



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 102671

St John Fisher Primary School
Grand Drive
West Wimbledon
SW20 9NA

Inspection date: 21 November 2012

Chair of Governors:	Rev T Kavanagh
Headteacher:	Mrs U O'Byrne
Inspectors:	Mrs H Thompson Mrs P Rickard

EDUCATION COMMISSION

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SECTION 48

Introduction

Description of the school

St John Fisher Catholic Primary is voluntary aided. It is maintained by Merton LA. The principal parish which the school serves is St John Fisher Merton. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholics is 95%. The average weekly proportion of curriculum time given to religious education is 10% in Key Stage 1, 10% in Key Stage 2.

The school takes pupils from 3 to 11 years. The number of pupils currently on roll is 449. Increasingly, the attainment of pupils on entry into the Nursery is below that expected for their age. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. Around 10% of the pupils receive extra support in class. Approximately 34% of pupils have English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils from homes where English is an additional language is above average with the majority coming from Poland. The proportion of pupils with special needs is below average.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding	Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 2	Good	Grade 4	Inadequate

Publication date ... 22 January 2013

Overall effectiveness as a Catholic school

GRADE
2

St John Fisher is a good school with several outstanding features. It places equal emphasis on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and academic education. Relationships are strength of the school and parents spoke very sincerely about how welcoming the school is and how happy their children are. The Headteacher has a clear vision of Catholic education which is shared by Governors, senior leadership team and all staff. Parish links are strong resulting in excellent support for pupils and families. Pastoral care is excellent. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. Recommendations from the previous inspection are being addressed. Assessment is good and the further development of pupil tracking systems (SIMS) is currently under way. This, together with, more lesson observations and more interactive marking will ensure all pupils make good progress. The capacity of the school to improve is good.

What steps need to be taken to improve further?

Governors, headteacher and staff should:

- Formalise the time allocated to the coordinator to enable effective lesson observations and monitoring.
- Continue to develop pupil tracking systems so that the outcomes can identify trends and further raise attainment.
- Continue to improve teaching and learning through the consistent use of interactive marking.

The Catholic life of the school

Leadership and management

GRADE 2

The headteacher, together with the senior management team and governors, lead the school effectively. The pupils' personal development and well being are at the very heart of its nurturing Christian ethos. Governors are committed, well informed and regular visitors to the school. Relationships are excellent. The mission statement is clearly visible throughout the school and a review to ensure that all pupils understand and value it will result in it being at the centre of the school's mission. This is an inclusive school with high standards of pastoral care valuing every child. Pupils learn to respect and care for one another, as a result of this, behaviour is exemplary. Parish links are very strong and the spiritual life of the whole school community is enhanced by regular visits from the parish priest and local clergy.

Quality of provision for personal and collective worship

GRADE 2

Prayer, Eucharist and worship are central to the life of the school. Pupils are taught the formal prayers of the Church. Pupils in Reception make the sign of the cross very prayerfully with special words to help them remember the correct way. Pupils' own prayers are valued and displayed in some classrooms. The central prayer area is used very effectively for prayer groups with opportunities for the Rosary, Advent and Lenten prayers before and during school time. Reconciliation services are held regularly for Key Stage 2 pupils. Provision for personal and collective worship is good and includes a variety of opportunities for prayer and worship. Mass is celebrated monthly in school and pupils participate in the preparation for all Masses. On Education Sunday staff and pupils play a prominent role in the Parish with the Headteacher talking at every Mass. Parents are welcome to a variety of assemblies and Masses. Focal areas for prayer are clearly identified in all classrooms, although the quality of these is varied. The best were prominent, relevant, and reflected the spirituality of the pupils by including their own work, prayers or a box for thoughts. This good practice should be shared throughout the school. The Parish priest and Deacon make a valued contribution to the school community. In the assembly seen, pupils were fully engaged and responsive. It had a clear moral message about inclusion of all pupils. Pupils enjoy singing in assemblies – it is a real strength of the school. One parent wrote; "My children come home singing a new hymn or song with a strong Christian message and gain faith from the many assemblies presented to them throughout the year."

In the best practice observed, plenary sessions were used to good effect. In a Y6 lesson children voluntarily expressed their own prayers in a meaningful fashion. This practice should be developed across the school.

The school has identified the creation of an outdoor prayer area and a retreat day for year 6 in its development plans. These developments will further enhance collective worship and the prayer life of the school.

