Stage 2, the display of the 'Stations of the Cross' depict the importance of 'hands' being put to good use instead of negative purposes. The vibrant 'Prayer Team' support the leader to create appropriate mood and atmosphere for displays which are evident in all public areas of the school. Prayer books in classes have age appropriate prayers and pupils are encouraged to write their own prayers; the prayer to St Joseph which is recited daily in all classes was created by the pupils.

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

The executive headteacher, head of school, RE leader and the governors constantly enforce the vision and expectation that RE is the foundation of all that is done at St. Joseph's. The chair of governors, school chaplain, and RE link governor, provide outstanding support and commitment to the place of RE in the school. RE receives the full 10% requirement set down by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. There is a generous provision for both RE resources and for all staff and governors to participate in professional development on the Catholic nature of education; there are six members who have completed the CCRS and a further two due to completion before Christmas. Each classroom is well equipped, including Bibles and artefacts linked to the delivery of learning within the liturgical cycle. The staff pray and reflect regularly together, using a range of resources, including music.

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

The provision for prayer and worship for the whole school community is outstanding. Prayer and worship are central to the Catholic life of the school and are an integral part of every school celebration. There are whole school celebrations of Mass on feast days. For instance on St. Joseph's day in 2017, the principal celebrant for the Mass was Bishop John Wilson, who also blessed the new Mission Statement, 'Through Christ we achieve our personal best.' There are opportunities for the Sacrament of Reconciliation in Advent and Lent. The pupils, led by Year 6, are actively engaged in planning and leading prayer throughout the school. A Year 6 pupil articulated how, 'everybody is important in this school, and we live our mission day by day.' This is exemplified by their commitment to the school's core values, 'we are united in faith in love; we are respectful; we strive to achieve our personal best.' Parents, in responding to the questionnaire, outlined how 'my child receives an outstanding education and the spiritual growth is significant.' Pupils across the age range, plan and lead prayer and support staff in planning for feast-day celebrations, Masses, assemblies and reflective, evaluative class worship at age appropriate levels.

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

The commitment to the Common Good and social justice is outstanding. Children demonstrate outstanding behaviour and attitudes and show a real pride in their school. All children and pupils are equally valued, respected and nurtured by the caring and dedicated staff team, so that they in turn value and respect each other. The children are empowered in their school, as stated by one pupil, 'everyone has a voice, we are encouraged to be independent and to learn about Jesus through creation, scripture and everyday experience.' The rich diversity in the school supports the promotion of strategies to support social justice and the Common Good across the phases. It also

acts as a focus for all to celebrate and highlight their place in the school, parish, local and global communities. Pupils are actively empowered to carry out 'solidarity' fund-raising activities. This includes their collections and donations for the 'Irma' hurricane victims in the West Indies, the Grenfell disaster and more recently the fires in Portugal. Their 'servant king' approach to social injustice and to serve the Common Good, includes how they 'earn' their donations by carrying out jobs at home, which also support the work of Cafod and MacMillan Cancer Support. The empowerment and encouragement from the leaders and staff in the school inspires this active service from pupils as young as nursery age to Year 6.

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 highly value the work of the school. They were glowing in their appreciation for the ways the school nurtures the faith and spiritual life of their children. Some parents commented how 'the children care for each other because the school nurtures this attitude in every pupil.' The Catholic faith is at the 'heart of the school,' demonstrated through weekly Masses, prayer groups and children bringing home prayer bags to encourage family prayer. The parental response to the questionnaires speaks volumes in expressing the high regard all parents have of the work of the school in promoting the Catholic faith, practice and service to others. The executive headteacher and head of school accompanied by other staff regularly meet parents and discuss any concerns or suggestions. The executive headteacher, as a member of the local SACRE, actively encourages extended links with local and wider school networks for moderation and professional development. The leader of religious education supports a range of diocesan networks and programmes. The governing body understands its ecclesial responsibility and is fully committed to all aspects of training from the diocese. The school seeks advice from diocesan advisors and officers as appropriate and effectively implements all diocesan policies.

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

is outstanding

There has been significant improvement in the Catholic life of the school since the previous inspection. The leader for the Catholic life of the school, who is currently also head of school, has a strong vision and determination for the school to demonstrate excellence in all aspects of the day to day life of the school. His ready availability to staff and parents, his personal witness and commitment to the faith, and his example, act as an inspiration for the whole community. The Catholic life of the school and religious education are given high status, endorsed by the RE link governor and the chaplain. The partnership between the leader, the link governor and chaplain, enables the prioritisation of RE and the Catholic life in all school improvement decisions. They are involved in self-evaluation and scrutinising all aspects of the quality of learning. They provide challenge to the school leaders and are constantly striving for excellence.

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

- Embed the new mission statement, sharing with all stakeholders, including the vision and values documents.
- Increase opportunities for EYFS to have places for quiet reflection.
- Develop 'veneration' opportunities through Exposition and the celebration of Corpus Christi, to mark the 'Adoremus Conference' due in 2018.

Information about this school

- The school is a 1 form entry Catholic type school in the locality of Kensington and Chelsea.
- The school serves the parish of St. Mary's Chelsea.
- The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholic is number 95.6%.
- The proportion of pupils who are from other Christian denominations is number 3.92% and from other faiths is number 0.5%. The remaining pupils are from families who have not declared a faith.
- The percentage of Catholic teachers in the school is number 42%.
- The number of teachers with a Catholic qualification is 7, with 2 teachers completing final CCRS unit – completing October 2017.
- There are 10% of pupils in the school with special educational needs or disabilities of whom 3 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, (90%).
- The number of pupils speaking English as an Additional Language is well above average, (83%).
- There is an average rate of families claiming free school meals.
- 43 pupils receive the Pupil Premium (number 19%).

Department for Education Number	207/3477
Unique Reference Number	100496
Local Authority	Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils	4 - 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on roll	233
The appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Maggie Loo
Executive Headteacher	Mrs Karen Wyatt
Telephone number	020 7589 2438
Website	www.stjosephs.rbkc.sch.uk
Email address	info@stjosephs.rbkc.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	June 2012
Grades from previous inspection:	
Classroom religious education	Good
The Catholic life of the school	Very Good

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 6 lessons or part lessons were observed.
- The inspectors attended 1 assembly and 3 acts of worship.
- Meetings were held with school staff, pupils, parents 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 Grades

- Outstanding
- Good
- Requires improvement
- Causing concern

Inspection Team

The inspectors are appointed by the Archbishop.

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Mrs Ruth Sykes

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