



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 137295

**More Park Catholic Primary School
Lucks Hill
West Malling, Kent
ME19 6HN**

**Inspection
date:**

January 25 2016

Chair of Governors:

Mr Neil Lewis

Headteacher:

Mr Niall Fox

Inspectors:

Mr Damian Fox

Mrs Rufina Ebenebe

EDUCATION COMMISSION

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SECTION 48

Introduction

Description of the school

More Park school is an Academy in the Maidstone Deanery of the Archdiocese of Southwark. The school is part of the Kent Catholic Schools' Partnership. The principal parish which the school serves is St Thomas More. 82% of pupils are members in the parish. The other parishes it serves are St Francis, Maidstone, and Holy Family, Maidstone South. 74% of pupils are baptised Catholics. 20% are from other Christian faiths. The remaining pupils have no faith affiliation. The average weekly proportion of curriculum time given to Religious Education is 10% in all Key Stages.

The school takes pupils from Reception to 11 years of age. There are 209 pupils on roll. The attainment of pupils on entering the school is broadly around average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below national average. The proportion of pupils who receive extra support in class is below national average. 84.5% of pupils are white British. 13.5% of pupils are mixed dual background, Black British and Asian British. The number of pupils on the special education needs register is 23. There are 24 pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium.

Date of previous inspection:

27th January 2011

Overall Grade:

2

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1 Outstanding
Grade 2 Good

Grade 3 Requires improvement
Grade 4 Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school in providing Catholic Education

GRADE
1

The provision of Catholic education at More Park School is outstanding. It is a warm, welcoming and spiritual school. Leaders, governors and managers are deeply committed to the Church's mission of education. Since his arrival in September the new Headteacher has had a positive impact. The progress made since the last inspection is the result of a collaborative from all staff as well as governors.

The links with the parish are one of the many strengths of the school. The Parish Priest has been serving the school community for 16 years. For him the parish and the school are "one and the same thing". He described the ethos of the school as "fantastic, both in a spiritual and human way".

Teachers have a strong sense of service, mission and vocation to the pupils. They set high expectations and deliver well planned challenges in lessons. The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. They are extremely well mannered, very proud of their school and are considerate of each other.

50% of families returned questionnaires. Both they and the pupils confirm and appreciate the high level of care teachers have for the pupils. The overwhelming view of parents is that "the school always feels right. It is where children look after each other." Non Catholic parents were enthusiastic in their praise of the school.

The school has addressed the issues raised at the last inspection, and the capacity to develop even further is outstanding.

What steps need to be taken to improve further?

Governors, Headteacher and staff should:

- Develop their understanding of their role in monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning in Religious Education.
- Ensure that the Section 48 Self Evaluation Form becomes a regular feature of the self-review process for the leadership of the school.
- Support the growth of the pupil liturgy group to ensure more pupils are learning and taking responsibility for collective worship.

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

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school is outstanding. They value and respect the Catholic tradition of the school and its very strong links with the parish community. Pupils have a deep sense of belonging to their school and parish family. The mission statement is central to the life of the school and is fully embraced by pupils in their daily school life. They understand the essence of the mission statement, "learn to love and love to learn." One pupil said that "you are here to find out how you live out the Gospel values."

The behaviour of the pupils in class and around the school is exemplary. Year 5 pupils are very proud of the way they act as buddies to new pupils in Reception. They are there throughout the year to help them. Year 6 pupils, as House leaders, organise events and activities, (such as fundraising) for other pupils. Pupils take responsibility for their actions and understand the value of restorative justice within the school. One pupil said that "justice, peace and love sum up what the school is about."

Pupils particularly appreciate the "listening ears" when they can write their concerns confidentially, teachers always promptly respond.

Pupils are alert to the needs of others in the local and wider community and are willing to raise money for organisations such as CAFOD and Shelter Box. They often choose to support charities which have helped school families such as Great Ormand Street. The Prayer Garden was opened, in response to pupils' suggestions, to offer a quiet, sheltered place for private prayer and group reflections. The school has a play therapy room with an experienced play therapist. This provides emotional support for children when they need it.

