

The Cardinal Wiseman Catholic School

Greenford Road, Greenford. UB6 9AW

Date of inspection by Westminster Diocese: 19 & 20 September 2019



Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

A. Classroom religious education is outstanding

- The content of curriculum religious education meets all the requirements of Religious Education Curriculum Directory. Religious education programmes are used creatively and supplement and enhance the delivery of the Religious Education Curriculum Directory resulting in a progressive and cohesive programme.
- Teachers create a positive climate for learning in their lessons and pupils are interested, engaged and eager to do well.
- Pupils are enthusiastic learners and exceptionally well versed in religious language and understanding. Pupils are confident users of religious vocabulary and illustrate excellent knowledge and understanding appropriate to their age and ability.
- Pupils' outcomes are excellent. In religious education GCSE, pupils attain significantly above the national average. Achievement is better than other core subjects at Key Stage 4 and there are a higher percentage of levels 7-9 than in other subjects. Pupils have made sustained progress in A level religious studies and attainment is very good.
- Leadership and management of religious education is outstanding. The subject leaders are well qualified and experienced and have a strong understanding and appreciation of the centrality of religious education at the mission of the Church and its impact in the daily life of the school. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and provides an excellent picture of the strengths and areas for development.

B. The Catholic life of the school is outstanding

- Cardinal Wiseman is a close-knit Catholic community that lives out its school motto 'All things for Christ'. Pupils are proud of their school and this is evident in their interactions with each other and with adults in the community.
- The Bishops' Conference requirements for pupils to receive 10% curriculum time in Key Stages 3 and 4 and 5% at Key Stage 5 are met.
- Worship and prayer are central to the life of the school for pupils and there are many opportunities for spiritual growth. Pupils live out their faith and spirituality: this was seen in their reverence in prayer in a variety of contexts.
- The commitment to the Common Good is outstanding. Pupils and staff demonstrate a dynamic and creative understanding of the call to human flourishing by the very strong relationships and the care and respect shown to all. The school develops pupils' actions for justice in a local, national and global context.
- The school cultivates excellent relationships with parents, parishes and other Catholic schools.
- The headteacher and leadership team are fully committed to the importance of religious education influencing all aspects of school life. Governors share the strategic leadership with energy and enthusiasm and make a highly significant contribution to the Catholic life of the school. There are excellent systems in place for the induction of new staff, and for the formation of all staff so that they actively participate in, and contribute to the Catholic life of the school.

A. Classroom Religious Education

What has improved since the last inspection?

The religious education (RE) subject area has been developed on the school's virtual learning environment, which has allowed easier access for pupils. Pupils are more confident in using the virtual learning environment for homework and revision. There has been an increase in parental engagement as parents and carers can access resources and support their children. The complete redesign and embedding of Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 religious education in response to the specification changes has taken place. There has also been a complete redesign of sixth form core RE and a redesign of the schemes of work to include faith in action.

The content of classroom religious education

is outstanding

Religious education meets the requirements of the Religious Education Curriculum Directory (RECD) and is mapped accordingly. The programmes of study enlighten pupils about the life and message of Christ whilst also giving them the preparation and skills to excel in their public exams. The knowledge and understanding of the commitment to faith in action is clearly understood and articulated by pupils. All teaching staff know and understand the broad areas of the RECD and resources are used to facilitate excellent links to this. Each key stage is mapped to ensure all areas of study are met. Groups within religious education have been changed and RE groups are now taught in broader streams. The impact of this has been significant as evidenced in the recent GCSE examination results. Resources are creative and supplement and enhance the delivery of the RECD resulting in a progressive and cohesive programme for each key stage.

Pupil achievement in religious education

is outstanding

Pupils' achievement is outstanding when evidence of progress is measured against levels of attainment and the new diocesan standards document. The religious education department is a leading department within the school and attainment in RE is better than other core subjects. The outcomes in GCSE religious education are outstanding, this is evidenced through ability bands. The RE department have achieved in the top 5% nationally. Pupils are confident users of religious vocabulary and illustrate excellent knowledge and understanding appropriate to their age and ability applying a wide variety of skills to great effect in their work. Pupils have made sustained progress in A level religious studies and results have been consistently good over time. All pupils are enthusiastic learners and excel through teacher expectations and engagement in their learning.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

The religious education department's outstanding standard of attainment and progress is a direct result of the highly effective teaching and learning systems and the staff's high expectations of the pupils. All teachers have consistently high expectations of pupils. Teachers systematically check pupils' understanding throughout lessons. Time is well used and every opportunity is taken to develop skills. During the inspection, teaching that had the most impact on learning was creative, inspiring and actively engaged pupils in their learning. Lessons were well planned with good pace and some challenge: for example, in Year 12 on Plato's Allegory of the Cave where a group work task engaged pupils in an animated philosophical debate. Another lesson was observed where Year 9 pupils participated in a creative group work activity on marriage. There was also a Year 11 lesson in which pupils were engaged in a highly theological debate on Salvation. Teachers used a variety of well-judged teaching strategies to match pupils' learning needs.

