



## 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 118763

St Augustine's Catholic Primary School  
St John's Road  
Hythe  
CT21 4BE

Inspection date: 22 June 2015

Chair of Governors:	Mrs Anne Malpass
Headteacher:	Mr Kim McConnell
Inspectors:	Mrs Angela O'Connor OBE Mr Roger Tapley

### EDUCATION COMMISSION

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# SECTION 48

# Introduction

## Description of the school

The school is voluntary aided. It is in the Dover Deanery of the Archdiocese of Southwark. It is maintained by Kent Local Authority. The principal parish which the school serves is The Virgin Mother of Good Counsel, Hythe. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholics is 46%. The average weekly proportion of curriculum time given to Religious Education is 10% in both key stages.

The school takes pupils from 4 to 11 years. The number of pupils currently on roll is 209. The attainment of pupils on entering the school is average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. Around 14% of the pupils receive extra support in class. The proportion of pupils from homes where English is an additional language is above average. The majority of pupils are white European heritage.

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Date of previous inspection:

17/06/2010

Overall Grade:

2

### Key for inspection grades

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

St Augustine's Hythe is a good Catholic school with some outstanding features. It is a warm and caring school with a strong sense of family. The atmosphere is welcoming, purposeful and friendly, and staff demonstrate their commitment to all aspects of school life. The leadership and management of the school is strong and the drive of the relatively new Headteacher ensures that the school is constantly moving forward.

The Headteacher, staff and governors are totally committed to the continuing development of the school and the welfare and education of all its pupils.

The pupils are polite, friendly and very well behaved. They feel safe and well cared for and are very proud of their school. As one pupil said, "I love coming to school. I have to work hard but the teachers make it fun."

Teaching is a strength of the school. High expectations, well planned lessons, good assessment procedures and an interesting curriculum ensure that all pupils make good progress. Teaching assistants are a real asset to the school and the close working relationship with the class teachers further enhances pupil progress.

Parents are very supportive of the school and appreciate the care given to their children and the Catholic education provided by the school. One parent stated, "I feel that St Augustine's is a warm, welcoming school and the pastoral care for the children is outstanding."

Links with the parish are good and the Parish Priest, who has a very extensive parish, is a regular visitor to the school to celebrate Mass and other liturgies.

The issues from the last inspection have been addressed. The school has good evaluation procedures in place and is aware of its strengths and areas for development. Strong leadership and a real commitment to raising standards in all areas ensures that the school has good capacity to continue to improve.

## What steps need to be taken to improve further?

Governors, Headteacher and staff should:

- Arrange for the Mission Statement to be reviewed and renewed as soon as possible by all members of the school community. This could be achieved by holding a staff meeting or Inset day to which teaching and support staff, governors and pupil representatives are invited. This should then be displayed prominently throughout the school and known to all.
- Continue to develop school/parish relationships. The pupils' role to be developed by sharing in the planning and preparation of Masses both in the parish and in the school.

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

Pupils are responsive to the Catholic ethos of the school. They are beginning to take some ownership for the Catholic life of the school which is proving successful. For example, the House Captains, together with the school leadership, are helping to produce a rota each term for some of the Collective Worship.

Mass is celebrated in school each month. The pupils take part by reading at Mass, writing and saying the bidding prayers and joining in the singing. Parents are invited to participate.

This year a Sunday School Parish Mass has been organised to take place three times a year. As this is a new venture it has been planned by the Parish Priest and the Religious Education Co-ordinator. The next step is for the pupils to be involved in the planning stage.

Other liturgies take place in school such as Stations of the Cross being held in the school grounds. This is well received by both pupils and parents.

There is a strong focus in supporting the local and wider community through fund raising. Pupils help to plan and organise fund raising events to support charities such as Macmillan Nurses, Pilgrims Hospice and CAFOD. They have responded well to international appeals such as the Ebola crises. The school choir sings at the church and at various events including a Mass for the housebound and visiting local nursing homes.

There is a mission statement in place. However the time is now right to review and renew the Mission Statement so that it accurately reflects the values and aspirations of the school and is owned and known by all the school community.

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

Pupils come into school with average ability. They settle well into school and make very good progress in the Early Years and across the school. By the end of Key Stage 2 they reach standards in Religious Education at least in line with national standards.

Pupils enjoy their learning. They work collaboratively, are attentive, listen well and are confident enough to respond to questions accurately.

Pupils are extremely well behaved and are able to work for an extended period of time. They know how to make connections with previous learning and respond well to the high expectations of the teacher.

## **How well pupils respond to and participate in Collective Worship**

Pupils respond with interest, reverence and respect. There is a calm and purposeful atmosphere in the school.

A whole school assembly led by the Headteacher was observed. The theme of "Trust in Jesus" was related to everyday life. The pupils were interested, listened attentively and answered questions with enthusiasm. There was good interaction between Headteacher, staff and pupils which show the family spirit of the school. The singing was lovely and enhanced by the piano accompaniment. Prayers were said with reverence. They went in and out of the assembly in a quiet and disciplined manner.