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education

Pupils achieve a high standard in Religious Education, it is in line with other core subjects which are significantly above national averages. By the end of Key Stage 2 most pupils secure high levels of attainment and progress.

Teachers have high expectations of their pupils. There is appropriate challenge and support for pupils in lessons. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils responded enthusiastically to the opportunity to explore the danger of indifference to the needs of others by using the story of Maximilian Kolbe and the Good Samaritan. More able pupils then cross referenced their understanding with further scripture passages. Their written work showed that rapid progress was made throughout that lesson. In the Year 4 lesson, an Inspector commented on the "buzz" among the pupils. They were very enthusiastic and keen to work together. Progress was excellent.

Pupils say they enjoy their lessons immensely because of the range of teaching strategies teachers use to engage and enthuse them. They particularly appreciate the variety of tasks that teachers provide. As a result, they concentrate well and behaviour for learning is outstanding. Work is differentiated and tasks are well matched to pupils' age and ability to ensure that all pupils can access learning. The quality of written work in the books consistently shows that pupils are proud of their learning and are making good progress overall.

How well pupils respond to and participate in Collective Worship

Acts of worship engage all pupils and inspire them to reflect and pray individually and as a school community. The whole school assembly was a beautiful and spiritual occasion. Pupils played meditative music and read clearly. Pupils' responses showed that they understood, not just the names of inspiring people, but also how they themselves could care for and help others. They all sang the final hymn beautifully. Movingly, every pupil and teacher signed it as they sang.

The Parish Priest confirmed that pupils are participating more this year. This reflects the commitment of leadership to create more opportunities for pupils to prepare and participate in Collective Worship.

The wonderful reverence of the pupils should encourage the school to allow spontaneous prayers. Pupils are at ease praying and will be inspired to contribute their own intentions and prayers during acts of Collective Worship.

Year 6 pupils are part of the Liturgy Group which was started by the Headteacher. They research prayers and readings according to the theme of assemblies and masses. The school agreed with inspectors that they should now consider putting together a collection of pupils' prayers into a school prayer book for future generations.

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

Leaders and managers are outstanding in their promotion and evaluation of the Catholic Life of the school. They are energised by their responsibility to give staff, pupils and parents a school that teaches the faith and provides opportunities to worship together.

Governors and the Headteacher value their mutual support and challenge as they work together to ensure More Park remains an outstanding faith community. The School Improvement Plan and minutes of meetings show rigorous monitoring and evaluation. Governors know the strengths of the school and the areas for development. Inspectors advised governors to establish the Religious Education Self Evaluation Form as part of the school's self-review process.

The Parish Priest is the Religious Education link Governor. He plays an active role in the life of the school. His support of children's services and sacramental celebrations ensures strong and effective links with the wider parish community.

The Headteacher's personal faith and his commitment to the pupils has a significant impact on them. They appreciate his presence in the school and the care he gives. He has put living the Gospel values at the heart of school life. In the recent staff inset, he led a day centred around Gospel values.

Parents also confirm and appreciate his impact on the school. They all know the meaning and importance of these values.

The school engages well with parents and carers to the benefit of all its pupils, who have a very good understanding of the school's mission and are very supportive of it. Parents particularly noted the influence of the school on the lives of their children and their understanding of the faith.

The Religious Education leader is an experienced and highly effective leader. He works closely with the Parish Priest in developing the prayer life of the school. Through the new liturgy group, Year 6 pupils are involved in preparing Collective Worship. This is appreciated by the pupils and is having a positive impact on the involvement of pupils in the Catholic Life of the school. There are detailed plans for a Religious Education club which would allow quiet prayer and reflection and a focus on the Marian months to complement the Church's liturgical celebrations.

On average, 50% of pupils go on to Catholic secondary schools. As part of its mission, the school has developed very strong links with the partner Catholic secondary school to ensure that parents understand the importance of staying within the Catholic family. The Parish Priest has a youth group to keep young people within the Catholic family.

How well leaders, governors and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan and implement for improvement to outcomes for pupils

Leaders, governors and managers are deeply committed to improving standards in Religious Education and are kept fully informed through their visits to the school and by receiving written and verbal reports from the Headteacher and Link Governor. They meet with the Religious Education Leader regularly to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning and to review steps to improve them further.

