



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 100180

St Margaret Clitherow Catholic Primary School
Cole Close
London SE28 8GB

Inspection date: 26th February 2016

Chair of Governors:
Headteacher:
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SECTION 48

Introduction

Description of the school

The school is voluntary aided. It is situated in the Greenwich Deanery of the Archdiocese of Southwark. It is maintained by Greenwich Local Authority. The principal parishes which the school serves are St Paul's, Thamesmead and St Benet's, Abbey Wood. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholics is 96%. 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 of age. The number of pupils currently on roll is 204 with another 37 children in the Nursery. The attainment of pupils on entering the school is below national average with a significant number of pupils entering school with speech and language difficulties. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is broadly average at 15%. Around 12% of the pupils receive extra support in class. There has been an increase in the number of children who speak English as an additional language from 22% in 2013 to 26% in 2015. In addition to English, there are 15 different languages spoken by the children or their families. The largest ethnic group represented within the school community are black African, most of whom are Nigerian (84%). The proportion of pupils from homes where English is an additional language is well above average.

Date of previous inspection:

16th March 2011

Overall Grade:

1

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

St Margaret Clitherow Catholic Primary School is an inspirational school providing an exemplary Catholic education for its pupils. Provision in relation to a majority of aspects of Religious Education is outstanding, and for this, the school is to be commended. Staff and Governors ensure the distinctive Catholic ethos is upheld and pupils see themselves very much as belonging to an overtly Catholic, Christian community. The school holds its Mission Statement truly at its heart;

"In our school we recognise that everyone is unique and has something to offer. Working in partnership with children, their parents, our parish and the wider community we seek to promote Christ's teaching as found in the Gospel, so that all may have life, life in all its fullness", and this is explicitly lived out. Very good use is made of a pupil version of this statement which is evident throughout the school.

The school's distinctive Catholic ethos is strongly evident in all aspects of its work, and guiding daily working practices. Pupils are extremely well cared for, well guided and supported in their learning, development and wider well-being. The school is fully inclusive and provides a warm and welcoming environment. Pastoral care is a strength.

All members of the school community feel they are valued; their uniqueness celebrated and their contribution to the life and work of the school appreciated. Pupils have a mature understanding of the Catholic life and mission of the school. They are keen to do well, are well motivated and work hard. They make excellent progress, developing secure knowledge, skills and understanding in matters related to Religious Education.

Pupils participate enthusiastically and with reverence in the prayer life of the school. Their behaviour is exemplary. They show a high level of respect and consideration for others and are appreciative of the level of care they receive. Pupils are rightly proud of their school. They feel valued and trusted. Parents are extremely supportive of the school and pleased with the quality of provision and education provided for their children. Parents speak of how their children "have blossomed" since being at school and describe the school as open and friendly with a strong sense of "family". This was summarised by one parent who spoke for many when writing, *"Teaching is exceptional in every way. My child is happy in school, feels loved, nurtured and cared for. She misses school in the holidays. I couldn't be happier with the choice I made when I enrolled my child at St Margaret Clitherow."*

The Headteacher is inspirational and dedicated to the school. With her Deputy they provide a highly effective team with strong and effective leadership in all respects. The Headteacher is well supported by her committed and skilled Religious Education Coordinator and as a senior leadership team they work symbiotically with a knowledgeable governing body. Matters related to the Catholic mission and core purpose of the school are given priority. All staff

contribute very effectively to the well-being of pupils enabling them to thrive. Teachers demonstrate considerable skills, dedication and commitment to providing high quality provision for Religious Education. The school is to be commended for maintaining and successfully building on its 'Outstanding' grading gained at its last inspection. The Headteacher and governors know the school well having identified its strengths and areas for improvement. As a result they are able to effectively steer its future development. The school retains a strong capacity to maintain and build on its successes.

What steps need to be taken to improve further?

