



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 100852

St Anthony's Catholic Primary School
Etherow Street
Dulwich
London SE22 0LA

Inspection date: 13th June 2017

Chair of Governors:
Headteacher:
Inspectors:

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SECTION 48

Introduction

Description of the school

St Anthony's is a voluntary-aided Catholic primary school situated in the Camberwell Deanery of the Archdiocese of Southwark. The principle parish which the school serves is St Thomas More, Dulwich, with a smaller number of pupils attending a number of other local parishes in the area. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholics is 100%, which has remained constant over many years. The average weekly proportion of curriculum time given to Religious Education is 10% in all key stages.

St Anthony's is a two form entry school for pupils ages 3 – 11, with 446 pupils currently on roll. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is 10% and is below the national average. The percentage of pupils who have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and/or Educational Health Care (EHC) plans/statement is also below the national average. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic groups is 63% and, as a result, the number of pupils for whom English is an Additional Language (EAL) is above the national average.

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 2

St Anthony's continues to be a good Catholic school, with a number of outstanding aspects, providing its pupils with opportunities to develop their spirituality alongside religious knowledge and understanding. It is a school which is identified as integral to the local Catholic community, with many parents identifying the partnership between school, parish and home as a real strength. The warm atmosphere and the quality of relationships between all members of the community are a particular strength of this school.

In recent years, the school has undergone a full refurbishment which offers pupils a welcoming, safe and stimulating learning environment. The Headteacher and other leaders successfully promote the Catholic life of the school and its place in the local community. They ensure that the school's mission as a Catholic school is reflected in all aspects of school life. A strength of the school is the stability of experienced staff, who are seen as caring and accessible, as well as being good role models for the pupils in their care, thereby fully living out the school's Mission Statement, "We see Christ in everyone."

The school's self-evaluation of its Catholic life and Religious Education is detailed and supports its improvement planning processes. Governors are very active in supporting the school through a full range of activities. They know the school well and have a growing level of skill in driving school improvement.

Standards in Religious Education are good. All groups of pupils make progress and achieve at least as well as in other core subjects. Pupils enjoy Religious Education and appreciate its importance in their own lives. Pupils achieve well. The school follows the 'Come and See' programme which provides the themes for many of the its acts of Collective Worship. Prayer and worship are significant in the Catholic life of the school and pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good. Pupils have a developing understanding of the Church's mission at home and abroad through their significant support for a number of charities.

The inspectors received a significant number of responses from parents to the pre-inspection questionnaire. The overwhelming majority of responses to the various questions were positive with the majority agreeing or agreeing strongly with the various statements about what the school offers and how it helps pupils to progress. One parent wrote: "St Anthony's is a fantastic school with a wonderful, cohesive Catholic ethos and we are very happy with it." Another identified the contribution the school had made to transition to secondary education, stating, "My older children are confident in their faith and are able to contribute to discussions around community and morality... it is the result of St Anthony's values, daily acts of worship and discussions about responsibility and spirituality."

The school has largely addressed the three areas for development identified in the last inspection (June 2012).

What steps need to be taken to improve further?

Governors, Headteacher and staff should:

- Establish more formal structures for governors to monitor and celebrate the Catholic life of the school.

- Review the Religious Education curriculum structure in order to promote the study of other faiths, including active learning and opportunities for displays around the school.
- Further develop the newly established programme of collaboration with other local Catholic schools on all aspects of school and subject development

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

Pupils respond very well to the encouragement of staff to take ownership of key aspects of the religious life of the school and as a result feel valued and have a strong sense of belonging. In particular, the newly established Chaplaincy Team are enthusiastic about their role in leading liturgies, particularly for Early Years' pupils. They make good progress as a result of the teaching they receive and the expectations placed on them by their teachers. Pupils are confident about their faith and through active participation in lessons, liturgies and various acts of worship are capable of expressing their views in an assured manner. The Headteacher, senior leaders and teachers are excellent role models for the pupils.

During meetings with the pupils from the School Council and Chaplaincy Team, the pupils demonstrated how proud they are of their school. They felt very safe and well cared for by their teachers and other adults and were encouraged to take care of one another. Pupils value and respect the Catholic tradition of the school and their mission to help others less fortunate than themselves, generously supporting a wide range of charities, local, national and global. Of particular significance was that pupils were not only able to list the names of charities they had supported but were able to articulate in detail why they had done so and the impact of their work on those less fortunate than themselves. CAFOD and a Children's Home in Zambia are two of the charities. In addition, pupils are aware of the need to support those in need locally through their support for the local Food Hub and the homeless charity 'The Passage.'