The effectiveness of leadership and management in promoting religious education

is outstanding

The quality of the leadership and management of religious education is outstanding. Religious education is a core subject and is the bedrock of the school. The curriculum coordinator has a strong understanding and appreciation of the centrality of religious education in the mission of the Church and its impact on daily life of the school. There is a fully established culture of high expectations with religious education lessons, which creates an outstanding atmosphere for learning and progress. Highly effective systems and structures are in place within the department to frequently monitor, track and ensure pupil progress in religious literacy. Sound subject knowledge is developed through continuing CPD and staff are exceptionally well supported in this. The curriculum coordinator and senior leaders have an excellent understanding of the strengths and areas for development in religious education.

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

- Focus on the pace in the lessons in order to maximise learning opportunities for all pupils.
- The senior leadership team should continue to prioritise sixth form Core RE within the curriculum, so that students continue to make maximum progress.

B. The Catholic life of the school

What has improved since the last inspection?

Pupils are aware of the life and influence of Cardinal Wiseman through assemblies, tutor time, RE lessons and enrichment experiences. A 'Catholic Life' team meets regularly to ensure that the Catholic ethos is an integral part of the day to day life of the school. The team have raised the profile of the active Catholic life of the school by delivering high quality professional development to staff and introducing liturgical leaders. Pupils have more opportunities to live out their faith through daily activity and participation of a number of faith-based enrichment groups within the school

The place of religious education as the core of the curriculum

is outstanding

Religious education receives the 10% curriculum at Key Stages 3 and 4 and 5% at Key Stage 5 as required by the Bishops' Conference. Religious education is at the heart of the school and influences and enhances the quality of Catholic education offered. Displays in the classrooms and corridors support the Catholic ethos of the school with professional artwork and impressive work by the pupils. The department is well resourced and staffed by specialists and a new chaplain has recently taken up position, emphasising that this is a central role in the school. The place and importance of religious education are acknowledged through appropriate recognition of whole school issues at leadership level. The chapel is at the heart of the school and is open at all times for staff and pupils in both the physical and spiritual sense. The governors offer outstanding support and active guidance in developing and reviewing the place of religious education.

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

is outstanding

The Cardinal Wiseman Catholic School is a close-knit Catholic community that lives out its school motto 'All things for Christ'. Worship and prayer are central to the life of the school for pupils and there are many opportunities for spiritual growth. Weekly Mass takes place for different year groups in the parish church of Our Lady of the Visitation. Pupils from all year groups contribute to the Mass celebration with readings, bidding prayers, choir and the offertory. Pupils also have the opportunity to attend Mass on Holy Days of Obligation. The chapel is used for worship including liturgies and prayer groups. Daily acts of worship take place during tutor time, class time and assemblies. Weekly prayer sheets are available to use and daily prayers are based on the gospel of the day and these are also put online for faith sharing with parents and carers. There are opportunities for the celebration of the Eucharist and the Sacrament of Reconciliation throughout the year. There is a developed retreat programme for Years 7, 10 and 12.

The contribution to the Common Good – service and social justice –

is outstanding

Pupils are proud of their school, and this is evident in their interactions with each other and adults. A respectful calm atmosphere permeates the whole school. In the pupil panel meeting, one pupil stated that the school had a different 'aura'. The staff at the school are committed to developing pupils' gifts and talents and there was plenty of evidence to support the 'Wiseman spirit'. The school develops pupils' actions for social justice in a local, national and global context. Pupils of all ages and levels spoke about their support of the local food bank as one of the main local charitable activities that they were involved in, and have collected an impressive two tonnes of food in one year. Pupils

talked about their support for a school in Burkina Faso, and their work has helped to build two classrooms. Sixth form students organised their own opportunity to support a local home for the elderly, ensuring everyone had presents, and spending a day with them, attending Mass together. They also support a local hospice by volunteering. Pupils could articulate that this was part of their duty to serve, with one pupil saying that 'some people are more vulnerable, but God said we should all be equal, so we should help'.