Governors, Headteacher and staff should:

- Further extend the learning of more able pupils through more challenging and extended written tasks incorporating opportunities for pupil initiated learning and opportunities for independent research. This could in turn provide a vehicle for pupils to undertake more extended reading in this subject area.
- Provide more detail on the school's website regarding the school's Religious Education curriculum through celebration of the many activities and examples of good practice that take place.

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

The extent to which the pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school is outstanding. The school exudes a strong sense of spiritual purpose. There is a focus on teamwork, achieving high standards and creating a nurturing welcoming environment where Gospel values permeate every aspect of school life. Pupils know and understand the school's mission statement and the part they play within the mission of the school.

Pupils have a strong sense of belonging to the school community and value and respect others. Each pupil is seen as being unique and emphasis is placed on ensuring they achieve the best they possibly can. St. Margaret Clitherow is a place where worship, faith, education, and practice are central to school life. Pupils are encouraged to take on roles of responsibility in the school and wider community. There is an active School Council which meets regularly and impacts positively on the life of the school. For example, the pupils spoke with enthusiasm about the School Council's input into charity fundraising, giving them a voice and developing the playground area. This group would welcome and are ready for a more formal and regularised structure that could include management of a small budget.

Pupils are actively involved in developing the Catholic character of the school by the way they confidently lead and participate in Collective Worship, school assemblies and community events with great enthusiasm and a strong sense of togetherness. These opportunities increase the pupils' confidence and self-esteem. Behaviour of pupils is exemplary and notable for being extensively pupil driven. Pupils enjoy school, have positive attitudes to learning and a good sense of right and wrong.

Pupils show respect for each other's views and take increasing responsibility for themselves and their actions. Education for pastoral care and personal relationships has fostered positive attitudes in pupils. This is a strength of the school. Pupils praise and acknowledge the contribution of others. They show a readiness to embrace and celebrate their lived experiences. Pupils are encouraged to meet their potential in all aspects of school life and readily embrace and appreciate the many opportunities offered to them through the school's many enrichment activities.

Pupils are given a number of opportunities to assume responsibilities around the school. For example, Year 6 children enjoy acting as monitors, delivering registers and setting up and clearing the dining room. Representatives from each class act as playground friends while older children support younger classes at wet play. Younger children are also given jobs around the classroom, which they take on with enthusiasm and perform well. The School Council meets regularly and organises special activities and events. Pupils have a say as to how the money raised is spent and Year 6 organise a charity event each year with money going to CAFOD. Through these activities pupils gain an

understanding of their responsibilities towards people less fortunate than themselves. Money is raised for a variety of local and global charities.

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education

Pupils are both positive and passionate about Religious Education. They enjoy it immensely and many view it as their favourite lesson. They particularly appreciate the range of teaching strategies used by teachers to engage and enthuse them. As a result, pupils concentrate well and behaviour for learning is outstanding.

St Margaret Clitherow School is very inclusive. The school's cultural diversity is celebrated through curriculum projects on the countries represented by the school's community, displays, assemblies and special events throughout the year. This includes, Black History Month, an International Evening, special foci in Religious Education, which for example includes learning about Other Faiths, inviting story tellers into the school and performing art groups from different cultures.

Teachers have high expectations of their pupils. They know them well and have an accurate understanding of their starting points. There are no perceivable differences between different groups of pupils. The school provides exceptional progress in relation to pupils starting points in religious and oral literacy which was exciting to witness. The assessment data shows that the percentage of pupils achieving the higher levels of attainment exceeds expectations reflecting the marked progress the majority of pupils make from their starting points on entry to the school. Evidence in pupils' books reflect extensive subject coverage and progress over time. Trends over time show high levels of attainment in Religious Education and broadly mirrors pupils' attainment in English. There is evidence of work being differentiated albeit largely by outcome. Tasks are generally matched to pupils' ability. Religious Education is at the heart of the school curriculum. It is taught both discretely and in a cross-curricular way.

