



## 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 118863

Our Lady of Hartley Catholic Primary School  
Stack Lane  
Hartley, Kent  
DA3 8BL

Inspection date: 4 March 2014

Chair of Governors:	Mr Frank Stanley
Headteacher:	Ms Patrina Begley
Inspectors:	Mrs Angela O'Connor Mrs Jan Mann

### EDUCATION COMMISSION

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# SECTION 48

# Introduction

## Description of the school

Our Lady of Hartley Catholic Primary School is Voluntary Aided. It is in the Gravesend Deanery of the Archdiocese of Southwark. It is maintained by Kent Local Authority. The principal parish which the school serves is St Frances de Sales, Hartley. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholics is 71%. The average weekly proportion of curriculum time given to Religious Education is 10% in all Key Stages.

The school takes pupils from 4 to 11 years. The number of pupils currently on roll is 212. The attainment of pupils on entering the school is average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below average. Around 10% of the pupils receive extra support in class. Most pupils are of white British heritage. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and who speak English as an additional language is below that found nationally.

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## Key for inspection grades

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

# Overall effectiveness of the school in providing Catholic Education

GRADE  
1

Our Lady of Hartley is an outstanding example of a vibrant, successful school, which is committed to high academic achievement and the all-round development of the pupils. The school has many strengths. The leadership and management of the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team partnered with governors is outstanding and a key ingredient in the success of the school.

The highly committed and enthusiastic staff, both teaching and support staff have great pride in their school, and work hard to ensure that all the pupils enjoy school, and make progress and achieve well.

Excellent teaching and learning, high expectations of the pupils, independent learning and an attractive and stimulating environment further enhance the pupils' experiences in school.

The spiritual life in school is very strong and is at the heart of all that they do.

The pupils are lively, polite, friendly and respectful. They are extremely well behaved, very proud of their school and are very considerate of each other. They feel safe and well cared for. As one pupil said, "The teachers are like my parents. They love me and if they can sort out a problem they will or talk to our parents."

The parents are overwhelming in their support and appreciation of the school. One parent spoke for many as they said, "I feel privileged that my children attend Our Lady of Hartley school which promotes a strong Catholic ethos based on Gospel Values."

All the issues from the previous inspection have been addressed and any areas for development have been identified. The strong leadership and supportive staff team ensure that the school has an excellent capacity to continue to improve.

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

Governors, Headteacher and staff should:

- Develop more pupil participation in the preparation and leading of Catholic Worship.
- To embed and continue to develop the new curriculum, 'The Way, The Truth and The Life'

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

The school motto, 'Together in Faith, Love and Learning' is at the heart of the school. When the pupils were asked what is a Catholic school the reply was, "As it says in the motto we are all together in faith, love and learning". Pupils are very responsive to the needs of others as is shown in their quest to help. Their initiative and personal response to requests for help are exemplary. For example, they have raised a considerable sum of money for various charities including CAFOD. They are also involved with Mission Together which encourages children to support other children worldwide.

The Assembly observed on Shrove Tuesday and the start of Lent, encouraged all the children to make a Lenten promise and place in a special box. The pupils will be helped during Lent to keep their promise. During the assembly the pupils were very attentive, sang beautifully and with great joy, participated readily and were able to reflect and give relevant answers. They understood the meaning of Lent as a time for a time of Giving and preparation for Easter. As one pupil said, "When you give up something and do something extra it's like Jesus giving up his life for us".

The pupils are already writing bidding prayers for Mass and assembly and their own prayer books and the school is now planning to develop this further.

They have a good understanding of Reconciliation and are able to reflect and say "sorry". One pupil in a lower Key Stage 2 class said, "The bruise on the outside can heal, but the one on the inside can't heal unless you are forgiven".

Reception class pupils were able to explain through the use of glove puppets when and how you had to say sorry.

When the older pupils were asked how their faith had inspired them one answered, "When Jesus performed miracles it inspires us, like giving money to charity".

The many beautiful, artistic and varied displays and artefacts reflect the Catholicity of the school and show the pupils' work to the best advantage.

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

The standards pupils achieve in Religious Education are very high, in line with their Literacy results, and above national expectations.

The pupils come into school with average ability, but make excellent progress across the school to achieve above average results.

Pupils concentrate extremely well and show great enjoyment in their Religious Education lessons. One pupil in a Year 5 class said, "It's fun as you get to learn all the stories in the Bible."

They focus well and respond to the pace that is set, the challenging activities and the high expectations of the teachers. They answer high level questions with enthusiasm and willingness and want to succeed. They rise to the challenges set before them.

Behaviour is excellent in all lessons observed.

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

Pupils respond to Collective Worship with reverence and great interest.

In the assembly observed pupils were able to reflect and give answers that showed clear understanding. They led the assembly through drama, singing and prayers. They entered and exited quietly while music was playing.

Music and singing enhance the prayer life of the school.

Prayer be it silent, contemplative or formal, and reflections permeate lesson times. The reflections are used during lesson times to give the pupils an opportunity to deepen their thinking and make the meaning of the lesson relevant to them.

Every class has a prayer book with copies of formal prayers and children's own prayers.

They know the traditional prayers of the church.

