



INSPECTION REPORT

Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Primary School
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Headteacher: Mrs Sally Lux
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**Canonical Inspection under Canon 806 on behalf of the Diocese of Clifton
and inspection of Denominational Education under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005**

Date of inspection: 5-6th February 2020
Date of previous inspection: 19-20th March 2015

Reporting Inspector: Mr J Skivington
Additional Inspector: Mr F Toner

Description of school

Our Lady of the Rosary is a one form entry primary school which serves the parishes of Our Lady of the Rosary, Lawrence Weston, Sacred Heart in Westbury on Trym, and St. Anthony's in Henbury. The school has 210 pupils on roll and is currently oversubscribed. The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic groups, and pupils with English as an Additional language (EAL), are both well above the national average with ten languages spoken. The proportion of pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) stands at 7%: two children have SEND statements. The school is a member of the Clifton Catholic Schools Newman Partnership. In January 2018 the school received a RE Monitoring Visit.

Overall effectiveness of this Catholic school (summary statement)

Grade 2

This is a good school, with outstanding features, because:

- The outcomes, the provision, and the leadership and management of Catholic life are overall good. The pupils' contribution to the evaluation of the Catholic life of the school is good as is the provision for Catholic life. Leadership and management are outstanding.
- The outcomes, the provision and the leadership and management for religious education (RE) are overall good. The quality of teaching is good. Pupils' achievement and progress are good. The leadership and management of RE in monitoring and planning for improvement is outstanding.
- The pupils' involvement in planning and evaluating the prayer life of the school is outstanding. The provision for the prayer life of the school, and the effectiveness of the leadership and management in monitoring and evaluating this provision, are both outstanding.

The capacity of the school community to improve and develop is good.

- Since the last inspection, the school has successfully come through a period of instability and pressure, and is now - thanks to outstanding and transformative leadership and management - close to achieving its goal of being an outstanding school. The areas for development highlighted in the previous inspection : governors to review how they strategically monitored Catholic life; to develop the leadership role of pupils in all areas; to ensure consistency of practice in religious education (RE) by all teachers through clear learning objectives - all these aspects are swiftly becoming strengths thanks to inspirational school and subject leadership, close attention to detail, and a strong, knowledgeable, and challenging governing body. There is now a new stability in the school, staff morale and commitment is high, and rigorous systems of monitoring and evaluation are now becoming embedded, and their impact becoming evident in every

area of school life. Parental approval, appreciation, and support for the school is unanimous.

What the school should do to improve further

- To further develop all pupils' confidence in systematically contributing to, and evaluating, the Catholic life of the school, by extending chaplaincy across the school.
- To improve the quality, consistency, and impact of teachers' questioning skills in order to deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- To encourage pupils to develop thinking skills so that they become more independent, inquiring, and competent self-learners.

a) The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school

- Pupils appreciate the Catholic life of the school, as expressed in the school's mission statement. They have come to live the values the school promotes, and they understand how they can live out the school Mission statement; and what they can do to help others live it out. They are able to articulate what is special about being in a Catholic school and are given opportunities to express their views. The Junior Leaders took part in discussing the six priorities in the School Development Plan, sharing their views on how well the school is fulfilling each priority, and what their duty is as learners. The school recognises the need for more opportunities for all children to contribute, in a more planned and systematic way, to the school's own evaluation of its Catholic life, and to take the lead in planning improvements to it.
- The pupils' outstanding behaviour conduct and attitudes around the school reflect its Catholic character. Their care for one another, particularly the older pupils for the younger children, is an embedded behaviour and demonstrates the values inculcated by the school. Each class has a Beatitude to focus on which is designed to encourage positive behaviour. They are alert to issues of social justice and a growing sense of corporate responsibility.
- Most pupils accept the responsibilities of living in a Catholic school community. They take on positions of responsibility for a variety of charities and outreach to the local community, through the school council, the Junior Leadership Team, and the Chaplaincy. They live out the school mission of service and stewardship by supporting global charities such as CAFOD, but also local projects such as the St. Peter's Hospice, the mental health charity MIND, Children in Need, NSPCC, and many other charities.
- The links with the parish are strong. The church of Our Lady of the Rosary is adjacent and well used for Masses, special liturgies, and as an excellent learning resource. Pupils take part and lead in some Sunday parish Masses. The parish priest is a frequent and supportive presence to the whole school community.
- The chaplaincy team meets regularly and takes the lead in the daily prayer life of the school, but the school having recognised they can make a stronger contribution, plan to open it up to pupils further down the school. They have already developed pupils' involvement in charity outreach through the Charity chaplains, who are responsible for raising awareness and fundraising. The chaplains work with other teams across the Newman Partnership of schools, such as the annual Team training linked to the Bishop's vision 'A Future full of Hope', and Year 4 retreat days. As part of the opening of the school prayer garden by Bishop Declan, stewards were commissioned to raise awareness and

responsibility for looking after creation and promoting Pope Francis' encyclical Laudato Si.

