



DIOCESE OF **Arundel and Brighton**

DENOMINATIONAL (S48) INSPECTION REPORT

St Catherine's Catholic Primary School

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**School Unique Reference Number:** 126040

<b>Headteacher:</b>	Mrs G. Askham
<b>Chair of Governors:</b>	Mrs E. Bedford
<b>Lead Inspector:</b>	Mrs A. Oddy
<b>Associate Inspector:</b>	Mrs P. Rickard
<b>Inspection date:</b>	13 <sup>th</sup> November 2015

<b>Overall Effectiveness</b>	Previous Inspection: 2
	This inspection: 1

<b>Catholic Life:</b>	1
<b>Collective Worship:</b>	1
<b>Religious Education:</b>	1

## SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

St Catherine's is an outstanding Catholic school because:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ It is a warm and welcoming community centred around the teachings of Jesus. Pupils and parents value the strong Catholic ethos which ensures that every individual is valued and nurtured to develop academically, spiritually and morally. Excellent relationships between all groups within the school community ensure an atmosphere of trust and confidence.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Prayer and worship are central to the life of the school and valued by all its members. The quality of collective worship is high. Pupils participate with enjoyment and enthusiasm, recognising their important place within this inclusive worshipping community. Prayer is an essential part of the school day; pupils are at ease with spontaneous prayer and also familiar with the traditional prayers of the Church.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ The school has an exceptionally strong and vibrant Catholic life. A wealth of varied activities enriches the school curriculum and encourages pupils to take an active part in their school community and to learn the values of tolerance, justice and forgiveness. Pupils learn to help each other and to consider the needs of others within the school community and beyond.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Standards in religious education are high. Pupils enjoy their lessons and the many enrichment activities that enhance the religious education curriculum. High standards of teaching and learning enthuse and engage pupils. All groups of pupils are appropriately supported and challenged so that they achieve their full potential.</li></ul>

# **FULL REPORT**

## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

- St Catherine's Catholic Primary school is a voluntary aided school in the Worthing Deanery in the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton.
- The school is maintained by West Sussex local authority.
- The school takes pupils from 4 to 11 years old.
- There are 189 pupils currently on roll. 51% of pupils are baptised Catholics.
- The principal parish which the school serves is St Catherine's, Littlehampton.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. 31% of pupils are from minority ethnic groups and have English as an additional language. This is higher than the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is close to the national average.
- 30% of pupils are in receipt of pupil premium funding. This is higher than the national average.
- Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is generally lower than expected levels.

## **WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

- Continue to develop and build on current good practice in the assessment of religious education, including introducing electronic pupil progress tracking systems and the embedding of peer and self assessment across the school.

## CATHOLIC LIFE

### THE QUALITY OF THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

- The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.
- The quality of provision of the Catholic Life of the school.
- How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school.

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### The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.

- St Catherine's is a warm and welcoming school community in which all feel valued and supported. The mission statement is at the heart of the school; it informs all policy and practice and is reviewed annually. Pupils are directly involved in shaping the school's mission and applying it to their own lives, at school and beyond. They value their part in belonging to the school community and recognise their responsibilities to others.
- Pupils from a variety of other faith backgrounds and cultures feel welcome in the school and are part of the school family. They identify with the ethos of the school and are happy to speak of their participation in school life.
- Although attainment on entry is generally below the national average, the supportive and encouraging culture of the school enables pupils to make good progress and achieve well. Pupil outcomes are good, including for pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding and other vulnerable groups.
- Pupils speak confidently about their relationship with God and their spiritual journeys. They know they are 'walking in the footsteps of Jesus'. They readily express their own views and beliefs and are able to refer to the teaching of Jesus and Gospel values and relate these to their school community. A pupil said, 'The pupils in this school are loving and caring and are God's children'.
- Pupils value and respect the Catholic tradition of the school and their mission to help others less fortunate than themselves, generously supporting a wide range of charities. They understand that their help can make a difference to the lives of others and also appreciate the importance of the support afforded by personal and communal prayer.
- The school's Catholic life is enriched by strong links with the Deanery and the Diocese. A member of staff from the local Catholic secondary school works closely with all the Deanery primary schools in a chaplaincy role. He is instrumental in

facilitating the school's participation in, and contribution to Deanery and Diocesan events. For example, pupils are involved in the annual Children's Deanery Conference. They welcome and enjoy the opportunity to work with pupils from other Catholic schools. One pupil said, 'We are all part of a family of schools'.

