



## **DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION REPORT**

incorporating Section 48 and Canonical Inspection under Canon 806 on  
behalf of the Archbishop of Southwark

**URN 118764**

**St Ethelbert's Catholic Primary School and Nursery**

**Dane Park Road**

**Ramsgate**

**Kent CT11 7LS**

**Inspection date: 19<sup>th</sup> May 2023**

**Chair of Governors: Claire Turner**

**Headteacher: Simon Marshall**

**Inspectors: Helen Frostick  
Lisa Wimshurst**

### **EDUCATION COMMISSION**

St Edward's House, St Paul's Wood Hill, Orpington, Kent BR5 2SR  
Tel 01689 829331

**Interim Director of Education: Angela Cox OBE**



## Key for inspection grades

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

## FULL REPORT

### INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Ethelbert's Catholic Primary School and Nursery is voluntary aided. It is situated in the Thanet Deanery of the Archdiocese of Southwark. It is maintained by Kent Local Authority. The principal parish which the school serves is St Ethelbert and St Gertrude, Ramsgate and Minster. It also serves the church of the Shrine of St Augustine and Minster Abbey.

The school admits pupils from 3 to 11 years and is situated in an area ranked amongst the 40% most deprived neighbourhoods in the country. The number of pupils currently on roll is 210, at full capacity, with an additional 20 pupils attending either half day or full day nursery provision. The attainment of pupils on entry is well below the national average. The proportion of pupils eligible for Pupil Premium Funding is 38%. Six pupils have an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) and 16% of pupils are identified as having a Special Educational Need or Disability (SEND). 29% of the pupils speak English as an additional Language and 30% are of minority ethnic heritage.

The number of baptised pupils is 99. The weekly proportion of curriculum time devoted to Religious Education is a minimum of 10% in all key stages.

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## SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

St Ethelbert's is an Outstanding Catholic school because:

- The pupils make outstanding progress in Religious Education from a wide range of starting points.
- Pastoral support at St Ethelbert's is exemplary.
- The school is a beacon of excellence for Catholic education, living out its mission, 'to ignite within everyone the light of Christ.'
- The headteacher, deputy headteacher and governors are visionary and ambitious, resulting in a clear direction of policy and practice across all areas of Catholic life, Religious Education and Collective Worship.

## WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER

- To embed the improvements in teaching and learning by adopting a consistently creative approach beyond the scheme of work.
- To raise standards in Religious Education even higher by further increasing the numbers of pupils working at greater depth and continuing the drive for deeper questioning and developmental marking.

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## Overall Effectiveness

How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education.	1
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### Catholic Life

	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.	1
The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school.	1
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school.	1

### Religious Education

	1
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.	1
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education.	1
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.	1

### Collective Worship

	1
How well pupils respond to and participate in the schools' Collective Worship.	1
The quality of provision for Collective Worship.	1
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship.	1



## CATHOLIC LIFE

1

### **The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school is Outstanding.**

- Pupils are fully supported in their personal growth and development and as a result are physically, emotionally and spiritually confident and secure.
- Pupils are proud to attend St Ethelbert's school and are keen to participate in its Catholic life. They enthusiastically support one another through a variety of leadership roles and acts of self-giving. For example, Minnie Vinnies, School Leadership Council and Librarians. These opportunities help to build their confidence and self-discipline.
- The school values of 'thoughtfulness, inclusion and knowledge' are understood by all pupils, and they can describe them and talk about them with reference to Bible stories they have learnt.
- The value of inclusion impacts on the pupils who treat each other with respect, and they recognise their special place in their school community as a result. One parent stated, 'My child is a Muslim but enjoys what the school offers in the sense of what's right and wrong.'
- Almost all pupils express pride in their own religious and cultural identity and beliefs and enjoy having their classes named after a country and inspiring saint who lived there. They benefit from their diverse school community and enjoy learning about other cultures from first hand experiences such as the annual 'Around the World Day.'
- Pupils benefit from a strong ethos of caring for others and Catholic Social Teaching. They are very generous with their fundraising efforts, for example raising money for Cafod and supporting the Salvation Army Food Bank.
- The pupils embrace the opportunity to engage with the local community, for example the residents of a rest home for whom they make Christmas cards. They show their faith in action through acts of kindness such as these and lift the spirits of the elderly through their singing.
- The pupils are keen to share their views on the Catholic life of their school and are rightly proud of their commitment to making a difference to the lives of others. They said, 'We decided to raise money for people living on the streets during our next fundraising event, and then after that, for Cancer Research.'
- The behaviour of the pupils is exemplary and is often commented on by visitors to the school.
- Pupils, appropriate to their age and capability, have an excellent understanding of loving relationships and sexual development framed within the context of a Christian understanding of the purpose of sexual love.



