

St Vincent's Catholic Primary School

1 Pierpoint Road, Acton, W3 9JR

Date of inspection by Westminster Diocese: 11 December 2019



Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

A. Classroom religious education is outstanding

- The curriculum, mapped to the Religious Education Curriculum Directory, is very well sequenced and planned for by the subject leader of religious education. It is comprehensive and rigorous and gives pupils an outstanding opportunity to deepen their knowledge about their Catholic faith.
- Pupils leave at the end of Year 6 with skills, knowledge and levels of attainment of an exceptionally high standard. What is special about the school is the level of pupils' oracy and speaking and listening skills. They are exceptionally well versed in religious vocabulary. They can equally recall to a high degree their prior learning. Pupils are highly articulate and literate in religious education.
- The quality of teaching is at least good in all classes seen with outstanding aspects also in evidence in some classes. The 'Forest School' is being well used outside to enrich pupils learning and instil a sense of awe and wonder in nature and creation. Pupils all say how much they enjoy their learning in religious education. They say they find lessons exciting and enjoyable.
- There are extensive opportunities provided to enhance creativity in pupils' wider learning. Aspects of this wider curriculum in religious education include areas such as music, art and computing. Some of the cross-curricular links made are innovative and deserve to be more widely shared.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes get an outstanding start to their school life.
- The leadership and management of classroom religious education are outstanding in all aspects.

B. The Catholic life of the school is outstanding

- There is 10% of curriculum time devoted to religious education in every class, as required by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.
- There are extensive opportunities within the school for daily collective worship, liturgy and prayer. The children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are quickly introduced to the prayer life of the school in a sensitive and age appropriate way. Children at all ages and all key stages play an active part in leading prayer and liturgy in a variety of ways. The active participation of pupils includes, liturgical dance, narrations, preparing liturgies, prayers of intercession and drama.
- The celebration of the Eucharist is carefully planned both in school and in the local parish church and many other sacramental celebrations are offered at key times throughout the liturgical year. All year groups attend Mass weekly in the parish of Our Lady of Lourdes.
- The school is outstanding in its work to promote the Common Good. St Vincent's has established a genuine commitment to this over many years. Some charities have been supported for a long time. A key feature of this school is that initiatives are almost all driven by the pupils.
- The partnerships with parents, school and parish are judged to be outstanding. Parents spoken with during this inspection and the large number who responded to the inspection questionnaire are almost overwhelmingly supportive of the work of the school. Links with the diocese are very strong.
- The leadership of the headteacher, governors and the senior leaders in promoting the Catholic life of the school is outstanding and equally ambitious.

A. Classroom Religious Education

What has improved since the last inspection?

The school has continued to improve since the previous inspection. Staff training opportunities have been plentiful. Continuous professional development has been provided for all teaching and non-teaching staff. The school has invested in high quality music resources to enhance religious education (RE). Assessment procedures have been reviewed and new systems trialled. The school uses photos and ICT to capture images of pupils work in classroom religious education.

The content of classroom religious education is outstanding

The content of St Vincent's RE curriculum meets the requirements of the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*. The curriculum is being very well sequenced and planned for by the subject leader of RE. The curriculum is monitored by the RE leadership team. It is comprehensive and rigorous and gives pupils an outstanding opportunity to deepen their knowledge about their Catholic faith. The programmes of study illustrate where, when and how key aspects of content are taught and assessed. Resources such as Bibles are being used effectively. Pupils are taught about other faiths such as Judaism and Sikhism and visits to places of worship of other faiths are carefully planned for. There are extensive opportunities to enhance creativity in pupil's wider learning. Aspects of this wider curriculum in RE include areas such as music, art and computing. Some of the cross-curricular links made are innovative and deserve to be more widely shared.

Pupil achievement in religious education is outstanding

Attainment on entry to the school is broadly average. Pupils leave at the end of Year 6 with skills, knowledge and levels of attainment of an exceptionally high standard. Therefore progress is judged to be outstanding. Overall pupils' attainment in all classes is well above the national average. Attainment of pupils recorded by the school and scrutinised by the inspectors equally confirmed that overall attainment is high and therefore judged to be outstanding. Standards of written work are high in this school. Pupils' written work clearly develops effectively as they progress through the school. A scrutiny of books and lesson visits shows that boys writing is not as well developed as girls and this needs to be improved further. What stands out most however, is the level of pupils' oracy and speaking and listening skills. They are exceptionally well versed in religious vocabulary. They can equally recall to a high degree their prior learning. Pupils are highly articulate and also express a great love of learning about RE. The school's rich and engaging curriculum encourages children to make links between scripture, their actions and everyday life. This is evident in talking with pupils of all ages. Progress is strong in Key Stage 2 for all groups and for all abilities. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are being well supported. The higher attaining pupils are equally being stretched and challenged via highly effective teacher questioning and work that is closely matched to their abilities.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