Parents identified that their children enjoy school and that they feel that the school is an important part of the local Catholic community. Information for parents about the school's Catholic life is shared through newsletters, the school website, The Wednesday Word and links with the local parish church. Parents identified that the Parent Association, (FOSTA), was valued by the school, not only raising invaluable funds and resources, but also ensuring that a strong partnership between families and the school.

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education

Religious Education is at the heart of the school curriculum. Pupils acquire knowledge quickly and in depth, linking their learning in Religious Education to other subjects.

Pupils spoke highly about their enjoyment and interest in Religious Education lessons. They particularly appreciated the range of teaching strategies used by teachers to engage and enthuse them. As a result, pupils' concentrate well and their behaviour observed during the inspection was outstanding. Pupils' engagement in the various learning activities was strongest when they were actively challenged and teachers took risks in planning creative activities and tasks. The inspectors would encourage teachers to consider further methods to challenge the most able pupils through more in depth questioning and creative tasks.

Pupils' attainment and progress in Religious Education is good, especially when teaching is confident and assured. Pupil progress will be considerably enhanced by lessons which are creative and delivered by teachers who are prepared to take risks. Teachers know their pupils well and have an accurate understanding of their abilities and needs. There are no perceivable differences between different groups of pupils with levels of attainment in

Religious Education mirroring pupils' attainment in English. There is evidence in books, confirmed via discussions with pupils, of pupils being encouraged to work independently and collaboratively. They are developing the skills that enable them to reflect spiritually, think ethically and theologically and are becoming more aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life.

How well pupils respond to and participate in Collective Worship

Acts of worship engage the majority of pupils and inspire them to respond thoughtfully, respectfully and reverently. Most pupils are knowledgeable about, and proficient in, using scripture, music, silence and artefacts to support their prayers and reflection. The planned programme of prayer, liturgies and Masses is based on the Church's year, is age appropriate and contributes well to the pupils' learning and spiritual development.

In a whole school assembly observed by the inspectors, the focus was on 'Ramadan.' Pupils took the lead in giving information and leading prayers with confidence and maturity. The assembly was an opportunity to celebrate diversity and shared values. The inspectors would encourage the senior leadership to include Collective Worship in their monitoring programme and consider how to share best practice across the school.

Parents and governors are encouraged to join in acts of worship including, liturgies and Masses. The Parish Priest, who is a governor at the school, was able to confirm the high rate of attendance at these services which take place both in the school and in the parish. This aspect was highly valued by parents.

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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

School leaders, governors and managers are deeply committed to the Catholic life of the school. Senior leaders promote the Catholic identity of the school at all times which is evident in Collective Worship, the excellent relationships between all members of the school community, and the comprehensive and rich programme of events in the school's Catholic life.

Governors are actively involved in the Catholic life of the school, regularly attending school celebrations and events. Leaders and governors are clearly carrying out their monitoring role regarding the school's Catholic life, but evaluation and plans for improvement are largely done informally, through observation and discussion. This should now be recorded and form part of formal school self-evaluation and improvement planning.

The Governing Body has, over the past year, undertaken a skills review and, as a result of new recruitment, is in a strong position to support school improvement. It is ably led by an experienced and committed Chair of Governors who has fostered a supportive and professional relationship with the school's Headteacher and senior leaders. Of note, was the commitment of the governors to ensure that they take advantage of training opportunities to ensure that they are effective in their role.

School self-evaluation is reflective and links well to the priorities for targeted improvement for Religious Education. The governors are aware that they should be more involved in the review process and monitoring the Catholic life of the school more formally. They have identified one of their sub-committees to undertake this important responsibility. It is also an opportunity to recognise and celebrate the considerable strengths of this Catholic community.

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 Headteacher, until recently, has led the development, monitoring and review of Religious Education. A new subject leader has been appointed and during the transition period senior leaders have continued to play an active role in the monitoring and development of the subject.

The school has developed an effective system for tracking attainment and progress which provides valuable data to identify trends, progress and attainment for individuals and groups. It also identifies any gaps in provision and will enable the school to effectively benchmark with other schools. The school has established good links with other local schools across core subjects and there is now the opportunity to make use of support from other local Catholic schools in order to ensure that Religious Education work and assessments are effectively moderated.

The school has a system for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning across key subject which identifies strengths and areas for development. Working with the Diocesan advisors, the school is enhancing its assessment criteria, starting in Early Years provision, in order to ensure that attainment and progress is more effectively monitored. The inspectors identified that opportunities for formally monitoring Religious Education lessons

and Collective Worship should be developed. These opportunities will further inform the school leadership of the quality of provision and outcomes.

Senior leaders, alongside the Religious Education leader, regularly provide training to all staff which helps to develop their understanding of Catholic doctrine, sacraments and the liturgical year. This is essential in ensuring that all staff, are confident in delivering not only the 'Come and See' scheme but additional lessons which support pupils' spiritual and moral development.