**The quality of provision of the Catholic Life of the school is Outstanding.**

- The Catholic ethos of the school impacts on all areas of school life, including the positive relationships throughout. St Ethelbert's is a supportive, welcoming and joyful community.
- The school mission statement states that every child at St Ethelbert's is to fulfil their academic, social, behavioural and emotional potential in the surroundings of a Catholic community. It is effective in expressing and living out the wider mission of the Church in education.
- All staff took renewed ownership of the school mission statement at a designated INSET day this academic year, whereby they discussed its relevance and purpose, to ensure that it remains at the heart of everything they do. They are exemplary role models of care, respect and forgiveness of the pupils.
- The chaplaincy provision offered by both Father Simon and Father Christopher is exemplary in supporting and promoting the Catholic life of the school.
- There is a team work approach to the centrality of prayer at St Ethelbert's, as evidenced by the wonderful artwork depicting the mission statement. Displays of work are of a high quality and focal areas are used well to provide further opportunities to enhance the prayer life of the school.
- Religious icons, often made by the pupils themselves, are clearly identifying the school's Catholic ethos and Catholic character.
- Clear policies and structures are in place and lead to high levels of pastoral care which is extended to all staff as well as all pupils.

**How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school is Outstanding.**

- Leaders and governors are highly ambitious for the Catholic life of St Ethelbert's and their visionary mission is to 'high expectations for all, in the Light of Christ.' The impact of its Catholic life is monitored closely by the leadership team who strive to ensure that Christ is always at its heart.
- Governors review and challenge this most important part of school life in their meetings and ensure that Catholic social teaching is prioritised and having an impact on the pupils' understanding of the importance of looking after their common home and the poor.
- Professional development for staff is impacting on the leadership of Catholic life and leaders and governors ensure that staff engagement is high as a result.
- The development of the Catholic life of St Ethelbert's is viewed by leaders and governors as a core leadership responsibility, as illustrated by the work of the Governors' Catholicity committee.
- The self-evaluation carried out by the leadership team is an accurate and detailed reflection of robust monitoring and self-challenge. The Catholic life of the school is central to its plans, leading to well targeted and planned improvements.



- The headteacher and deputy headteacher implement the requirements of the Bishops' Conference and work closely with the diocese. They attend conferences and beginning of the year Mass at St George's Cathedral, and all policies promote the bishops' vision.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher act upon the views of parents, priests and governors alike and encourage feedback and challenge.

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## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

1

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

- Almost all pupils, irrespective of their varying starting points, make very good progress at St Ethelbert's. They speak articulately about what they have learnt in religious education and are committed to improving their knowledge. They enjoy learning about how they can relate what they learn to their own lives.
- Pupils are actively engaged in lessons and are interested and enthusiastic. They use their knowledge, understanding and skills to reflect spiritually, ethically and theologically. They respond well to challenge and working in groups.
- Almost all pupils understand their next steps for learning and 'the purple polish' system, which is part of the developmental marking policy, fosters a high level of response.
- Pupils' attainment, as indicated by teacher assessment, is good with elements of outstanding and is on an improving trajectory.
- The drive to consider more thought-provoking questions is leading to the pupils becoming more inquisitive, thinking deeply and this is promoting lively discussion.
- Teachers capture information for assessment in class reflection books. Pupil voice and moments of awe and wonder and other significant events also complement the assessment system.
- The quality of pupils' work in class and in written work is at least good with much outstanding.

### **The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education is Outstanding.**

- Teachers consistently plan high quality and effective lessons linked to pupils' current assessment, so that almost all pupils learn extremely well. As a result teaching is never less than good with much outstanding.
- A focus on 'quality first teaching' has led to a tighter structure in lessons.
- Teachers' plans are based on the Religious Education Curriculum Directory, supported by 'The Way, The Truth and The Life.' But beyond this, topical links are built in to engage the pupils and to make learning relevant.
- Lessons are paced well and skilful questioning leads to adaptations of tasks and explanations, thus maximising learning for every pupil.
- Almost all pupils apply themselves well and make very good progress in lessons and over time.
- A dedicated teaching block of time on a Wednesday morning is designated for religious education at St Ethelbert's and this timetabling has led to more in-depth studies. The minimum requirement of 10% devoted curriculum time is being met and often exceeded.



- The teaching of Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) is faithful to the Church's vision of human wholeness and the 'Ten Ten' programme and resources complement it well.
- The pupils at St Ethelbert's are taught and understand that people may have chosen another faith to their own. This is through a comprehensive study of other faiths.

