

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School

Herlwyn Avenue, Ruislip, Middlesex, HA4 2AB

Date of inspection by Westminster Diocese: 8 June 2018



Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

A. Classroom religious education is good

- The school provides a carefully planned and broad and balanced curriculum in religious education, based on the Religious Education Curriculum Directory.
- Behaviour of pupils in lessons and around the school is of the highest standard and parents should be proud of this.
- The headteacher and religious education team provide good leadership of the subject and have introduced some good new tracking and assessment systems.
- Standards of achievement and progress have been variable over the last few years in both key stages. Current school data is now showing better outcomes in all areas.
- Teaching is at least good in all classes with some aspects of outstanding teaching.
- New technologies are being used well in the school and this is helping pupils engage even more in their learning.
- Teaching assistants and support staff are well deployed. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are being well supported and make better than expected progress.
- Pupils get an outstanding start to their school life in the Nursery and Reception Years in a spacious and attractive environment both indoors and outside.
- The leadership and management ensure that staff are well trained to teach religious education.

Classroom religious education is not yet outstanding because

- The achievement and outcomes for boys in particular are not yet high enough.
- There is insufficient challenge being provided for the most able pupils in some areas.

B. The Catholic life of the school is outstanding

- The head, governors and all staff share a common purpose and ambition for developing the Catholic life of the school.
- Religious education is at the core of the curriculum, with 10% of the curriculum time devoted to religious education, as required by the Bishops' Conference.
- Prayer and worship is a major strength of the school. The prayer life of the school is outstanding in all aspects. Religious education leaders plan the liturgical life of the school at the start of the year. Year 6 pupils engaged with planning and preparation of the prayer life spoke with pride of their work and contribution.
- Prayers are said throughout the day and time is given for pupils to offer their own thoughts and prayers. Pupils' response is respectful and reverent.
- The environment is beautifully set out with a chapel and outside prayer garden maintained to a high standard.
- Partnerships are strong at all levels. Links with the Diocese of Westminster and other schools are mutually supportive. Links are especially strong with parents who greatly appreciate the work of the school in caring for their children.
- The work the school does around the Common Good is judged to be outstanding. Pupils understanding of both the theology and knowledge that underpins this work is of a high standard.
- Pupils are articulate and polite in their responses to questions and are keen to be good role models for others to follow.
- Opportunities for pupils to be of service in school and beyond are plentiful.
- Governors are very well informed and provide good challenge and support. They are ambitious for the school and its future well-being.

A. Classroom Religious Education

What has improved since the last inspection?

The school has delivered a wide range of staff training to ensure teachers ask effective questions in lessons. The school has placed a greater emphasis on embedding creativity in religious education (RE). The marking and assessment of pupils work has been evaluated and refined by the leadership team to help pupils improve their work.

The content of classroom religious education is good

The school has an RE curriculum that meets all the requirements of the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory* (RECD). This scheme is in place across all ages and key stages. The school has been keen to develop a creative approach to the teaching of RE. It has used experienced outside consultants to develop best practice. Cross-curricular links are being made in such areas as art, information technology and also in homework. RE is well planned for in all classes. The curriculum also now includes projects on learning in some depth about Judaism, Islam and other faiths.

Pupil achievement in religious education is good

The school evaluates its pupil achievement to be good and this report confirms that judgement. Children enter the school with skills and abilities that are broadly average for their age. Progress is variable as pupils go through the school. Current assessment information for this year shows a marked improvement on previous years. The children in the early years foundation stage (EYFS) show rapid and sustained progress in their acquisition of RE literacy. Most pupils across the school now make at least age expected or good progress. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) make more than expected progress. Attainment in RE is now also on the rise in both key stages and is also showing an improvement. However, the school does recognise that there is further work to be done in this area to raise standards. In particular, boys achievement and progress is not as good as for girls in both key stages. Books are neat and tidy and are well presented. The use of scripture to enhance learning is evident in all classes. Pupils' work is regularly assessed by teachers and is being marked in accordance with school policy. Lots of examples were seen of pupils responding to teacher's comments on how to improve their work. Pupils told inspectors that they felt confident in their learning in RE and clearly also enjoyed the subject. The school has rigorous systems in place to moderate the standards of pupils work and ensure accuracy of judgements.