Pupils acquire knowledge quickly and in depth, linking their learning in Religious Education to other subjects. They are able to interpret sources and symbols, to understand nuance and subtlety enabling them to reflect on their learning. The vast majority of pupils engage with religious ideas and integrate them into their daily lives.

The school now needs to ensure all pupils are given more regular extended work opportunities and that challenge is embedded into practice.

A parent commented, "As a parent I am very proud of the knowledge my child has about religious education. My child knows the meaning of being a good person, respectful and forgiving and aspires to be all, as a result of the school's input. This is a 5 Star school."

How well pupils respond to and participate in Collective Worship

St Margaret Clitherow is a very prayerful and spiritual school where worship is a regular and meaningful part of the day. Pupils' response to and participation in Collective Worship is outstanding. All pupils are inspired by, and enthusiastic, in their response to Collective Worship. This is evident in their keen participation in liturgies, particularly their gathering, joyful singing and prayerful reflection. They listen intently, show respect and offer heartfelt responses. Acts of Collective Worship engage the interest of all pupils and inspire them to reflect deeply.

Pupils' knowledge of prayer and liturgy is exceptionally well developed. They are very familiar with a variety of prayer styles and are increasingly more confident in preparing and leading worship from their earliest years.

From the earliest ages pupils recognise the special nature of liturgical symbols and show respect. They are aware that religious beliefs are important, demonstrating respect for their own faith and the faith of others.

Adults provide excellent role models for pupils in their response and participation in liturgy and this is evident when pupils lead their own liturgies.

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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

Leaders, governors and managers are outstanding in promoting monitoring and evaluating the provision for the Catholic life of the school and in the way they plan and implement improvement. This is reflected in the school's own Mission Statement, which is lived out by all concerned and is regularly reviewed. Leaders, governors and managers use monitoring data to evaluate the school's performance and to celebrate, and plan future improvements. Governor involvement also includes visits to the school.

Excellent opportunities are provided for the staff and pupils to play an active part in the Catholic life and Mission of the school. They live out the values of the Gospel in the everyday life of the school, especially in the way they treat each other. The school's self-evaluation document provides evidence of the school's monitoring, self-challenge and development. It provides a basis to celebrate the school's strengths and outline areas for development and benefits from being a working document. The school ensures that all staff receive in-service training to enable them to further understand the Church's mission in education and play their unique part in it.

The quality of Collective Worship is a priority for the school. It is effectively monitored and evaluated by leaders, governors and managers. An up to date and very good policy is in place. Leadership at all levels respects difference, values diversity and ensures equal opportunities for all.

Parents are consulted regularly and involved in a variety of ways in the life of the school, especially by their attendance at assemblies and Masses. Governors are outstanding in fulfilling their responsibilities having effectively helped to shape the direction of the school, drawing on their own strengths and areas of expertise.

Since the last inspection, policies relating to the Catholic life of the school have been reviewed by staff and governors. The implementation of *SEAL* and more recently the introduction of the *TEN TEN* resources have supported children's understanding of themselves and their relationships with others. Planned workshops on how the school teaches Religious Education and other subjects have provided a forum for discussion, as well as developing understanding. Parents confirmed that they are very happy with the school and that the workshops provided have been both informative and valuable to them in supporting both their children's religious and academic development.

The Headteacher is held in very high regard by the school community. She leads by example and has created an environment where all teachers are

leaders, modelling exemplary behaviour, which is imbibed by pupils throughout the school. The leadership style is marked by sincerity and modesty.

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 successfully monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and are strategic in planning and implementing improvement to outcomes for pupils. Monitoring data is used effectively to evaluate the school's performance and plan for future improvements. There is a robust cycle of monitoring and evaluation. Teaching and learning is monitored regularly and appropriate feedback and support given as necessary. Good practice is shared and celebrated. Continuing professional development opportunities are provided for all.

