

Mount Carmel Catholic Primary School

Little Ealing Lane, Ealing W5 4EA



Date of inspection by Westminster Diocese: 4 March 2020

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

A. Classroom religious education is good

- The religious education curriculum is mapped to and fully meets the requirements of the current Religious Education Curriculum Directory.
- Teachers create a stimulating, nurturing environment that promotes excellent attitudes to learning. There are very good relationships among pupils and adults, and these are used positively by teachers to create an atmosphere that promotes learning. Pupils are articulate, enthusiastic and demonstrate a thirst for learning; they are eager to develop their Catholic faith.
- Pupils make good progress in religious education and outcomes are broadly in line with other core subjects.
- Home learning is used very well to develop knowledge and understanding and creates valued links between school and home.
- Staff are extremely well supported by the excellent subject leader to further enhance their knowledge and expertise in religious education. The headteacher, leader of religious education, parish priest and governors show and articulate a strong commitment to driving forward standards in religious education.

Classroom religious education is not yet outstanding because

- Teachers have missed some opportunities to increase creativity in religious education across the school.
- Recent initiatives are not yet fully embedded to enable leaders to accurately monitor, track and ensure pupil progress is rapid and sustained.

B. The Catholic life of the school is outstanding

- The Catholic life of the school permeates the whole community in the outstanding opportunities it provides on a daily basis. The pupils strive to be 'Ambassadors of Christ' and are rightly very proud of their school.
- Religious education is well resourced and is allocated its full 10% of teaching time as required by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.
- Parents, staff and pupils recognise the importance the school places on its Catholic life. The school website celebrates the Catholic life of the school beautifully.
- Prayer and worship are central to the Catholic life of the school. Throughout their time at Mount Carmel, pupils are supported in their own planning of prayer and worship so by the time they leave in Year 6, they are skilled in making worship a real celebration.
- Mount Carmel's commitment to social justice is very high and this is reflected in the school's life. Pupils are given opportunities to fundraise and be of service to a wide range of charities both locally, nationally and overseas.
- The school has strong and productive relationships with the parish, deanery and diocese and parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the work of the school. Parents frequently mentioned the close-knit community and pastoral care of the school.
- School leaders, including governors, are fully committed to the Church's mission in education and this is clearly demonstrated throughout the school. It is the leadership of the school that has made this area outstanding over many years.

A. Classroom Religious Education

What has improved since the last inspection?

In the last inspection, the school was asked to develop its understanding of the levels of attainment through whole school and phase moderation. Since then, the school has piloted the new 'Standards in Religious Education' framework, embedding the framework across the school and sharing good practice with other schools in the deanery and across the diocese. Staff are becoming increasingly confident in teaching the skills and are gaining a clearer understanding of what is expected for each strand of the framework. The school were also asked to ensure that tasks set allow pupils to demonstrate their achievement of the higher levels of attainment. This continues to be an on-going target for the school. Progress since the last inspection has been good and the school has a clear picture of where it still needs to further develop in the delivery of religious education.

The content of classroom religious education is good

The religious education curriculum is mapped to and fully meets the requirements of the current Religious Education Curriculum Directory (RECD). The strengthening study of scriptural texts is supporting the development of pupils' religious literacy. Progression in topics is planned but there is scope to focus the cycles of learning more carefully so that over the years the pupils can grow in their knowledge and deepen their understanding even further. Although there is a good focus overall on the key factors that develop religious literacy, the implementation within lessons does not always deepen pupils' skills and understanding as tasks are not always matched to pupils' earlier learning. The school engages in research and seeks external guidance and advice to ensure that pupils and staff receive appropriate training and support. There was evidence of 'The Big Question' on display and being used effectively across the school. The school is currently focusing on the message given by Pope Francis on poverty and mission with each year group concentrating on a particular theme through which we can protect our world.

Pupil achievement in religious education is good

Pupils' attitudes towards their religious education (RE) lessons are very positive. They are eager to share their knowledge and discuss what they know about RE. Pupils have high levels of religious literacy, which is evident through discussions; however this is not always displayed through the work in their books. Pupils make good progress in RE lessons. They are provided with challenging activities through the use of 'chilli challenges.' Where teaching is strongest, children are given choices as to which task they undertake to ensure stretch and challenge. Pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage receive a very good start to their school life in a secure, nurturing and well set out environment. There are good opportunities to learn, both indoors and outdoors, and staff are effective in helping the young children to develop their faith. The school has been using the new 'Standards in Religious Education' framework to measure progress and attainment for the last three years and through moderation exercises and joint planning sessions, teachers are becoming more confident in using these to plan and assess in RE.

