

# St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Rockingham Close, Uxbridge UB8 2UA

Date of inspection by Westminster Diocese: 23 June 2017



## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### A. Classroom religious education is outstanding

- The religious education curriculum is well-planned allowing pupils to deepen their Catholic faith.
- Teaching staff have developed a broad understanding of the Curriculum Directory.
- Pupils' progress and attainment in religious education are outstanding. Pupils are both proactive and enthusiastic learners developing a rich religious vocabulary.
- The quality of teaching is outstanding. Teachers meet regularly to plan creative and challenging lessons.
- Pupils enjoy their religious education lessons and are fully engaged in their learning.
- Higher order questioning is used to enable a depth of understanding of religious belief and practice.
- The school tracks and monitors the progress of pupils in religious education, including all groups, very effectively.
- The quality of leadership and management is outstanding. The religious education leader demonstrates great passion which is reflected in the development of the subject across the school.
- There is a dynamic and creative vision for religious education in which all leaders strive for excellence.
- The quality of art and display throughout the school and surroundings demonstrates that religious education is at the centre of this Catholic school.

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

- St. Mary's Catholic Primary School excels at being a strong, inclusive community based on Catholic tradition and practice.
- At least 10% of curriculum time is devoted to religious education, which complies with the requirements of the Bishops' Conference.
- The partnership between parents, school and parish is outstanding. There are excellent, strong links with the local parish and parish priest.
- Religious education and prayer life is at the heart of the school's vision and ethos.
- Daily worship and prayer are an integral part of school life for staff, parents and pupils.
- The school works to ensure that the diverse cultural and socio-economic background of pupils is supported and celebrated regularly and that all are treated with respect.
- The school's mission statement informs all aspects of life in this Catholic school. It is known and lived by all.
- The school's commitment to the Common Good is outstanding. Pupils are actively involved in decision-making and have a very clear understanding of the theology underpinning their actions.
- School leaders and governors are fully committed to the Catholic education mission of the church. The school's self-evaluation is both honest and accurate.
- School leaders at all levels give high priority to ensuring that there is a vibrant Catholic ethos throughout the school.

## A. Classroom Religious Education

### What has improved since the last inspection?

Monitoring at all levels, a new scheme of work and the introduction of more focused marking ensures that children are now confident at reflecting on their work and progress. The curriculum directory is clearly mapped to topics and teachers have a comprehensive understanding of what they are teaching in religious education (RE)

### The content of classroom religious education is outstanding

The content of the religious education curriculum at St Mary's Catholic School fully meets the requirements of the Religious Education Curriculum Directory. The curriculum is closely tracked and planned by the RE leader. It is both comprehensive and rigorous and gives pupils an outstanding opportunity to deepen their knowledge about their Catholic faith. Lessons are carefully planned and resources such as Bibles are used effectively. Pupils are taught about other faiths such as Judaism and Hinduism and are also being taught about British values and Gospel values. Displays around the school demonstrate work undertaken in these areas. Pupils clearly enjoy their RE lessons and this was evident in their eager and enthusiastic responses during lessons and discussions. Evidence demonstrated that pupils recognised the links between learning about their religion and learning from their religion in the process of developing their religious literacy.

### Pupil achievement in religious education is outstanding

Achievement in religious education is outstanding. Teachers accurately and confidently use the Agreed Understandings of the Levels of Attainment. Regular data tracking provides sufficient detail to monitor progress not only across classes but also against other core areas. As a result, attainment in religious education is at least as good, and at times better than in other core subjects. The school moderates internally as well as at deanery and diocesan level. Moderated work is updated regularly. Different groups of pupils make excellent progress in religious education, including those entitled to Pupil Premium funding. Teachers have high expectations and stretch pupils of all abilities through differentiated tasks. Recent work using 'Growth Mindset' encourages pupils to consistently aim high and have a 'can do' attitude. Pupil books and displays demonstrate that pupils value religious education and are proud of their achievements.

### The quality of teaching is outstanding

Teaching is never less than good and often outstanding. This enables pupils to make excellent progress over time and to learn exceptionally well. Teachers use open ended and challenging questions and encourage discussion with talk partners to deepen and enhance learning in all classes. Support staff are instrumental in lessons, ensuring that pupils with additional needs are well catered for. Reference to scripture is used very effectively to engage pupils' interest and enhance learning. Clear and consistent marking across the school, with good quality feedback where appropriate, is evident across the school leading to higher levels of attainment. Evidence in books showed this led to pupils' higher order thinking skills and enabled them to understand how to improve their work. Pupils enjoy their RE lessons and a pupil in Year 6 said, 'RE lessons help me to know how to live my life better by following Jesus' example.' The introduction of the composite models has ensured that with excellent teaching pupils are developing their religious literacy. Planning is detailed and takes account of pupils' prior learning. The impact on pupils' progress is evident in their work in books and in the lessons observed. There are good resources throughout the school and there is detailed attention to vocabulary and language development as a result of a recent funding opportunity from the local authority. The charity initiatives displayed on classroom doors throughout the school

provides a rich, and inspiring environment, where it is truly evident that St Mary's pupils 'With Jesus, learn together through faith and love.'

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

The leader of religious education has a very clear understanding of the strengths and areas for development in religious education. The new scheme has been in place for a year and much work has been done to support staff in the development of their subject knowledge, in particular non-Catholic staff. Religious education is led by a senior leader, demonstrating the high priority given to religious education in the school. He is an outstanding role model and works very successfully to monitor, improve and support teaching so that it is always good or better. The governors and headteacher support the development of religious education very well. The performance management systems are clearly set out and apply equally for all staff. There is a good range of continuing professional development delivered both internally and from the diocese. These opportunities are woven through the school improvement plan. All staff are well guided and supported to deliver highly effective religious education for all pupils.

