



# Larmenier and Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School

41a Brook Green Hammersmith London W6 7BL

Date of inspection: 4 July 2014

## A. Classroom Religious Education

**What is the overall effectiveness of classroom religious education in developing pupils' religious literacy?**

**Overall Grade 1\***

Overall, the effectiveness of classroom religious education is outstanding. The quality of teaching is typically outstanding and never less than very good. The rich curriculum, exceptionally well informed by the curriculum directory, engages pupils excellently in their learning. As a result, their progress in acquiring religious literacy is generally outstanding. Children have immensely positive attitudes to learning as a result of the generally outstanding ethos that encourages them to do their very best. Very regular participation in worthwhile training events, including those within the diocese, are much appreciated by all staff and promoted well by the outstanding leadership and management of religious education within the school. All pupils, including those with specific learning needs, feel valued in lessons which are carefully monitored and staff fully supported. The school is driving forward its work to ensure that the most able pupils have access to materials at the highest available levels, in line with those in the other core areas.

## B. The Catholic life of the school

**What is the overall effectiveness of the Catholic life of the school in developing pupils' experience of the richness of a Catholic way of living and believing?**

**Overall Grade 1\***

Pupils receive a Catholic education that is second to none. They have an excellent all round experience of the Faith and of Catholic traditions. Their understanding, commensurate with their ages, of what it means to live according to these traditions and teachings is deep. Religious education is highly valued as the heart of the curriculum and all the requirements of the Bishops' Conference are in place. Worship and prayer are central to the life of the school and this is clearly evident in the vibrant yet nurturing environment and respectful ethos. There are excellent close links with the local parish and with parents, and the school sees itself as very much part of the diocesan family. There is an excellent commitment to the Common Good with pupils growing in understanding of the Church's social teaching that underpins their practice. The headteacher, together with the leadership team, have established a vision for this Catholic school that permeates all of its work. Governors make a highly significant contribution to the work of the school and the Catholic life. They are able to provide the high levels of challenge and support required to sustain this thriving Catholic community.

## Introduction

The inspectors would like to thank the governors, headteacher, staff, pupils and parents for their co-operation over the conduct of the inspection. The inspectors spent one day in school, visited six parts of lessons and carried out three interviews with the headteacher, the chair of the governing body and the religious education coordinator. Inspectors also spoke with pupils. Other evidence was gathered from contacts with parents through a questionnaire, scrutiny of a sample of pupils' work in lessons, observation of pupils in and out of lessons and examination of school documents. Holidays prevented discussion with local clergy, one of whom is a governor and the main parish link with the school.

The Inspection of Larmenier and Sacred Heart Primary School, Brook Green, was carried out under the requirements of the Canon 806 and Education Act 2005, and in accordance with the Framework for Section 48 Inspections approved by the Archbishop of Westminster. The inspectors are appointed by the Archbishop. The inspection reviews and evaluates how effective the school is in providing Catholic education. This process begins with the school's own self-evaluation.

## Inspection Team

Sheila Nolan	Lead Inspector
Catherine McMahon	Associate Inspector

## Description of School

Larmenier and Sacred Heart School is a two-form entry primary in the local authority of Hammersmith and Fulham and the locality of Brook Green. The school serves the parish of Holy Trinity, Brook Green, as well as a number of near-by parishes, including St Augustine's Hammersmith and Holy Ghost and St Stephen's, Shepherd's Bush. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholics is 98.7% with the remainder from other Christian Faiths. The percentage of Catholic teachers in the school is very high and close to a hundred percent. Eight staff hold a Catholic qualification and another six are studying for a Catholic qualification. The school is a centre for the study of the CCRS.

There are 473 pupils on roll, with 9 of the pupils with statements of special educational need. The proportion of pupils from ethnic minority groups is above average. The number of pupils speaking English as an Additional Language is also above average but the percentage of families claiming free school meals and in receipt of the pupil premium, additional government funding, is below average. A total of 66 pupils receive the pupil premium.