- Pupils understand the need to help each other and the importance of forgiveness. They know they should 'Think, Speak and Act like Jesus' and that they have responsibilities towards the members of their school community. They are happy to serve their school and when given responsibilities, take these very seriously as an example of their mission. The International Links, Fairtrade group, School Council and Liturgy team were clear regarding their roles and spoke eloquently of their service to the school community.
- Pupils spoke of feeling welcome and happy in the school from their earliest days. One said, 'It's a great school and you have everyone in the school as your best friend'.

### **The quality of provision of the Catholic Life of the school.**

- The school mission statement embodies the Catholic ethos of the school. Senior leaders, governors and staff are committed to ensuring that it is known and lived. It is evident in the school's strong sense of community, the excellent relationships within the school and the care and support provided to families, pupils and staff.
- The school's Catholic identity is clear in the attractive and welcoming learning environment it provides. High quality displays and artefacts encourage pupils and visitors to reflect on the Catholic nature of the school as well as offering opportunities for personal prayer. Beautiful prayer focus areas are linked to liturgical seasons and the religious education programme. The heading 'Come and Pray' above each prayer focus area encourages personal and interactive prayer. A Prayer Tree in the school entrance encourages parents and visitors to contribute prayers and reflections.
- Outstanding systems of pastoral care are in place. These include the 'Rainbows' programme for those who have suffered loss and a parent support adviser is available to work with families who have concerns. A variety of strategies support vulnerable pupils; these range from practical assistance such as funding for school trips to more diverse support programmes such as play therapy and work with other outside agencies. Of particular note is the school's commitment to ensuring that staff are supported and cared for, both practically and spiritually. The cohesive and committed staff team is testament to the sense of community evident in school.
- Education in Personal Relationships is well established in the school and closely linked with religious education and the school's Catholic life. Pupils are encouraged to reflect and think deeply about the issues involved and respond sensitively and with consideration of the views of others.
- Standards of pupil behaviour are excellent. During this inspection pupils behaved impeccably at all times, in lessons and around the school. They were considerate of

adults and of each other and happy to welcome visitors to their school. They feel safe at school and know that the adults at school will help them if they have any problems.

- Provision for the Catholic life of the school is enhanced by the strong Deanery network. This provides excellent links with the Catholic secondary school. Joint conferences, liturgies and retreats provide a wealth of additional opportunities for pupils.
- Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and the Catholic education it offers. They appreciate the strong Catholic ethos, saying, 'You can see it everywhere in the school' and feel it supplements and extends values taught at home. They describe the school as welcoming and inviting and commend the way every child is known and nurtured. Many parents commented on how much their children loved coming to school.

#### **How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life of the school.**

- School leaders and governors are deeply committed to the school as a Catholic community and to the Church's mission in education.
- The school actively fosters the spiritual and moral development of every pupil and the sense of vocation in every individual.
- The Catholic life of the school is a clear priority in school development planning. Provision and outcomes are effectively evaluated and this contributes significantly to planning future improvement.
- 'Spirituality' is a regular agenda item at Governing Body meetings, reflecting the importance placed on this aspect of school life. Governors are very much part of the school's Catholic life, they are frequent visitors to the school and participate in liturgical celebrations as part of their monitoring role and as members of the school community.
- The parish priest works closely with the school, providing valuable support and guidance as well as fostering links with the parish. He welcomes pupils to the parish church on a regular basis encouraging them to 'touch, feel and experience' the fabric and contents of the church. This enables them to feel at home in the church and to extend their understanding of traditions and worship.
- Parents are welcomed into the school's Catholic life and appreciate being part of the Catholic community. Newsletters and the school website provide information regarding events and a warm invitation to parents wherever appropriate.