The quality of teaching is good

The school has had a high turnover of staff in recent years and throughout this time, leaders have worked very hard to maintain the quality of teaching and learning in religious education. Overall, the quality of teaching is never less than good, Teachers are continually striving to further develop their subject knowledge through joint planning sessions with the RE lead. Teams of teachers regularly gather to plan and deliver a lesson and then reflect on practice through the school's professional development cycle. Teachers create a positive climate for learning in RE lessons; pupils enjoy their lessons and are eager to succeed. Teachers use a number of effective strategies in RE to ensure

pupils are fully engaged and learning. An increase in creative opportunities and fewer scaffolded lessons will enable children to be more independent learners. Where marking is strongest, it provides pupils with feedback that deepens their learning; however this is not always consistent across the school. Behaviour of pupils in lessons, on the playground and around the school is exemplary. At Mount Carmel, the learning environment is very positive with success celebrated. There are very good relationships among pupils and adults, and these are used positively by teachers to create an atmosphere that promotes learning. The teaching of other faiths is embedded in the curriculum and children are encouraged to discuss and respect similarities and differences. Pupils' own experiences are valued and shared. There are excellent systems for homework at Mount Carmel. Pupils engage positively with 'home learning projects' and parents speak of how these bring their families together to learn and share ideas about their faith.

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

The RE lead, along with the headteacher, provide strong leadership in religious education with a clear vision which is shared by all the staff. Religious education is at the heart of the curriculum, informing all other areas of school life. The RE lead is passionate about the subject and this is evident to the whole school community. Supported by the headteacher and governors, the RE lead has set in place systems and procedures which ensure that the standards in RE are as high as they can be. That these standards are still high, given the high turnover of staff, shows the importance given to this work by the school. The RE lead has ensured that there are many opportunities for staff training through deanery and diocesan moderation and including those new to teaching and to Catholic education. The school has worked with the new 'Standards in Religious Education' framework effectively and has shown a constant willingness to make changes which will improve the outcomes in classroom RE for the pupils and, given some stability with staffing, there would seem to be no reason why these should not embed over the next few years. The self-evaluation (SEF) document was completed accurately and clearly demonstrated the school's understanding of their strengths and areas for development.

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

- Encourage the pupils to take increasing risks by giving them ownership of their learning and opportunities to think creatively and deepen their understanding independently.
- To clarify end of topic outcomes for both staff and pupils when planning and provide opportunities for challenge for all groups of learners.

B. The Catholic life of the school

What has improved since the last inspection?

All areas mentioned in the previous report have been fully addressed by the school. The prayer gardens are a source of pride for the whole community and are used very well. A new initiative has been to create 'RE Pupil Leaders'; this is a role that is regarded as extremely important within the school and helps pupils with their worship, charity work and service to others.

The place of religious education as the core of the curriculum

is outstanding

Religious education receives 10% of curriculum time as required by the Bishops' Conference. Religious education has a very high status within the school. The leadership team, supported by the parish priest and governors, work very hard to ensure that the pupils are provided with the best opportunities possible and that staff are supported in their professional development. The school is a vibrant and well-maintained learning environment with displays of Catholic life everywhere, including The Year of the Word and The Common Good; exceptional RE home learning projects, are on display both in school and on the school website. An appropriate budget is allocated to RE and the school ensures these funds are well spent and that RE is very well resourced. Parents are very complimentary and appreciative of the school's work as demonstrated by the response in two recent surveys and by conversations with inspectors in the playground with one parent saying, 'Mount Carmel doesn't just pay lip service to RE, it's really very important to the school.'

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

is outstanding

Prayer and worship are at the heart of all that Mount Carmel does. Life at this school is underpinned by its mission statement: 'I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full' (John 10:10) which is clearly evident and on display throughout the school. Pupils are given many opportunities to discuss and understand its meaning and how they can live it out in their own lives. Throughout their time at Mount Carmel pupils are supported in their own planning of prayer and worship so by the time they leave in Year 6, they are skilled in making worship a real celebration. Assemblies are used to celebrate achievement and to enhance pupils understanding of Catholic life and responsibility, using themes such as The Year of The Word, 'The Big Questions', caring for the Earth and others and the message of Pope Francis in *Laudato Si'*. The school marks events in the liturgical calendar as a community through attendance at Mass and takes every opportunity for collective worship including May Processions, Passion Plays, Stations of the Cross in the local parish church and Benediction as well as class-based liturgies. The parish priest is a weekly and much valued visitor. The headteacher, RE lead, parish priest and parish pastoral assistant who is also the RE Link Governor, plan the liturgical calendar for the school year in September, including both national and local initiatives, thus enhancing the prayer life of the whole school community.