Community cohesion

GRADE 1

Community cohesion is embedded in the school's Catholic ethos. There is a warm, friendly, welcoming environment. Relationships with parents are excellent. One wrote; "The school teaches the children to "love thy neighbour" from the very beginning and to love God knowing that He loves us all." A high number of questionnaires returned were overwhelmingly positive and appreciative of the school's commitment to Catholic values and teaching. Inclusion is a shared vision of the whole school community. Jigsaw4U supports pupils with emotional needs effectively. The School Council is well established

and pupils are proud to belong to it. There is a good range of after school clubs. There is an 'after-school care' club on site. The school supports a wide range of charities both Catholic, local and international. These include CAFOD, Cabrini Society, Chase Hospice and NSPCC. Through the "Lunchbowl Network" pupils support feeding children in the Kibera in Kenya. The school fully supports anti-bullying week and the assembly seen focussed vey effectively on issues of bullying. There is an active Parent, Teacher Association and parent volunteers run the school library. There are strong deanery and local community links. The school is a UNICEF accredited 'Rights Respecting' school and high quality displays throughout the school reflect this. The school is rightly proud of this achievement. There are excellent Parish links which include Key Stage 2 pupils being involved in the 'Young Crusaders' club and 'Guild of Our Lady'. The attractive display in the entrance area celebrates the ethos of the school and has books in all the main languages of the school welcoming parents.

Publication date ... 22 January 2013

Religious Education

GRADE 2

Achievement and standards in Religious Education

Attainment on entry is increasingly below that expected for their age. However, by the end of Key Stage 2 it is well above average. Attitudes to learning are very positive. All pupils gain knowledge, skills and understanding at a good rate across all key stages. Pupils with special needs and English as an additional language make good progress due to the high quality of support. More able pupils are motivated, confident and enjoy their lessons. There is no significant difference in progress by either ethnicity or gender. Presentation in books is good and there is evidence of a good range of activities. Consistency and progression are evident. Excellent practice in affirmative marking was evident but formative marking needs to be further developed to include more interactive marking and opportunities to reflect and respond to it. Pupils engage well in lessons and their behaviour is excellent. Lessons give opportunities for spiritual and moral development.

GRADE 2

Teaching and learning in Religious Education

Teaching is good overall with some outstanding features. Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject. Classroom management skills are good. In the best lessons, pace, challenge, high expectations, good questioning skills and differentiation by task were evident. Planning is consistent with some cross curricular links identified in literacy, art and music. The school needs to develop this further, making links with ICT to further enhance the RE curriculum. In one lesson a mother brought her new baby son in and all the pupils were highly focussed on the needs of this baby and lit a special candle for him and prayed for him as well as finding out all the things a new baby needed. Awe and wonder were very evident in this lesson and it was linked to the birth of Jesus. In a lesson on Advent, pupils explored their understanding of expectations by paired and group work and linked these to God's "unconditional love". The teacher led a thoughtful reflection on "Jesus is the light of the world" with music creating an outstanding opportunity for pupils' spiritual development. Pupils show a high level of moral awareness. Assessment is good. Pupil progress is tracked and the further development of tracking systems to provide more detailed information for planning and target setting purposes is under way. The use of pupil conferencing is developing well.

GRADE 2

The Religious Education curriculum

The curriculum fulfils the requirements of the Bishops' Conference with 10% of curriculum time allocated for Religious Education following the "Come and See" programme and linked to the Church's liturgical year. RE is not taught in isolation but permeates through out the school day. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development also takes place through PHSE and SEAL which incorporates work on children's rights. The new "Come and See" programme is being closely followed and the school plans to evaluate this next year. Education in Human Love is very well taught and includes a visit from a member of the charity "Life" to talk to year 6. The school organises a special week each year in which Religious Education plays a prominent part. Last year focussed on the Olympics and this year an arts week is planned which incorporates religious education as a core component. The Parish is having a Mission Week and the school will be working closely with the team to provide a strong Parish school link and to support the faith of the whole school community. The Parish priest is a regular visitor to the school and closely involved in the pupils' faith journeys. For example, on the topic of Sacraments, he came to talk to Year 6 pupils about the priesthood. Other faith festivals are celebrated. Other faiths are taught through the Come and See programme materials and enhanced by a visit from a Rabbi for the week on Judaism. Pupils know about the lives of the saints especially their class saint. Resources are good. Displays reflect the UNICEF focus and are of a high standard.

The school may like to consider linking these more closely to the mission statement and the Bible. Displays on the topic of Baptism are well presented with pupils' work. The curriculum contributes significantly to the spiritual and moral development of all pupils.

Leadership and management of Religious Education

GRADE 2

The Religious Education coordinator, with strong support from the headteacher, leadership team and governors, ensures that the teaching of the Catholic faith remains central to the school's mission and is embedded across the curriculum. Monitoring includes learning walks, book scrutinies, planning scrutinies and some lesson observations. However, school needs to provide further opportunities for the RE coordinator to observe lessons. Assessment is developing very well and the school is aware of the need to further develop tracking systems to enable data to be used more effectively to support teaching and learning and raise attainment. Pupil work has been levelled in year groups and across phase to ensure consistency of standards. The new "Come and See" programme is well resourced and followed closely by all teachers. The coordinator supports teachers in their planning and leads staff meetings. The coordinator attends diocesan training sessions and local Catholic cluster meetings. She has excellent subject knowledge, is enthusiastic, and dedicated to her role. The coordinator files are comprehensive and well presented. All the staff are committed to the Catholic ethos of the school and to making it a happy, stimulating place to be.

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