

DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION REPORT

incorporating Section 48 and Canonical Inspection under Canon 806 on
behalf of the Archbishop of Southwark

URN 100177

St Thomas a Becket Catholic Primary School

Mottisfont Road

Abbey Wood

LONDON SE2 9LY

Inspection date: 24th April 2018

Chair of Governors: Mr Barry Cannon

Headteacher: Mrs Bernie Greally

**Inspectors: Ms Ann Oddy
Mr Patrick Moloney**

EDUCATION COMMISSION

St Edward's House, St Paul's Wood Hill, Orpington, Kent BR5 2SR
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Interim Director of Education: Mr Stephen Bryan



Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding	Grade 3	Requires improvement
Grade 2	Good	Grade 4	Inadequate

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Thomas a Becket Catholic Primary School is voluntary aided. It is situated in the Greenwich Deanery of the Archdiocese of Southwark and is maintained by Greenwich Local Authority. The principal parishes which the school serves are St David's and St Benet's, Abbey Wood. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholics is 57%. The average weekly proportion of curriculum time given to Religious Education is 10% in all key stages.

The school takes pupils from 3 to 11 years. The number of pupils currently on roll is 353, with an additional 43 pupils attending half day Nursery provision. The attainment of pupils on entering the school is broadly well below average. Pupil Premium funding is received for 12% of pupils. Three pupils have an Education and Health Care Plan and 22% of pupils are identified as having a Special Educational Need or Disability (SEND); this is above the national average. 35% of pupils speak English as an additional language and 79% of pupils are of minority ethnic heritages. The school's deprivation indicator is 0.4 which is well above the national average.



SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

St Thomas a Becket Catholic Primary is an outstanding Catholic school because:

- St Thomas a Becket Catholic School is a caring community providing a high standard of education for its pupils in an attractive and well-kept learning environment that reflects its Catholic identity. The school's mission statement is at the heart of the school and underpins all policy and practice. Parents and carers are welcomed into the school's Catholic life and as partners in the education of their children. They are very supportive of the school and appreciative of the education it offers.
- The school has a rich and vibrant Catholic life which embraces all members of the school community and permeates all areas of the curriculum. It is reflected in the inclusive and welcoming nature of the school and in the caring and supportive relationships between members of the school community. Pupils are proud of their school and are responsible members of it. Their behaviour is exemplary, showing consideration and courtesy both in the classroom and around the school. Governors and the Parish Priest provide valued support for the school's Catholic life.
- Collective worship at St Thomas a Becket is outstanding. Prayer and worship opportunities reflect the traditions of the Catholic Church and encourage pupils to deepen their relationship with God. Pupils are very much involved in the prayer life of the school and enjoy contributing to the planning and preparation of worship. They are familiar with the traditional prayers of the Church and with composing their own prayers.
- The standard of Religious Education offered by the school is outstanding. High quality teaching and learning ensures that all pupils achieve their full potential. Standards of attainment are high. Pupils enjoy their Religious Education lessons. They are interested and attentive and keen to do well. Work in pupils' books is of a high standard and demonstrates the pride they take in their work. Religious Education is very effectively led and managed and is at the heart of the curriculum.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- The school should continue to develop the monitoring schedule for Religious Education and the Catholic life of the school so that it is more formal and is clearly linked to the school's development plan.
- To develop stronger links with all feeder parishes as per the school development plan



Overall Effectiveness

How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education.

1

Catholic Life

1

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

1

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

1

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

1

Religious Education

1

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

1

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education.

1

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.

1

Collective Worship

1

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

1

The quality of provision for Collective Worship.

1

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship.

