



## INSPECTION REPORT

Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School  
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DfE Number: 803/3434  
URN: 109265

Interim Executive Headteacher: Miss R McLoughlin

Interim Co-Heads: Mr O Bell and Mr M Poulson

Chair of Governors: Mrs J Curran

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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

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Date of inspection: 25<sup>th</sup>/26<sup>th</sup> May 2022  
Date of previous inspection:

Reporting Inspector: Mrs A Fowler  
Additional Inspector: Mrs S Land

## **Description of School**

The school is a single form entry school serving the parish of Our Lady of Lourdes and St Bernadette's Church Kingswood. Approximately 48% of the pupils are baptised Catholics with an additional 33% of pupils identifying as Christian. The proportion of pupils from ethnic minority groups is above average at 52%. 14% of pupils are classified as having special educational needs. Since the last Diocesan inspection in 2015, the school has been through a period of considerable change including a significant turnover of teaching staff and leadership. 'Since November 2018, the school has been led by an Executive Headteacher in partnership with Saint Patrick's Corsham, Wiltshire. Both schools are part of the Camino Partnership of Catholic schools who are actively working towards MAT conversion. One of the deputy head teachers now shares responsibility for the RE curriculum and Chaplaincy with the executive head teacher. Since November 2021 the executive headteacher has been on sick leave and the two deputies share responsibility for the leadership of the school.

## **Key for inspection grades**

Grade 1: Outstanding; Grade 2: Good; Grade 3: Requires improvement in order to be good;  
Grade 4: Inadequate

## **Overall effectiveness of this Catholic school (summary statement)**

**Grade 2**

### **This is a good school because:**

- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding, as is their proactive involvement in the Catholic life of the school. The approach to chaplaincy is innovative and involves all pupils.
- The school has involved the whole community in renewing its mission statement and pupils are able to articulate what this means to them and how it shapes their actions.
- The school's self-evaluation is accurate and is leading to clear improvement.
- Systems have been put in place by the leadership which have already begun to bring about improvement in the teaching of RE.
- The Governing Body and the whole school community is committed to developing and improving the Catholic Life of the school.
- Parents value the school and are very supportive of its ethos and there is a supportive relationship between parish and school.

### **The capacity of the school community to improve and develop**

- The school has made notable improvements in developing the Catholic life and ethos over the last two years.
- Partnership with the Camino group is enabling the sharing of good practice and strengthening the ability of the school to further develop.

- Staff morale and commitment is very high, and the school leadership has the full support of parents and pupils.
- Actions identified in the last monitoring visit have been addressed.
- The governors recognise the need to disperse aspects of leadership amongst staff and there will be a new leadership structure in place from next year.
- All staff are committed to improving outcomes for pupils.

#### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Governors should review and strengthen their procedures for monitoring and evaluation so that they are systematic, rigorous and evidence based. The impact of this monitoring and evaluation needs to be demonstrated.
- Assessment systems need to be fully embedded so that the data can be used effectively to support learning and identify the progress of different cohorts.
- Further opportunities should be provided for all pupils to engage in more extended, reflective writing on the topics they are learning.
- The development of pupils as leaders in chaplaincy should continue.

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

- All pupils benefit enormously from, and participate in, the vibrant Catholic life of the school and make a significant contribution towards the ethos of the school.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary, and they take the need to treat each other with respect seriously. One pupil saying, "everyone is welcome here" and from another "everyone is there for each other".
- Pupils can link faith to life and talk maturely about the presence of God in their lives.
- Pupils are able to take on leadership roles in a variety of ways. For example, as Eco Warriors. This group explore environmental issues and try to ensure that the school doesn't waste energy, effectively linking this to the messages of Pope Francis in 'Laudato Si'. Year 6 pupils buddy with reception children actively helping them with their learning but also sitting with them at Mass and being a friend in the playground. House captains organise the charity events for their respective houses and take the initiative for fundraising.
- The school has taken an innovative approach to chaplaincy. Whilst there is an actual chaplaincy team, chaplaincy is dispersed throughout the school community with all pupils able to participate in the 'Footsteps in Faith' system. Pupils earn badges for completing different tasks which they display with pride. This engenders a sense of real ownership for chaplaincy within the school.
- During Covid the school continued the work already taking place in supporting families both academically and pastorally, for example delivering simple Mother's Day gifts, sending messages during lockdown showing staff singing happy birthday for children in their class. That support, for parents and pupils, especially in the area of mental health, is continuing and staff send cards to families for important life events reinforcing that sense of community.
- The PSHE programme is fully compliant with Catholic teaching, but it is too soon to review its effectiveness.

