



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 101802

St Chad's Catholic Primary School
Alverston Gardens
South Norwood, London
SE25 6LR

Inspection date: 18 March 2015

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| Chair of Governors: | Ms Yvonne Epale |
| Headteacher: | Ms Joanne Hawthorne |
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SECTION 48

Introduction

Description of the school

St Chad's Catholic Primary School is voluntary aided. It is situated in the Croydon Deanery of the Archdiocese of Southwark. It is maintained by Croydon Local Authority. The principal parishes which the school serves are St Chad's, South Norwood and the Polish parish of Merciful Jesus, South Norwood. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholics is 87%. The average weekly proportion of time given to Religious Education is 10% in Key Stage 1 and 10% in Key Stage 2.

The school takes pupils from 3 to 11 years. The number of pupils currently on roll is 441. The attainment of pupils on entering the school is broadly below average. The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is above average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and the proportion who speak English as an additional language are above average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs supported through the graduated approach (formally known as school action or school action plus) is above average.

Date of previous inspection:

26/11/2009

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
1

St Chad's Primary School is a warm and welcoming Catholic community providing high standards of academic achievement and pastoral care for all its members. Pupils are happy, enjoy coming to school and achieve well. All groups of pupils are enabled to achieve their full potential. Parents are appreciative of all that the school offers. One wrote, "The school provides a good Catholic education. The principles of the Catholic faith and worship are woven into the fabric of everyday learning." The school provides a very attractive and well-resourced learning environment. High quality displays and artefacts proclaim the school's Catholic identity as well as promoting learning and reflection. The school has excellent links with the parish and the Parish Priest is a regular visitor to the school. The 'Wednesday Word' provided by the school strengthens the home / school / parish partnership and encourages parents to share in the faith development of their children. A parent commented, "The introduction of the Advent breakfast, Lenten breakfast and the 'Wednesday Word' has really provided opportunities for parents to support the further development of links with the local Catholic community. The Senior Leadership Team should be commended on successfully developing the Catholic character of the school." The school has experienced recent significant changes in leadership and management but has maintained high standards in its academic provision and its Catholic life. The new headteacher is well supported by an effective governing body and senior leadership team. Together they have clear vision and a sense of direction, guided always by the school mission statement. As a result, the school has excellent capacity for further improvement.

Recommendations made by the last inspection have been addressed.

What steps need to be taken to improve further?

Governors, Headteacher and staff should:

- Develop the use of monitoring and sharing good practice to increase the proportion of outstanding lessons in Religious Education.
- Develop the consistency of the use of dialogue and developmental marking in Religious Education across the school, with particular regard to ensuring pupils have the opportunity to respond to teachers' comments.

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

St Chad's is a warm and welcoming school community. Pupils are supported by its strong Catholic ethos and are happy to contribute to its Catholic life. The school mission statement has been reviewed to make it more child friendly and is displayed prominently around the school. Together with the school motto 'Grow in Love, Live in Peace' it is at the heart of school policy and practice.

From an early age, pupils are involved in the Catholic life of the school through prayer, Religious Education and preparing for the sacraments. Opportunities for spiritual development include a Retreat Day for Year 6. Pupils are actively involved in school liturgical celebrations. Prayer forms an integral part of daily life at school. Attractive prayer focus areas form an important part of each classroom. Pupils are encouraged to take on responsibilities within the school. 'Playground Buddies' and 'School Ambassadors' are proud of their roles and their school. School self-evaluation has identified the need to further develop the role of the School Council. Pupils are aware that others may have different faith beliefs and practices and that these should be respected. The school's cultural diversity is recognised and celebrated. For example, a recent International afternoon was well attended. Pupils appreciate the need to consider and care for others less fortunate than themselves. The school supports a range of charities locally, nationally and globally. Pupils are active in suggesting causes to support and are increasingly taking more responsibility in fundraising for these. The school works well with the local parish and is seeking to extend this to the Polish church attended by many of its pupils. St Chad's has good links with other local Catholic schools, including secondary schools, and with the Diocese. This is beneficial for providing training and sharing good practice and the school plans to extend this further. The school's commitment to nurturing and supporting all pupils and their families is evident in its outreach to parents. A Family Support Worker has been appointed to provide guidance and support. Behaviour workshops have been well attended. Parents have appreciated the school's increased levels of home / school communication. "I feel that communication about events has improved, enabling parents to be able to plan ahead to join in the spiritual development of the school." Pupils express their own views with confidence. They are able to talk about the teachings of Jesus and the relevance of these to their own lives. They understand the importance of caring for and respecting each other and the need for forgiveness.

A parent commented, "The school has a strong Catholic ethos which permeates all aspects of school life and in particular the caring approach of the adults towards the children."

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education

Standards pupils achieve in Religious Education are high, with significant numbers of pupils attaining the higher levels. Pupils make good progress throughout the school. Pupils enjoy their Religious Education lessons. They are keen to do their best work, are attentive and behave well. A variety of teaching strategies such as hot seating, drama and discussion engage and enthuse pupils. It was evident that the Reception class pupils wholeheartedly engaged with their Palm Sunday procession as they sang joyfully and waved their palms and ribbons. Pupils are developing good religious literacy and show an

understanding of religious concepts and topics. They are able to discuss these thoughtfully and sensitively. Work in pupils' books is of a high standard. Pupils are required to think deeply about their responses and respond positively to the challenge. Marking is regular and developmental, helping pupils to deepen their level of understanding. A dialogue between teacher and pupil is evident in some pupils' books; the school should now develop this across the school, together with providing opportunities for pupils to respond to teachers' comments. All groups of pupils make good progress, including those from disadvantaged groups. Pupils with special educational needs are appropriately supported. Appropriate levels of challenge are in place for higher attaining pupils. The school has established clear systems of assessment and pupil tracking. These inform planning and ensure that all pupils achieve their full potential.

