

The Annunciation Catholic Infant School

Thirleby Road, Edgware, Middlesex, HA8 0HQ

Date of inspection by Westminster Diocese:

30 November 2018



Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

A. Classroom religious education is good

- The leadership of religious education is good. There is clear commitment to the Catholic mission of education which is being led by a determined and successful head who strives for high standards in religious education.
- The curriculum fully meets the requirements of the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*. The curriculum is carefully planned for by the subject leader of religious education to ensure that the four areas of study are being well covered.
- The Nursery provides a good and nurturing start to the children in this school. The Early Years Foundation Stage as a whole provides a rich and stimulating start to school life and religious education.
- Pupil achievement is good overall. Standards in religious education are comparable to outcomes in other core subjects in the curriculum.
- The quality of teaching is at least good in all classes seen. Teachers use music creatively to enhance pupils' learning.
- Behaviour in all classes is of a high standard. This is the case all around the school and at playtimes where children co-operate well and say they feel well cared for.

Classroom religious education is not yet outstanding because

- Opportunities for writing in religious education lessons are being missed and this requires further development.
- Assessment systems are not fully developed to ensure accuracy of judgements.

B. The Catholic life of the school is outstanding

- There is 10% of curriculum time devoted to religious education in every class as required by the Bishops' Conference.
- The Dominican tradition is well established within this infant school and is central to the life of the school. This is a school that celebrates its Catholicity immediately upon entry in to the school.
- Displays are of a high standard and are sensitive to the ages and stages of development of the children. They also reflect local issues and charities that the school supports.
- Prayer and worship are central to the Catholic life of the school. This is a strength of the school and is judged to be outstanding. Class assemblies feature a prayer focus and begin with a short time for whole school worship. Children are now actively involved in planning and leading short acts of worship in class.
- The school is blessed by having the church nearby. This allows the children to use the church on an almost daily basis.
- The school is outstanding in its work to promote the Common Good.
- Children are regularly reminded of the school's mission statement: 'Let all our actions speak of God's loving care.' This is carried out through acts of good work and charity.
- Partnerships at all levels are well developed in this school. Parents are very supportive of the life and the work of the school and are proud of the Catholic Life on offer to their children.
- The school's leadership and management has much to be proud of in the way they promote Catholic life in this Catholic infant school community.

A. Classroom Religious Education

What has improved since the last inspection?

The school has responded to the previous inspection report by putting in place an internal system for the collection and tracking of pupil's progress. Planning now provides challenging tasks for groups of pupils and also ensures teaching assistants are deployed effectively to support pupils in their religious education (RE) learning.

The content of classroom religious education is good

The content of The Annunciation Infant School's religious education curriculum fully meets the requirements of the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*. The curriculum is carefully planned for by the subject leader of RE to ensure that the four areas of study are being well covered. Progress and development of age appropriate content is well planned for from the moment children enter the school in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The programme is also structured to meet the needs and abilities of a wide range of children.

Pupil achievement in religious education is good

Pupil achievement is good overall. School attainment records show that children enter the school with overall standards below age expectation. They leave at the end of Year 2 with good levels of religious literacy therefore progress is equally deemed to be at least good. The Nursery provides a good and nurturing start for the children in this school. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) as a whole provides a rich and stimulating start to school life and religious education. Classrooms are well set out and resources are plentiful to support learning in RE. All classes are named after saints whom the children then learn about in some detail. Activities are well planned for and a wide and stimulating religious vocabulary is quickly acquired in this key area of learning. During this inspection Year 1 were writing Advent promises. Reception and Year 2 pupils were learning about the colours, signs and symbols of Advent. Year 1 pupils make a special Christmas book every year and examples of this were seen. In a Year 2 class some good writing was seen on display about St Bernadette and St Alphonse. Pupil's oracy skills in RE are being well developed. Standards overall in RE are comparable to outcomes in other core subjects in the curriculum. However, opportunities for writing are being missed and there is not enough coverage of written work in books.

The quality of teaching is good

The quality of teaching is at least good in all classes seen. A distinctive feature of this school is the use of music to enhance pupils learning. Teachers use music creatively and the children themselves sing and respond with enthusiasm and gusto. Teaching assistants are well deployed and support a wide range of pupils in their learning. Each classroom is set out with a prayer focus area. This acts as a focal point for prayer and worship. In this inspection children were learning about the colours of Advent. They were also able to tell inspectors that the colour of the cloth is changed according to the liturgical seasons such as Advent and Easter. Behaviour in all classes is of a high standard. This is the case all around the school and at playtimes where children co-operate well and say they feel well cared for. Teaching is judged to be good in all classes seen. Teachers' own subject knowledge of RE is good. The senior leadership team hold the Catholic Certificate of Religious Studies (CCRS) qualification and six other staff members have the Catholic Teacher's Certificate. This good subject knowledge allows teachers to plan effectively and respond to any pupils' questions to deepen their learning. There is a positive climate for learning in the school and pupils respond eagerly to some good questioning. Relationships between staff and children are warm and caring. Assessment systems do not yet ensure that the most able pupils are being effectively challenged.

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

The leadership and management of RE are good. There is a clear commitment to the Catholic mission of educating young children. This is being led by a determined and successful head who strives for high standards in RE. She is being supported by an experienced leadership team. The chair of governors is also the RE link governor and is equally committed to seeing good standards of classroom religious education. Opportunities for staff and professional development are being provided and staff are encouraged to develop their professional expertise in religious education. The self-evaluation document produced is reasonably accurate but is not yet fully rigorous and objective.

