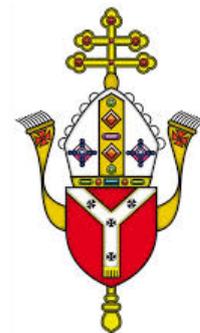


# Westminster Diocese Inspection Report

## St Monica's Catholic Primary School

Cannon Rd, Southgate, London N14 7HE



Date of inspection: 23 April 2015

### A. Classroom Religious Education

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

**Overall Grade 2**

The overall effectiveness of classroom religious education in developing the pupils' religious literacy is good. The school ensures it meets the requirements of the Curriculum Directory, meeting the 10% requirement of the Bishops Conference as well as providing the headline categories of it for both staff and pupils in corridor displays and pupil books. Pupils achieve well, both in their knowledge of the Catholic faith and in their capacity to talk about what it means to them. The teaching is consistently good with elements of outstanding teaching. The developed use of ICT on the part of both teachers and pupils is a noticeable characteristic. The leadership and management of religious education is outstanding, with very good monitoring systems in place to assess pupil progress and to provide the inspiration and content to take teaching to new heights. The Governors, with a strong knowledge of what is happening in the RE teaching, provide the overview and resources to maintain RE being at the core of the curriculum.

### 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**

St Monica's is outstanding in ensuring the Catholic life of the school is effective in developing pupils' experiences of the richness of the Catholic way of living and believing. The vision and reality of religious education being at the core of the curriculum and life of the school is fully in place. This stems both from the focussed planning on the part of the headteacher and senior leadership team to find opportunities to celebrate Catholic values and practices, and from the steady support and overview of the Governors. The partnership of home, school and parish is firmly embedded and this is shown in the pupils speaking of their home life and parish life with ease in the context of their school life, all with a Catholic voice. Pupils are regularly involved in planning and leading acts of worship; it is a noticeable characteristic of the school that the pupils have confidence to lead prayer and speak of their faith. Jesus's teaching of love of neighbour is well exemplified by the pupils' generous involvement in many different fund raising activities and local service initiatives to the community in proximity to the school. There is a commitment to work with the local deanery and the diocese, attending appropriate meetings and conferences arranged by the Education Service on behalf of the Bishop. Governors are committed to promoting these partnerships at all levels and take an active role by their presence and support.

## 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 12 lessons and 3 assemblies, and carried out 7 interviews with school staff, pupils, parents and governors. Other evidence was gathered from contacts with parents through a questionnaire, discussion with local clergy, scrutiny of a sample of pupils' work, observation of pupils in and out of lessons and examination of school documents.

The Inspection of St Monica's Catholic Primary School, Southgate 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

Dcn Anthony Clark  
Mr Daniel Keane

Lead Inspector  
Associate Inspector

## Description of School

This Voluntary Aided school is a two form entry in the LA of Enfield and the locality of Southgate. The school serves the parish of St Monica's, Palmers Green. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholic is 100%. The percentage of Catholic teachers in the school is 71%.

There are 420 pupils on roll, with 10 pupils with statements of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) / Education Health & Care Plans (EHC). The proportion of pupils from ethnic minority groups is well above average. The number of pupils speaking English as an Additional Language is above average. There is a well below average rate of families claiming free school meals. 19 pupils receive the Pupil Premium.

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DFE Number: 3083503  
URN Number: 102039

Headteacher: Mrs Kate Baptiste  
Chair of Governors: Mrs Mary Joseet

Date of previous inspection: 5 March 2010  
Previous Inspection grades: A 2. B 1.

**Key for inspection grades:**

<i>Grade 1</i>	<i>Outstanding</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 previous inspection report recommended two areas for improvement:-

- Continue to implement the assessment of religious education so that the progress of each pupil can be tracked more accurately
- Put in place a more rigorous system to monitor teaching and learning

The school has fully implemented both these recommendations, introducing tracking systems, including TargetTracker, to follow the progress of each pupil. The school has put in place a rigorous monitoring system involving the Senior Leadership Team monitoring each teacher and class each half term. This monitoring includes regular lesson observations, looking at RE books, reviewing prayer tables and displays, and talking with the children.

The school has introduced greater use of ICT in the religious education lessons, including more relevant classroom pictures in their RE books, more videos about relevant teaching areas and the use of iPads by the pupils to search for appropriate information and pictures.

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

#### **Grade 2**

The content of classroom religious education meets the requirements of the Curriculum Directory well. The school has adopted the curriculum units produced by Dr Carswell, which both increase the scriptural underpinning of all teaching and relate it to the liturgical year. These units fully correspond to the headings and content of the Curriculum Directory. The headings are well displayed on attractive boards. The pupils have at the back of their RE books the headings and topics of the Curriculum Directory and are well on their way to becoming familiar with them. The teachers ensure that when they enunciate the learning outcome for any lesson or topic, they also indicate where it is situated in the directory. The Curriculum Directory emphasises the importance of knowing the Scriptures in learning about the Catholic faith and the curriculum units ensure that this is included appropriately in the lessons. In the course of the inspection the inspectors saw the regular reference to the Scriptures and the use of Bibles in the classrooms, from Reception through to Year Six. The assistant Parish Priest makes himself available on a regular basis to assist teachers in their knowledge and understanding of the religious education topics in the directory.

