

St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Durants Rd, Ponders End, Enfield EN3 3DE

Date of inspection by Westminster Diocese: 26 September 2019



Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

A. Classroom religious education is outstanding

- The school has adapted and developed the themes of the Religious Education Curriculum Directory in an excellent manner to meet the learning needs of the pupils of St Mary's.
- The religious education programme in use fully delivers this content and the use of the De Bono system in religious education pushes pupils to develop their understanding further.
- After carefully analysing the needs of their pupils, the school has developed a curriculum and teaching programme that has reached outstanding achievement by the pupils in religious education.
- Teachers have high expectations and plan lessons that deepen pupils' religious literacy.
- Since the last inspection, staff confidence in recording and assessment has been demonstrably improved, as evidenced in planning imaginative lessons based on the religious education programme followed in the school.
- The headteacher is also the religious education curriculum coordinator and she takes the closest interest in developing the excellent teaching and learning of religious education in the school.
- The chair of governors is a recent appointment but with her years of experience on the governing body she is clear in her role of both support and challenge in pursuing the special responsibility of governors of a Catholic school.

B. The Catholic life of the school is outstanding

- The curriculum fully conforms to the classroom curriculum time of at least 10% for religious education and teaching is fully in line with the requirements of the Bishops' Conference.
- The previous inspection asked the school to develop pupils' understanding of Catholic Social Teaching and to help pupils understand the ethics of the market place and fair trade. The school has fully addressed these priorities, both in their classroom teaching and in the encouragement offered when choosing charities to support.
- The pupils of St Mary's enjoy an outstanding experience of prayer, liturgy and Catholic worship.
- Pupils and staff have a deep understanding of the call to 'human flourishing' and are given opportunities to develop and celebrate their gifts and talents.
- Partnership with the parents is excellent; they appreciate and support all that the school provides for their children.
- The leadership and management of the school are very effective in promoting the Catholic life of the school. The head is strong and devoted in providing both oversight and support on all aspects of Catholic life. The contribution and regular visits of the parish priest provides a strong and stable reinforcement of the foundational position of Catholicism in the life of the school.

A. Classroom Religious Education

What has improved since the last inspection?

The previous inspection report focused on two issues. The first was improving staff confidence in respect of planning and assessment. This has been demonstrably achieved as evidenced by the clarity and confidence on the part of the staff in planning imaginative lessons based on the religious education (RE) programme followed in the school. The second was to provide more opportunities for the pupils to engage in independent learning. The inspectors found good evidence during the book scrutiny, in lessons and in discussion with the pupils that the school has made good headway and it continues to be a target for the future. The school has shown improvement in other areas since the last inspection including the sustained adoption of the De Bono Thinking Schools approach. It was impressive to see some of the thinking hats very appropriately suggested for extension work in a number of the RE lessons.

The content of classroom religious education is outstanding

The content of classroom religious education is based on a comprehensive religious education programme which emphasises both a deeper knowledge of Scripture and how to face bigger questions that arise from religious belief. This programme is very closely derived from the Religious Education Curriculum Directory (RECD) and ensures that the themes and topics which the pupils are taught reflect contemporary Catholic Christianity. The school has adapted and developed the themes of the RECD in an excellent manner to meet the learning needs of the pupils of St Mary's. The curriculum covers in an engaging way the teaching of Jesus and the Church, showing both through classroom teaching and school displays the relationship between faith and life. The pupils, through the generous number of wallcharts illustrating the RECD, are aware and proud that they are learning what the Church wants them to learn. The study of other religions, Judaism and Islam in particular, is creatively delivered and relevant to the pupils.

Pupil achievement in religious education is outstanding

After carefully analysing the needs of their pupils, the school has developed a curriculum and teaching programme that has reached outstanding achievement by the pupils in religious education. From their initial level of knowledge and understanding, the pupils reach beyond the national average in their study of teachings of Jesus and the Catholic faith. Staff are confident in planning and assessment. The school is using the current mode of assessing pupil progress using the Levels of Achievement but propose to change to the system suggested by the diocese of age related standards after the inspection. The majority of teachers are very confident and accurate in using the assessment levels. The curriculum delivers the content of the RECD very well. The RE programme in use fully delivers this content and the use of the De Bono system in religious education pushes pupils to develop their understanding further. Pupils are encouraged to articulate their learning and with the inspectors often quietly but accurately explained points they were learning. Pupils make very good progress in religious education and are able to relate their learning to other areas of the curriculum. They are proactive in their learning and on completion of a task move on when appropriate to the next level of work. There is a sense of active involvement on the part of the pupils which is balanced by a firm teaching structure which channels but does not inhibit curiosity. Learning skills and habits were well established and pupils moved purposefully from one style of involvement to another e.g. from working in pairs to group discussion.