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

- Provide more opportunities at upper Key Stage 1 for pupils to develop their writing skills in RE.
- Develop further the new assessment procedures to provide more challenge for pupils, including the most able pupils.

B. The Catholic life of the school

What has improved since the last inspection?

All areas for improvement since the previous inspection have been fully met. Prayer and worship are strengths of this infant school. Pupils support a wide range of charities and can talk in an age appropriate way about why they perform acts of kindness and good works.

The place of religious education as the core of the curriculum

is outstanding

There is 10% of curriculum time devoted to RE in every class. This is all timetabled and shows that RE is at the core of the curriculum. The Dominican tradition is well established within this infant school and is central to the life of the school. This is a school that celebrates its Catholicity upon entry in to the school. Displays are of a high standard and are sensitive to the ages and stages of development of the children. They also reflect local issues and charities that the school supports. The school has a small garden area that it uses as the seasons change to enhance further the Catholic life of the school. A generous budget is allocated for RE every year.

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

is outstanding

Prayer and worship are central to the Catholic life of the school. This is a strength of the school and is judged to be outstanding. Class assemblies feature a prayer focus and begin with a short time for whole school worship. Children are now actively involved in planning and leading short acts of worship in class. Classes have a collective worship resource box. This provides periods of prayer, reflection and response to the Word of God. Seasonal liturgies are also in place; these are popular, well attended by parents and are judged to be successful in broadening the range of worship on offer in the school. The school is blessed by having the church beside the school. This allows the children to use the church on an almost daily basis especially in the morning before school starts.

All gatherings for worship are enhanced by the use of some beautiful and appropriate music, with symbols and images projected onto a screen. During the course of this inspection a high quality and reverent Advent liturgy was held in the school with extensive pupil input. The school recently planned and organised a Spirituality Week, 'Finding God in all things.' The aim was to look at familiar things with fresh eyes through a range of creative activities. Staff and children were very receptive and inspired by these different ways of praying. This distinctive work is something the school wishes to develop even further.

The contribution to the Common Good – service and social justice

is outstanding

The school is outstanding in its work to promote the Common Good for these young children. Children are regularly reminded of the school's mission statement: 'Let all our actions speak of God's loving care.' This is carried out through acts of good work and charity. The school contributes to national and international charities including Cafod, the Hospices, RNLI, HEMS (Air ambulance) and the Poppy Appeal. Once a year at Harvest time the school provides food which is donated to 'Homeless Action Barnet.' The school has also done work around 'Laudato Si' and the call of Pope Francis to protect our planet. Pupils equally learn about other faiths, such as Islam and Judaism via visitors and guest speakers.

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

Partnerships at all levels are well developed in this school. Parents are very supportive of the life and the work of the school in developing Catholic education and are proud of the Catholic life on offer to their children. A recently completed survey showed strong support for the school and its leadership. Parents are given regular RE newsletters, the 'Word on Wednesday' and information via a well designed website. They are also invited to all liturgies, assemblies and masses throughout the school year. The school works closely with the Diocese of Westminster making full use of training opportunities and also regularly attends deanery and moderation meetings with other Barnet Catholic schools. The school is blessed with having the church on their doorstep and the parish priest plays a key role in the development of the Catholic life of this school.

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

is outstanding

The leadership and management in promoting the Catholic life of the school are also judged to be outstanding. The governing body are united in their vision for excellence. The chair is articulate in setting out the direction she wishes for the school. The school's RE leadership team are equally fully committed to the Church's mission in education. The governors provide the school with a good balance of challenge and support to achieve their aims. Professional development opportunities are plentiful and induction for new staff is being evaluated as to effectiveness. This school's leadership and management in promoting the Catholic life of the school has much to be proud of in this Catholic community.

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

- Further develop the 'Spirituality Resources' to enhance and foster the spiritual development of these young children.

Information about this school

- The school is a two form entry Catholic infant school in the locality of Burnt Oak.
- The school serves the parishes of Our Lady of the Annunciation Catholic Church Burnt Oak, St Anthony's, Edgware and SS Sebastian and Pancras', Kingsbury Green.
- The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholic is 84%.
- The proportion of pupils who are from other Christian denominations is 8% and from other faiths is 2%. The remaining pupils are from families who have not declared a faith.
- The percentage of Catholic teachers in the school is 83%.
- The number of teachers with a Catholic qualification is 6.
- There are 7% of pupils in the school with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities of whom 2 have 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 a below average rate of families claiming free school meals.
- 19% (36) pupils receive the Pupil Premium.

Department for Education Number	302/3500
Unique Reference Number	101330
Local Authority	Barnet

Type of school	Infant
School category	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils	3-7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on roll	189
The appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Michelle Mwangi
Headteacher	Miss Teresa Lynch
Telephone number	020 8959 2325
Website	www.annuncaition.inf.org.uk
Email address	enquiries@annunciationinf.barnet.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	18 June 2014
Grades from previous inspection:	
Classroom religious education	Very good
The Catholic life of the school	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 7 lessons or part lessons were observed.
- The inspectors attended 2 acts of prayer and worship in classes.
- 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.

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