

St. Mary's Priory Catholic Junior School

Hermitage Rd, London N15 5RE

Date of inspection by Westminster Diocese: 26 May 2022



Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

A. Classroom religious education is good

- A good curriculum is offered based on the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*.
- Most pupils make good progress in their knowledge of the Catholic faith and their religious literacy is well developed for their age and ability.
- Attainment is at least as good as in other core subjects.
- Pupils have a positive attitude to learning and this helps ensure good progress.
- Leaders ensure there is regular participation in internal and external moderation.
- Teaching is never less than consistently good.
- Teaching is creative and ensures pupils are actively engaged.
- Pupils can identify their next steps in learning through effective feedback from teachers.
- The contribution of religious education to the Catholic life of the school is strong.

Classroom religious education is not yet outstanding because

- The curriculum is not yet clearly structured and progressive to meet the needs of all pupils.
- Activities and tasks are not always appropriate to the learning objective and do not always provide challenge to deepen pupils' understanding.

B. The Catholic life of the school is good

- Pupils are offered a good Catholic education that provides a wide range of opportunities for pupils to understand a Catholic way of living.
- Resources, staffing, and accommodation are good.
- Prayer and worship are central to the school's understanding of itself as a Catholic school.
- The school promotes strong links with parents and other Catholic schools.
- Gifts are celebrated and pupils are taught to value each other and respect the opinions of others.
- The school actively encourages pupils to give freely of their time and energy to plan activities for the local community.
- Leadership encourages staff and pupils to deepen their understanding of the distinctiveness of this Catholic school.

The Catholic life of the school is not yet outstanding because

- Pupils experience of prayer and worship is not sufficiently deepened and developed as they move through the school.
- Pupils do not have a clear understanding of the theology underpinning their actions.
- Pupil leadership needs to be further developed.

A. Classroom Religious Education

What has improved since the last inspection?

Since the last inspection St. Mary's Priory Junior School has successfully addressed some of the issues raised. Feedback is now more effective, however on occasion, more able pupils are not yet effectively challenged because activities and tasks do not always meet their needs.

The content of classroom religious education is good

In St. Mary's Priory Junior School leaders have ensured that the Curriculum Directory as agreed by the Bishops of England and Wales forms the basis of the content of religious education. As part of this work, leaders have also included a comprehensive and age-appropriate study of other religions. Inspectors observed that pupils had good recall of previous learning and could make links with new learning. In some instances, feedback and answering written questions from previous learning detracted from new learning and progress was slower.

Resources such as video clips and strategies such as hot seating are used effectively to enhance learning in lessons and inspectors observed a range of artifacts to enhance learning of other faiths. The development of content at a deeper level is not yet fully embedded, leaders are aware that this is an area for development and have begun to address this issue.

Pupil achievement in religious education is good

Leaders have put good structures and systems in place to measure progress, the school's own internal moderation system is effective and the school attends deanery and diocesan moderation. There is evidence of progress measured against standards, however assessment procedures are not yet robust. Attainment is as good as other core subjects.

Pupils' attitude to learning is good and this impacts positively on the progress made.

Inspectors observed that religious literacy is good. In a Year 5 lesson pupils were very good at articulating prior knowledge about the Resurrection and what happened when the women went to the tomb. Pupils achieved well in this lesson because teaching was concise and engaging. Explanations were relatable and inspectors observed that progress in the lesson was clear when they listened to pupil discussion. Feedback in books was effective in informing pupils of their next steps as well celebrating successes.

In some lessons observed pupils were not given tasks that closely matched their ability. There were missed opportunities to extend learning further and this impacted on progression across St. Mary's Priory Junior school. Inspectors looked at religious education books and observed that activities did not always meet the needs of more able pupils.

The quality of teaching is good

Teaching is consistently good; most pupils make good progress and achieve well over time.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge and are confident teaching religious education, lessons are engaging, and this contributes to pupils' good progress. However, in some instances pupils' needs are not met because planning is not progressive between year groups.