The quality of teaching is good

Teaching is mainly good with examples of good and outstanding lessons seen. Pupils make good progress over time. Teachers have high expectations and plan lessons that deepen pupils' religious

literacy. Those who are less confident or new to teaching are given 'partner teacher' support. Teachers plan in pairs, deciding on the strands and attainment levels to be focused on. Most teachers have strong subject knowledge in religious education and inspire pupils. Teachers create a positive climate for learning and pupils display good learning behaviour during lessons. Pupils are provided with detailed oral and written marking and generally know how to improve. Homework contributes well to pupils' learning and pupils say that it helps them to make progress. Some teaching is not matched clearly to the learning needs of all pupils and in some lessons pupils' understanding was not checked effectively to ensure misconceptions were addressed. ICT was confidently and effectively used in lessons, especially video clips illustrating points of learning. Scaffolding was well employed to enable better progress in written tasks. Support staff in general provided conscientious and focused aid to pupils though some are not ensuring pupils are engaged and challenged. Pupils are accustomed to focus on their work without delay at the beginning of lessons and clearly enjoy working together both in pairs and small groups.

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

The leadership and management of the promotion of religious education at St Mary's is outstandingly effective. The headteacher is also the RE curriculum coordinator and she takes the closest interest in developing the excellent learning of religious education in the school. With the help of the staff, her skill has been to focus specifically on the sometimes very particular needs of the pupils arriving at St Mary's, and ensure they are served with an RE programme that is bespoke and works for them. The pupils spoke of how the teachers care for them in RE and help them to make good progress, thus indicating how the leadership has created an outstanding learning ethos in the school. Since the last inspection she has set up an RE team to assist her, made up of lead teachers from the different key stages. In this way she ensures that whatever the future staff changes are, there is an embedded core of staff to sustain the very good provision of religious education in the school. In the course of the year every teacher is monitored and written feedback is provided which gives both affirmation of strong points and suggestions for development where appropriate. The governing body receives regular reports in the course of the year. The school ensures that teachers attend area and diocesan moderation meetings. The chair of governors is a recent appointment but with her years of experience on the governing body she is clear in her role of both support and challenge in pursuing the special responsibility of governors of a Catholic school. The parish priest is the link RE governor and is regularly in touch with pupils through his visits to the school.

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

- The school should continue to develop the role of the RE team.
- The school should develop further the horizons of achieving independent learning in religious education.

B. The Catholic life of the school

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection there were two points for improvement. The first was to develop pupils' understanding of Catholic Social Teaching and the second was to help pupils understand the ethics of the market place and fair trade. The school has fully addressed these priorities, both in the classroom teaching and in the encouragement offered when choosing charities to support. Other areas of improvement include the introduction of the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament in the parish church and the invitation to parents and pupils to drop in for a moment of adoration before school.

The place of religious education as the core of the curriculum

is outstanding

Religious education is at the core of the curriculum. The leadership of the headteacher, who is also the RE curriculum coordinator, puts great emphasis on religious education in school planning, budgeting and in-service opportunities for the teachers. The walls of the school are covered with displays, each a clear topic; some with a religious theme, others a more secular theme but with signposting to integrate them into the Catholic vision of creation. When being shown around the school by pupils and when talking to pupils in the corridors and classrooms it was evident that the displays were well understood and provided excellent insight into religious education themes and topics. The current curriculum topic in religious education during the inspection was the creation narratives in Genesis 1 and 2. Pupils showed both knowledge and deeper thinking when talking about them to the inspection team. The curriculum fully conforms to the RECD and the classroom curriculum time of at least 10% for RE teaching is fully in line with the requirements of the Bishops' Conference.