Assessment information is collated and tracked by the subject leader and shared with the leadership team, governors and parents. The subject coordinator is a member of the leadership team and is outstanding in guiding Religious Education. She shows great enthusiasm and commitment and introduces new initiatives when appropriate. Outstanding documentation guides and directs all staff in the delivery of the subject and this is regularly updated. The self-evaluation document reflects a clarity of thought and an understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. The coordinator attends Diocesan coordinators meetings, cluster group meetings, the annual Religious Education Conference and was a member of the Diocesan Assessment Working Party. All staff show a commitment to improve their teaching in Religious Education so that it has a positive impact on children's learning. Achievement and effort are regularly recognised and celebrated. Pupils' work is celebrated through thoughtful and thought provoking displays and every effort is made to help them appreciate and respond in a way which develops their sense of awe and wonder.

The Parish Priest is a regular visitor to the school. He provides a valued and respected chaplaincy role to the whole school community. His generosity of care and support contributes greatly to the wellbeing of all and the success of the school. He attends class prayer services, celebrates Mass in school and accompanies Year 6 to Aylesford Priory. He meets regularly with the Headteacher to plan and discuss opportunities for sacramental preparation. Liturgies and Masses also take place at St Paul's church and are attended and well supported by parents and the parish community.

Ecumenical links within the Parish school community have been recently further developed through a shared Harvest Liturgy and Shrove Tuesday service with the neighbouring Church of England school. Further plans are in place to share a picnic to celebrate a Religious Education week.

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

The quality of teaching and learning in Religious Education is of a very high standard. Excellent use is made of the '*Come and See*' scheme which teachers use as a resource whilst recognising the need to supplement it as appropriate.

On the day of inspection, all lessons observed were good or better with much evidence of outstanding practice. Teachers display good subject knowledge and deploy a range of teaching styles to motivate and inspire pupils. Very effective use is made of praise, positive feedback and valuing children's best efforts. This creates a very positive, secure learning environment. Around the school and in classrooms displays are bright and appealing. Appropriate artefacts are used and reflect Religious Education themes and show prior learning. In lessons observed, effective planning and teaching strategies ensured pupils were engaged. Teaching encourages pupils' enjoyment of and enthusiasm for Religious Education. Teachers have excellent relationships with all pupils. Across the school teachers share experiences and link Religious Education to their own lives, inviting pupils to do the same. Religious Education is given great importance at St. Margaret Clitherow;

Lessons contribute to raising children's self-esteem through providing opportunities for discussion, reflection, art and drama. Wherever it is appropriate to do so links are made to other areas of the curriculum so that pupils see their Religious Education as an integral part of their life. Careful planning, challenging questions, guided discussion and quality resources encouraged pupils' enthusiastic responses.

Plans and evidence in pupils' workbooks show some opportunities for a variety of collaborative work. There is evidence of differentiated tasks and that the Religious Education work consolidates, builds knowledge and understanding. Differentiation should continue to be developed to secure consistent challenge for all pupils and specifically for abler pupils. In the Foundation Stage, themes are reinforced through appropriate and well planned continuous provision. Good quality resources are used within lessons and teachers use Information Communication Technology (ICT) to maximise learning, particularly through the use of interactive whiteboards.

Teaching Assistants provide excellent care and support to pupils. They are deployed effectively and show sensitivity to pupils' needs. Pupils are given opportunities to discuss their work and assessment for learning was used in some lessons observed. This good practice should be more widely shared across the school.

Pupils are informed of their progress and how to improve both orally and at times through marking. Marking shows positive and encouraging comments and should continue to improve by providing challenge to pupils in their next steps.

By developing and sharing good practice of assessment for learning in lessons and through marking, teachers will enable pupils to consistently evaluate their own work. The school has good assessment strategies which provide detailed information on the achievement of all the pupils.