- Pupils are happy, well- rounded individuals and well prepared for the next stage of their physical, emotional, and spiritual development.

b) The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school

- The provision for the Catholic life of the school is good. The school's mission and Catholic ethos are at the centre of all the school does and this is very evident in the environment and the colourful displays around the school, and more widely shared through the parish and on the school's website. Every September staff have an RE INSET session to reflect on Catholic Life, the meaning of the school mission within the wider diocesan mission of the Church, and to re-emphasise the core of the school's purpose.
- Our Lady's is a welcoming and inclusive community where all are valued and invited to participate. As a result, all have a strong sense of belonging to a community that celebrates difference and diversity. The whole school community including parents, pupils and staff, celebrates an annual 'Faith Day' in the autumn term, when they visit an outdoor venue e.g. Westonbirt Arboretum. The day starts with an outdoor collective worship led by Year 6 focussing on Mary, our Lady of the Rosary.
- Very effective pastoral support and care is given to all and this is a real strength of the school. This is effectively modelled by governors, senior leaders and all adults involved in the children's lives. All staff are helped through example and CPD to understand the Catholic nature of the school, and as a result they become fully committed to its mission and are real role models for the children. The school promotes mental health especially through the Mental Health Awareness week.
- The new Relationships and Sex Education programme is substantially planned and will be in place for the start of the new term in September 2020. The school also provides many opportunities for the pupil's spiritual and moral development across the curriculum. Time is given to enable pupils to reflect on making right choices in the context of Gospel values

c) How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school

- Leaders and governors are strongly committed to promoting the Catholic ethos of the school as their first priority. Since the last inspection a Mission and Pastoral committee was established, made up of governors who have extensive experience of working in Catholic education at a senior level. Their influence has been transformative, and they are outstanding modelling of good practice as leaders of Catholic life. The October 2019 RE monitoring visit noted that

'Governors have now become a strength of the leadership team...providing a balance of support and challenge. They are able to articulate priorities well and receive reports from a range of people to evidence rationale for them or progress in addressing them'.

- The quality and frequency of induction and CPD for staff formation to develop their understanding and commitment to the Church's and the school's mission is very effectively provided by the head teacher and RE lead teacher, with frequent Inset on Catholic life and RE held both in school, and with the Catholic Schools Newman partnership.
- The governors and school leaders monitor the quality of Catholic life regularly and it is a standing item in the Governors Minutes. There is a consistent process of evaluation and quality assurance, with visits to the school and attendance at assemblies and liturgies both formally and informally. Their evaluation of Catholic life, in terms of the quality and range of opportunities for pupils' and staffs' spiritual and moral development, and their understanding of it, has led to more involvement of parents, and further opportunities for staff and pupil retreats.
- Leaders and governors are well thought of by the parents in their feedback, and they offer models of good practice and commitment to the Catholic ethos of the school. The parents are given regular opportunities to comment and share their views of the school and its effectiveness. These are noted and action taken through the school development plan which is a working document. The school is eager to encourage greater parental participation in whole school liturgies.
- Governors are aware of the Pastoral Vision for the Diocese –Future full of Hope- and keep themselves involved through diocesan training and events. They also attend Local Authority events and training. They are open to advice and collaboration with the other partner Catholic schools in the Newman Partnership.

