



INSPECTION REPORT

St Osmund's Catholic Primary

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D/ES Number: 8653425

Headteacher: Mrs E. Jolly

Chair of Governors: Mr N. Cusack

Canonical Inspection under Canon 806 on behalf of the Diocese of Clifton
and inspection of Denominational Education under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

Date of inspection: 29/30th April 2013

Date of previous inspection: 2nd/3rd December 2008

Reporting Inspector: Mrs P. J. Antolik

Description of School

St Osmund's is a smaller than average-sized Catholic primary school in the centre of Salisbury and draws its pupils from a diverse range of social backgrounds. It serves the three parishes of St Osmund's, St Gregory's and Holy Redeemer in addition to congregations in Downton and Whaddon. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium funding is below average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and who speak English as an additional language is close to the national average. The proportion of pupils who are supported by school action plus or have a statement of special educational needs is less than half the national average. The proportion supported at school action is lower than the national average. The head teacher is a recent appointment, having taken up the post in September 2012. Approximately 75% of the pupils are Catholic and the remaining pupils belong to other faith backgrounds. There are a high percentage of full and part time teachers who belong to the Catholic faith. The school is popular with the local community and parents view the school highly and are all supportive of its Mission.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1: Outstanding; Grade 2: Good; Grade 3: Satisfactory; Grade 4: Unsatisfactory

Overall effectiveness of this Catholic school

Grade 2

St Osmund's is a good Catholic school. It has a strong ethos rooted in Catholic values which permeate all of school life. The well-being and all round personal development of each pupil is at the heart of the school's vision and is reflected in the strong sense of pastoral care. The newly appointed head teacher is committed to developing and strengthening the distinctive ethos of the school and together with her senior leadership team and governing body tries to model the approaches and values that she feels are essential to the Catholic nature of the school.

Outcomes for pupils are good. They thrive in the caring, family atmosphere the school provides and are becoming confident, mature, independent learners with positive attitudes to school life. All groups of pupils are achieving well in religious education and making good progress. Attainment in RE is good. Pupils benefit well from the good opportunities given to contribute to the Catholic life of the school and are developing useful skills and positive attitudes for life in school and beyond. Their participation and involvement in acts of worship are good and developing well. However pupils need to be given greater skills in leading prayer and worship. Pupils respond to a variety of prayerful setting with reverence and respect.

The school provides a good Catholic education. They are currently introducing a new scheme of work, "Come and See". Religious education is given a high priority and pupils are encouraged to be independent and to think for themselves. The quality of teaching is good across the school and this leads to purposeful learning and motivated, interested, engaged pupils. The teachers need to ensure that the use of assessment data is more effective in planning learning activities, and in developing the "next steps" for the pupils to improve their work and raise standards.

The quality of leadership and management of the new head teacher is good. The support of the governing body is good but they must ensure they develop their role in reviewing the quality of teaching and learning, and develop their ability to review and analyse performance. The chair of

governors knows the strengths and areas for development of the school and understands the challenges it faces, however this monitoring role needs to be more fully developed with the full governing body. The school is outstanding at developing and implementing a variety of partnerships with other providers, organisations and services. The presence of prayer and meditation groups for pupils and the community, which are held in the school, are strong visible practices of the mission of the school. The parish priest and deanery youth worker are frequent visitors to the school and this strengthens the link between the school and the parish. The inclusion of all is a central goal and a shared vision. Leaders and managers work with others beyond the school to ensure that pupils are given opportunities to enter into dialogue and collaborate with people from different backgrounds.

The capacity of the school community to improve and develop

Grade 2

Prospects for improvement are good due to:-

- the high expectations, strength, vision and dynamism of the new head teacher;
- the support, appreciation and challenge of governors;
- the dedication of teachers and support staff
- The ethos of the school, which indicates strong support for the spiritual and moral development of the pupils within a culture of continuous improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- ensure pupils are enabled to prepare and lead vibrant acts of worship themselves;
- continue to raise standards in Religious Education by:
 1. using assessment data to set challenging targets for pupils using the newly purchased tracking system
 2. formulating a strategic, structured long term plan for improvement which is periodically monitored and evaluated to ensure impact on outcomes for pupils

How good are outcomes for pupils, taking account of variations between different groups?

Grade 2

From their earliest years, pupils at St Osmund's show interest, enjoyment and enthusiasm for religious education. Overall, pupils make good progress. The school has already identified that in order to raise standards further, and meet the needs of all pupils, there is a need to provide a greater level of challenge for more able pupils. Pupils are religiously literate and increasingly articulate when expressing themselves orally and in their recorded activities. Scrutiny of children's work indicates that teachers plan a wide range of activities. Pupils apply themselves diligently, work at a good pace and are keen to do well. The quality of most pupils' recorded work is generally good. Differentiation is mainly by outcome, which does not always meet the needs of all pupils. Although not embedded, recent developments, including the marking policy, skills ladders, targets and differentiation by task, are beginning to have a positive impact upon pupil progress. "Come and See" assessments, linked to NBRIA Levels of Attainment and the new tracking system, ensures that staff are able to support the learning of the pupils.