The governing body reviews the school's 'Religious Education' and 'Sex and Relationships' policies on an annual basis.

The Religious Education Leader's personal faith and experience ensure that the progress of each pupil is a priority for governors and teachers. There is a detailed process for monitoring and evaluation. The school uses Pupil Asset to provide information for each pupil. Formal assessment tasks are undertaken and collated and tracked by the subject leader and shared with the leadership team and governors. The information results in well targeted planning and action. The data is discussed at pupil progress meetings and helps staff plan appropriate challenge and support for every pupil. The school makes effective use of moderation with other Catholic schools to improve the accuracy of their assessment data.

The Religious Education Leader has the enthusiasm and vision to build on assessment and monitoring systems. Achievement and effort at More Park are always celebrated

Parents confirm that communication from the school is regular and meaningful.

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

The quality of teaching is never less than good and is often outstanding. In all lessons, pupils are given a clear direction for learning. Lessons are well planned to ensure the development of pupils' prior learning. Relationships between teachers and pupils are outstanding and the behaviour in lessons is exemplary. There is marked pupil enthusiasm and enjoyment in lessons.

Outstanding examples of teaching are characterised by the high level of challenge, excellent subject knowledge and differentiation. As a result, pupils are highly motivated and consistently on task. Year 6 pupils, particularly the more able, were asked to investigate the dangers of indifference to peoples' needs by using scripture and the story of Maximilian Kolbe. They worked confidently in pairs and independently. The sample of written work showed real progress in the lesson and over time.

Teaching Assistants were deployed very effectively in all lessons so that pupils with particular needs made progress. A Year 2 pupil, who needed individual support, proudly showed his learning to the inspector. The quality of learning for pupils with special educational or with specific needs is excellent as pupils are well supported with differentiated tasks and the effective use of classroom assistants.

Religious Education work is consistently marked to a high standard. Comments are affirmative and often give advice on how to improve. Pupils' responses show their understanding of the work and a willingness to improve their learning.

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

All classes receive the full allocation of 10% of curriculum time for Religious Education.

Teachers use The Way, the Truth and the Life programme successfully providing stimulating and well planned opportunities for engagement and learning. As a result, pupils are enthusiastic and highly motivated. There is a focus on using challenging questioning and vocabulary across all Key Stages.

The impact of the curriculum in its wider sense is excellent. Pupils know they are part of a caring, happy faith community. The curriculum is enriched by the many opportunities for charity work throughout the year, such as visiting a local residential home. The school regularly leads a Sunday parish Mass. Throughout the school the many displays reflect the deep commitment to its Catholic identity and pupils' learning. Prayer tables and prayers are prominent in all classrooms. Of special note was the Memorial Garden set up in response to the pupils' when

there was a family bereavement of one of the pupils. It is appreciated by the whole community and has become a focus to the prayer lives of staff, pupils and parents.

Pupils learn about other faiths through the curriculum. Their understanding is enhanced by the multi faith weeks which occur throughout the year.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is outstanding. Prayer and worship are a central part of the spiritual and caring ethos of the school. There are extensive and varied worship experiences for staff and pupils.

Assemblies are made more prayerful through the excellent use of music. The whole school signs hymns as they sing to show the meaning of the words through action.

There are class and house assemblies. The quality of all forms of collective worship is greatly enhanced by regular input from the Parish Priest. Pupils value Collective Worship as confirmed in discussions with inspectors. Parents and pupils are appreciative of the many prayers, assemblies and the presence of the Parish Priest for mass and reconciliation, because they offer highly effective spiritual experiences.

The liturgical calendar is followed in assemblies. The Sunday readings are the basis for the weekly whole school assembly. Music, action and pupil-led readings and prayers are used well to help the pupils understand how they might live by the message of Jesus.

The Easter Celebration is the highlight of the liturgical year. Parents and pupils recognised the significance of celebrating the events of Holy Week. Staff spoke very movingly of the stillness created by the music, drama, and faith response of the pupils.