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

#### **Grade 2**

Attainment and progress are overall good and this is supported by the teachers commitment to the teaching of RE at St Monica's Catholic School. Teachers have high expectations with regard to pupil progress and their religious literacy. Teachers use the National levels of attainment and the Curriculum Directory well to guide their planning. Pupils make good progress in RE from one year to the next. There is evidence in books of pupil achievement and good progress in RE. Scrutiny of books and tracking support this statement. Moderation and target tracker supports assessment in RE. While most pupils understand what they have achieved, there should be a common way of

recording this at the back of their RE pupil books and year by year. The RE subject leader knows and understands her subject very well and fully supports teachers in developing the RE programme. This is further supported by the Head Teacher and School Leadership Team. This is evidenced in discussion, commentary on the RE portfolio and understanding of where the school is in terms of overall progress and next steps for learning.

## **The quality of teaching**

### **Grade 2**

Teaching is overall good and with some evidence of outstanding. Pupils make secure and good progress in classes and over time. This is evidenced in pupils' books and in their responses. Teachers have secure subject knowledge of scripture with good bible use and extracts in all classes. Pupils are given feedback both orally and in marking. Teacher comments in some classes were powerfully made. The pace and challenge set in most classes was mainly good. Pupils were confident to ask question in class and use the class question box with regard to their understanding. In the Early Years and KS1 there was good use of scripture and drama to illustrate the Story of Pentecost. Pupils listened with interest. In KS2 pupils worked independently and together on research, for example Pentecost people. There was good use of IT in this regard. Themes of Pentecost were very well explored and taught. Pupils' books were also seen and showed evidence of progress. Prayers were said clearly and with deep understanding both in class and during assembly. Appropriate music was used as a good resource. Lesson plans were linked to the Curriculum Directory and on display in some classes. In all classes there was a calm, positive climate for learning. Pupils were eager to learn. Behaviour was always good. Pupils commented that they did enjoy their RE lessons.

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

### **Grade 1**

The leadership and management of religious education is outstanding. The RE coordinator is one of the SLT and the team ensures religious education is at the core of the curriculum of the school. There is a relentless focus on developing the religious literacy of the pupils through the teaching units, through the teaching policies regarding pupil questioning and independent learning, and through the ensuring that Scripture is at the heart of all teaching and learning. This excellent leadership – supported by the assistant priest with theological input - ensures that recently appointed staff move without delay to improved RE teaching, and pupils to better RE outcomes. Staff at all levels attend courses for the continuing professional development in religious education. Further, the school benefits from the assistant parish priest coming in most Wednesdays for both staff and pupils. The special benefit to the staff, both Catholic and non-Catholic, is to have opportunities to understand more deeply the religious concepts of the current units of work, and to share ideas for applying them to pupils' life situations. The tracking and monitoring of pupil progress is embedded and transparent, and teachers are fully able to prepare for the next steps of the pupils' knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith. The curriculum newsletters keep parents from each year group informed of what is being taught. The RE coordinator meets regularly with the RE link governor who reports back to the full governing body. The Governors provide strong support and share the vision for the ongoing development of RE teaching, both by their regular support within the life of the school and the budget decisions regarding RE resources.

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

- Share in greater detail the analysis of the available RE assessment data to the Governors.
- Improve the already good consistency in marking policies and practices so that all pupils are aware of what their 'next steps' in religious education are.
- Develop further the teaching skills and techniques used in delivering the religious education curriculum units to all teachers.

## **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?**

There were no points for improvement in this area from the previous report. In moving from the 'Here I am' syllabus to the curriculum based units of Dr. Margaret Carswell, there is an evident emphasis on the use of Scripture in the prayer, teaching and life of the school. This was specially evident in the content of what the children planned in their own acts of worship. The school is promoting children taking more responsibility for their own acts of worship.

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

#### **Grade I**

Religious education is clearly at the core of the curriculum in St Monica's. In talking with the children, it was evident that their understanding of the world and their lives was founded in faith in, and knowledge of, Jesus Christ. Religious education receives a very high priority in the school's taught curriculum with a 10% weekly commitment, conforming to the requirements of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. The support of all staff in their teaching of religious education is focussed and generous, with time being available for continuing professional development. The additional support of the assistant parish priest is encouraged and accommodated. The budget spent on religious education is higher than on other core areas, and includes the Wednesday Word which so strengthens the home, school, parish cooperation and sharing. The school devotes a whole day each year for INSET on religious education and ensures that appropriate staff attend the various training opportunities for development in RE and Catholic life provided by the diocese. The monitoring of the teaching of religious education by the leadership team includes provision for bespoke training for individual teachers. Links with neighbouring Catholic schools both inside and beyond the deanery ensure that both at teacher and Governor level there is support and exchange of ideas. Governors are fully aware of their duty to support and promote the catholic life and religious education offered in the school.