1



CATHOLIC LIFE

1

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

- Pupils at St Thomas a Becket school appreciate and value the school's Catholic life and are active participants in it. They recognise that they are part of a caring and supportive school community and are happy to make their contribution to it. Examples include their willingness to take responsibility as members of the school council and as monitors helping younger pupils and staff. A pupil said, 'In this school we're together as one.'
- Pupils know that the mission statement is at the heart of their school and that they are expected to exemplify it. They have been involved in shaping it and the 'Golden Rules' provide opportunities and guidance on how to make it an active part of school life.
- Pupils are proud of their school and enjoy belonging to their school family. They are considerate and helpful to others. They know it is important to be inclusive and forgiving and are secure in the knowledge that any worries they may have will be swiftly addressed and resolved. A pupil commented, 'Our teachers look after us and we all look after each other.'
- Pupils are encouraged to consider themselves and their school as part of a much wider community. They benefit from the school's links with the Deanery and the Diocese. Links with the local parish are strong. The Parish Priest is a frequent visitor to the school and also welcomes the school at Mass in the parish church. The First Communion programme takes place in the school and is considered an important part of school life.
- The behaviour of pupils in lessons and around the school is exemplary. During this inspection pupils were polite and welcomed the inspectors as visitors to their school.
- The school supports pupils academically, spiritually and emotionally to ensure that all can achieve their full potential. Strong systems of support within the school and with a range of outside agencies ensure that pupils receive support appropriate to their needs. Examples include, Learning Mentor, PE Coach and Mathematics Specialist Intervention teacher.
- Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is well established throughout the school, using the 'A Journey in Love' programme and is in line with the teaching of the Catholic Church.
- The school has a particular commitment to developing pupils' sense of self worth through sport, competing in the Catholic Schools Cluster and achieving considerable success in the London Youth Athletics Finals. This is part of a wide range of extracurricular activities which develop teamwork and new skills.



- The school's Catholic life nurtures and supports its pupils. This results in a happy and united community in which all groups of pupils make good progress and achieve well. Academic results at the end of Key Stage 2 are above national and local authority averages, despite low starting points on entry to the school.
- Parents are appreciative of the school and value the Catholic education it offers. One commented, "I have always been made to feel welcome at the school" and another said, "St Thomas a Becket is a lovely school with the pupils at the heart of all its activities" A very high number of parental questionnaires were returned. These were overwhelmingly supportive of the school.

The quality of provision for the Catholic life of the school is outstanding.

- The school mission statement reflects the educational mission of the Church, offering "Excellence of education in accordance with the teaching of the Church and to value and develop each child's potential in a community in which every member is fully respected". It was developed following consultation with governors, staff and pupils. It is central to school life and is displayed throughout the school. It informs all school policies and practice. Pupils are aware of the mission statement and its importance to their school.
- Staff are committed to the Catholic ethos of the school and feel supported by it. Effective induction of new staff and professional development and training provision ensure the cohesive nature of the staff team.
- The school's Catholic life and ethos is evident in the many attractive displays and artefacts which form part of the well kept and well resourced learning environment.
- Prayer focus areas are a feature of every classroom. These reflect the liturgical season, Religious Education themes and feature pupils' own prayers. Religious journals document the class's celebrations and liturgies as well as prayers and responses to reflection.
- Staff are fully committed to nurturing and supporting pupils in all aspects of school life. School enrichment planning enhances the curriculum and effective systems of pastoral care are in place, particularly for vulnerable pupils and their families.
- All members of the school community are welcomed into the school's Catholic life, regardless of culture or faith commitment. Pupils appreciate the need for tolerance and respect for the beliefs and practices of others.



How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life of the school is outstanding.

- Leaders and governors are deeply committed to the Catholic life of the school. The Headteacher is an inspirational role model. Together with very supportive staff and governors she provides clear vision and direction for the school's Catholic life.
- Senior leaders and governors promote the Catholic ethos at all times. They actively foster links with the parish and value being part of the wider Catholic community.
- Governors are active in monitoring and evaluating the Catholic life of the school. They are frequent visitors to the school and participants in its Catholic life. The Catholic life of the school is regularly discussed and evaluated by the Religious Education learning team, who provide feedback to the Headteacher and governors. This informs school development planning.
- The Catholic life of the school is featured on the school website, which clearly reflects the school's Catholic identity. It also provides information to parents regarding the Religious Education curriculum and school celebrations.
- Planning for Religious Education and the school's Catholic life is clearly set out in school development planning. Appropriate resourcing reflects its importance to the school.
- Parents and carers have a good understanding of the school's mission and are very supportive of it. They feel welcome in the school and know that the school will respond to any concerns. A parent wrote, "A school that listens to parents' concerns. Staff are approachable and pleasant."

