

# St John Vianney Catholic Primary School

Stanley Road, London N15 3HD

Date of inspection by Westminster Diocese: 7 June 2018



## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### A. Classroom religious education is outstanding

- The Religious Education Curriculum Directory is fully and carefully embedded in the programme of study.
- The school's well-managed process of preparing themes and lessons and regular planning sessions has resulted in high quality religious education lessons.
- The introduction of a new curriculum structure specifically related to Catholic Social Teaching has proved very beneficial to the religious education curriculum.
- All pupils observed in lessons were enthusiastic learners, displaying a strong desire to learn and actively participate in lessons.
- A major strength in the teaching is the warm relationship between staff & pupils and between pupils; this enables staff to be creative and ambitious in their planning and leads to outstanding teaching over time.
- Differentiation is not yet fully developed across the whole school.
- The school provides a rich learning environment.
- The school has fully responded to the recommendation of the previous inspection and introduced a thorough introduction to other world faiths.
- The governors show close and sustained interest in the teaching of and attainment in religious education.
- The school has established a very effective leadership team of head, deputy and RE coordinator which has led to a great improvement in the consistency and quality of RE planning in the school. Its understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement is highly accurate.

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

- The Bishops' Conference expects at least 10% of classroom curriculum time to be devoted to religious education and St John Vianney complies.
- Catholic values and ethos are kept at the forefront of pupil awareness.
- The school is outstanding in ensuring that religious education is at the core of its curriculum.
- Pupils are friendly, confident and articulate ambassadors for the school.
- Pupils are accustomed to begin and end each day with prayer as well as at the beginning of RE lessons and lunch.
- The Year 5 'Chaplaincy Team' is helping to develop further the confidence pupils already have to lead prayer.
- Outstanding whole school assemblies provide the theme that inspires school life in the coming week.
- Pupils can articulate well both what Jesus taught us about serving our neighbour and how to go about it in daily life.
- The school has introduced a structured introduction to Catholic Social Teaching which has substantially taken forward the already successful Catholic life of the school.
- The school provides excellent initiatives in engaging with and serving the local community.
- The partnership with the parish is very close and there is excellent cooperation and joint planning regarding the liturgy and the sacraments.
- Parents praise the school for the way they feel included in its life. Governors are outstanding in their knowledge and support of the Catholic life of the school.

## A. Classroom Religious Education

### What has improved since the last inspection?

The previous inspection report recommended that the school create a regular programme of study which develops the pupils' understanding of Judaism and Islam within a rolling programme of the study of other faiths. The school has fully responded to the recommendation and as it happened in the week of the inspection the school had a focus week on the study of Sikhism as part of its established programme. Other focus weeks in which the whole school takes part include Buddhism and Hinduism as well as Judaism and Islam.

### The content of classroom religious education is outstanding

The school fully employs its chosen religious education (RE) programme and goes well beyond it. The process of working together as a staff to prepare lessons ensures that a creative opportunity is in place, enabling extended units of work related to current needs and events to be produced. This process of preparing themes and lessons is leading to very high quality of lesson, carefully attuned to the needs and aptitudes of the pupils. An outstanding example was the unit of work on the Grenfell Tower fire prepared for Y6. The Religious Education Curriculum Directory (RECD) is fully and carefully embedded in the programme of study and the school has in place a number of mechanisms to monitor compliance with the RECD. The programme of study for each year is uploaded to the school's website and the parents are provided excellent signposting. This reinforces for the pupils the immediacy of what they are learning. The homework strategy is focused on the pupils' development and understanding of the topics studied. They are often completed as a family and resulting work is displayed. Learning strands related to both scripture, whether by topic or liturgical reference, and to the Church's celebrations are also built into the school's programme of study. The material offered by the diocese, which is taken up very well, provides further opportunities to develop lessons which reflect diocesan and deanery priorities and topics.

### Pupil achievement in religious education is good

All pupils observed in lessons were enthusiastic learners and displayed a strong desire to learn and actively participate in lessons – children will ask others when they do not understand a word or concept to ensure they gain a full understanding of the lesson. Pupils use their 'success criteria' in assessed pieces to see what they need to do to improve their work and achieve their next steps. Pupils are friendly, confident and articulate ambassadors for the school. Their behaviour is outstanding both in lessons and around the school. The pupils were keen to talk about what they had learned in their RE classes and were impressively articulate. In one class, the teacher used her magic wand to turn the pupils into apostles and encouraged them to explain what they were about and how they felt. In another class, the pupils were enthusiastic as they sat on the bench in the boat with Jesus and listened to his teaching. In a minority of lessons pupil attainment is impeded by lower teacher expectations for the higher ability range. The Agreed Understandings provided by the Diocese are well understood and carefully acted upon. Religious literacy is very well supported by the scaffold provisions established during the literacy development that has taken place in the school over the past few years.