### **How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education is Outstanding.**

- There is an inspiring vision of high expectations for all in teaching and learning and this is resulting in well targeted planning and strategic action to continue the school's journey of improvement.
- Leaders and governors ensure that religious education has full parity with other core subjects including professional development, timetabling, resourcing and staffing.
- The headteacher, deputy headteacher and governors are part of networks and access diocesan training to ensure that they are up to date with initiatives and developments in religious education.
- Standards in religious education are tracked three times a year and professional development on greater depth is beginning to impact on staff's ability to recognise it and plan for it.
- Pupil progress meetings are an integral part of monitoring and are carried out by school leaders. The results of these meetings also shape future professional development.
- Moderation of standards in pupils' books by the deputy headteacher, who is also the religious education lead, further helps to develop the teachers' confidence in assessment, which is now far more accurate as a result.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have set up a shared drive to provide a wealth of teaching resources for the staff and is beginning to further impact on the quality of teaching and learning.
- A mentoring and coaching programme established by the school leadership team is further developing the teachers' skills.
- The governors monitor the effectiveness of teaching and learning through learning walks and book looks alongside the senior leadership team. They offer challenge and support, for example they have focused on communal prayer areas and ensured interactivity for the pupils.



## COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

### **How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship and Prayer Life is Outstanding.**

- The experience of being part of a faithful, and prayerful community has a profound and visible effect on the spiritual and moral development of all pupils at St Ethelbert's.
- Acts of collective worship ignite interest for all pupils and inspires in them deep thought and heartfelt response. A genuine enthusiasm for collective worship is evident amongst pupils and staff alike.
- Pupils are engaged and reverent during prayer and liturgy. They participate wholeheartedly and particularly enjoy the weekly Gospel reflection led by the headteacher.
- A range of visitors are welcomed into school to further enrich the experiences of the pupils, such as a local Rabbi.
- The pupils benefit from opportunities to meditate and pray in a variety of ways, including beyond the classrooms at the interactive prayer stations.
- Whole school Masses are times of community focus, and the parents enjoy their weekly invitation to the class led Masses. The pupils have responsibility for leading these Masses and serving on the altar too. One parent said, 'The Mass today was so beautiful. The fact that we are now all invited to celebrate Mass together is lovely.'
- The pupils love to learn about the parish and its history, such as the Shrine of St Augustine and a highlight is Mass at the Shrine and a picnic afterwards. The Feast Day of St Ethelbert is a celebration enjoyed by all.
- The school prayer has been updated by the pupils themselves and links to the school values. This work was led by the Minnie Vinnie group but was in consultation with all pupils.

### **The quality of provision for Collective Worship and Prayer Life is Outstanding.**

- Collective worship is central to life at St Ethelbert's and has a clear purpose and message. The themes are chosen to illustrate a deep understanding of the Church's mission in education.
- All staff have an excellent understanding of the Church's liturgical year, seasons and feasts, and are passionate about ensuring that the pupils have high quality experiences of the Church's liturgical life. Collective worship is given the highest priority in terms of planning, resourcing and evaluating.
- The weekly Gospel reflection is developed beyond the collective worship in which it is presented, with the staff on hand to answer any questions it provokes in the pupils.



- Opportunities to engage in the school's prayer life developed beyond the school are planned in a way that attracts and boosts attendance, for example the Faith Club, a pathway to the Sacrament of First Holy Communion for Year 1 and Year 2, is an inspiring example of this work.
- Relationships with the parish and the two parish priests are extremely positive and are proactively developed by the headteacher and deputy headteacher who attend Sunday Masses in the parishes to increase links. This helps to further build a strong sense of home-school-parish.
- The school is now oversubscribed in applications for entry to Reception which is testimony to the strong ethos being built upon by leaders and governors.
- The diversity of the school is celebrated, and as an example, its Polish community is integral to its school family.
- The school environment is alive with celebrations of the glory of God.

**How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship and Prayer Life is Outstanding.**

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have expert knowledge in how to plan and deliver high quality collective worship. They have an extensive understanding of the Church's liturgical year, seasons and feasts.
- The liturgical calendar is promoted with celebrations of relevant events and Holy Days of Obligation are woven into the rich fabric of collective worship at St Ethelbert's
- Monitoring of collective worship takes place via the governors' catholicity committee and reports are compiled and shared by leaders and governors alike.
- The hard work of governors has positively impacted on collective worship, as seen in the outcomes of a focus on the learning environment and how it can be developed into interactive prayer stations for the pupils to access independently.
- The two parish priests, Father Simon and Father Christopher, are serving and active governors and work hard in partnership with the school leadership team to maintain and build upon its provision for collective worship.
- The school website is used well as a vehicle to show that religious education and collective worship permeate all areas of school life at St Ethelbert's.
- The headteacher, deputy headteacher and governors ensure that professional development for collective worship is prioritised and the policy for collective worship, prayer and liturgy is reviewed annually and further developed with staff. Professional development is extended to governors, for example they accessed the diocesan training on religious education and the revised inspection framework which they found very useful.