**b) The Quality of Provision for the Catholic Life of the School**

- The mission statement of the school was recently renewed with the whole community, parents, parishioners, staff and pupils involved. This process was called 'Our School Mission Re-Dreamed'. The mission statement used a prayer by Cardinal Newman as its basis. Each year group was then invited to reflect on this and make the mission statement their own. Pupils talk extremely knowledgeably about this and displays outside each classroom reflect their work. As a result, the mission statement is a lived reality.
- All staff are committed to the development of the school, for example taking part in the 'Walk against Hunger' during Lent 2022. Staff regularly take part in staff

training to improve their knowledge and understanding of the school as a Catholic community.

- Catholic Social Teaching (CST) informs both policy and practice. Different subject areas are working to expressing how CST informs their subject and pupils understand aspects of CST and how it applies in practice.
- The Catholic ethos is highly visible around the school, with vibrant displays in corridors and classrooms. Gospel values are prominently displayed, and all classrooms have appropriate focal areas. Displays also promote the inclusive nature of the school. There is a prayer room in the school which is cared for by pupils. This reinforces the idea that God is at the heart of the school.
- Pupils see staff as role models, one pupil saying; ‘We trust the staff’. Relationships are positive and supportive, and pupils value the work staff do. Pupils understand that at times they make mistakes, and the staff will help them with this.

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

- Governors and leaders are committed to ensuring that the promotion of the school’s Catholic life is at the centre of its strategic direction. They see this as a priority. This is demonstrated through their provision for staff induction and staff training which further develops an understanding and commitment to the Church’s mission in education. Links with the diocese are effective and all Bishop’s Conference requirements fulfilled.
- Although the governors do monitor the Catholic Life of the school this is not always reflected in governor minutes, and they have yet to develop an effective evidence base. They take part in some evaluation, but the impact of this evaluation is not yet clear and again there is no system in place for recording this nor is it reflected in the records of their discussions.
- The school’s self-evaluation is accurate and informs future planning.

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

- Pupils are becoming religiously literate and are encouraged to make links between faith and life. They use their learning in RE to help them reflect spiritually and ethically on current situations. For example, in one Year 3 lesson pupils were learning about a post resurrection experience where Jesus asks Peter to 'feed my sheep'. They then made links with the school values and how this might find expression in action.
- The majority of pupils enjoy their learning in RE and value the opportunities it gives them to learn about faith. They appreciate it when staff are creative in their approaches to teaching, but they also expressed the view that they would prefer at times more challenging tasks. Their behaviour in lessons is excellent.
- Pupils spoke with confidence about the importance of learning about other faiths and cultures. They valued the opportunities to do this.
- The school took part in the recent diocesan synod and pupil responses were thoughtful and often linked to current world situations.
- The recent introduction of learning ladders in RE as well as the technique of reflecting on what they know at the beginning and end of a module is helping pupils become more aware of their learning, but they cannot yet speak with confidence about improving their own work.
- Work in pupil books is not always a reflection of the learning achieved through discussion or other activities.

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

- Teachers are enthusiastic about RE and want to ensure that pupils succeed. Their questioning skills are excellent, designed to ensure that pupils recall past learning and are able to think more reflectively about the topic. Pupils are offered opportunities to work in pairs and groups and to do independent research.
- Staff are quick to praise pupils and able to adapt to their needs.
- Staff have attended several training sessions on RE, including before the start of each module, to help them plan. They are becoming increasingly confident with the material and benefit from the work the school has done in providing a planned programme of inset.
- Teaching assistants are used effectively to support individual pupils or small groups.
- Where teaching is at its best, pace is good, tasks set clearly to enable the learning focus to be fulfilled and there is an appropriate level of challenge. Work in Upper Key stage 2 requires greater scaffolding to enable all pupils to meet the challenges presented in the assessment criteria.