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

#### **Grade I**

Prayer, worship and good planning is a strength and central to the Catholic life of St Monica's. Pupils know their Mission Statement and prayers, both common and individual. Outside by the playground there is a very special prayer garden, which is used by pupils in different settings. Key church events in the life of the school are celebrated with Mass which is held at the school. Mass is also celebrated for Holy Days of Obligation and with groups of children in the parish church nearby. Assemblies are held on regular occasions. The key stage two assembly and act of worship celebrated the life of St George with very good story telling, drama and music. This was further supported by whole school singing that was of a very high standard. Music is a strength of the school. Again there are other opportunities across the school for prayer and worship. Pupils are involved in preparation and leading assemblies and are keen to do so. The school Chaplain is very active in the school alongside the Parish Priest, who is also a foundation governor, in supporting Catholic life and worship, RE, and

the pastoral needs of the school community. This unique and special partnership between school and church is very strong in supporting its Catholic life and worship. Retreats and class visits fit into the school year. Parents are invited to attend liturgies and services and do so. Parent meetings on the day of inspection fully support and also endorse that Catholic life and worship is central to this Catholic School.

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

### **Grade I**

Pupils know and understand the Gospel, the call to justice and “service for others”. Charity and giving is a strength and very well supported, through Cafod during Lent, Macmillan coffee mornings, food and resources for homeless, Operation Christmas Child and a rich range of activities. Pupils understand the needs of others, and respect for persons. Both pupils and staff together ‘have humility’ and respect for each other. A school council is in place with a strong pupil voice and pupils were able to say the school mission statement. This was also on display in classes. Pupils were also able to talk independently about their current RE topics and with interest, for example Pentecost people and the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Minutes and record of school council meetings were on display. All pupils are enabled to develop their talents, and are given roles with age appropriate levels of responsibility. Successful projects have taken place with a charity called Three Faith Forums and there are established good links other faith traditions. Respect for one’s own and others cultural background is a strength within the school setting and fully supported by staff .

## **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 I**

The school is committed and effective in enabling authentic cooperation between parents, school and parish as an integral part of the Diocese. The home, school, parish partnership is an outstanding feature of the school. This was evidenced in the recent parents’ questionnaire where the affirmation of the school in both religious education teaching and in its Catholic life was given very high approbation. The children see themselves as belonging to the Catholic family with the school and the parish as extensions of their home family. The strong relationship between St Monica’s Parish and the school is founded on the close cooperation in parish and school liturgies. The Parish Priest is a governor of the school while the assistant parish priest regularly visits the school, talking with both staff and pupils. The active Friends Committee organises occasions such as Quiz nights, discos, summer fete and similar events which both raise funds and build community. The school is actively involved in meetings with other Catholic schools in the borough, contributing to the joint moderation of religious education outcomes. There is a good relationship with its diocesan advisor and both governors and members of staff regularly attend diocesan training meetings and conferences. The school works closely with the parish to support families who have pastoral needs, always with a focus on the welfare of the children. The Governors are committed to promoting these partnerships at all levels and take an active role by their presence and support.

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

### **Grade I**

The leadership and management of the school is outstandingly effective in promoting the Catholic life of the school. The leadership team looks to every opportunity to show the pupils the centrality of the life of faith to each Christian. The Mission and Vision statement is very well known, specially the acrostic Vision statement which the pupils were always happy to explain to the inspectors:-  
Strive to succeed in the presence of God.

**Together** as a Catholic Community

**Everyone** – children, staff, parents and parish

**Achieves** in their own unique way and strives to be

**More** like Jesus.

A number of pupils explained the phrase, there is no 'I' in team, to the inspectors. The vision is clearly communicated to the pupils. The school organises whole school Inset days at least once a year. It has previously looked at the Catholic life of the school, Scripture and the nature of voluntary aided schools (two years ago), assessment in RE and, last year, children planning their own acts of worship. This year it has been on the history of the school as it is in its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary year. With the Parish Priest as a governor, the school is highly supportive of its specific Catholic nature and origin. These In-service days ensure all staff of whatever denomination are drawn into living and passing on the message of Jesus Christ as a core purpose of the school. Two senior members of staff are signed up to train to be associate diocesan inspectors, thus learning in a special way to know and discern what makes for a Catholic school.

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

- To continue to find ways and occasions to use the celebration of the 60 years since its founding to develop further the school's awareness of its Catholic identity.
- To develop prayer groups and the use of the outside prayer area as a means to support the emphasis on prayer.
- To take forward the project to link up with and support rural schools in South Africa.
- To underpin and promote the confidence of the lay staff in their vocation to serve the pupils as teacher.