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

is outstanding

Mount Carmel's outstanding commitment to the Common Good is at the centre of the school's Catholic social teaching. Pupils understand their role as 'Ambassadors of Christ' and are provided with a wide range of meaningful opportunities to develop and celebrate their gifts and talents and also to serve and recognise Christ in others. The mission statement is at the core of the school's work as a Catholic community and its call to serve others at a local, national and global level. Pupils demonstrate an excellent understanding of how to live out this call to human flourishing in

themselves and in others and do so with pride. The school supports many local, national and international charities including Cafod, Ealing Food Bank, Action Homeless Concern, Love in a Box and The Catholic Children's Society. Pupils are articulate and rightly proud of their support for such a range of charities. Pupils can clearly explain why they are taking part in these fundraising initiatives but the theology underpinning the Common Good is not yet fully embedded across the school. All pupils show a clear understanding of Pope Francis' letter *'Laudato Si'* and their responsibilities to be stewards of their common home. The school has achieved the 'Live Simply' award in recognition of its work to respect and care for the world around them and to 'live simply so that others can simply live'. Pupils and parents are overwhelmingly positive about their school and the opportunities it offers the children to develop their gifts as an individual and as part of the community. Each pupil is recognised as an individual and encouraged to achieve their best and leave Mount Carmel as an 'Ambassador for Christ'. Excellent relationships throughout the school enables pupils to flourish; behaviour too is excellent, and children are very proud to be part of this faith-filled community.

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

Mount Carmel has a very strong link with the parishes, together with a strong standing in their local Catholic community. The parish priest is often seen in school, leading Masses, liturgies and reconciliation services. Pupils also attend Mass in the local church. Year 5 pupils act out the Stations of the Cross in the church each Lent and this is attended by both parents and parishioners. Strong communication has led to a very positive relationship between the school and the parish; this undoubtedly enhances the children's religious experiences. The school works closely with parents and carers in the development of the children's faith. Parents feel very secure in supporting the school and its core Catholic purpose and think that their children receive a very good start in life. Parents are welcomed into the school for assemblies, Masses and liturgies; most recently for a weekly Lenten Mass which takes place before school each Wednesday. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the job the school is doing in supporting the children on their faith journey. Parent questionnaires were also overwhelmingly positive and they comment on the 'strong sense of community' at Mount Carmel. The staff at Mount Carmel are actively involved in the diocese, attending conferences and training sessions regularly. The excellent relationship with the parish priest, additionally supported by the parish pastoral assistant, ensure that pupils have outstanding and effective links between school and parish.

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

is outstanding

The headteacher and RE lead are excellent role models, leading by example. They have a strong commitment and determination to demonstrate excellence in all aspects of the day-to-day life of the school. With the governors, they are fully committed to the Church's mission in education and this is clearly demonstrated throughout the school. New staff are well supported, and all staff have access to high quality professional development opportunities. The whole school reflects the vision of the leadership team in the relationships displayed by all members of the community and in the respect and care they show for each other. Governors are well informed, knowledgeable and are determined to ensure the school thrives in the years to come. The school knows its strengths and are aware of the areas of development to ensure outstanding provision is maintained.

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

- All pupils need to better articulate the theology that underpins their actions for social justice.

Information about this school

- The school is a 2-form entry Catholic voluntary aided school in the locality of Ealing.
- The school serves the parishes of St Peter and St Paul, Northfields, St Dunstan's, Gunnersbury and St John's, Brentford.
- The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholic is 96%.
- The proportion of pupils who are from other Christian denominations is 3% and from other faiths is 1%.
- The percentage of Catholic teachers in the school is 56%.
- The number of teachers with a Catholic qualification is 6.
- There are 16% of pupils in the school with special educational needs or disabilities of whom 7 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.
- The number of pupils speaking English as an Additional Language is well above average.
- There is a well below average rate of families claiming free school meals.
- 29 pupils receive the Pupil Premium (7 %).

Department for Education Number	3073500
Unique Reference Number	101919
Local Authority	Ealing

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils	4 -11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on roll	441
The appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Maggie Pound
Headteacher	Mrs Clare Walsh
Telephone number	0208 567 4646
Website	www.mountcarmel.ealing.sch.uk
Email address	info@mountcarmel.ealing.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	24 April 2015
Grades from previous inspection:	
Classroom religious education	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 15 lessons or part lessons were observed.
- The inspectors attended 3 of 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 Team

The inspectors are appointed by the Archbishop.

Ms Maureen O'Donoghue

Lead Inspector

Ms Robina Maher

Associate Inspector

Ms Cynthia Ni Loingsigh

Associate Inspector

Mrs Jennifer O'Prey

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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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