Pupils make a good contribution to the Catholic life of the school. They have a sound knowledge of the key celebrations of the liturgical calendar. They are developing a secure understanding of Catholic teaching and the teachings of other faiths. Pupils have a strong sense of belonging to the family of St Osmund's and are proud of their school. All classes have the school Mission Statement displayed on their classroom door. Because the Mission Statement is highly visible and referred to by staff, pupils can explain how it impacts on their daily life and guides their high standards of behaviour. Pupils show care and respect for all members of the school family and are courteous and helpful to visitors. Pupils benefit from a range of extra-curricular activities that support their all round development. There are strong links with the Catholic secondary school and the deanery youth worker. Pupils from the secondary school attend mass with the children at St Osmund's on a weekly basis. Secondary school pupils support the pupils at St Osmund's with their reading and class work when doing work experience; they also attend meditation groups held at the school. These activities strengthen pupils' awareness of being part of a Catholic community. Pupils' wellbeing is supported through effective pastoral care systems. The care and concern for others is evident in their fundraising for charities e.g. CAFOD, NSPCC, Meningitis Trust and many others.

Prayer and worship are central to the life of the school. Pupils' response to prayer and worship is good. Pupils demonstrate reverence and respect in both class and whole school worship settings. Pupils are developing a good awareness of a variety of styles and forms of worship, including traditional and spontaneous prayer. All classes have well presented prayer tables reflecting the current topic in "Come and See" or the liturgical year. Prayer books and prayer boxes are evidence of how the children are responding to the prayer life of the school. Exploring more vibrant acts of sharing worship is something to be developed and encouraged, both led by the staff and pupils. The parish priest and wider community play a major role in developing the prayer life of the school community.

Overall, the prayer life of the school is making a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual and moral development.

How effective are leaders and managers in developing the Catholic Life of the school?

Grade2

The governing body is active in the school and has a good understanding of the strengths and areas that need to be developed. The governors themselves have a wide scope of expertise to draw upon. They actively attend diocesan courses. Governors ensure that all policies and documentation reflect and support the school's Catholic identity; however systems for the monitoring of standards in learning and teaching are not yet fully embedded. The new head teacher has begun to implement the tracking of progress in RE through assessment. Governors need to monitor and evaluate this new data to gain an effective picture of standards in RE. The governors set performance management targets for the head teacher in religious education.

The range of in-service training provided for the governors, head teacher and staff with regard to the Catholic life of the school has been good. The head teacher is currently also the religious education co-ordinator. She has conducted a thorough review of the school and ensured that religious education is a core subject and receives the required 10% of teaching time. The governors manage finances well, and religious education receives equal funding for resources. Leaders successfully promote an inclusive vision.

How effective is the provision for Catholic Education?

Grade 2

The school environment is bright, attractive and welcoming. The surrounding grass and playground areas of the school are well maintained. Creative play areas for the early years and the whole school are modern and well used by the pupils. Play activities are also available for the children to use during their break times. The head-teacher has invested in new religious resources for the school, for display and teaching purposes. Year 5 pupils have created a prayer focus table in an empty space near the stairs to their classroom for children to use for reflection at any time of the day. The varied extra-curricular activities, including breakfast clubs and after school provision, are appreciated and valued by both pupils and parents and contribute to a sense of community identity.

The quality of teaching is variable, but generally good across the school with the majority of pupils making at least expected progress as learners, though progress is not always consistent. In the best practice, planning is linked to assessment and prior learning and together with sound subject knowledge, contributes well to pupil progress. Planning needs to be purposefully differentiated, providing further challenge for the more able children in the class to ensure that all pupils' needs are consistently met. The school has identified this as a priority in its recent self-evaluation document.

Teachers employ a range of teaching styles, techniques and resources to enhance pupils' concentration, motivation, application and understanding. The range, quality and pace of work in most classrooms is good, with pupils being encouraged to work industriously and to the best of their ability. In most classes, marking and oral feedback affirms how well pupils are doing but it does not consistently identify how they can move forward with their learning. ICT is embedded in the lesson planning and used effectively to support learning in RE. Pupils at St Osmund's enjoy religious education and undertake tasks enthusiastically. Reception pupils benefit from a solid foundation to their learning; understanding that they are all members of God's family and that God loves everyone. Pupils participate in a range of both formal and informal opportunities for prayer and worship. Reflections are part of RE lessons and contribute to their spiritual development. In key stage 2 children are enthusiastic about their learning and lessons contribute to their developing understanding of the Catholic faith. The active involvement of learning support assistants ensures effective support for all pupils.

Prayer and worship are central to the school. Staff, pupils and parents are offered opportunities to pray together. A comprehensive programme of prayer services and events are arranged by the head-teacher and parish priest. Masses are celebrated regularly throughout the year, enabling pupils to understand that the Eucharist is at the heart of the school's and the church's liturgical life. Children attend the Tuesday parish Mass at St Osmund's church in rotation of their year bands with Year 7/8 pupils from St Joseph's Secondary School joining them. Sacramental preparation is led jointly by the parish community and school staff and is held after school on the school premises. Parents speak highly about the school in terms of its Catholic life. They are welcomed to the school community and encouraged to participate in a wide variety of acts of worship. There is an excellent range of after school spiritual opportunities, which are led by the Deanery youth worker and a parish volunteer. This enriches the prayer life of both the children and other parish members. Retreats, forthcoming mission work, faith exploration programmes are but a few of the out of school activities that are held on the school premises. All these activities contribute to a shared sense of values and beliefs.