The quality of teaching is good

The quality of teaching seen in the school ranges from good to outstanding in all classes. Teachers have high expectations for their pupils. They equally use a wide range of questioning techniques and strategies to help pupils engage during lessons. In Year 6 work around virtuous and inspiring people led to some deep pupil discussion and clearly was developing their critical thinking skills. Children get an outstanding start in the both the Nursery and Reception years. Classrooms are attractive and very well set out for both indoors and outside learning. The school is blessed with space and the EYFS stage is an environment the school should feel proud of. This inspection occurred on the same day as the school's feast day. Children in early years were busily engaged in making red hearts to wear. The school is actively seeking ways to encourage creativity in RE lessons. It is also keen to promote new technologies and platforms such as Twitter to further enhance learning. Support staff are being effectively deployed to help the learning of pupils with differing abilities including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teaching by the end of Key Stage 2 is of a high standard and this is now having an impact on overall achievement. A detailed scrutiny of

pupils' books showed generally good coverage of the RE curriculum. Feedback from teachers on how to improve work is in place in most year groups and this is developing well. In some classes opportunities were missed for practising the skills of extended writing. Pupils had very positive attitudes to RE and were keen to respond to some searching questions posed by teachers. In some lessons seen there was a lack of challenge for the most able pupils. Homework opportunities are extensively provided for and helping pupils in their learning and research. Behaviour in lessons, around the school and at playtimes was of the highest standard. Parents should feel genuinely proud of their children's behaviour in this school.

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

The subject is being well led by an experienced RE team. They provide good support to all staff in developing their subject knowledge. The headteacher has high aspirations for her school and this is clearly leading to a rise in standards. Her work on introducing new monitoring and assessment systems is clearly showing impact. The headteacher is keen for the subject to have the highest profile in this school. Staff training has been carefully provided in the last few years. The governing body are well informed about all aspects of classroom religious education and are equally eager to drive up standards even further. They are ambitious for the school and do set performance targets to hold leaders to account.

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

- Raise the standards of pupil achievement and progress for boys across the school.
- Provide more challenge for the most able pupils across the school.

B. The Catholic life of the school

What has improved since the last inspection?

Opportunities for pupil-initiated worship are now in place and pupils are also being given additional opportunities to write and include their own prayers in liturgical celebrations. Children regularly lead prayer in this school.

The place of religious education as the core of the curriculum

is outstanding

RE is at the core of the curriculum in this school. 10% of curriculum time is devoted to RE in every year group. An appropriate budget is allocated to the subject every year and the school is really well resourced. The building is bright and is being maintained to a very high standard both indoors and in the outside prayer garden. Relationships are good at all levels between adults, parents and pupils. The school is strongly committed to the teaching of Catholic religious education and this is evident from discussions with governors and the senior leadership team. In-service training opportunities are well planned for and this includes the governing body who are well informed about developments.

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

is outstanding

The prayer life of the school is outstanding in all aspects. The liturgical life of the school is planned by RE leaders at the start of every year and closely follows the liturgical cycle of the church. This ensures a rich experience of the Catholic tradition of prayer and worship. Whole school masses, as well as liturgies appropriate to the age of the pupils - including opportunities for reconciliation, take place regularly and are supported by the local clergy. On the day of this inspection the school was celebrating its own feast day and pupils were eager and proud to share their work as they prepared a special Mass. The parish priest is a frequent and always welcome visitor to this school. He kindly showed this inspector around the beautifully appointed chapel in the school. Pupils in Year 6 who had been given responsibility for planning and preparation of prayers and liturgy, spoke with pride of their work and contribution to the prayer life of this school. Prayers are said throughout the day and time is given for pupils to offer their own thoughts and prayers. Pupil's response is respectful and reverent. Music is used effectively in almost all classes including as a background during lesson time. The school offers many opportunities for spiritual development and some good examples were seen of meditative reflections right across the school. The school beautifully developed its extensive outside space to include an area for prayer and contemplation.. Talk partners are used effectively to discuss moral and social issues and the school has very carefully linked the curriculum in to other areas of learning within the school.