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

1

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

- Pupils make very good progress in Religious Education and achieve well, with the great majority achieving or exceeding age related expectations by the end of Key Stage 2. A significant number of pupils are working at greater depth. Results are in-line with those in other core subjects.
- All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and achieve well, reflecting the effectiveness of the school's intervention and support systems.
- During the teaching observed as part of this inspection, pupils were keen to give of their best and do well. They were enthusiastic and responsive and able to reflect on their learning. Behaviour for learning was excellent.
- Pupils interviewed as part of this inspection clearly saw Religious Education as an important subject in their school and important to their own lives. They were keen to talk about their work and proud of their achievements. One said, "I like Religious Education lessons because they really make me think."
- Pupils' written work shows good curriculum coverage and a range of tasks and ways of recording their work. Standards of presentation are high, reflecting teachers' expectations and pupils' pride in their work. Pupils have a very high standard of religious literacy and their work indicates a high level of thoughtfulness and reflection.

The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education is outstanding.

- Standards of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education are high. This is reflected in lessons observed as part of this inspection and in pupil outcomes.
- Four lessons, across three key stages, were observed. In all lessons, standards of teaching and learning were exceptionally high. Teachers skilfully engaged and inspired pupils, who responded thoughtfully and attentively. Probing questions enabled pupils to explore and deepen their learning. Teachers demonstrated excellent subject knowledge.
- Effective planning ensures that lessons are linked to pupils' needs. Assessment is effectively used to inform planning, track pupil progress and target support and challenge.
- Pupils are confident in expressing and exploring their ideas and demonstrate an extensive religious vocabulary.
- Differentiation is evident in planning, questioning and learning activities. As a result, pupils are appropriately challenged to develop their learning. Support assistants facilitate pupils' learning using well planned and sensitive support.



- Marking of pupils' work is regular and affirmative and indicates an effective dialogue between teacher and pupil. Self assessment is well established, with pupils contributing to their end of topic assessments.
- 'I Can' statements are used to monitor pupil progress and provide a developmental record of ongoing learning. Pupil progress reviews ensure that support can be put in place where needed.
- Assessment is effectively used to inform future planning and in the constant drive towards raising standards further. Moderation (in-house and external) validates teachers' judgements and a portfolio of work samples provides a reference point for teachers. Since the last inspection, the school has worked hard to develop robust systems of assessment in Religious Education and these are now well established.

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education is outstanding.

- The school uses 'The Way, The Truth and The Life' programme of Religious Education, in line with Diocesan requirements. Curriculum time allocated to Religious Education is 10% in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 and conforms to the requirements of the Bishops' Conference.
- Following the recommendation of the last inspection, the teaching of Other Faiths is now well established in the school. It is well resourced and a regular feature of curriculum planning. School displays and assemblies reflect the school's commitment to ensuring their pupils learn about the beliefs and faith practices of others in order to better understand our multicultural society. Examples included attractive displays on Hinduism and World Religions which included pupils' thoughts and reflections as well as information. The curriculum is enriched by a programme of visits to places of worship. On the day of this inspection, Year 4 pupils were visiting a Sikh Gurdwara.
- The Religious Education learning team provide leadership and support to colleagues. They work to maintain excellent provision and expertise as well as a commitment to monitoring and evaluation in order to raise standards further. They work very well together, sharing ideas and contributing to development planning.
- Governors regularly visit the school on a formal and informal basis as part of their monitoring role. The link governor for Religious Education is conscientious in her role and has a clear awareness of standards and progress in Religious Education, which she feeds back to the governing body.
- School self evaluation is accurate and evidence based. The school may now wish to consider including 'Next Steps' as part of its school self evaluation document, reflecting its current development planning.
- Monitoring in Religious Education includes learning walks, and lesson observations. It should now be further developed to be on a more regular and formal basis which would provide a strong evidence base to inform development planning.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

1

How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's collective worship and prayer life is outstanding.