The pupils know the traditional prayers of the Church. During the month of October there is a daily opportunity for all to say the Rosary.

The pupils have opportunities to write their own prayers, and many were on display in the front entrance on the theme of "Gifts of the Holy Spirit." One pupil had written, "Please pray for peace for all the world especially for the countries involved in war."

Each classroom had a colourful and relevant prayer corner. These would benefit from being in a more prominent position to be really appreciated, as there are so many other beautiful and interesting displays in each classroom.

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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**

The Headteacher, senior leadership team and governors work together as a team.

Governors are committed to the welfare and development of the school and they are now aware of the strengths and areas for development. The Governing Body has a wide spectrum of experience and skills among its members which enhances the governance of the school. Governors have sufficient information to challenge and support the Headteacher. They have a high profile in the school being regular visitors both formally and informally.

The Headteacher is in his second year of Headship and the school is growing under his leadership. He is very enthusiastic and is working to further raise standards. He has aspirations to improve and develop further in all aspects of school life. He is ably supported by the senior leadership team.

The Parish Priest comes into school for Masses, liturgies and Confessions during the year. This year a school Parish Mass has been planned and instigated for three times a year. The time is now ripe to further build on the relationship and to develop more interaction between school and parish

Relationship with parents are very good. They are very supportive of the school, take part in school events and work hard with the school in supporting the various Charities. One parent said, "We are very pleased with the education provided by the school. They do an excellent and thorough job of teaching the faith."

The First Holy Communion programme is well supported by the school. The Religious Education Co-ordinator works with the parish sisters to deliver the programme in the parish. The Holy Reunion group, provides pupils who left the school, an opportunity to stay in touch until they choose to be confirmed. This has helped to develop strong links in the wider community.

There are many beautiful displays in the classrooms and around the school, including a display on the Holy Spirit in the Main Entrance. To further visually highlight the Catholic ethos consideration should be given to more displays and artefacts of a Catholic nature in the main body of the school.

## **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 Religious Education Co-ordinator is very committed to her role and is well supported by the Headteacher. She is ambitious for the development of the subject and has built up a programme of planning and monitoring that is shared with the staff. She is very supportive of the staff, providing help with subject knowledge and planning. Her monitoring role includes book scrutiny and lesson observations. The outcomes are shared

with the staff and points for development are included in the Action Plan for Religious Education.

Assessment has been a priority and it is now very comprehensive. It is carried out six times a year and pupil progress for all groups is closely monitored

Both the Headteacher and the Co-ordinator attend Diocesan training and Deanery meetings.

The Co-ordinator meets with the link governor on a regular basis providing the governors with information on monitoring, assessment and pupil progress.

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

The quality of teaching is good with some outstanding features. It is a real strength of the school.

Where teaching is good or better several elements are in place. The lessons have a brisk and lively pace and teachers make good use of their own and pupils' personal experiences. Learning intentions are clear and shared with the pupils.

Teachers are enthusiastic. They have good questioning skills which enable the pupils to think for themselves.

Teachers have high expectations of the pupils. They ensure that the pupils have knowledge of the correct language and vocabulary of the Religious Education curriculum.

Pupils are engaged, focussed on their work and participate fully in their lessons.

There are a variety of interesting tasks which encourage proactive learning. In particular differentiated tasks are very well thought out and appropriate to the needs of each group. Some tasks are more detailed and give the pupils opportunities for research, while some tasks are more structured and allow the pupils to work independently.

Teaching Assistants enhance the learning experience of the pupils. They work as a team with the class teacher and are involved with the planning and assessment process. They have a good rapport with the pupils, supporting where necessary so that all pupils can access the curriculum.

Relationships in the classroom are excellent. The pupils are well behaved and focussed on their work.

Pupil's workbooks were well presented. There was a good quantity of work, of a good quality and marked regularly.

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

The curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference and 10% of the timetable is allocated to the teaching of Religious Education.

The school uses 'The Way, The Truth and The Life' and this scheme provides good support for the staff.

The curriculum is enriched through the use of role play, the use of technology and art.

There are good links with the Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE) curriculum. For example, in a Key Stage 2 class the concept of 'who is my neighbour' was discussed and related to everyday life.

There are a good variety of books and resources including those for the teaching of other Faiths. Religious Education resource boxes are being developed for each class. This will include artefacts, cloths and books for the prayer corners and to support the lessons.

### **The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school**

The school meets its statutory obligation for Collective Worship. There is a very well-planned and clear timetable for Masses, assemblies and liturgies in place. Masses are also said on one-off special occasions. For example, a 'Peace Mass' at the end of 'War and Peace Week' to pray for all those who have lost their lives in war and to pray for peace in the world.

Whole school assemblies on Monday are linked to the liturgical seasons and these are illustrated with stories, readings, music and prayers. Whole school assemblies during the week are linked to the Wednesday Word, which is also sent home to the parents. Key stage assemblies are usually led by the class teachers.

The quality of the Collective Worship can be seen in the enjoyment and participation of the pupils.

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