The quality of teaching is at least good in all classes seen with outstanding aspects also in evidence in some classes. Pupils do make progress during lessons and examples were noted of pupils extending their religious vocabulary and understanding in learning about Advent. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes get an outstanding start to their school life. Teaching is engaging, nurturing and well set out for the children. The learning environment both indoors and outdoors in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) has been creatively developed with areas for prayer and quiet reflection also being provided. Due to the timing of the inspection, the EYFS staff were able to have set out stables, mangers and areas for role play for young children; EYFS staff were active at all times in supporting young children's learning. Teaching was creative, tasks were age appropriate and EYFS

staff had created a wonderful learning environment for young children at this special time of year. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and are eager for them to make rapid progress in lessons. High order questioning was evident in most lessons seen. Higher ability pupils are being well provided for with challenge questions. Where tasks were matched to pupils own interests and understanding then outcomes were outstanding. Lessons seen on Antiphons in Year 4 were complex and really stretched pupils' learning. The Forest School is being well used outside to enrich pupils learning and instil a sense of awe and wonder in nature. The links being made between music and RE are of a very high standard. Pupils from Year 6 were seen composing music using ICT as background music to Antiphons. Computing is very well used to develop RE and resources such as Google Classroom and other storage platforms are being well used. This enables pupils to complete tasks at home and share their learning with their parents. Support staff play an important role in supporting pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and or disabilities SEND. Home learning and research opportunities are provided for pupils. Quality of teaching typically is judged to be outstanding.

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

The leadership and management of RE are outstanding in all aspects. The headteacher has ensured clear roles and responsibilities for her deputy and middle leaders. The RE subject leader provides effective support and guidance to teachers and support staff. The subject leader is an outstanding practitioner himself and leads by example. His detailed knowledge of the curriculum and assessment is of the highest order. His insights into teaching and learning are equally well developed. New staff and non-Catholic staff are being very well supported by middle leaders. Leaders are ambitious for their school and RE as a subject to be of the highest quality. Leadership is exemplary and is deserving of this recognition outlined in this inspection report. The governing body are equally knowledgeable and supportive of the work of the school. Governors spoken with display clear insight into classroom RE practice. They are keen to set the highest standards possible for RE in this school. The leaders' self-evaluation of classroom religious education is accurate and RE leaders are especially open to new innovations.

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

- Provide more opportunities for boys to develop their writing skills in RE particularly in Key Stage 1.

B. The Catholic life of the school

What has improved since the last inspection?

All areas for development in the previous inspection report have been fully addressed.

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

There is 10% of curriculum time devoted to RE in every class, as required by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. This is clearly timetabled and is central to the life of the school. A generous budget has been set for the last three years and new resources bought to support the implementation of an exciting RE curriculum. Parents and pupils recognise the importance the school places on its Catholic life. It is the leadership of and commitment to RE that has made this area outstanding.

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

Prayer and worship are central to the life of this school and is judged to be outstanding. There are extensive opportunities within the school for daily collective worship and prayer. The children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are quickly introduced to the prayer life of the school in a sensitive and age appropriate way. All classes have prayer areas, a prayer focus and appropriate liturgical colours for the season of Advent. Displays of work and around the school are of a very high standard. There are examples of stained glass windows, mosaics and murals produced by the pupils. Children at all ages and all key stages play an active part in leading prayer and liturgy in a variety of ways. The active participation of pupils includes, liturgical dance, narrations, preparing liturgies, prayers of intercession and drama. This demonstrate their growing levels of knowledge and understanding of the links to scripture, ritual and relevance their everyday experiences. Some high quality examples of pupil led liturgy were seen during the course of this inspection. Evidence of a highly developed prayer life in the school is also clear from the school's website. There is a beautiful chapel and prayer areas set up in the school grounds. All areas of the school clearly show and celebrate that this is a Catholic school. Prayer and worship are integral to the daily life of the school. The celebration of the Eucharist is carefully planned both in school and in the local parish church and many other sacramental celebrations are offered at key times throughout the liturgical year. All year groups attend Mass weekly in the Parish of Our Lady of Lourdes, on a rotational basis. Pupils' spiritual development is carefully fostered in this school. Parents are invited in all events and greatly appreciate these opportunities.