- School self evaluation is accurate, reflective and strongly evidence based. The school has a relentless drive towards continued improvement. Priorities are clearly identified and progress towards addressing these is regularly evaluated.

## COLLECTIVE WORSHIP AND PRAYER LIFE

- How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship and Prayer Life.
- The quality of provision for Collective Worship and Prayer Life.
- How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship and Prayer Life.

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### How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship and Prayer Life.

- Collective worship is a central part of school life. Pupils are offered a rich variety of worship opportunities and celebrations and respond very positively.
- A liturgy team of pupils from Year 3 to Year 6 helps to plan, prepare and deliver liturgical celebrations. They are conscious of the responsibility of this role and are keen to serve their school in this way.
- During the act of collective worship observed, pupils were reverent and prayerful. Pupils were fully involved, enjoying role play and singing with enthusiasm. Meditation was effectively used as an aid to prayer. It was an excellent example of the school as a worshipping community.
- Pupils are at ease with spontaneous prayer and are familiar with the traditional prayers of the Church. They understand that prayer and worship take many forms and that they can participate using song, dance and quiet reflection.
- Pupils enjoy being part of a worshipping community and appreciate that this forms part of their spiritual development, with a message for their daily lives and how they should behave towards others.
- All pupils are included and welcomed, regardless of their faith background. The school rightly sees collective worship as an opportunity to be all embracing and inclusive as well as an opportunity for those with little or no faith background to experience being part of a faith community.



### **The quality of provision for Collective Worship and Prayer Life.**

- The school provides a wealth of high quality, carefully planned collective worship opportunities, enabling pupils to develop their spiritual life.
- Worship is central to the life of the school. Adults associated with the school are invited to attend and are clearly pleased to do so. Pupils are encouraged to write their own invitations to parents and carers and attendance reflects the success of this.
- A well planned programme ensures that pupils are familiar with the week's Gospel readings and are encouraged to relate the message of these to their own lives. Collective worship also celebrates the Church's feasts and seasons, building up pupils' knowledge of the traditions of the Church.
- Pupils are encouraged to participate in the planning and delivery of liturgies. The parish priest is instrumental in providing guidance to support the pupils in making these celebrations personal to the school.
- Older pupils benefit from school retreats and days of reflection. Year 5 are offered a residential retreat and Year 6 pupils are offered a day of reflection, meditation and celebration as part of their preparation for the transition to secondary school. Pupils really enjoy these occasions and spoke very appreciatively of their experiences.

### **How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship and Prayer Life.**

- Promotion, monitoring and evaluation of the provision for collective worship is outstanding. School self evaluation indicates that the school is constantly seeking to evaluate current provision and to improve it. The religious education development group monitor collective worship as part of their drive to monitor and raise standards.
- Senior leaders and the member of staff responsible for the chaplaincy role work together to provide inspirational liturgical experiences for the pupils. Leaders model good practice, providing exemplars for the staff team. The parish priest also provides a wealth of experiences linked to the Church's feasts and seasons to enrich school worship on these occasions.
- Governors are fully committed to their monitoring role. Prayer and reflection are part of every Governing Body meeting and the collective worship of the school is regularly reviewed in discussion.

# RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

## THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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- How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.
- The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education.
- How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.

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

- Pupils achieve high standards in religious education and make excellent progress. End of key stage results show that pupil outcomes are very good, with significant numbers of pupils achieving the higher levels. Pupils with disabilities or special educational needs are effectively supported to achieve their full potential.
- Pupils enjoy their religious education lessons and appreciate its importance in their school curriculum and to their own lives.
- In the lessons observed, pupils were attentive and reflective, often showing a deeper understanding of religious concepts. Pupil behaviour in all lessons observed was excellent. They were keen to participate and give their best.
- Standards over the last three years are in line with other schools and shows no significant differences in attainment between pupil groups.
- Curriculum religious education is enriched by events such as spirituality weeks and the retreats offered to older pupils. Pupils also enjoy the fundraising initiatives to help others. This includes support for Cafod and Mission Together.
- Work in pupils' books is beautifully presented and reflects the high expectations of the teachers and the care taken by pupils.