### The quality of teaching is outstanding

At St John Vianney Catholic Primary School a major strength of teaching is the warm relationship between staff & pupils and between pupils. Resources are excellent and range from scripture, iPads and role play resources to traditional religious artefacts. The thorough provision of shared preparation time is the foundation for the excellent teaching programmes and lesson content in the school. The senior leadership team and RE coordinator ensure there are regular planning sessions

for all teachers linked to the RECD with a focus on planning together and taking all the steps together. Teachers have sound subject knowledge and have the confidence to develop and adapt materials to the needs of the class they are teaching. They use a wide variety of teaching methods related to literacy development such as storyboarding, role playing and sequencing which are very effective in engaging the pupils. ICT is confidently used by both teachers and pupils and its employment is focused on developing religious understanding. The school provides a rich learning environment and is full of high quality pupil-centred displays, promoting different liturgical celebrations and events over time. Teaching assistants are actively deployed in the classroom and provide very good support. In many lessons observed the teaching was creative, inspiring and it actively engaged the pupils in their learning. Where teaching was strongest pupils made rapid progress due to the high order questioning used to stretch them. There is some variation in the written feedback guidance given to pupils on how to improve. There is a culture of candour and self-reflection both between pupils and teachers as well as among the teachers which gives constructive opportunities for improvement based on dialogue and discussion. Some staff have achieved the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies (CCRS) to support their subject knowledge.

### **The effectiveness of leadership and management in promoting religious education**

**is outstanding**

The leadership and management of the school as a whole has been through a dramatic process of change and improvement in the past few years. Integral to this change and improvement has been its influence on the leadership and management in promoting religious education. The school has established an outstanding and effective leadership team of head, deputy and RE coordinator which has led to a great improvement in the consistency and quality of RE planning in the school. The leadership team is very closely and accurately aware of strengths and areas for improvement. The self-evaluation of RE on their part was fully reflective of reality in the school. Teachers are confident, well prepared and relaxed in their teaching roles – all clearly a product of excellent leadership. The priority of religious education at the core of the curriculum is evidently in place. The building up of the tradition of preparing lessons in conjunction with each other a half term in advance and the incorporation of insights into teaching techniques based on the skills learned in the literacy drive has proved to be a very good mechanism for promoting very high quality religious education. The governors show close and sustained interest in the teaching of and attainment in religious education; they provide both challenge and support. They were instrumental in the recent introduction of a new structure into the curriculum specifically related to Catholic Social Teaching. Pupils prepare displays on the main themes of recent papal documents and have in this way a richer background when it comes to understanding core RE issues across the rest of the curriculum. This new emphasis on Catholic Social Teaching has led to further refinement of both the religious education provided in the school as well as the living of its Catholic life.

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

- Take steps to provide further differentiated challenge across the ability range and to higher ability pupils in particular.
- Review the use of levels in the light of impending attainment and assessment changes.
- Encourage more staff to continue their professional development, for example, undertake the CCRS,

## B. The Catholic life of the school

### What has improved since the last inspection?

The previous inspection recommended that the school deepen the work on the Common Good by forging closer links with other faith groups. It has fully responded to this recommendation, establishing a rolling programme of focus weeks on other faiths such as Buddhism, Hinduism and Sikhism, as well as strengthening the more substantial teaching units on Judaism and Islam. In order to deepen the understanding of the Common Good yet further it has introduced a structured introduction to Catholic Social Teaching, present over the course of a few weeks on one particular theme such as solidarity, rights or service. The pupils' ability to see better their place in the world and that their actions can positively or negatively change the lives of other both locally and globally, has been enhanced.

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

is outstanding

The school is outstanding in ensuring that religious education is at the core of the curriculum. The 10% of classroom curriculum time is in place as recommended by the Bishops' Conference and classroom teaching timetables are monitored to ensure this time provision is maintained. The budget for resources for religious education is generous and comparable with the other core subjects. In each classroom there is a prayer table which provides a focus for prayer. This is enhanced with cloths and posters indicating the liturgical season. The joint staff planning ensures that Catholic life issues are at the heart of the school's curriculum. Listening to the pupil responses indicated that they both appreciate and can articulate Jesus's teaching applied to the many areas of life. The wide diversity of topics covered in the headteacher's collective acts of worship assemblies are of note as pupils enjoy and benefit from the core message presented. These topics are reinforced with displays in the course of the week, ensuring that Catholic values and ethos are kept at the forefront of pupil awareness. The governors and leadership team offer active and generous support to the religious education programme of the school. The continuing professional development opportunities given are regular and thorough. The governors also ensure that they themselves attend opportunities to develop their understanding of Catholic teaching and the pedagogy of a Catholic school.