Telephone:	020 8748 9444
e-mail address:	admin@larshrc.lbhf.sch.uk
DFE Number:	205 3649
URN Number:	134009
Headteacher:	Sister Hannah Maria Dwyer
Chair of Governors:	Mr Dominic McGonigal
Date of previous inspection:	23 March 2009

**Key for inspection grades:**

<i>Grade 1*</i>	<i>Outstanding</i>
<i>Grade 1</i>	<i>Very Good</i>
<i>Grade 2</i>	<i>Good</i>
<i>Grade 3</i>	<i>Requires improvement</i>
<i>Grade 4</i>	<i>Causing Concern</i>

## **A. Classroom Religious Education**

*How religiously literate are pupils in the teachings and traditions of the Catholic faith and how well do they know, understand and appreciate the importance of religious faith and practice in everyday life?*

### **What has improved in classroom religious education since the last inspection?**

The only issue identified for improvement at the last inspection related to the monitoring of new assessment procedures. Since then, the school has embedded well its assessment practice across the Key Stages. It has a very clear picture of the achievement of the pupils not only in Key Stages 1 and 2 but also in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Samples of work are levelled and annotated at the end of each topic in religious education. Termly and end-of-year assessments are recorded centrally within the school's tracking system alongside other core subjects. Teachers have had training in these procedures and parents are fully informed of the pupils' performance through the school reporting system.

### **How well does the content of classroom religious education meet the requirements of the Curriculum Directory?**

**Grade 1\***

The religious education curriculum map is planned to mirror the current Curriculum Directory. Each topic links carefully with the Directory and is clear in the staff planning sheets. The four strands are carefully orchestrated so that there is clear progression from the Early Years Foundation Stage to the end of Year 6. There is a very sharp focus on the key factors that develop religious literacy, particularly through supporting understanding in analysing scripture. The implementation of the scheme of work in the classroom engages pupils exceptionally well as it matches very securely the pupils' earlier learning. Resources are especially imaginative and shared very effectively among staff to support the planned curriculum. The study of other faiths, including Judaism and Islam, is incorporated into each unit of work in the course of the year. Judaism, however, is given particular prominence as a separate unit of work. As the curriculum follows the pattern of the liturgical year, time allocations are well managed to include topical events, feast and festivals, some from other faith traditions.

### **Pupil achievement (as well as attainment and progress) in religious education**

**Grade 1\***

Pupils achieve exceptionally well in religious education and at least similarly to their achievement in other core areas. There is a systematic assessment and moderation in place to ensure that pupils make as rapid progress as in other areas of the curriculum. The school uses the diocesan levels of attainment successfully to support assessment and moderation of how well the pupils are doing. Increasingly, the school is providing very challenging opportunities for the most able pupils to achieve at least very well and at the highest available level. There is a year-on-year increase in the proportion of the pupils gaining a secure Level 5 in classroom religious education. The pupils' written work is of a similar standard to that in English. The school is exploring ways to assess and moderate the high degree of understanding required of the pupils at this level. Besides this meticulous attention to the most able pupils, the school ensures that pupils at all starting points make as much progress as possible in religious education. The work in pupils' books as well as their genuine engagement in class illustrates pupils' exceptionally positive attitudes to religious education. The language of narrative and doctrine is carefully and routinely promoted and regularly assessed by well-considered specific tasks. From the earliest years, the pupils are sensitively guided to put their

grasp of their work into practice in everyday life. Even in the Nursery, after a discussion on friendship, for example, children were encouraged to show this by sharing a task or helping another.