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

The school's partnership with key stakeholders is outstanding. Parents and carers are invited to attend Masses, liturgical events and other school occasions, such as the Celebration of Success prize giving. Communication is further improved through the school's virtual learning platform where parents can view homework set and lesson content. The parents were overwhelmingly supportive of the school in the diocesan survey and almost all agreed that the school provides opportunities for spiritual growth and development. One of the parents remarked that Cardinal Wiseman was 'a very good Catholic school with strong links to the local parishes'. Another parent stated that 'our children have benefited immensely from the values and ethos of the school. There is a very dedicated staff and strong leadership'. The school has close links with the local parish and other feeder parishes, priests from the parishes celebrate Mass weekly with different year groups. During Lent, opportunities are offered for the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The RE department uses the church to enhance their curriculum when exploring features of a church. Staff regularly attend the professional development opportunities offered by the diocese. Pupils live out the school's motto 'Omnia Pro Christo' - 'All things for Christ', through actively supporting the Ealing food bank; Year 12 students volunteer their time on a weekly basis. Strong links are established with local primary 'named' (feeder) schools through the transition programme.

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

is outstanding

School leaders have worked hard to provide an environment which reflects the school motto. Catholicism is clearly at the heart of all that is done and staff and pupils are rightly proud of the community they have built. Each member of the community is valued as an individual and supported to be their best. This is clear from the strong induction processes which are in place for pupils, newly qualified teachers and other members of staff; new staff are told 'you are the face of Christ to the pupils'. Senior leaders are supported by a strong governing body which challenges them to continue to provide a vibrant and engaging Catholic community. The long serving experienced chair of governors has an in depth understanding of the school and its vision. There are clear lines of communication between the governors and the parish. They see how mutual support can be a force for improvement, and excellent relationships are seen throughout the school. Staff continuing professional development is important and regular sessions take place, keeping all up to date as well as specific training in the Catholic life. A weekly staff breakfast helps develop the collegiality of the staff. The school is constantly looking for new ways to bring Christ alive to the pupils and it is this that makes the community so vibrant and relevant.

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

- Ensure there is a focal point for prayer in every classroom.
- Further develop the role of liturgy leaders in order to lead worship.

Information about this school

- The school is a 12 form entry Catholic Comprehensive school in the locality of Greenford
- The school serves a wide variety of parishes including Our Lady of the Visitation, Greenford; St Peter & St Paul Northfields; St Anslem's Southall.
- The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholic is 96.4%.
- The proportion of pupils who are from other Christian denominations is number 0.9% and from other faiths is 2.5%. The remaining pupils are from families who have not declared a faith.
- The percentage of Catholic teachers in the school is number 47 %.
- The number of teachers with a Catholic qualification is 5.
- There are 9% of pupils in the school with special educational needs or disabilities of whom 35 have statements of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)/ 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.
- 212 pupils receive the Pupil Premium (11 %).

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| Department for Education Number | 3074603 |
| Unique Reference Number | 101934 |
| Local Authority | Ealing |

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| Type of school | Secondary School |
| School category | Voluntary Aided |
| Age range of pupils | 11-18 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on roll | 1,927 |
| The appropriate authority | Governing body |
| Chair | Mrs Maggie Pound |
| Headteacher | Mr Michael Kiely |
| Telephone number | 020 8575 8222 |
| Website | www.wiseman.ealing.sch.uk |
| Email address | info@wiseman.ealing.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 3 April 2014 |
| Grades from previous inspection: | |
| Classroom religious education | Outstanding |
| 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 50 lessons or part lessons were observed.
- The inspectors attended 1 assembly and 12 of acts of worship.
- 6 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 Team

The inspectors are appointed by the Archbishop.

Mrs Mary Coyle

Lead Inspector

Mrs Catherine Mc Mahon

Shadow Lead Inspector

Mrs Santina Ferracane

Associate Inspector

Miss Susan Grace

Associate Inspector

Ms Caitriona Powell

Associate Inspector

Information about inspection

The purpose of Diocesan inspection is to report to and advise the Archbishop on the quality of classroom religious education and the Catholic life of the school. The inspection report is also used to inform parents and carers, and the wider Catholic community. Inspection provides an opportunity to support, challenge, evaluate and promote the work of Catholic schools. It also assists schools in the work of self-evaluation and improvement, and enables the Diocese to celebrate with schools their sense of identity and their strengths as Catholic schools.

Inspection Grades

- Outstanding
- Good
- Requires improvement
- Causing concern

This report is published by the Diocese of Westminster and is available at:

<http://rcdow.org.uk/education/schools>

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