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

The quality of Religious Education teaching, seen during the inspection, was good with examples of outstanding practice. This judgement concurs with the school's own self-review and monitoring process. The work in Religious Education is of the same expected standard as work in other core areas of the curriculum.

In the best lessons, pace was good throughout with activities closely matched to the needs of the pupils. Questioning was used effectively to facilitate and check pupils' understanding. Lessons observed had a scripture basis and fostered the development of religious literacy. It was pleasing that the recent Section 8 inspection highlighted Philosophy lessons and the inspectors can confirm that this was well deserved, particularly after observing an engaging Key Stage 1 lesson in which pupils explored the concept of 'friendship,' successfully linking it to scripture.

In another effective lesson, pupils focused on a single piece of religious artwork which provided the stimulus for engaging discussion and a wide range of learning experiences. Questioning was good, however not all pupils were sufficiently supported and/or challenged. The inspectors would encourage the school to carefully monitor its approach to differentiated learning, ensuring that all abilities are challenged through appropriate, engaging and challenging activities.

Work in books is very well presented and of a high standard. There was a wide range of work found in pupils' books during the inspection; using different literacy genres such as letters, lists, writing a homily and prayers as well as standard recounts. There were examples of pictorial tasks – illustrations, posters, sequencing, and more. There is excellent evidence of developmental marking which is purposeful and gives pupils valuable feedback and suggested steps towards further improvement. Pupils value the written dialogue with their teachers and respond thoughtfully as well as following the suggestions offered. Other adults in the classroom effectively support individuals and groups of pupils, including EAL pupils and those with SEND, enabling them to fully access the curriculum.

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

The Religious Education curriculum follows the 'Come and See' scheme. The amount of curriculum time devoted to Religious Education (10%) which meets the Bishop's Conference requirements. The school has established programmes of 'Relationships & Sex Education' and 'Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education'. These are linked with the Religious Education curriculum and are in line with the teachings of the Catholic Church. Parents confirmed that they receive information on these programmes each year.

Pupils responded well in lessons and clearly enjoyed the opportunity to explore the various themes and issues, whether spiritual or moral. All pupils, irrespective of ability, are encouraged to make progress in their knowledge, skills and understanding and to learn to reflect spiritually, to think ethically, and to become aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life. The planned curriculum and individual lesson planning and delivery contribute to the pupils becoming progressively religiously literate. English literacy skills are also specifically but naturally developed during the course of lessons. The Religious Education curriculum makes a good contribution to the spiritual and moral development of the pupils.

The study of Other Faiths is less well established and coordinated. The inspectors would strongly recommend that a full review is undertaken to ensure that this issue is addressed without delay in order to ensure that pupils are able to explore other world religions in more depth; including active learning and experiences. During the inspection little or no evidence was seen of display work, either in classrooms or community spaces, of religions other than Christianity. The school already does much to support the pupils' understanding of 'British Values' and this will further enhance this important aspect of the curriculum.

Staff and pupils work together to create a calm and spiritual school where each individual is valued. This is also evident in the relationships between staff and pupils where it is clear that pupils are well cared for and nurtured. Pupils also take great care of each other. This was evident not only in the classrooms but also around the school and especially on the playground where older pupils help to look after younger and more vulnerable pupils. The inspectors were impressed with the way the school has taken advantage of the recent improvements to the school buildings to create a safe and stimulating environment both in the classrooms and in community spaces.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school

Collective Worship is central to the life of the school and enhances each and every school activity. As previously recorded in this report, the quality of the assemblies at the school is good as a result of the pupil involvement as well as a strong focus on prayer and reflection. Masses are held regularly, both in the school and in the local parish church, and it is pleasing that the number of parents attending is good and increasing.

School leaders ensure that their liturgical calendar is based carefully on the church seasons and celebrations. The school's established annual Easter Play, Passion Play and Nativity involve children from all year groups, enabling them to develop confidence in sharing their faith in a creative way with others.

Pupils are confident in prayer and are able to explain aspects of their faith with confidence. As well as formal acts of worship and liturgies, prayer and reflection take place throughout the day and in lessons. This is facilitated by members of staff who ensure that these opportunities are sensitive and thoughtful.

The school supports its local parish in making available its facilities for First Holy Communion preparation courses. While the majority of candidates are from St Anthony's, other children, not attending local Catholic schools are welcomed, along with their parents, into the programme.

The school has also established other opportunities for pupils to explore their faith through the Chaplaincy Team. Staff encourage pupils involved to lead worship and prayer across the whole school. In addition, pupils are able to identify clearly the important link between their role and the school's shared CARE values (consideration, achievement, respect and effort). Pupils engagement in this activity is to be praised for putting their faith into action.