a) How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education

- Pupils come to the school from varied backgrounds and with different levels of knowledge and understanding. They make a good start in the early years thanks to effective teaching and a creative use of drama, role play, and art, making good progress for their starting points, so that by the end of Key Stage 1 most pupils have reached their expected level of attainment and achievement. The generally good learning continues in the later years, so that by the end of Key Stage 2 most pupils have made the expected level of progress. They are religiously literate and have the knowledge, skills, and understanding appropriate to their age.
- Pupils with special educational needs or with disabilities make good progress thanks to the help they receive from very supportive teaching assistants, and planned intervention. Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) quickly catch up with their peers in terms of literacy and make similar good progress.
- Pupils take an active part in lessons and most are motivated and engaged in their learning, especially in Key stage 1. The lesson observations and monitoring by the RE lead suggested pupils in Key Stage 2 found the curriculum demanding and did not have the same enthusiasm for RE. This year staff have developed cross curricular links to offer greater opportunities for Art, Music and drama within RE lessons, with much improved results and more engaged pupils.
- There are occasional gaps in pupils' understanding of key concepts in the later years. For example, pupils are able to name the different Sacraments but can find it difficult to explain or define what exactly a Sacrament is. They are, however, able to make the link between belief and action, between the topics they are studying, and their own lives and experiences. This is evident in their outstanding caring behaviour towards others.
- Pupils say enjoy their RE lessons, working well independently, in pairs, and in groups. Their presentation of written work is consistently good in its neatness and quality reflecting the level of care and pride they take in their work, and their teachers' expectations. There are further opportunities already planned to encourage greater depth of reflection and understanding (AT3) as the next focus in learning objectives, to encourage them to write reflectively and in depth, supporting their statements with quotations and examples from the Scriptures.
- The school's data on progress and achievement of pupils is detailed and extensive, and the pupils know how much they have achieved through very helpful tick lists at the end of each topic or module. Assessment for learning is effective when teachers plan closely with the teaching assistants to support weaker learners.

b) The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education

- The quality of teaching is generally good, and this promotes the good learning across the school. Teachers use a good range of strategies including art, music, drama and role play which the pupils enjoy, and which helps them to learn. The teaching assistants provide valuable and sensitive support for the less able children and ensure rapid development in literacy for the EAL pupils.
- Teachers have a good rapport with the pupils and plan their lessons effectively. The lessons observed during the inspection were sometimes overly teacher-led and task driven, with opportunities missed to check that all pupils, especially those without their hands up, actually followed and understood what was being taught. Where questioning was targeted to individual pupils it not only checked understanding, but also challenged pupils to think more deeply, and to provide reasons for their opinions, making links to scripture and their life experience.
- When introducing independent work, teachers sometimes give heavily structured guidance- which is indeed helpful, but can be limiting, allowing little opportunity for pupils' wider thinking and greater depth
- The school provides excellent support in developing the teachers' confidence levels in teaching this specialist subject through well planned INSET both in the school and the excellent uptake of diocesan training and courses. Teachers are highly motivated and committed to the school and its values, and the workbooks demonstrate the successful impact over time on their pupils' learning about, and learning from, religion. Strategies to develop AT3 to deepen pupils' understanding is work in progress.
- The marking policy is well embedded and its consistency across the school is an exemplar of best practice in directing pupils' learning, evident in the quality of the teachers' comments and the pupils' responses. It has become a real driver of progress over time, because individual achievement is more closely assessed, and the pupil knows what their next steps are.

c) How well leaders and governors monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education

- The evaluation of RE provision is an area of leadership and management which is outstanding and driving rapid improvement. The RE Leader and link governors monitor and track RE through lesson observations, learning walks, and book scrutiny, and have very successfully embedded rigorous and reliable systems in a remarkably short time scale. Their evaluations and recommendations for improvement - and any follow up, are clearly evidenced in writing and seen to be making a difference. They, together with the support provided through diocesan training and collaboration with the other RE leaders in the Newman partnership, can provide close guidance especially for teachers new to the subject.

- The RE curriculum meets the Bishops' Conference requirements, as well as any additional requirements of the diocesan Bishop. The new diocesan system is having a positive and challenging impact and is steadily being adopted. Extra-curricular enrichment is in place through visits and events, and these opportunities can always be extended further. Other World religions such as Islam and Judaism are studied discretely, and the pupils appreciate learning about others' beliefs. There is, for instance, a Judaism week held in the autumn term with a celebration assembly to share the learning of each class, plus a Year 6 visit to a synagogue. The class retreats held twice a year extend pupils' experience of spirituality and reflection.
- Leaders and governors take into account the views of parents and pupils in evaluating RE through questionnaires and conferencing. Parents are very positive in their feedback to the school and could become even more involved in decision making and partnership. Their response to the inspection parental questionnaire was 76 replies, an indication of their approval, gratitude and close interest in what the governors and leadership are providing for their children. Parents have commented on how the school is a welcoming, fully inclusive community.

