



## 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 100752

Bonus Pastor Catholic College  
Winlaton Road  
Bromley  
BR1 5PZ

Inspection date: 29 -30 April 2013

Chair of Governors:	Mrs Pat Barber
Headteacher:	Mrs Ruth Holden
Inspectors:	Mr Tom Cahill Dr Janet Croggon

### EDUCATION COMMISSION

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# SECTION 48

# Introduction

## Description of the school

Bonus Pastor Catholic College is a voluntary aided, mixed 11-16 comprehensive secondary school, located in the parish of Downham. It is maintained by Lewisham LA. The number of students on roll is 762. The published admission number for the school is 155 students and the school is oversubscribed. Approximately 90% of the students on roll are baptised Catholics.

The percentage of boys on roll is approximately 60% and girls 40%. The school has a fully comprehensive intake and the attainment of students on entry to the school is in line with the national average, but above the local authority average.

The percentage of students with statements, or at school action plus, is around 4%, which is below the national average and well below the local authority average.

The percentage of students entitled to free school meals is approximately 20%. This is above the national average, but well below the local authority average.

The percentage of students where English is not their first language is 18.5%. This is above the national average, but well below the local authority average.

## Key for inspection grades

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

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# Overall effectiveness as a Catholic school

GRADE

1

Bonus Pastor Catholic College is an outstanding Catholic school. It provides a very caring, nurturing and harmonious environment for its students, where Gospel values are lived out on a daily basis. The Headteacher and governors have created a highly inclusive community, where every student really does matter. Outstanding support is provided to all students, including those who need a fresh start, those who come from challenging homes, as well as those students who are bereaved, reflecting the highly inclusive ethos of the school.

Students enjoy coming to school, as evidenced by exemplary attendance figures and talk openly about the respectful, supportive and friendly atmosphere that pervades the school. Students feel safe in the school and know they can talk to staff when they are in need of support. Bullying is rare and students know that any bullying that does take place is dealt with effectively by staff at the school.

Parents are also very supportive of the school and a number of parents met with inspectors. Only a small number of questionnaires were returned by parents; however, the responses of the parents were very positive about the school and they felt the school helped to develop in students a clear sense of right and wrong. One parent was very worried about her son who was feeling dejected and said that "the staff really kept a watchful eye on him without him knowing". The parent went on to say "I will always be grateful for the school's support at a very difficult time".

Parents are kept very well informed by the weekly publication of the school newsletter, 'Pastorale', which is emailed to all parents.

The mission statement is summarised through the words 'Through faith to success'. The mission statement is displayed clearly in the school entrance and features in high quality art work, which is displayed around the school. This includes some outstanding mosaics produced by the students and staff in the Art Department. Religious artefacts are found throughout the new buildings which, together with the new chapel and prayer life of the school, make it a distinctively Catholic school.

Leaders know the school well and clearly know the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They have clear action plans to tackle the few weaknesses that exist and have outstanding capacity to improve the school further.

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

Governors, headteacher and staff should:

- Review the time allocated to Key Stage 3 students to ensure it meets the 10% requirement of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.
- Dedicate a section within the school development plan to Religious Education and the Catholic life of the school, to help governors monitor progress towards targets.
- Share good practice amongst the teaching staff of the Religious Education Department to increase the amount of outstanding teaching experienced by students.
- Introduce a weekly voluntary Mass in the new chapel to further enhance prayer life and worship in the school.

# The Catholic life of the school

GRADE 1

## Leadership and management

The leadership and management of the school are outstanding. School leaders have successfully addressed most of the key issues for improvement identified in the previous Section 48 report. This includes increasing the time allocated to the school Chaplain, which is now a full time post. The provision of a chapel is already making a significant contribution to the Catholic ethos of the school, as is the associated accommodation for the Chaplain, who now has time to support students in need more effectively.

The Headteacher provides outstanding leadership and is passionate that every student should achieve their potential within a highly effective Catholic ethos. She has ensured the Catholicity of the school remains central to its work and, together with the governors, has provided a beautiful chapel, which is at the heart of the school.