## **The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education.**

- The school follows the 'Come and See' programme of religious education. Curriculum time allocation is 10% and fulfils the requirements of the Bishops' Conference. The 'Come and See' programme is used as a basis and is enriched by cross-curricular links and additional resources such as spirituality weeks to ensure creative and imaginative provision and delivery. Pupils enjoy their religious education lessons. They are interested and enthusiastic and appreciate the relevance of these lessons to their own lives.
- Pupils' written work shows good coverage of the curriculum and clear evidence that pupils approach their work thoughtfully and want to do their best. The standard of written work is excellent across the school.
- Four lessons across three key stages were observed as part of this inspection. These ranged from good to outstanding. This is in line with the school's own monitoring. Lessons were well planned and differentiated. Imaginative use was made of resources and other effectively supported adults effectively supported pupils as appropriate. Development of religious literacy was excellent. Pupils were encouraged to think deeply and reflectively. Skilful questioning enabled pupils to explore the religious concepts at the heart of the lessons. A special atmosphere was created using music, meditation and candles and the relationships between pupils and teachers were excellent.
- Teachers are supported to enable them to deliver high quality teaching in religious education. The religious education leader, who is also the Deputy Head, provides coaching sessions to enable staff to evaluate and improve their practice. The chaplaincy post holder models good practice and works closely with the subject leader in order to support staff.
- Pupils' work is assessed against clear objectives for each topic. This is moderated at school and deanery level to ensure accuracy of teacher judgements. Pupil progress is tracked throughout a pupil's time at school and records passed on the next teacher each year. Underachieving pupils are identified and supported as appropriate. The school currently anticipates including religious education assessments as part of their electronic pupil tracking system and this is correctly identified as an area for development.
- Self assessment, peer assessment and developmental marking strategies have been introduced. There is some evidence of these in pupils' work; these now need to be consistently applied across the school, together with pupils given time to respond to teachers' comments.

## **How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.**

- Leaders, governors and managers are deeply committed to promoting, monitoring and evaluating the provision for religious education. It is clear that religious education is at the heart of the school and very much part of the core curriculum.
- An annual monitoring schedule for religious education is well established and informs school self evaluation and development planning. Monitoring includes the evaluation of planning, lesson observations and book scrutiny.
- Governors work closely with school leaders to evaluate current provision and to formulate a comprehensive action plan for religious education. This is clearly laid out, with aims and evidence of success criteria so that progress can be monitored. The Headteacher regularly reports to governors on religious education and spirituality in the school; it is a standard agenda item at governing body meetings.
- The Headteacher and religious education leader are passionate in their drive to ensure excellence of religious education provision and pupil outcomes. They provide inspiration and support for the cohesive staff team.
- Continuing professional development opportunities are provided for all staff. These include staff meetings, inset training and diocesan courses, ensuring that staff are up to date with developments in the teaching of religious education and are provided with new ideas and resources to inspire them and deliver provision for the pupils.
- The religious education leader models good practice and provides coaching sessions for staff, enabling them to develop their knowledge and skills.
- The school is active in working with the Deanery and the Diocese in sharing good practice and working with other schools.

# Summary of Inspection Judgements

**How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education.**

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## **Catholic Life**

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

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The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school.

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How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school.

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## **Collective Worship and Prayer Life**

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How well pupils respond to and participate in the schools' Collective Worship and Prayer Life.

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The quality of provision for Collective Worship and Prayer Life.

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How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship and Prayer Life.

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## **Religious Education**

1

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.

1

The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education.

2

How well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.

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