Prayer Corners are prominent, well maintained and are a focus for personal prayer. In the Hall is a prayer corner which is dedicated to Our Lady of Hartley.

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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, previously the Deputy has been in post since last year. She has a clear vision for Catholic education and the way forward for the school. She is an inspirational leader who has high expectations for the whole school community.

Together with the newly formed Senior Leadership Team they are driving the school forward with enthusiasm and verve. They have ensured that the Catholic ethos is apparent in all aspects of school life. There is a real sense of belonging, community and family, which helps everyone to work together for the benefit of all.

The Governors, led by an experienced and proactive Chair, have a very good understanding of the strengths and areas of development for the school. They work as a team with the school leadership and provide a good balance of challenge and support. The Parish Priest is well known throughout the school and supports pupils and staff in their spiritual development.

The Chair, Parish Priest and Headteacher attend termly meetings of the deanery and share good practice to support and enhance the Catholic ethos of the school.

There are very good school and parish links. A strong PTA regularly supports parish events and vice versa such as the Christmas Fayre and parish fete which brings the whole community together.

The First Communion programme now is parish-based and well supported by the school staff. Parents are very supportive of the school and appreciate the ethos and the care for their children. The excellent response to the parent questionnaire showed how much they value and appreciate the school. One parent spoke for many as they said, "We appreciate all the support and the effort to welcome our children and to help all the families to settle into 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 newly appointed Religious Education Subject Leader is committed to and passionate about his role. Religious Education is given a high profile in the school and the Subject Leader is a member of the Senior Leadership Team. His monitoring role includes lesson observations, work scrutiny and planning. He evaluates assessments, and with the Headteacher is able to plan future developments.

The subject Leader has compiled a portfolio of levelled assessments, which were shared and confirmed at moderation meetings. These help the staff to develop their assessment techniques.

Tracking procedures are in place and developing well and are used to ensure good pupil progress across the school.

Governors are kept well informed of the progress and development of Religious Education through regular meetings and updates.

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

The quality of teaching is never less than good and is frequently outstanding. When teaching is outstanding, several elements are in place. There is a brisk and lively pace and a variety of interesting and challenging activities which are matched to pupils' ability. The teachers have excellent subject knowledge and use high level and probing questions which challenge the pupils to think. A cross curricular approach is used effectively to engage the pupils' interest. For example, in a Year 6 class on a lesson on Miracles the pupils had to work in groups to devise a shadow puppet show on one of Jesus' miracles to present to Year 3. They worked well together using skills learned in other curriculum areas to produce some excellent pieces of work.

Teaching Assistants are well deployed. They provide good support and have an excellent rapport with pupils. They were very clear about their role, supported well and intervened when necessary.

Interactive marking of pupils' work is exemplary throughout the school and pupils respond regularly to comments for improvement. Peer assessment is used to good effect and much appreciated by the pupils.

High quality resources, including technology enhance the pupils learning experiences. The way that the pupils work independently, reflect on their learning and collaborate is a key feature of the school. For example in a Year 4 lesson, 'hot seating' was used to good effect with pupils asking each other questions which helps them to be independent learners.

High expectations of the pupils, and the quality of the language used and expected ensures that their learning progresses at a good rate.

The learning environment is attractive and stimulating and there is much evidence of high quality pupils' work.

The behaviour of pupils on all lessons observed was excellent.

## **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. Since last September the school has adopted, 'The Way, The Truth and The Life.' This followed a period of consultation with the governors and training for the staff. The staff are evaluating the impact on the pupils' learning.

The 'Alive O' scheme is used to supplement and support the teaching of other faiths and evidence of this was seen around the school.

There are strong links with PSHE curriculum which provide good opportunities for personal, spiritual and moral development.

As well as cross-curricular links and use of technology the curriculum is further enriched by visitors to the school and visits out of school such as the local church and Gudwara.

The pupils and their families own experience enable them to make connections and relate to their own lives.

Future plans include the use of technology to research projects and for the pupils to communicate safely with other schools of different faith and culture.

The budget for Religious Education has ensured that there are sufficient artefacts, books and materials to support the curriculum.

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

Collective Worship is central to the life of the school and reflects the Catholic nature of the school. There are a variety of well-planned celebrations and liturgies which have a good attendance by parents, governors and parishioners.

Mass is regularly celebrated in school including the beginning and end of the school year and Holy Days of Obligation. There is a school parish Mass each month and Key Stage 1 and 2 attend a fortnightly Mass in the church.

Although the pupils take part in Masses, Liturgy and Assemblies, plans are in place to develop this further, so that the pupils have the opportunity to take part in devising and leading prayers, meditations and choosing hymns.

There is a Reconciliation service during Lent and the Rosary is said each morning in Lent which is open to staff, pupils and parents.

Assemblies, which are either whole school or separate Key Stage assemblies, are planned to link with the liturgical year or with a theme. Staff take it in turn to lead assemblies.

Each class leads a whole assembly at some point in the year, based on their Religious Education topic and well attended by the parents.

The prayer corners in each class are linked to the Religious Education topic and the liturgical seasons.

Opportunities for spiritual and moral development are excellent in Assembly and class prayer time. There are many opportunities for developing reflective prayer which allow the pupils to think about their own behaviour.

The quality of Collective Worship is manifest in the enjoyment and participation of the community.