- Systems of assessment are only recently in place and the impact of this cannot yet be evaluated. However, teachers are increasingly confident in making judgements about learning and once the school has acquired more data these systems should begin to give a coherent picture and inform learning.

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

- Leaders and governors ensure that the religious education curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference. The school follows the approved diocesan programme, though this has been adapted to reflect the needs of the school and ensures that the teaching of other faiths is an integral part of this.
- The coordinators have a very clear insight into how to develop the subject which has already brought about improvement. Monitoring and evaluating work is carried out on a regular basis through lesson observations, book scrutinises and informal meetings. To further develop this, evidence of the impact of this monitoring needs to be provided.
- There is a link governor for RE who has attended diocesan training. Governors do, to a certain extent, monitor and evaluate progress in RE. However, there is no systematic system in place, and they need to provide evidence of the impact of this monitoring. Governor minutes do not yet record their work in this area.

## The Prayer Life of the School

Grade: 2

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

- Pupils value the opportunity to participate in the prayer life of the school. From reception, pupils learn traditional Catholic prayers and respond with reverence and respect to the opportunities provided. School and class worship follows the pattern of the Church's liturgical year which enables pupils to reinforce their knowledge. At the whole school Mass observed during the inspection, pupils' behaviour was exemplary. They joined in the responses and sang with enthusiasm. Each Year 6 pupil sat next to their reception class 'buddy', modelling expected behaviour to them.
- The focus of prayer also responds to the events and needs in the world. For example, when a staff member died, pupils met the funeral cortege in the school car park and sang that staff members favourite hymns.
- The Chaplaincy programme 'Footsteps in Faith' helps pupils develop their understanding of the Church's year and class and school assemblies are tied into these themes. Pupils are aware of the key liturgical seasons and the meaning behind them. They pray regularly during the school day. They are familiar with traditional prayers and the use of Scripture and artefacts to help enrich prayer.
- Pupils are offered opportunities to participate in whole school Masses and assemblies and to lead class prayers. The chaplaincy team have organised and led prayer for other pupils. Pupils are keen to take on more responsibility.
- Pupils take part in voluntary activities such as saying the Rosary and have attended retreats. Voluntary activities are often led by the chaplaincy team.
- Pupils are aware of a variety of ways of praying and of the role this plays in other faiths. They are respectful of difference and understand that people pray in different ways.

### b) The Quality of the prayer life provided by the school

- Prayer is central to the life of the school and teachers strive to ensure that prayer is relevant to life thus creating opportunities for spiritual and moral development. Prayer is inclusive and uses music, story, and sign effectively. Displays in and around the school are vibrant and supportive of the school's Catholic life. Prayers are displayed in the classroom, with a prayer table acting as a focal point for prayer and reflection. Each class has an Awe and Wonder book that records prayer activities and pupils' thoughts.
- The school gives a high priority to prayer in terms of resourcing and training.
- Developing pupils progressive understanding and knowledge of traditional forms of prayer and worship is clearly mapped out on the curriculum.

- The school has a very positive relationship with the local parish and the parish priest is a frequent visitor to the school. Pupils are able to use the church as a resource and ask questions about it. Parents and parishioners are invited to whole school Masses.
  - Pupils are developing skills as leaders, but this is not yet fully realised.
- c) **How well leaders and governors promote, monitor, and evaluate the provision for the prayer life of the school**
- Leaders have an excellent knowledge of liturgy and worship. They attend diocesan training and in school training is provided for all staff. They understand the centrality of prayer to the life of the school and ensure connections are made with the liturgical year, with scripture and CST.
  - Staff are working towards helping pupils become leaders in prayer and see this as a priority for future development.
  - Monitoring and evaluation of the prayer life of the school by governors is not yet fully realised.

## **Summary of Parental Questionnaires**

*There were 30 responses to the questionnaire all of which were extremely supportive of the school.*

Parents spoke of ‘the community feel’ and the ‘supportive atmosphere’. Some parents spoke of ‘the inclusive nature of the school’. Teachers were praised for their enthusiastic teaching and the way they supported pupils. Other parents spoke of the opportunity for spiritual development and the support in place for parents of children with special educational needs.