A Foundation Stage lesson on the topic of growing was very well planned and paced. Classroom management was of a high order with the teacher regularly reinforcing high expectations of behaviour to which the pupils rose. The teacher made good use of a range of teaching strategies to retain pupil focus for a lively group of pupils. Good use was made of music, prayer, talk partners and pupil interaction. The lesson was marked by strong cross curricular links with science, literacy and numeracy and saw excellent development of vocabulary.

An upper Key Stage 2 lesson on the topic of Lent was well prepared with good opportunities for reflection. A secure environment was created that enabled pupils to respond confidently and demonstrate their own faith. A very good plenary saw the teacher model our journey through Lent including the use of a video clip reflecting the theme of journey.

A Key Stage 1 lesson on the topic of "giving" provided challenge to pupils to consider their feelings through the teacher's excellent use of a puppet to stimulate discussion. The lesson was well linked to the feelings Jesus experienced in his life and the impact people's actions have on others. The teacher's classroom management was exceptional and the range of teaching strategies employed secured progress and saw new learning being built on previous knowledge throughout the lesson.

A Key Stage 1 lesson on Lent saw the teacher use very skilled questioning with nuance eliciting very clear focussed responses from pupils. They were enabled to develop both short and extended responses and this practice was clearly typical and pupils were engaged and motivated.

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

The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum promotes pupils' learning is outstanding in meeting pupils' needs. Of the total curriculum time 10% is allocated to Religious Education in all Key Stages. This fulfils the requirements of the Bishops of England and Wales. Imaginative and well planned strategies are deployed to enrich pupils' learning. The school implements new curriculum developments as appropriate. The Religious Education curriculum provides outstanding opportunities for pupils' spiritual and moral development and vocation.

The curriculum is customised to meet the needs of groups and individuals. Older pupils have opportunities to explore the beliefs and values of Other Faiths and religions particularly Judaism and Islam and this should be extended down the

school. This helps to promote tolerance and respect for those who have different beliefs.

People are invited into school to share their faith with the children and visits to other places of worship have been organised.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school

The quality of provision for Collective Worship is outstanding. St Margaret Clitherow is a very inclusive community, uniting all its members in prayer and worship and offering a wealth of opportunities to develop spiritually. Collective worship is central to the life of the school and a key part of daily life. Every day begins with prayer and there are regular assemblies and Masses. All Religious Education lessons begin with the lighting of a candle and praying.

The pupils enjoy the opportunities provided for prayer and worship. They are keen to contribute, and have a positive attitude to personal and collective prayer. Pupils said that there are many opportunities to pray as a school and a class and that often their own prayers and intentions were used. Pupils know that prayer is at the heart of their relationship with God. They are familiar with the traditional prayers of the Church and at ease with spontaneous prayer and writing their own prayers. Beautiful prayer focus areas are a feature of every classroom and offer opportunities for reflection.

The way pupils respond and engage reflects how the quality of worship inspires them and offers them a calm and prayerful atmosphere in which to be with God. The quality of Collective Worship is greatly enhanced by the personal faith of the Headteacher members of staff and regular input from the Priest. The liturgical calendar is used effectively to involve pupils in themed assemblies which use the Sunday readings to help the pupils understand how they might live by the message of Jesus.

The school assembly that inspectors saw was both a joyous and reverent occasion. It was an example of outstanding practice and an exceptionally beautiful example of Collective Worship celebrated by Year 2 pupils. The theme of 'forgiveness' incorporated good use of scripture, prayer and opportunities for reflection and was greatly enhanced by singing that included a wonderful descant. Pupils spoke well, with confidence, without prompts. The theme was deconstructed and explained by pupils providing a real depth of understanding. Bookmarks were provided to those present containing prayers on the assembly theme. It was notable how well the pupils led this liturgy, gaining engagement of all pupils, staff and parents present. The assembly was enhanced by the use of singing, opportunities for reflection and a very prayerful atmosphere.

A variety of liturgical celebrations and prayer opportunities enables parents and the parish community to join pupils in worship and prayer. This is welcomed and appreciated by all parties.