## **The quality of teaching**

**Grade 1\***

Teaching is never less than very good and often outstanding. The impact on the pupils' progress is evident in their work in their books and in the lessons observed. Planning is very systematic and detailed to take account of pupils' earlier learning. Teachers expect much of pupils, both academically and personally. Support staff are excellently deployed with often detailed planning sheets to support their work. This was clearly seen in the Year 2 lesson on the Sacrament of Baptism. One group worked very effectively with the teaching assistant on what it meant to be a member of God's family while the other group worked equally effectively with the teacher on what it meant to be a member of the Church. As pupils proceed through the school, staff increasingly challenge their understanding of their work. In a Year 5 lesson, pupils were striving to interiorise St Paul's teaching to the Corinthians on the theme of forgiveness. They were able to explore current issues from the world cup within the context of the Christian message. All classrooms demonstrate a very positive ethos with pupils and teachers working collaboratively to do their best. Resources are excellent, creative and imaginative and there is regular good attention to vocabulary and language development. Pupils really enjoy their work and the interactions between each other and with the adults around them. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and are reaching to deepen their understanding of what constitutes Level 5 or better as part of their on-going development.

Checks on pupils' written work are very regular and encouraging. There is still some variability, however, in the quality of the written guidance on the next steps to help pupils improve their work. Pupils have ready access to the diocesan attainment targets in their work books but it is not evident that they, themselves, use them regularly in conjunction with their teachers to help them to understand where they are in their learning journeys.

## **The effectiveness of the leadership and management of religious education**

**Grade1\***

The outstanding progress of the pupils in religious education reflects very well the excellent leadership of curriculum religious education. A genuine strength of the work of the religious education area is the strong links with parents and carers. Topics are shared in advance so that families can work with and contribute to pupils' development in religious education. Modern technology, newsletters and notice boards are all well deployed to communicate events in the life of the parish and religious education within the school. Similarly exceptionally successful links are promoted, not only with the local parish but also with other parishes from which the pupils come. For Year 3 pupils preparing for Holy Communion, for example, the 'home parishes' are clearly displayed in their classrooms.

Much very successful training supports staff at all levels in developing their understanding of their work in religious education. Not least, is the school's involvement in hosting the CCRS course for teachers across the diocese. The coordinator works closely with the headteacher and governors to promote religious education across the school. Staff are encouraged to participate as fully as possible in diocesan training and moderation. The coordinator manages very well the process of securing evidence from teachers to share at these meetings. Pupils' attainment and progress are carefully and accurately recorded, not only their written work but also their achievements in other learning activities. Resources are very well managed and there is excellent liaison between the librarian and coordinator in sourcing materials. The school promotes imaginative ways to enhance pupils' religious literacy as, for example, in the preparation for the school pilgrimage to Assisi. This opportunity gave

rise to the study of the role of pilgrimage in the Church. The school provides an environment that is second to none in promoting the Church's global mission. The very experienced coordinator promotes the school's mission of 'One Faith- One Family' very actively. Throughout the school, visual materials and artefacts, many donated by parents sustain children's awareness of their place in the Church family. Self-evaluation is very accurate.

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

- Further develop the marking practice so that it matches the best by ensuring all teachers pose helpful questions to help pupils improve their work.
- Deepen even further staff's understanding of what is involved in Level 5 and even higher work.

## **B. The Catholic life of the school**

*How well do pupils experience the richness of a Catholic way of living and believing through all areas of school life?*

### **What has improved since the last inspection?**

At the last inspection, there were no issues for development. Since then, the school has put in place a new religious education programme and has been embedding its tracking systems to match those of other core subjects. The quality of teaching has also improved with staff knowledge and understanding of the curriculum deepening through extensive training.

### **The place of religious education as the core of the curriculum – time, staffing, accommodation, resources, budget**

**Grade 1\***

High priority is given to religious education which is at the heart of the curriculum. This is clearly demonstrated not only by the inspiring and beautiful environment, but also by the attention to staff training, to the accommodation and to the budget. The religious education curriculum is allocated at least 10 % of the time available. The placing and length of individual sessions is carefully considered. In addition, cross-curricular opportunities are planned in a range of subject areas such as PSHE, art, music, drama, mathematics and computing. Further enrichment activities such as the school choir with its collaboration with the cathedral choir school, take place outside of the timetable. Governors and the leadership team do all in their power to support the Catholic ethos of the school and the way in which the staff and pupils apply their faith in daily life. All but one of the governors, for example, was able to attend recent events in the Catholic life of the school. Attendance at diocesan training is regular and much appreciated and the school hosts the CCRS programme for teachers from across the diocese.

