



## **SECTION 48 INSPECTION REPORT**

Canonical Inspection under Canon 806 on behalf of the  
Archbishop of Southwark and Inspection of  
Denominational Education under Section 48  
of the Education Act 2005

**URN 140873**

**St Gregory's Catholic Primary School  
Nash Road  
Margate  
Kent  
CT9 4BU**

**Inspection date: 19<sup>th</sup> April 2016**

Chair of Governors:	Debbie O'Shea
Headteacher:	Jacqueline Wright
Inspectors:	Damian G Fox Catherine Burnett

**EDUCATION COMMISSION**  
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# SECTION 48

# Introduction

## Description of the school

St Gregory's Catholic Primary School is an academy within the Kent Catholic Schools Partnership. It is also a member of the Thanet Catholic Schools Collaboration. It is situated in the Thanet Deanery of the Archdiocese of Southwark. The school serves the Parish of SS Austin and Gregory, Margate. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholic is 36%. The average weekly proportion of curriculum time given to Religious Education in Key Stage 1 and 2 is 10%.

The school takes pupils from Reception to 11 years. There are 303 pupils on roll with a further 33 in the nursery. The attainment of pupils on entering the school is below average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. 39% of pupils receive extra support. 44% of pupils are currently on the school's vulnerable list. Almost all pupils are of white British heritage. There are 47 pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium.

Date of previous inspection:

9<sup>th</sup> March 2011

Overall Grade:

2

### Key for inspection grades

Grade 1      Outstanding  
Grade 2      Good

Grade 3      Requires improvement  
Grade 4      Inadequate

# Overall effectiveness of the school in providing Catholic Education

GRADE  
2

St Gregory's is a good school, the vision of the Governors and school leaders shows their deep and sincere commitment to the pupils and their families. The Headteacher and her staff work effectively to ensure plans are in place to raise standards and to support pupils of all abilities. The Religious Education team is beginning to address areas which have been identified for further development.

The school has worked to support families, financially, emotionally and socially. It has a clear commitment to caring for them. The Headteacher said "we coped because we wanted to cope." One pupils said, "give teachers more salary because they are fabulous, school is the best place to be."

Prayer and worship are at the heart of school life. There are daily opportunities to pray individually and collectively. The Parish Priest is a regular visitor to celebrate Mass and also to meet with the school community. He has worked with the school in developing good links with the parish.

The overwhelming majority of parents support the school and are appreciative of the learning and care their children receive. Comments, such as "the way they provide for her as a person, not just as a student, is exceptional," reflect their gratitude for what the school provides for the children.

Collaboration with other schools in the KCSP and other local schools is a strength of the school and demonstrates a strong commitment to finding the best ways to raise standards.

Pupils display a pride in their school. They are honest and well behaved. There is culture mutual respect with the St Gregory's community.

## **What steps need to be taken to improve further?**

Governors, Headteacher and staff should:

- Create a clear strategic role for the Religious Education Team to ensure a consistent upward trend in standards in Religious Education.
- Continue to support staff in developing consistence through moderation and additional training.
- Include support in the lesson planning process to ensure they are able to make more meaningful contributions to pupils' learning.

### **The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school**

Pupils clearly value and respect the Catholic tradition of the school. Behaviour is exemplary and pupils treat each other with high levels of respect. The school is a happy, reassuring place for all pupils. Pupils are able to articulate their appreciation of the school and the care they are shown by all staff. When asked what they would change, one pupil said, "I would keep everything, especially the peer mediators." The older pupils go out of their way to be aware of and to speak to other pupils who are on their own or who look unhappy. Inspectors saw this for themselves before school started. This is a credit to the effective pastoral approach of the school and to the level of support for pupils which is deeply embedded into the culture and daily life of the community. There is a soft room for pupils who are frequently angry as their first response.

Prayer is central to the Catholic life of St Gregory's and children are supported and nurtured in their prayer lives.

Outdoor space is imaginatively arranged to incorporate reflective areas for pupils. Outdoor spaces are effectively used to enhance learning and reflection. The school agreed that pupils would be asked to provide ideas for another planned reflection area.

Pupils are happy to demonstrate their awareness of the need of the others in the local and wider community by generously participating in fund raising activities such as for CAFOD, the Rainbow Ward at the local hospital and the Pilgrim's Hospice Trust. Pupils have a voice in choosing fundraising and awareness activities.

The School Choir regularly sing in Deanery celebrations and in the local area. The whole school are a wonderful Catholic presence in the Beach Assemblies when the pupils pray, sing and show an excellent attitude on the local beach.

### **How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education**

Standards pupils achieve in Religious Education are average. They are in generally in line with English. The Headteacher acknowledged that Levels of Attainment could be better and that there needs to be a greater focus on the higher ability pupils. Inspectors are confident that pupils will continue to make sustained progress as new strategies of assessment are more consistently applied.

Pupils enjoy their Religious Education lessons. There is a quiet but intense learning environment in all classrooms. One pupil said that "he gives lessons full marks." Another pupil commented that "lessons are enjoyable because we can act out things." This was also evident in Key Stage 1 lessons, where pupils were happily engaged and where progress was evident.

The quality of the written work in the pupils' books is of a very high standard and shows that the whole school focus on writing is enhancing Religious Education. Pupils are proud of their work and are keen to learn.

## **How well pupils respond to and participate in Collective Worship**

Acts of Collective Worship engage all pupils' interests and inspire them to participate fully. They show great reverence when at prayer. In the school assembly, there was a wonderful variety of activities which engaged pupils. They all sang with enthusiasm, prayed reverently together and joined in the fun of pupils acting out the story of Jesus calling the Disciples. Their responses to questions reflected their understanding of friendship in their lives. There was also time for quiet reflection which was observed with respect.