The contribution to the Common Good – service and social justice

is outstanding

This aspect of school life is being very well developed and is judged to be outstanding. Pupils and all members of the school community are aware of the Gospel call to service. A wide range of opportunities exist for all to engage in service to those in need and equally to be of service around the school. Pupils have a good understanding of the theology underpinning their actions, with the Church's call to action for justice and peace being fully appreciated and understood. The school has supported a very wide range of charities in the last few years and pupils are rightly proud of their work in this area. Some pupils were unsure of the work of Catholic charities, such as Cafod and Catholic Children's Society, which the school supported.

In classes pupils link the theology of the Common Good very well to the lives and works of virtuous and inspiring people and also to scripture from the New Testament. This is highly effective practice and is judged to be outstanding.

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 head teacher attends a wide variety of diocesan conferences and Hillingdon deanery events. Links with Hillingdon Catholic schools are strong and co-operation and sharing of good practice occurs on a regular basis. The religious education adviser provides good challenge and support. Staff and pupils have attended the Good Shepherd Mass at Westminster Cathedral. Parents are invited to celebrate Mass with the school and greatly appreciate this vital link. Support from parents as evidenced by an online survey is very strong. Parents express pride and confidence in this school. They feel their children are being well nurtured and cared for. Curriculum newsletters inform parents of future learning in religious education as well as other areas of school and parish life. The school is constantly seeking ways of developing its partnership work further and is therefore judged to be outstanding.

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

is outstanding

The RE leadership promotes the Catholic life of the school effectively and is very eager to offer the best it can towards the pupils. Self-evaluation of the Catholic life is accurate and the school has devised good plans for even greater ways to promote the Catholic life of the school. There is a very strong commitment exhibited by the head, the governors and all staff to enhancing all aspects of Catholic life and education. Governors in particular are very keen to see this community continue to prosper in its overall Catholic life. The behaviour for learning of the pupils at all times is of the 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 pupils can demonstrate their theological understanding of the Common Good with practical examples from the charities that the school supports.

Information about this school

- The school is a three form entry Catholic Primary school in the locality of Ruislip.
- The school serves the parishes of Most Sacred Heart, Ruislip; St Thomas More, Eastcote and St Paul's, Harefield.
- The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholic is 94%.
- The proportion of pupils who are from other Christian denominations is 0.4% and from other faiths is 0.3%. The remaining 5.7% of pupils are from families who have not declared a faith.
- The percentage of Catholic teachers in the school is 85%.
- The number of teachers with a Catholic qualification is 10.
- There are 13% of pupils in the school with special educational needs or disabilities of whom 9 have statements of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)/ Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP).
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below average.
- The number of pupils speaking English as an Additional Language is below average
- There is a well below average rate of families claiming free school meals.
- 43 pupils receive the Pupil Premium (6%).

Department for Education Number	312/3405
Unique Reference Number	102426
Local Authority	Hillingdon

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on roll	622 (682 inclusive of Nursery)
The appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr David Kennedy
Headteacher	Ms Theresa McManus
Telephone number	01895 633240
Website	www.sacredheart.hillingdon.sch.uk
Email address	office@shruislip.org
Date of previous inspection	July 2013
Grades from previous inspection:	
Classroom religious education	Very 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 21 lessons or part lessons were observed.
- The inspectors attended a number of acts of prayer and worship in classes.
- 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.

Mr Sean Flood	Lead Inspector
Mrs Margaret Hanley	Associate Inspector
Mr Michael Ross	Associate Inspector
Ms Asha O'Callaghan	Shadow Associate Inspector

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Vaughan House
46 Francis Street,
London
SW1P 1QN

T: 020 7798 9005
E: education@rcdow.org.uk
W: <http://rcdow.org.uk/education>