How well pupils respond to and participate in Collective Worship

Pupils enjoy the many opportunities for Collective Worship and respond very positively. Year groups prepare liturgies and assemblies and pupils are encouraged to be involved in the planning of liturgies as well as participating in them. Guided meditation, liturgical dance and singing enhance school assemblies and Masses, offering pupils different ways to participate in the celebrations. Hymns in other languages reflect the cultural inclusivity of the school. In the Collective Worship observed, pupils responded thoughtfully and reflectively. The singing was of an exceptionally high standard and contributed to the joyful atmosphere. A penitential service was also observed as part of this inspection. It was led by Year 4 pupils, who used music, dance and prayers they had written themselves to illustrate their theme of forgiveness.

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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 deeply committed to the mission of the school and are involved in its Catholic life. The recently appointed Headteacher and Chair of Governors work in close partnership to ensure governors are fully informed regarding school data and encouraged to develop their roles within the school. Diocesan and local authority training has been provided, particularly with regard to school data. As a result, governors are better equipped to fulfil their role with regard to monitoring and evaluation. They provide effective support and challenge and contribute to school improvement planning.

Governors attend school liturgies and events as well as supporting class groups. The Parish Priest is the Link Governor for Religious Education and a frequent visitor to the school. The Headteacher's report to governors includes a regular section on 'The Catholic Ethos of the School', reflecting its importance on the Governing Body agenda. The Headteacher, senior leadership team and members of the Governing Body are active in the life of their own parishes and carry this commitment through to the Catholic life of the school. The school has initiated a Parents Forum to improve communication and develop the role of parents in the Catholic life of the school. Parents have recognised and appreciated this opportunity, as well as the recently introduced provision of the 'Wednesday Word' which strengthens the school / home / parish partnership.

Part of the Catholic life of the school also involves support for its members. Parents and staff support pupils and families at difficult times.

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

The school has robust systems in place to monitor and evaluate provision for Religious Education. Lesson observations, planning and book scrutinies form part of this progress. Assessment data is analysed and contributes to school development planning. At the time of this inspection Religious Education was being led by the Headteacher and senior leadership team who ensure that monitoring and assessment in Religious Education is carried out regularly and effectively. A clear schedule is in place for the monitoring of Religious Education throughout the school. Religious Education provision is good and pupil outcomes are high. School development planning in Religious Education is strong. Priorities are clearly identified, together with the steps needed to implement improvement. The school has accurately identified attainment at the higher levels at the end of Key Stage 1 as a focus for development and school development planning reflects this, with appropriate resources, actions and timescales recorded. Governors are well informed regarding provision and progress in Religious Education through the Headteacher's report to governors and reports to the Teaching and Learning Standards committee.

The school's new leadership team has ensured that standards in Religious Education have been maintained, together with effective assessment, monitoring and evaluation. The school is well placed to continue to develop this.

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

Lessons observed as part of this inspection ranged from securely good to outstanding. Teachers demonstrated good subject knowledge and careful planning ensured the needs of all groups of learners were met. A variety of teaching strategies were used effectively. These included drama, discussion and guided reflection. In the best lessons, pace was good and led to clear pupil progress. Pupils were keen to learn and to fulfil their teachers' high expectations of them. They appreciated the need to think deeply about the message of their Religious Education lesson and to consider its impact on their own lives. The school should now use its systems of monitoring and the sharing of best practice to increase the proportion of outstanding lessons. Marking celebrates pupils' achievement and effort. In the best examples, marking included a dialogue between teacher and pupil in order to deepen pupils' understanding and offered pupils the opportunity to respond. This should be extended to be consistent throughout all year groups.

The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum promotes pupils' learning

The school uses the 'Come and See' programme of Religious Education and time allocated to Religious Education fulfils the requirements of the Bishops' Conference. Curriculum Religious Education is enriched by additional lessons linked to the liturgical year and school needs; for example, research into class saints. Religious Education lessons build on pupils' previous knowledge and experience and are related to their own lives. They encourage pupils to reflect on their learning and develop their questioning skills. Pupils spoke appreciatively of their participation in peer assessment and how it helped their learning. A Year 5 pupil said he enjoyed it when they exchanged books and discussed their work. He saw this as being clearly developmental to his learning. Religious Education lessons take place in a prayerful atmosphere and offer opportunities for reflection. Pupils are proud of their Religious Education books as special books. The Religious Education curriculum includes the teaching of other faiths. This has included the enactment of the Passover meal and a visit to a synagogue. Faiths studied are Islam and Judaism. The school could now consider extending this to other world faiths. Enrichment activities include Art, Dance, Drama and Music. Pupils also spoke appreciatively of opportunities for meditation.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school

Pupils are offered a wide range of prayer and worship opportunities. These include assemblies, Masses and liturgies linked to the Church year and school special events and occasions. Parents are often invited and enjoy celebrating these with their children. Two acts of Collective Worship were observed as part of this inspection, an Infant Assembly and a Penitential Service led by Year 4 pupils. Both were based on a Lenten theme and had a firm scriptural basis. Pupils contributed their own prayers and opportunities for quiet reflection enabled pupils to think more deeply about the impact of the message of the worship themes. Both acts of worship were well planned and engaged pupils in a prayerful atmosphere. Pupils participate in daily prayer. Prayer focus areas are attractive, with age-appropriate resources and provide a focus for class prayer. Collective Worship is all inclusive and parents and pupils who are not Catholic feel welcome. A parent

commented, "Even though I am not Catholic, I am happy that my son is learning about the life and work of Jesus."

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