The Parish Priest confirmed that pupils prepare for Mass with their teacher and participate meaningfully. He added that the "faith is practised confidently." He acknowledged that pupils write their own intentions and participate by reading, singing and serving.

One parent commented "it is refreshing to see children enjoy prayer."

### **How well leaders, governors and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life of the school and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils**

Leaders, governors and managers are promoting, monitoring and evaluating the provision for the Catholic life of the school. They are deeply committed to the Church's mission to serve the pupils and their families. They have a passion for developing the prayer and spiritual life of the community, to ensure that all pupils and families experience God's loving presence in their lives.

Leaders are willing to build partnerships with other schools to seek ideas, advice and support to help them improve further. This is a wise and effective response to fluctuations with key staff. Governors have responded to challenges with wisdom to strengthen the efficacy of the faith in the school. The Governing Body has been restructured and two governors have been appointed to specifically monitor and evaluate the Catholic life of the school and Religious Education. Minutes of meetings, the Religious Education reports and the school development plan reflect rigorous and effective planning for improvements. The Chair said that as a Governing Body, "we have grown too."

The Headteacher's vision for and commitment to the pupils, and also for families who have financial and social problems, has a major impact on the spiritual life of the school and its caring ethos. 44% of pupils are on the vulnerable list. She knows the strengths of the school and acknowledges areas for development. In partnership with the Governors, she has built a strong team around her to ensure that the Catholic life of the school continues to be strong.

Sustaining the effectiveness of the team remains a priority for her. In her words, "our children need 100% from us." There are three members of the Religious Education team who have produced detailed action points to develop the Catholic life of the school. The impact is confirmed by the Parish Priest who said that the Catholic identity is "very strong."

### **How well leaders, governors and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan and implement for improvement to outcomes for pupils**

Leaders, governors and managers have a deep understanding of how to raise standards in Religious Education. A new accurate, consistent and rigorous system for tracking and monitoring progress has been introduced but now needs to be embedded in order to identify where pupils are under-achieving.

Governors ensure that they are regularly informed of standards through the work of the two governors for Religious Education and their strategy meetings with the Headteacher. Religious Education is a core subject of the school. Pupil progress is monitored rigorously by phase leaders, in line with other core subjects. This ensures the high status of Religious Education within the school.

The Religious Education governors frequently come to the school to meet staff, visit lessons and examine data. This results in a more cohesive approach to understanding

how to plan for improvements. Inspectors felt that the relatively new Religious Education team would benefit from having a strategic role, to build on the progress already made.

**The quality of teaching and how purposeful learning is in Religious Education**

Teaching is generally good with some outstanding examples seen. Excellent subject knowledge is applied to challenge and inspire learning. Lessons are well planned and build on prior learning. In the Year 2 lesson the events of Holy Week were revisited to ensure that pupils understood how the Resurrection was the final act of Holy Week and the start of a new story.

Teachers clearly know the strengths of their pupils and where support is needed. Consequently, pupils are highly motivated and enjoy their learning. Behaviour in all lessons is exemplary. In the Year 6 lesson, the teacher quietly moved a pupil to encourage more involvement in his learning. The impact was immediate and the pupil began to contribute good ideas to his group. The inspector said the Year 3 and Year 4 lesson “oozed spirituality.” Pupils in Reception responded positively and with excitement in their learning.

All lessons began with quiet reflection while a candle was lit and music played quietly. A wonderful touch was that pupils had rosary beads throughout, to give them a focus for prayer.

Other adults in the room were not always used to support pupils. Inspectors suggested that the school should consider joint planning with Teaching Assistants to ensure that they make a meaningful contribution to pupils’ learning.

All teachers use the religious vocabulary list and expect pupils to use these key words in their learning. There is good use of the assessment system which leads to prompt and meaningful interventions for individual pupils. There are regular meetings to ensure that pupils are monitored carefully and that appropriate interventions are put in place. Teachers are supported in teaching and the accuracy of assessment through regular moderation with other schools.

Marking of pupils’ work is regular and meaningful, although not all pupils have been given adequate response time.

**The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum promotes pupils’ learning**

All classes receive the full allocation of 10% of curriculum time for Religious Education. The school’s use of *‘The Way the Truth and the Life’* is excellent. It is adapted to ensure that pupils of all abilities can access the many opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding. As a result, pupils make the most of the opportunities to be enthusiastic and hardworking learners.

Throughout the school the Catholic identity is evident. There are displays in all classrooms and along the corridors reflecting the patron of the school and Gospel values. The main hall was decorated with large prominent prints of saints and scripture sayings.

The outdoor space was particularly special. The quadrangle contained ‘Jack’s Garden’, an area set aside for pupils to pray as a class or individually. Pupils showed great respect



for the fabric of the school and particularly for each other. Relationships throughout the school reflected how the commandment to love was lived by all members of the community.

### **The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school**

Collective Worship is central to the life of the school and a key part of school celebration. The quality of collective worship is excellent. Consequently, teachers and pupils of all faiths feel a part of a prayerful community. The school assembly was excellent. It was well prepared and allowed everybody to feel included. Pupils contributed by singing with gusto, reading and acting. They were enthusiastic in trying to answer questions and in the way they responded both to the humour and the serious aspects of the assembly.

The Parish Priest ensures that Mass is a unique act of celebration. He helps the pupils understand the theme of the Mass as well as participate meaningfully. He provides music which inspires reflection and which helps create a calm, reverential mood.

Pupils, confirmed that they enjoy all forms of Collective Worship. The Church seasons are followed in assemblies, Masses and daily prayer.

The Parish Priest leads the children in the annual crowning of Our Lady in the Grotto. One of the Religious Education Governors, organises whole school meditations and the Lenten Stations of the Cross.