

# St Mary's Catholic Primary School

South Street, Isleworth, TW7 7EE



Date of inspection by Westminster Diocese: 28 February 2018

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### A. Classroom religious education is good

- The school provides a structured curriculum in religious education that includes teaching about other faiths.
- Pupils' behaviour for learning is positive across the school.
- Pupils get a good start to their religious education learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage, which provides a stimulating learning environment.
- Teaching observed was mostly good across the school.
- Pupils are articulate, polite and eager to share their work.
- Self-evaluation is mostly accurate and there is some evidence of actions already being undertaken.
- The religious education leader is passionate about making improvements in the teaching of religious education and is realistic in the timeline for priorities.
- The link governor for religious education is actively involved in supporting the religious education leader and has contributed positively to school improvement.

### Classroom religious education is not yet outstanding because

- Pupils are not sufficiently challenged to make as much progress as possible.
- There are missed opportunities for pupils to deepen their knowledge and understanding across all abilities.
- Recent improvements in practice are not yet fully embedded.
- The budget allocated over time to religious education does not match that of other core subjects.

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

- The school gives 10% of curriculum time to religious education, as required by the Bishops' Conference.
- Respect and value of each individual are central to the school's way of being.
- The school supports a number of charities local, nationally and globally.
- The school meets its commitment to ensuring prayer and worship are a daily part of pupils' experience.
- Pupils are at the beginning stage of planning opportunities for worship.
- The subject leader and staff are supported in the teaching of religious education.
- The religious education leader is fully committed to the Church's mission and is on a journey to ensure that policy and practice reflect that mission.
- The link governor for religious education has been instrumental in supporting the school on its journey to move forward.
- The new school building provides a good learning environment but now needs to reflect its Catholic nature through display, artwork and artefacts.

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

- There are limited opportunities for pupils to celebrate in the celebration of the sacraments across the liturgical year.
- Pupils are not yet able to articulate the theology underpinning the Common Good.
- The religious education budget should now fully support the Catholic life of the school.

## A. Classroom Religious Education

### What has improved since the last inspection?

The previous inspection highlighted the need to improve the quality of teaching and learning and this continues to be an on-going target for the school who are continually striving for improvement in classroom teaching. The school has ensured that timetables reflect the 10% requirement of curriculum time and that lessons take place at appropriate times throughout the school week.

### The content of classroom religious education is good

The content of classroom religious education (RE) is good. In the better lessons, open-ended questioning was used to challenge the children. The scheme used meets the requirements of the Religious Education Curriculum Directory. More resources such as class sets of bibles would give more variety and challenge to some of the activities. A programme is in place for teaching other faiths across the school year.

### Pupil achievement in religious education is good

Children make good progress during their time at the school in line with other core subjects. Pupil books provided evidence of the progress made over the last year as they carry their books from the previous year. In lessons where pupils are challenged by searching questions and feedback, religious literacy improves and progress is rapid and sustained. This was evident in a Year 4 class where the good teacher subject knowledge gave pupils many opportunities to think, share and deepen their understanding about praying in Lent. In the best lessons, pupils are given work well matched to their ability, taking their knowledge and extending it through careful questioning. In some cases, the pupils do not move immediately onto this stage and lose time completing work they can already do. In some classes pupils are not always clear about what they need to do next to improve their work. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good and they display a desire to deepen their knowledge and understanding of RE. This was evident when pupils were spoken to in class and during discussions with various pupil groups. Behaviour in classes and around the school is very good. Pupils are polite and respectful during lessons.

### The quality of teaching is good

The quality of teaching observed was mostly good and where teachers were confident and had good subject knowledge there were some elements of outstanding. In a Year 5 lesson about the three practices of Lent pupils were challenged appropriately using the 'Go Challenge' system used in lessons. Pupils across the school were eager to learn and wanted to improve their work. In lessons where work was matched to pupils' abilities and pupils were clear about what they had to do to improve there was evidence of substantial progress. Generally pupils were keen to share their work and discuss what they knew about RE. All teachers planned their lessons and in some classes planned for the different ability ranges. In other classes the work set did not match the ability of the pupils and in some classes pupils were unsure of what they should do during the lessons. Teaching in the Early Years classes was at least good and the young children receive a good start to their school life in a secure and well set out environment. There were good opportunities to learn both indoors and out and all staff in these areas were effective in helping the young children to quickly learn. In the Nursery class the very sudden hatching of an egg took the children's attention but provided a very important moment of awe and wonder, which the teacher managed appropriately. Across the school teachers generally have high expectations of their pupils and want them to do well.

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

The subject is being well led by an enthusiastic and experienced RE Leader. She provides good support to all staff in developing their subject knowledge and has a clear vision for the teaching of religious education, which is shared among the whole staff, placing it at the heart of the curriculum. There are now good systems in place for the monitoring of teaching, planning and assessment and the school has been supported by the RE link governor and diocesan advisor. Full use is made of the training provided by the diocese for the subject leader and for other members of the staff, for example newly qualified teachers and those new to Catholic education. The school self-evaluation is mostly accurate but has not been reviewed carefully by the senior leadership team and governing body before being shared and owned by the whole school community. Governors should look carefully at the budget allocated to RE over time and ensure that it is matched to other core subjects. It is noted that this has begun to be addressed in the most recent spending allocation.

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

- Further develop the marking system to ensure that pupils have sufficient time to fully respond and are sure about their next steps to improvement.
- Develop open-ended questioning and tasks for all pupils, in order to provide sufficient opportunities to maximise learning, ensuring they reach their full potential.
- Continue to embed all recent developments in classroom practice and monitoring of classroom RE.
- Continue to support the knowledge and understanding of non-Catholic staff.