The school is fortunate to have an experienced and supportive governing body. The chairperson is highly experienced and knowledgeable and gives very generously of her time. The governing body is kept well informed about the Catholicity and spirituality of the school by an annual report provided by the Head of Spirituality, who is also a member of the teaching staff of the Religious Education Department. Governors are actively involved in the life of the school, attending school Masses and services and other functions. The local parish priest plays an important part in the life of the school and is the link governor for the Religious Education Department.

Governors would benefit from having a separate section in the school improvement plan dedicated to Religious Education and the Catholic life of the school. This would help to ensure they are fully informed of developments in Religious Education and have clearly identified targets against which they can monitor progress.

The Top Table reward system has been put in place to reward students who not only do well academically, but for other students who are highlighted for their excellent behaviour, their kindness and support to other students. Older students and staff from the Religious Education Department serve at the Top Table (which takes place on a Friday). Visitors and staff are also invited to join the Top Table and students made clear how much they were motivated by this reward scheme and how much it was appreciated by the students.

A school mission has been booked with the Sion Community, which will take place in the autumn term.

## Quality of provision for personal and collective worship

GRADE 1

The quality of provision for personal and collective worship is outstanding. Inspectors feel that the chapel should enable a weekly Mass to be celebrated in the school, which would enhance the experience of both students and staff. Weekly Mass did take place before the school started its significant building project. Now this is completed, it would be an ideal time to reinstate this aspect of worship.

Students appreciate the high quality assemblies and respond very positively to these acts of collective worship, always displaying very respectful behaviour. Good use is made of audio visual aids and the students respond positively to prayers and readings.

Students would benefit from more opportunities for quiet reflection during assemblies, which would help deepen their faith and understanding.

Tutors are provided with a resource booklet each term, to help provide good quality and

meaningful collective worship at the start of each day. The booklet highlights assembly themes each week, as well as the liturgical calendar and reflections.

Local priests give generously of their time and each Year Group has a local priest assigned as its Chaplain. Form Masses take place on a weekly basis, as well as Feast Day Masses.

All Year Groups have the opportunity to attend a retreat and Mass normally takes place at some point during these retreats. Younger students spoke warmly of their enjoyable retreat to Aylesford, whilst older students thoroughly enjoyed their retreat to the Diocesan retreat centre at Whitstable in Kent.

The school is also developing a memorial garden adjacent to the new school chapel, particularly aimed at students who have recently experienced a bereavement. A remembrance book is also placed in the school chapel, in which students are encouraged to write the names of family and friends who have died.

A full time Chaplain was appointed in the spring Term and he is continuing to build on the very good practice of the previous Chaplain.

### **Community cohesion**

Community cohesion promoted by the school is outstandingly effective. The school works closely with its feeder parishes, as well as the Local Authority. It has maintained very positive links with its immediate neighbours, despite the major building works that have taken place over the past 3 years.

The introduction and continued development of the House system has played a very important role and resulted in a very cohesive staff and student body. Students have a different school tie and school diary, according to their House. The diary includes a life story of the Saint after whom the House is named, as well as prayers. A notable feature of the House system is that the Heads of Houses are often members of the support staff.

Students have the opportunity to study other world faiths and the school organises visits to the Catford Synagogue.

Fund raising is a real strength of the school and students raise considerable amounts of money for those in need. Recent fund raising activities include: The Lee Oasis, a local charity that provides support for the homeless, St Christopher's Hospice, the NSPCC and CAFOD. The school also has links to VIMBA, which supports health and education projects in Zimbabwe. These activities support the ideals expressed through the school motto 'Help not hinder'.

The school has also introduced Bonus Pastor Ambassadors. These are Year 11 students who go into 3 local schools to mentor students in Years 4-6, encouraging service to others.

The school also organises a number of annual trips to destinations such as Rome and students and staff had recently returned from a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Prior to the visit, students were given the opportunity to study Hebrew and Arabic. The school is also hoping to organise trips to Turkey and China in the near future, which will be coordinated by the Religious Education Department.