- Pupils are active and joyful participants in the school's collective worship and prayer life. In the act of collective worship observed as part of this inspection, pupils and staff assembled quietly and reverently, sitting attentively with hands joined together in prayer. Pupils contributed prayers and Scripture readings and took part in quiet reflection. The experience of prayer was enriched by enthusiastic and joyful singing.
- Pupils interviewed as part of this inspection appreciated that collective worship was at the heart of their school and an important part of school life. They enjoyed coming together as a school community and said it was, "a time to learn about God and to talk to Him."
- Pupils have a good understanding of the Church's liturgical year, seasons and feasts and know how these are celebrated in school. They spoke of the celebrations for Advent and Lent and in particular of the Stations of the Cross liturgy, which older pupils prepare for the rest of the school.
- Pupils are familiar with the traditional prayers of the Church and with composing and using their own prayers. They are at ease contributing to opportunities for spontaneous prayer. Pupils are involved in planning and preparing school and class liturgies.
- Pupils have their own prayer journals in which to record their own personal thoughts and prayers. They recognise the importance of these to their own spiritual journey and value them accordingly. A prayer room in school is available to pupils during the school day. On the day of this inspection, pupils were encouraged to use it for reflection and prayer following the recent death of a much loved member of staff.
- Pupils enjoy joining the congregation at the Parish Church for Mass and are welcomed and included by the Parish Priest. Pupils are altar servers in the parish and at school Masses. Some parents expressed the view that they would like to see stronger links made with the other parish and the school plans to develop this.
- The Collective Worship and prayer life at St Thomas a Becket gives pupils the experience of being part of a vibrant, worshipping community and they respond very positively. It nurtures pupils' spiritual and moral development and encourages them on their faith journey.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship and Prayer Life is outstanding.

- Collective worship is central to the life of the school for all pupils and forms the heart of every school celebration. Praying together is part of the daily experience for all pupils and staff. Prayers are said at the beginning and end of the school day and at staff and governors' meetings.
- Themes for collective worship reflect the Church's liturgical year, topics in Religious Education and events in school life, ensuring a wide range of collective worship experiences.
- In addition to school collective worship, class worship provides pupils with a more personal experience, allowing them to explore and express their views and Gospel values and offering them the opportunity to share their thoughts and prayers.
- Guided meditation gives pupils the opportunity to explore and respond to scripture in a different way, relating it to their own lives. It is used in class worship and Religious Education lessons, creating a prayerful and spiritual atmosphere.
- The school is committed to ensuring that collective worship experiences are of high quality and relevant to the pupils. Good resourcing and staff training help to ensure that pupils are interested, enthused and inspired by well prepared opportunities.

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for collective worship and prayer life is outstanding.

- School leaders are skilled in delivering high quality collective worship and are committed to ensuring that it inspires pupils and enables them to deepen their knowledge and understanding of the Church's liturgical year, seasons and feasts.
- The Headteacher and Religious Education team have set out clear expectations of the elements which should be present in school collective worship. Together with modelling and sharing good practice, this is supportive and helpful to staff preparing school worship.
- The school's rich programme of collective worship is enjoyed by pupils, who speak highly of school celebrations and are keen to take part. Parents are very appreciative and show this by their feedback comments. A parent commented, "I am very pleased with my child's education, fantastic lessons and acts of worship."
- Collective worship is part of the school's monitoring programme, although largely on an informal basis. Governors attend acts of worship and celebrations throughout the school year and provide feedback to the school and the governing body. School

leaders share feedback in staff meetings and provide support and guidance in all aspects of school worship.

- Collective worship and prayer is seen as an essential part of the school's Catholic life and is given high priority by school leaders and governors. Resourcing and the provision of support and professional development training reflect this.