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

- Continue to embed the new scheme of work across the school.
- Develop the system of paired peer observations to ensure the sharing of outstanding practice.

## B. The Catholic life of the school

### What has improved since the last inspection?

Pupils are now confident to plan, prepare and lead collective worship both in classes and across the school using the structured model available. There is evidence in the portfolios of a range of pupil-centered celebration and worship and pupils are now ready to develop this even further.

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

**is outstanding**

The school fully recognises religious education as a core subject and it is given the highest priority. This is reflected in the generous budget devoted to religious education, the resources and the continuing professional development available to staff across the school. At least 10% of curriculum time is devoted to religious education, which is planned, tracked and monitored rigorously by the RE leader and senior leaders. Teachers have excellent subject knowledge and are very well supported by the RE leader. All teachers, including those new to the school and non-Catholic, are well supported in learning about the teaching of religious education. Displays and prayer focus areas are prominent and of excellent quality around the school. Religious education contributes widely to pupils' personal, spiritual, social, moral and cultural development.

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

**is outstanding**

This is an area of celebration for this Catholic school. Prayer and worship are integral to the daily life of pupils and staff and are at the heart of the school and its mission. There is independent child-led worship, which is planned and led by pupils with a growing understanding and maturity as they move up the school. This is now at the stage where pupils are ready to be more independent in this planning and is an area for further development. The evidence of prayer is on display in each classroom and the class prayer books are shared with parents to encourage the links between home and school. Pupils experience a richness of Catholic tradition of prayer, worship and the celebration of the Eucharist by celebrating whole school Masses at key times throughout the liturgical year. The parish priest is a regular visitor and supports the school well. The sacramental life of the pupils is nurtured through the partnership with the parish and the access to the church. Pupils receive the sacraments of the Eucharist and Reconciliation during Advent and Lent. Stations of the Cross and a May procession are an integral part of the annual school life. The richness of the prayer life on offer both internally and externally reflects the warmth and calm, which is woven throughout all aspects of the school day. The mission statement, 'With Jesus, we learn together through faith and love,' which is well known by pupils, demonstrates everything about this outstanding Catholic school.

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

**is outstanding**

The fundraising programmes that each year group undertakes, provide opportunities for pupils to know and understand their role in promoting social justice and service to others. Their support and action for both secular and Catholic agencies, locally, nationally and globally, for example, Cafod, the World Wide Fund for Nature, the Syrian refugee crisis, informs the commitment to developing in pupils the importance of social justice and human flourishing. A Year 6 pupil told inspectors that they had a duty to 'build God's kingdom on earth.' Pupils from the youngest ages act independently and responsibly and demonstrate a very real pride in their school. Pupils actively engage in acts of service and have an excellent understanding of why they are doing it. This multi-cultural school celebrates its diversity through a well-planned cross-curricular programme throughout the year, including special

celebration events during the year.

**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**

There are outstanding links through the partnership of home, school and parish. The partnership with parents is strong and typified by the very high parental participation at school events. There is also a strong partnership with the parish of Our Lady of Lourdes and St Michael. The excellent relationship with the parish priest, who is a regular visitor, is evident when talking to both pupils and staff, who value his involvement within the school and community. The RE leadership team attend all relevant diocesan events and the school regularly participates in deanery meetings and training. Parents are very supportive of the Catholic life of the school as evidenced by a questionnaire as part of the school's own regular surveys. Pupils also have the opportunity to share their feelings about school through an annual 'Pupil Voice' day. The school is part of a Teaching Alliance and has given support to other diocesan schools helping them to improve their practice.

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

**is outstanding**

The effectiveness of the leadership and management in developing and promoting the Catholic life of the school is outstanding in the way that Catholicity permeates all areas of school life. The governing body works very closely with senior leaders to ensure the whole school community shares the clear vision of Catholic education. The senior leaders are outstanding role models who lead by example. Leaders of the school set performance management objectives for all staff that are focused on the Catholic life of the school and the religious education of the pupils. These targets reflect the priority that the leaders and governors give to the Catholic life and teaching of RE within the school. They ensure that all staff participate fully in the religious life of the school, which includes class Masses, religious assemblies, religious events and class visits. Governors fulfil their responsibilities with enthusiasm and rigour and are influential in determining its Catholic direction.

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

- Further develop the growing independence of child led worship to allow pupils to plan using their own thoughts and ideas.

## Information about this school

- The school is a one-form entry Catholic primary school in the locality of Uxbridge.
- The school serves the parish of Our Lady of Lourdes and St Michael, Uxbridge.
- The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholic is 94%.
- The proportion of pupils who are from other Christian denominations is 5% and from other faiths is 1%.
- The percentage of Catholic teachers in the school is 60%.
- The number of teachers with a Catholic qualification is 3.
- There are 12.4% of pupils in the school with special educational needs or disabilities of whom 6 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 below average rate of families claiming free school meals.
- 38 pupils receive the Pupil Premium (17%).

<b>Department for Education Number</b>	312 3404
<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	102425
<b>Local Authority</b>	Hillingdon

<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>	225
<b>The appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Maureen Thorpe
<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss Ann Shevlin
<b>Telephone number</b>	01895 232814
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.st-marys.hillingdon.sch.uk">www.st-marys.hillingdon.sch.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:office@stmarysuxbridge.org.uk">office@stmarysuxbridge.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	9 July 2012
<b>Grades from previous inspection:</b>	
<b>Classroom religious education</b>	Very Good
<b>The Catholic life of the school</b>	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 6 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.

Mrs Ann Staunton

Lead Inspector

Miss Grace Anderson

Associate Inspector

Mrs Mary Ainger

Associate Inspector

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