a) How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's prayer life

- Every pupil regardless of faith background feels welcome to participate fully in the school's prayer life and collective worship. The pupils show great reverence at prayer and a willingness to play a part in assemblies and whole school celebrations. Their demeanour, body language, and attentiveness at prayer are outstanding. Each class has an opportunity to lead a prayer assembly for the whole school and a class assembly with parents present. Each class from Year 1 upwards is expected to plan and lead in a celebration of the Mass.
- The liturgical celebrations are enhanced through drama, dance, and music, as in the Pentecost Mass when the Year 1 children shared their dance of the Holy Spirit. Year 6 pupils performed a moving tribute for the Remembrance Service which had a powerful message especially noted by the governors. The NSPCC presentation assembly observed during the inspection was attentively listened to, and the quality of the music, and enthusiastic singing, were both excellent. Many pupils are also involved significantly in the prayer life and worship in the parish, particularly at the Sunday Mass.
- There are many occasions when the chaplaincy plan and present whole school collective worship, and the school is successfully building on this modelling, planning to extend the chaplaincy further down the school, so that in time all the children can become equally confident in planning, preparing, and leading worship.
- Planning sheets to guide the pupils in their worship preparation, to include reviews and evaluations of their efforts and suggested improvements, are very helpful. This pupil self-evaluation is an excellent strategy and is making a real difference to the quality and impact of collective worship in the school.
- The prayer life of the school contributes significantly to the spiritual and moral development of the children. As pupils move through the school there is a corresponding progression in prayer, including the traditional Catholic prayers, and an understanding of the structure of the Mass as well as the liturgical year. The prayer areas in each class are a reflective focus for daily prayer and the colourful Class prayer Books have many examples of the pupils' own prayers and reflections.
- The parish priest is a frequent and inspirational presence to the whole school community, and there are strong, fruitful prayer links between parish and school. The adjoining church is an ideal resource for the pupils and an ideal alternative venue for their special assemblies and liturgies.

b) The quality of the prayer life provided by the school

- The provision for the prayer life of the school makes an outstanding contribution to the spiritual life of the whole school community, and part and parcel of every

school day. This is evident not only in the Masses and assemblies reflecting the Church's liturgical year, but also the school's whole environment, with appropriate statues and colourful displays, and a prayer garden recently blessed by Bishop Declan.

- The centrality of prayer life reaches out to all pupils, regardless of faith or family background, and includes both staff and parents. Significant moments, such as Harvest, Remembrance Day, Advent and Lent, and traditional Catholic practices, are celebrated as a whole community and are well supported by parents and parish. All pupils have two annual retreat days.
- Prayer bags are given to families in Advent and Lent to highlight the importance of prayer, the liturgical season, and to encourage families to pray together. A useful information sheet is provided for parents, and where appropriate, translated into, for example, Polish, as many of the families are from Poland.
- The pupils are made aware of prayer in other faiths especially during the two faith weeks. Understanding and respect for all faiths are incorporated into the discussion of British Values and the JIGSAW programme.

c) How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the prayer life of the school.

- Leaders and governors sustain and nurture the prayer life of the school community with outstanding commitment and effect, and ensure that provision, and opportunities for prayer and collective worship, is an enriching, spiritual experience. There is ample recorded evidence of ongoing planning, appraisal, and review in documentation such as the governors' minutes, and in the school improvement plans, in order to encourage all pupils to embrace ownership of their prayer life.
- All pupils plan and prepare for child-led collective worship. Resources have been in place for a year now and are being continually updated. These take into account the various cultures in the school and promote the learning of new languages. For instance, Years 5 and 6 occasionally say their lunchtime grace in French, and at Christmas Key Stage 2 children sang Silent Night in French
- The spirituality of the staff is well supported through training, time for reflection, and a very fruitful staff retreat. The RE lead led an in depth INSET on the parts of the Mass, reminding staff of the resources available, as well as watching video clips of different parts of the Mass with explanations of key theological aspects. The staff are also supported in planning for worship and so becoming more knowledgeable about the liturgical rhythm of the Church, and more confident in modelling high quality inspirational presentations.
- Fortnightly newsletters contain synopses of events which celebrate the spiritual and prayer life of the school, and these provide an ideal opportunity to promote the Catholic ethos and mission of the school.

Summary of Parental Questionnaires

Example:

There were 76 parental questionnaires returned. Responses were overwhelmingly positive about the school and their children's education, with one or two critical of not seeking parents' views and not being kept informed about RE/relationships education.

Comments included:

'The school has a wonderful inclusive family feel. My children are very happy and enjoy school and the rich curriculum it provides'.

'I chose the school because every child can grow spiritually and academically in this school'.

'The balance the school provides and the support my child receives are outstanding. The school is welcoming, open, and fair. Couldn't ask for better'.

'There are lots of opportunities to explore faith in different ways and this is encouraged to continue at home, or for us to come to the school and take part'.

' School looks after every child's educational needs individually.... allowing them to grow in knowledge and faith.'