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

**Grade 1\***

Excellent links with the local parish and local clergy provide strong support for the outstanding provision for prayer and liturgy across the school. Families' deep involvement in the religious development of the pupils is very effectively encouraged. Pupils have excellent opportunities to celebrate Mass and take part in other liturgical forms. They have ready access to the sacraments as their ages allow. Year 3 pupils are prepared very well in school for their First Holy Communion, which although this takes place in the home parishes, is later celebrated together through the school Corpus Christi event. Festivals are celebrated throughout the liturgical year both in school and in the local church. Daily prayers and reflection, the prayer garden, the Stations of the Cross and the rosary, for example, all contribute to the pupils' extensive experience of Catholic practice. Pupils are well involved in preparing for collective worship in its many forms. Year 6 pupils have had the opportunity to undertake a pilgrimage to Assisi. The school is planning to continue this practice in the coming year. It also intends to extend the opportunities for a retreat period to other year groups.

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

**Grade1\***

The school's mission statement forms the basis of its understanding of its wider responsibilities, local, national and global. The school community does its level best to turn words into actions. Guest speakers from local and other charities are invited to explain their work to the pupils so that they are well informed about what they are supporting. Fundraising events take place to support such as CAFOD , Red Nose day, a South African project and many others.

The school does all it can to promote the well-being of its pupils and their families. All aspects of children's talents are nurtured to encourage a holistic flourishing. Pupils are actively encouraged to celebrate their own and others' cultural traditions. The school celebrates diversity in all curriculum areas. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent and is well demonstrated by the pupils' courtesy and respect for each other and the adults around them and by the way they accept responsibility for their actions and support others. Pupils in Year 6, for example, were able to explore how to recognise the Gifts of the Holy Spirit in a range of scenarios. Again, two five-year-old pupils ran their own cake sale at home and contributed their earnings to the school fund, reflecting the very good home-school links. Pupils provide service to others, appropriate to their ages, through the prefect system, the house system, and buddying each other in learning.

## **Enabling the authentic partnership between parents, school and parish as an integral part of the Diocese, particularly through its relationship with the Diocesan Bishop and those acting on his behalf;**

**Grade 1\***

The school is welcoming to its families. Of the 119 parents who responded to the diocesan questionnaire, there were merely minor disagreements. The overwhelming majority are highly positive. There is a high level of attendance, for example, at conferences and at the open-air masses in the school grounds. Parents can readily access the religious education programme through the school web site and are encouraged to access other helpful web sites to support religious education homework. The high degree of satisfaction by parents is mirrored in the pupils' questionnaire.

Excellent partnerships also exist with the parish and the diocese. The headteacher is a member of the education commission. The school feels itself as an integral part of the diocesan community of schools and takes part in all available training and events. Staff are encouraged, and very happy, to attend such as deanery masses. Links with the local parish are very strong with representation on the governing body by one of the local clergy who are very involved in the Catholic life of the school. As a result, children have excellent access to the local parish church, not only for prayer and worship but also as a resource for investigative tasks. In a mathematics lesson, for example, the children explored symmetry through the architecture and art within the parish church. Children also visit the chapel of an adjacent convent.

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

**Grade 1\***

The distinctive nature and Catholic identity of the school is shared each year with governors and staff. Highly valued training opportunities help to inform and refresh the school community's understanding of its place in the family of Catholic schools. The headteacher has devoted many years of unstinting service in developing this. Senior leaders, exceptionally well guided by the long-serving headteacher, together with governors, have picked up the challenge of determinedly continuing to

build on the excellence established in promoting the Catholic life of the school. Staff are well inducted into the school and required to fulfil the on-going high expectations of the school leadership. The staffing structure of the school is carefully planned to ensure that teachers have ready access to support in planning the pupils' experiences of prayer and liturgy. The school knows its strengths and areas for development very well. Its self-evaluation is accurate.

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

- Take forward plans to involve more year groups in retreats.