Effective teaching strategies were observed, recall of previous learning is a strength, in the best lessons seen, recall was pacy and linked well to the new topic being taught. Pupils are also very good at having effective peer discussion, sharing ideas enthusiastically with the wider class group. Pupils in

Year 5 were able to relate being a 'bridging person' in society today with the 'bridging people' from Scripture. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils were learning about the Jewish Festival of 'Shavuot' and the Christian Pentecost. Key questions on display were thought provoking and the teacher created an atmospheric lesson with wind and flames depicted. Inspectors observed good questioning techniques to assess learning in a Year 6 lesson where behaviour for learning was a strength and impacted positively on progress made.

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

Leadership of religious education has been significantly impacted by the recent Covid pandemic coupled with a recent change in school leadership. Prior to this period of turbulence good systems and structures were in place and these were effective in ensuring the quality of religious education remained stable. Religious education continued to influence all aspects of the school. This is evident in the communal displays and prayer focus in classrooms. Teachers have high expectations, however tasks planned do not always meet the needs of every pupil, and because of this, challenge of more able pupils is an issue.

Leadership actively supports staff professional development; time is given to planning units of work and the leader of religious education makes herself readily available during these sessions to support staff and provide opportunities for sharing ideas.

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

- Map and develop a clearly structured and progressive curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils
- Ensure that the tasks are appropriate to learning objective and offer challenge to deepen religious literacy

B. The Catholic life of the school

What has improved since the last inspection?

St. Mary's Priory Junior School has addressed the issues from the last inspection. The school has celebrated Catholic Life on the school website. It has its own dedicated area on the website and is accessible to all.

The place of religious education as the core of the curriculum

is good

Leaders of St Mary's Priory Junior School ensure that religious education meets the Bishops' requirement for 10% curriculum time in every key stage. Religious education has a good status within the school and the parent community. Parents recently attended a liturgy for the crowning of Our Lady. Governors have ensured that religious education has a good budget, and this is in line with other core subjects. Staff allocation and accommodation are good. Leadership team and governors are committed to supporting the review and development of religious education and offer good support. St. Mary's Priory Junior School is not attached to a parish as the school was founded by the Servite Order; as a result, leaders have made a significant effort to establish links to support families. This year a First Holy Communion programme is being offered in school to support families and pupils in their faith journey.

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

is good

Prayer and worship are central to the school's understanding of itself as a Catholic school. Pupils are taught traditional prayers and during the month of May prayed the rosary daily. Pupils plan worship and clearly enjoy this responsibility. Pupils pray regularly each day and prayer spaces reflect the liturgical year. The local priest gives generously of his time and regularly celebrates Eucharist and the Sacrament of Reconciliation in school. Leaders have put a great deal of effort into making these celebrations important. Leaders have ensured that pupils' spiritual and moral development are well provided for. Pupils from other faith traditions experience understanding and respect for their religious traditions. In a Year 6 collective act of worship observed, pupils led worship and were clearly confident to do so. They created a reflective atmosphere and included prayers for the Ascension and a focus on Our Lady. Pupils read from Scripture and invited others to dip their hands in holy water. Inspectors observed that pupils were respectful of one another and listened attentively to each other. Pupils understand the structure of collective acts of worship, however more detail needs to be taught about ensuring a mission is included as well as providing opportunities for different forms of prayer.

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

is good

Pupils in this school have a good understanding of the call to human flourishing; they celebrate the talents and gifts of each other in star of the week assemblies and enjoy seeing the success of others. Pupils are respectful of each other; they listen to each other and understand that they have a call to serve. Pupils also worked hard to support charities globally, for example they supported Ukrainian refugees by holding a talent contest and understood the need to help, however they were not clear about the theology underpinning their actions.