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

is outstanding

On the day of the inspection, inspectors saw how prayer and worship were central to the life of St John Vianney for pupils and staff. The quality of the whole school collective worship is outstanding, offering a wide range of prayer and worship opportunities. Staff pray at the beginning of staff meetings and the pupils' day is punctuated with prayer moments, at the beginning and end of the day, at the start of RE lessons and before lunch. The assembly led by the head teacher and members of Year 5 'Chaplaincy team' excelled in offering the whole school opportunities to pray and reflect on Solidarity. Pupils' spiritual development is encouraged through opportunities they have for reflection, using a range of stimuli. The parents interviewed, praised and appreciated the wide variety of liturgies, masses and other prayer and worship opportunities offered throughout the year; pupils welcome their involvement in preparing and participating in these and respond very positively. The parents especially mentioned the home/school prayer book which goes home in turn to the families, as well as the familiarity of their children with prayer. The quality of the preparation of prayer opportunities enables worship to be a real celebration. Through the Year 5 'Chaplaincy Team', pupils are very much involved in the prayer life of the school and are skilled in helping to prepare and lead worship.

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

The school's commitment to service and social justice is outstanding. The pupil led 'call to action' is evident at a school, local, national and international level. The RE coordinator has introduced a Year 5 'Chaplaincy Team' this year. The pupils take pride in leading a prayer group using the 'Wednesday Word' and they give those pupils who attend a mission to carry out. The pupils have supported many charities including Cafod, MacMillan Cancer Support, Catholic Children's Society, Sports Relief and Chinzini Primary School in Malawi. Pupils are theologically aware from a young age and talk about Catholic Social Teaching confidently. One pupil commented: 'In assembly, we make the sign of the cross and talk about topics like solidarity. It means you're united and together. We can show solidarity by being a community'. The school emphasises its presence and service to the local community, whether helping build a monument in the local park, collecting for the local foodbank or campaigning to the local councillor over safety and environment issues. Pupils have an excellent understanding of the theology flowing from the teaching of Jesus underpinning their actions.

**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 involvement of parents in the life of the school has become much closer in recent years. The engaging website and the school letter emailed weekly to all parents has helped them feel more informed about and involved in the life of the school and their children's education. The parents who spoke to the inspectors emphasised how highly they felt enveloped and supported by the school. There is a very close partnership of the school with the parish. The parish priest actively supports the school both by regularly visiting and celebrating Mass, but also by arranging for classes to take it in turn to come for Mass in the parish church. The diocesan inset is well attended. The area bishop recently celebrated Mass in the school.

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

The very walls of the school with their displays speak loudly of this school's Catholic life. The head, deputy and RE coordinator are very effective in promoting Catholic life and ethos on every front. The good behaviour of the pupils is no accident – they feel cared for and at home – all a product of the school's outstanding leadership. The behaviour policy of the school is overtly linked to the school's mission and Gospel values, including elements such as learning empathy with victims of bad behaviour and the principles of restorative justice in conflict resolution. The pupils recently were involved in taking a fresh look at the mission statement and came up with the succinct motto 'Everything we can be with Christ in our hearts'. The introduction of a rolling structure of Catholic Social Teaching themes, emphasised on a half termly basis, provides an excellent framework for many other aspects of this school's Catholic life, especially its outreach to the local community. The governors are well informed about and ambitious for the school to be Catholic school in every way.

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

- The school should continue to build on the success of the 'Chaplaincy Team', deepening the link between faith, prayer and action.
- The school should provide further references to Catholic Social Teaching units linked to life and world events.

## Information about our school

- The school is a single form entry Catholic primary school in the locality of Tottenham, Haringey.
- The school serves the parish of St. John Vianney, West Green in Tottenham north London
- The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholic is 95%
- The proportion of pupils who are from other Christian denominations is 3% and from other faiths is number 0.5% The remaining pupils are from families who have not declared a faith.
- The percentage of Catholic teachers in the school is 64%
- The number of teachers with a Catholic qualification is 1.
- There are 8% 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 average.
- The number of pupils speaking English as an Additional Language is well above average
- There is an average rate of families claiming free school meals.
- 42 pupils receive the Pupil Premium (18%)

<b>Department for Education Number</b>	309/3510
<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	102152
<b>Local Authority</b>	Haringey

<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>	230
<b>The appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Eoin Hourigan
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Stephen McNicholas
<b>Telephone number</b>	0208 889 8421
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.st-johnvianney.haringey.sch.uk">www.st-johnvianney.haringey.sch.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	admin@ st-johnvianney.haringey.sch.uk
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	6 <sup>th</sup> June 2013
<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 eight lessons or part lessons were observed.
- The inspectors attended one assembly and a number 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 Grades

- Outstanding
- Good
- Requires improvement
- Causing concern

## Inspection Team

The inspectors are appointed by the Archbishop.

Dcn Anthony Clark

Lead Inspector

Ms Angela Dodd

Associate Inspector

Mrs Ruth Sykes

Associate Inspector

Published by the Diocese of Westminster

This publication 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](mailto:education@rcdow.org.uk)

W: <http://rcdow.org.uk/education>