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

The school is outstanding in its work to promote the Common Good. St Vincent's has established a genuine commitment to the Common Good over many years. Some charities have been supported for a long time and with ideas from the pupils who are always keen to support as many new projects as they possibly can. A key feature of this school is that initiatives are almost all driven by the pupils. Pupils in discussion proudly mentioned their support for Acton Homeless Concern, and their new work in the Michael Flanders Centre for dementia sufferers. Internationally they are all aware of the work they do to support the Domino Foundation in South Africa. Pupils speak with enthusiasm, pride and passion about the work they do. They are occasionally less clear on the why they do it and this needs to be revisited and revised more often. They were also all eagerly looking forward to their forthcoming 'Teachers Got Talent Day' a Christmas fundraiser. This academic year the school

has begun the 'Building the Kingdom' project to instill in pupils the idea that all children are unique and excel in areas of the curriculum.

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 partnerships with parents, school and parish are judged to be outstanding. Parents spoken with in a meeting during this inspection and via a very well responded to survey, 245 replies, are almost overwhelmingly supportive of the work of the school. Parents all mentioned the good start the young children receive and also went on to talk about the strong progress their children make. The pastoral care of the school was also frequently spoken about. A significant minority of parents asked for more home learning opportunities to be provided. Links with the parish are very close as possible and are greatly appreciated by the parish community. The school is integral to parish life and the parish priest is a frequent and welcome visitor to the school. Links with the Diocese of Westminster are equally strong at all levels. The excellent links with the diocesan team and pro-active involvement in deanery networks enhance the opportunities for professional growth for all staff. Governors engage effectively with key diocesan staff and attend diocesan training to improve their role of support and challenge to the school. The headteacher is a lead inspector for the diocese, mentoring and coaching potential associate inspectors and supporting the evaluation and review of the inspection process. Local deanery and diocesan moderation is continued regularly to ensure standards are maintained in progress and attainment.

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

is outstanding

The school motto: 'We grow, learn and achieve by following Christ', is evident in every aspect of daily life. The leadership of the headteacher and her senior leadership team in promoting the Catholic life of the school is outstanding. Their vision to promote the Catholic life of the school is equally shared by teachers and support staff at all levels. The governing body makes a major contribution to the work and Catholic dimension of the school. Governors are rigorous in their strategic leadership, through their challenge to the leadership team, while also providing highly effective support. The school's own self-evaluation is both informative, thorough and is accurate. Pupils own voices are very strong and articulate in this school. Pupils loved talking about their work in RE and were rightly proud and happy to be attending such a well-led Catholic school.

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

- Revise regularly the theology behind all the outstanding work the pupils do around the Common Good so they know why they are doing such good works.

Information about this school

- The school is a two-form entry Catholic primary school in the London Borough of Ealing and in the locality of Acton.
- The school serves the parishes of Our Lady of Lourdes, Acton and St Aidan's, East Acton
- The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholic is 87%.
- The proportion of pupils who are from other Christian denominations is 6% and from other faiths is 3%. The remaining pupils are from families who have not declared a faith.
- The percentage of Catholic teachers in the school is 69%.
- The number of teachers with a Catholic qualification is 4.
- There are 65 (14%) of pupils in the school with special educational needs or disabilities of whom 18 have statements of Special Educational Needs and /or Disabilities (SEND)/ Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP).
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well above average.
- The number of pupils speaking English as an Additional Language is well above average
- There is a below average rate of families claiming free school meals.
- 76 pupils receive the Pupil Premium (17%).

Department for Education Number	307/3509
Unique Reference Number	101926
Local Authority	Ealing

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils	3 - 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on roll	452
The appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Roberto Brianti
Headteacher	Mrs Monica McCarthy
Telephone number	020 8992 6625
Website	www.st-vincent.s.ealing.sch.uk
Email address	admin@stvps.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	25 March 2015
Grades from previous inspection:	
Classroom religious education	Outstanding
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 12 lessons or part lessons were observed.
- The inspectors attended 2 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 Team

The inspectors are appointed by the Archbishop.

Mr Sean Flood	Lead Inspector
Ms Tracey Peters	Associate Inspector
Ms Patricia O'Donnell	Associate Inspector
Mr Peter Sweeney	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>

Vaughan House
46 Francis Street,
London
SW1P 1QN

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