## B. The Catholic life of the school

### What has improved since the last inspection?

Work has been done to ensure that the schools commitment to the Common Good both at home and overseas has been addressed and pupils can articulate their call to action and service.

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

**is good**

The school fully meets the 10% requirements as laid down by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. The school recognised the need to appoint an experienced subject leader in the last academic year and were successful in this appointment. The new RE leader's enthusiasm and dedication to the post are recognised by the school community and this has been well received. She acts as a model of good practice, for less experienced teachers, and those new to the school and new to Catholic education. The RE leader has a high profile and regularly leads staff training and meetings on religious education. Staff who are not Catholic willingly support and promote the Catholic ethos of the school and are further supported by staff and the subject leader. The religious education link governor makes regular visits to the school and plays an integral role in supporting the RE leader and the school on its journey to improvement. Parents are very complimentary and appreciative of the school's work as demonstrated by the responses to inspectors who spoke to them in the playground on the day of inspection.

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

**is good**

The school recognises its duty of spiritual care for all members of the school community ensuring that prayer and worship are central to the daily life of the school. Pupils' experience a range of experiences during their time at St Mary's. A rota ensures that classes are able to attend parish Mass on a weekly basis. Children are able to plan, lead and share class worship and this should now be developed to ensure that it is completely pupil led. The newly appointed parish priests are establishing themselves within the parish and have visited the school. The pupils do not yet appreciate the deep richness of their Catholic experience as the opportunities for class Masses and liturgies that pupils can help to plan and lead, where appropriate, is limited. Year 6 pupils have the opportunity to take part in a retreat at the local Catholic secondary school and take part in a journey to Rome annually. The school have plans to design and build a prayer garden which they hope will be an opportunity for home, school and parish to work together to provide a space for prayer and quiet reflection.

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

**is good**

The school's commitment to the Common Good and social justice is good. There is a sense of community in the school that the pupils are keen to share. Pupils' understanding of the Church's call to action for justice and peace is demonstrated by their response to charities such as; Mary's Meals, CAFOD, Project Veerni, Emmaus House, SALs shoes, Macmillan and NSPCC. Pupils are keen to support those in need locally, nationally and globally by both raising awareness and fund raising. Discussion with pupils shows that they are just beginning in their understanding of the call to serve and the theology, which underpins these actions. Pupils are offered many opportunities to take on roles of responsibility and respond to these very positively. The school supports pupils well in developing their gifts and talents and these are celebrated through assembly and the various roles available to older pupils such as play leaders, wet play monitors, house captains, sports leaders and

school councillors. The school has plans to introduce Mini Vinnies very soon to give pupils the opportunity to turn their concern into action.

**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

The school is committed to the diocese and participates in in-service training and work moderation exercises. Staff and governors have taken part in diocesan training and shared this with other colleagues. The diocesan RE adviser is supporting the school and provides valuable support. The headteacher ensures the school is linked closely to local Catholic schools and values the support the partnership offers. Parents are invited in to school Masses and events. Inspectors spoke with parents on the day of the inspection and they were broadly positive about most aspects of the life and work of the school. The school is working to develop links with the newly appointed priests at their local church and is looking at ways to even strengthen these ties. A weekly newsletter, school website, a Twitter feed and Facebook page are available to parents to keep them informed and up to date with what is happening in school. The school has a very active and supportive PTA group.

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

The headteacher together with the senior leaders, RE leader and governing body are fully committed to the Catholic mission of education. The RE leader strives tirelessly to promote the Catholic life of the school. There is an obvious effort to make the Gospel relevant and real in the lives of pupils, staff and parents. The governing body shares in the strategic leadership of the school with energy and dedication. Targeted training and reflection opportunities are presented to staff to enable them to examine the distinctive nature of Catholic education and their role within it. The school is mostly accurate at self-evaluation and school improvement plans demonstrate a drive for improvement. The behaviour of the pupils at all times is of the very highest standards and this reflects very well on the leadership and management displayed by members of staff in this school.

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

- Ensure that pupils have access to a wide variety of Catholic tradition by introducing regular class Masses and liturgies shared with the whole school community.
- Further embed pupil led worship to ensure that pupils take full responsibility for planning, preparing and leading these occasions.
- Introduce the already planned 'Mini Vinnies' as soon as possible.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to link their acts of service to the theology that underpins these acts.

## Information about this school

- The school is a rising two-form form entry Catholic primary school in the locality of Isleworth.
- The school serves the parishes of Our Lady of Sorrows and St Bridget of Sweden, Isleworth and St Margaret's of Scotland, Twickenham and St Vincent de Paul, Osterley.
- The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholic is 93%.
- The proportion of pupils who are from other Christian denominations is 7% and from other faiths is 0 %.
- The percentage of Catholic teachers in the school is 40 %.
- The number of teachers with a Catholic qualification is 2.
- There are 30% 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 below average.
- The number of pupils speaking English as an Additional Language is below average.
- There is a below average rate of families claiming free school meals.
- 34 pupils receive the Pupil Premium (4.42%).

<b>Department for Education Number</b>	313 3504
<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	102528
<b>Local Authority</b>	Hounslow

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary Aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 -11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on roll</b>	442
<b>The appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Jacqui Corley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Farley Marsh
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8560 7168
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.smi.hounslow.sch.uk">www.smi.hounslow.sch.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:office@smi.hounslow.sch.uk">office@smi.hounslow.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	11 October 2012
<b>Classroom religious education</b>	Good
<b>The Catholic life of the school</b>	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 11 lessons or part lessons were observed.
- The inspectors attended 3 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 Grades

- Outstanding
- Good
- Requires improvement
- Causing concern

## Inspection Team

The inspectors are appointed by the Archbishop.

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