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

is outstanding

The pupils of St Mary's enjoy an outstanding experience of prayer, liturgy and Catholic worship. All religious education lessons begin and end with prayer. Using the diocesan toolkit, pupils are involved in selecting and leading prayers. A number of classes have adopted a period of meditation during their prayer and the pupils speak very well of what this period of silence and reflection means to them. As part of the Diocese of Westminster 'Proclaim' initiative, the parish church next door opens its door earlier in the day and arranges exposition of the Blessed Sacrament so that parents and pupils can drop in for a moment of prayer and adoration at the beginning of the school day. Mass is regularly celebrated, especially on the feasts of Our Lady. Pupils are taught the responses and participate well. A number of pupils are Mass servers on Sunday and the older ones are members of a school team tasked with helping with prayer and promoting / supporting buddy and social action initiatives. Pupils are given opportunities to go to the Sacrament of Reconciliation; pupils who are not Catholics are encouraged to ask for a blessing instead. The parish priest actively supports prayer and liturgical life of the school and encourages the parents to participate where possible.

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

is outstanding

Pupils and staff have a deep understanding of the call to 'human flourishing' and are given opportunities to develop and celebrate their gifts and talents. An example of this is the buddy system where older pupils are buddies for younger pupils. All pupils show great respect and each member of the school community is valued and encouraged to serve others. This was very evident in the

Acts of Worship. There is a very good understanding of the Church's call to action for justice and peace. Pupils can explain how they live 'peacefully' together, citing how buddies sort out problems. There are a variety of projects being run including support for the local homeless centre, collecting clothes to recycle, collecting money for Marie Curie and arranging a Macmillan coffee morning. Even the youngest children are taught about 'kind hands' and could talk about being kind to each other. Pupils in Year 3 were able to explain how they are called to be stewards of our world and Year 6 pupils linked this to 'Laudato Si, 'we need to be helping others and our world but not expect anything back.'

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 partnership of the school with parents and parish is excellent. Both in the questionnaire returns and at the meeting with a small group of parents on the day of the inspection, the message came back very strongly how much the parents appreciate and support all that the school provides for their children. They spoke highly of the calm and well managed atmosphere in the school and how their children gain so much from this ethos. The parish priest demonstrated a strong sense of common vision with the head and was very confident in affirming the outstanding Catholic life of the school. The schools works very closely with the diocese and has already had meetings with diocesan advisers on the next step of the development of the curriculum when it moves from Levels of Achievement to age related assessment procedures in religious education.

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

is outstanding

The leadership team at St Mary's is very effective in promoting the Catholic life of the school. There are conferences and levelling meetings attended which promote Catholic awareness and leadership. The head is strong and devoted in providing both oversight and support on all aspects of Catholic life. The Mass and commissioning service was an excellent occasion where the school's catholicity was on display. The head is the driving force of the good order and calm ethos which pervades the school and which the parents find so effective in contributing to the growth in the faith and sense of belonging to a community of their children. The contribution and regular visits of the parish priest provides a strong and stable reinforcement of the foundational position of Catholicism in the life of the school. This ensures there is a seamless experience for the pupils of being part of a Catholic community where home, school and parish are integrated in a common vision.

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

- The school should develop further opportunities for pupils to write their own prayers and take leading roles in prayer.
- The school should develop further the awareness of specific Gospel values underpinning Catholic Social Teaching.

Information about the school

- The school is a two form entry Catholic voluntary aided primary school in the locality of Ponders End, Enfield.
- The school serves the parish of Mary Mother of God, Ponders End.
- The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholic is 83.5%.
- The proportion of pupils who are from other Christian denominations is 14.2% and from other faiths is 2.3%.
- The percentage of Catholic teachers in the school is 87.6%.
- The number of teachers with a Catholic qualification is 6.
- There are 18% of pupils in the school with special educational needs or disabilities of whom 10 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 the national average.
- The number of pupils speaking English as an Additional Language is well above average.
- There an average rate of families claiming free school meals.
- 65 pupils receive the Pupil Premium (22 %).

Department for Education Number	308/3500
Unique Reference Number	102036
Local Authority	Enfield

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils	3 -11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on roll	401
The appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Wendy Allen
Headteacher	Ms Maeve Creed
Telephone number	020 88042396
Website	www.stmarysenfield.co.uk
Email address	office@stmarys.enfield.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	22 October 2014
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 14 lessons or part lessons were observed.
- The inspectors attended no assemblies and a number of acts of worship.
- Meetings were held with school staff, pupils, parish priest, 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 Team

The inspectors are appointed by the Archbishop.

Deacon Anthony Clark

Lead Inspector

Ms Catherine Bryan

Associate Inspector

Mrs Sue Cunningham

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>

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