GRADE 1

# Religious Education

GRADE 1

## Achievement and standards in Religious Education

Students at the school achieve very good results and standards are high. GCSE results achieved by students in Religious Education are amongst the strongest of all departments, including the percentage of students gaining A\*/A Grades. The department provides modular courses at GCSE, as well as early entry for GCSE in Year 10. Results at GCSE showed a slight dip in 2012, but this reflected the ability of the cohort and students achieved their target grades in Religious Education. In previous years, exam results for this department have been even higher and tracking data shows that results should return to these high levels in 2013. The school enters the whole cohort for GCSE Religious Education, which makes these results outstanding. Able students perform very well, as do less able students. The department has very high expectations of all students and goes out of its way to provide extra support and revision, including Saturday morning school.

The school has an early entry option for Religious Education at the end of Year 10. Those who pass at the higher grades are able to commence their AS studies.

## Teaching and learning in Religious Education

GRADE 2

The inspectors agree with the school's own self-evaluation that teaching and learning is good with outstanding features. The department has successfully addressed a key issue in the previous Section 48 report in regards to introducing more and different approaches to teaching, which better meets the needs of the students. As a result, students are, on the whole, engaged in their learning and respond positively to taking a more active role in their learning. Sometimes, teachers miss the opportunity for deeper learning by following up student responses to questions.

Teachers in the Religious Education Department are enthusiastic, committed and have excellent subject knowledge. They develop very positive relationships with their students. They benefit from whole school in-service training, which focuses on the quality of teaching, as well as the quality of learning that takes place in classrooms. They are all striving to be outstanding teachers and have the capacity to achieve this target.

Teachers in the Religious Education Department track the progress of students carefully and put in place intervention strategies where students fall behind the progress expected of them. Students are assessed each half term and levels achieved are recorded in their exercise books. The assessment also highlights areas that students should focus on to enable them to reach their target grades. Students have very positive attitudes to learning and clearly enjoy their Religious Education lessons and respond very positively to their teachers.

## The Religious Education curriculum

GRADE 2

The Religious Education curriculum is good overall, but does not meet the Diocesan guidelines at Key Stage 3. This was an issue at the last inspection. The school has plans to increase the time allocated to the teaching of Religious Education at Key Stage 3 from the current 6.6% to 10% for the higher ability groups. The school does offer a range of other religious experiences, such as retreats and other timetabled activities, which may help to reduce the impact of this shortfall in curriculum time for Religious Education and a detailed audit would help clarify how much these activities contribute towards the Religious Education curriculum. At Key Stage 3, the programme of study is based on The Way, the Truth and the Life.

The school does meet the requirements of the Diocesan guidelines at Key Stage 4, with 10% of curriculum time allocated for Religious Education. At Key Stage 4, the department

follows the Edexcel GCSE course in Catholic Christianity.

### **Leadership and management of Religious Education**

**GRADE 1**

The Leadership and management of the Religious Education Department is outstanding overall. Until the start of this academic year, the department was split across 2 sites. Since September 2012, the Religious Education Department has been based in new and very well-resourced accommodation on one site. This should allow for the more effective sharing of outstanding practice and moving the majority of teaching from good to outstanding. It will also allow for a more consistent approach to marking and assessment and ensure that all students benefit from advice on how to improve their learning and, consequently, their achievement. Self-evaluation carried out by the department needs to be much more evidence based to ensure judgements made are secure and reflect all aspects of the work of the department.

The Head of Department works closely with the Deputy Headteacher to ensure all students make expected progress. A detailed analysis of results and progress are provided by the Head of Department to the Deputy Headteacher. Actions are agreed, where necessary, to ensure all students meet their expected outcomes, although many exceed their predicted grades as a result of good teaching and high expectations.

Over the last 3 years, during the building programme, the Religious Education Department was based in unsatisfactory accommodation and teachers were split across both sites. The Head of Department, despite difficult circumstances, maintained the morale of staff and ensured excellent results were maintained.

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