St. Mary's actively encourages pupils to give freely of their time and energy and uses the liturgical year to enable various activities to take place for the local community. Pupils were keen to set up a school food bank after seeing how successful a local area food bank was proving to be. Inspectors

met with the recently established 'Mini Vinnies'; a group of pupils from both schools make up this team. Pupils knew the mission statement and applied it to their behaviour in school. They were less clear about what was meant by the 'Common Good' although they could discuss their fundraising locally, nationally, and globally. Pupil leadership is beginning to flourish in this school.

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 good

St. Mary's Priory Junior School is now beginning to invite parents back into school after the pandemic. A statue of Our Lady stands outside the Senario Centre, and parents were recently invited to come in to pray as Our Lady was being crowned. Parents have missed being a part of school liturgies and are appreciative that opportunities to attend are returning. When the schools became federated in 2006 there was no attached parish, the result of this is that leaders have actively sought to forge links with accommodating clergy from nearby parishes to ensure pupils understand that it is the parish that is the main experience of church for Catholics. This fact, coupled with falling admission rates has meant that the school has been successfully creative in its approach to engage families. The school is now a diocesan school and participates with the many services offered to ensure that staff, governors and pupils are aware of their place as a Catholic school within the diocese. A parental survey returned 156 responses; parents are overwhelmingly supportive of this school. Parents are very pleased that pupils bring books home and share work with their families. They commented on the support pupils receive and spoke highly of the progress made. A parent commented 'we are extremely happy with the Catholic life of this school and appreciate how this has a huge impact on our child in her formative years. We know this will stay with her for the rest of her life, many thanks to the school and this wonderful Catholic community.'

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

is good

A new headteacher has been appointed and at the time of the inspection was in place for five weeks. In the year preceding this inspection, senior leadership has been operating on a reduced level due to Covid staff absences. The result of this period of significant disruption has provided leaders with the opportunity to begin to work on a team-based approach to the leadership of religious education. St. Mary's mission statement '*To love one another as Mary loves Jesus and Jesus loves us. To do our best always. To take care of ourselves and the world God has given us*' is everywhere in school and pupils explained that this helps them to understand what it means to be in a Catholic school. Pupils know this mission statement and understand its significance. Leadership strongly and creatively expresses its support for the Catholic mission of education and ensures all policies and practices reflect that mission. The leadership has ensured high-quality in-service training supports staff to understand how every aspect of the education offered at St. Mary's derives from its mission. Governors make a strong contribution and their regular attention to the areas of Catholic life of the school ensures the school makes good progress.

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

- Fully develop prayer in all its forms and ensure worship follows an agreed structure.
- Ensure pupils have a sound understanding of theology underpinning their actions.
- Further develop and enhance pupil leadership.

Information about this school

- St. Mary's Priory Junior School is a two-form entry Catholic VA school in the locality of Haringey.
- The school serves the parishes of St Ignatius, Stamford Hill and St John Vianney, West Green Road.
- The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholic is 80%.
- The proportion of pupils who are from other Christian denominations is 15% and from other faiths is 1%. The remaining pupils are from families who have not declared a faith 4%.
- The percentage of Catholic teachers in the school is 7.
- The number of teachers with a Catholic qualification is 1.
- There are 19% 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 85%
- There is an above average rate of families claiming free school meals.
- Pupils who receive the Pupil Premium is above national average (36%)

Department for Education Number	3093503
Unique Reference Number	102145
Local Authority	Haringey

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary Aided Academy
Age range of pupils	7-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on roll	192
The appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Martha Hawting
Headteacher	Mrs Jane Ronan
Telephone number	02088009305
Website	www.stmaryspriory.co.uk
Email address	admin1@stmaryspriory.haringey.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	January 2016
Classroom religious education	Good
The Catholic life of the school	Good

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 8 lessons or part lessons were observed.
- The inspectors attended one of act 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 Evelyn Ward

Lead Inspector

Mrs Yvonne Rutherford

Associate Inspector

Mrs Joanne Walsh

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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