



## **DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION REPORT**

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

**URN 118860**

**St Bartholomew's Catholic Primary School**

**Sycamore Drive**

**Swanley**

**Kent BR8 7AY**

**Inspection date: 26<sup>th</sup> March 2018**

**Chair of Governors: Mr T. Austin**

**Headteacher: Mr K. McPartland**

**Inspectors: Ms A. Oddy**

**Ms B. Long**

### **EDUCATION COMMISSION**

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

Tel 01689 829331

**Interim Director of Education: Mr Stephen Bryan**

**Publication Date 16th May 2018**



### Key for inspection grades

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

## FULL REPORT

### INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Bartholomew's Catholic Primary School is a 1.5 form entry school. It is situated in the Gravesend Deanery of the Archdiocese of Southwark and is maintained by the Kent Local Authority. The principal parish which the school serves is Holy Apostles, Swanley. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholics is 41%. The proportion of curriculum time given to Religious Education is 10% in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

The school takes pupils from 4 to 11 years. The number of pupils currently on roll is 346. The proportion of pupils for whom pupil premium funding is received is 19%. 2% of pupils have an Education and Healthcare Plan (EHCP) and an additional 12% of pupils have a Special Educational Need or Disability (SEND). The majority of pupils are of White British heritage, but significant numbers of pupils are of Black Caribbean or Other White heritage.

Publication Date 16th Nov 2019



## SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

St Bartholomew's Catholic Primary is an outstanding Catholic school because:

- St Bartholomew's offers a very high standard of Catholic education within a warm and welcoming inclusive Christian community. The mission statement and the school's Catholic ethos pervade all aspects of school life. The Headteacher provides inspirational leadership. He is ably supported by a strong governing body and a cohesive staff team who share his vision of excellence in Catholic education. Leadership at all levels provides strategic direction for the school and care and support for all members of its community.
- The school has a rich and vibrant Catholic life. A wealth of celebrations and activities take place throughout the school year. The diversity of the school community is valued and celebrated; this is recognised and appreciated by parents who rightly see it as a strength of the school. Pupils are welcoming and helpful and exemplify the school's mission to 'Serve the Lord with Joy'. The school's Catholic life supports pupils academically and spiritually and fosters their sense of vocation.
- The standard of Religious Education offered by the school is exceptionally high. All groups of pupils make good progress and achieve well. High quality teaching and learning inspires and motivates pupils.
- The school offers a wide range of prayer and worship opportunities. These reflect the traditions of the Catholic Church and encourage pupils to develop their relationship with God. Pupils are very much involved in the prayer life of the school and are skilled in helping to prepare and lead worship.

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

- To continue with the school's identified focus of developing assessment in Religious Education by:
  1. Further developing and embedding the recently revised systems of assessment.
  2. Assembling a portfolio of samples of moderated work to support assessment judgements made to the new assessment framework, working collaboratively with other deanery schools to achieve this.



## Overall Effectiveness

How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education.

1

### 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

Publication Date 16th May 2018



## CATHOLIC LIFE

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

- Pupils are fully involved in the all embracing the Catholic life of the school. They are willing and enthusiastic participants in all aspects of this and recognise its importance to their school community. Pupils elected as 'Leading Lights' help the school community to grow in faith by leading class prayer and assemblies.
- They know that the school community includes them all and that everyone has a part to play in it. The school family welcomes all, regardless of belief or culture. A pupil said, "The school has many cultures and they all love and respect one another."
- Pupils are familiar with the mission statement and know that it is at the heart of school life. 'Serve the Lord with Joy' is a statement to live by and the pupils are genuine examples of this. The school has a harmonious atmosphere which is recognised by pupils. One said, "It is a warm community which helps you learn."
- The school's strong Catholic ethos is demonstrated by the pupils' attitudes and behaviour towards each other and the wider community. They know it is important to care for others and are aware of the importance of forgiveness. A pupil said, "We forgive others so we can start afresh and enjoy the good." 'Kindness Trophies' encourage pupils to think of others and celebrate instances where this has happened.
- Pupils appreciate the need to help others less fortunate than themselves and are active in supporting a wide range of charities. At the time of this inspection, the school's Lenten Fund raising efforts were very much in evidence. Pupils were keen to talk about this and the reasons behind it. Charities supported by the school include NSPCC, CAFOD, Cabrini and many others.
- Pupils are given many opportunities to take responsibility, serving others and their school community. Examples include Buddies, Head Boy and Head Girl, the School Council and Leading Lights. Pupils take these responsibilities seriously and are conscientious in their roles. They know they are contributing to the smooth running of their school community and are happy and proud to be able to help.
- The school makes good use of pupil surveys and feedback, using this to inform school improvement planning. Pupils know their views are listened to and will make a difference. Pupils had asked for playground benches and board games and were very pleased to get these.



- All pupils and their families are welcomed into all aspects of the school's Catholic life. Members of other faiths and those with no faith background are valued and equal members of the school community. A parent of another faith commented, "It is good for our children to know other religions, it will lead them to be a good person."
- The school has very strong links with the parish. Priests from the parish are regular visitors to the school and are very supportive of the school community. Pupils from the school help to lead a school Parish Mass once a month in the parish church. Parents are invited and are offered the opportunity to put their children's names forward to participate in the Offertory or Bidding prayers. Parents spoke appreciatively of the inclusivity of this approach. Sacramental preparation is provided by the school. The First Holy Communion programme welcomes and includes pupils from other schools.
- Good links with other Catholic schools in the deanery and with the diocese give pupils a sense of belonging to a wider Catholic community. The school also belongs to the Swanley Schools Partnership, enabling pupils to benefit from links with local community schools. Pupils have recently participated in the Swanley Schools Christian Unity Service.
- During this inspection, pupil behaviour was exemplary at all times. Pupils were kind and considerate to each other in lessons and around the school. They were exceptionally polite and courteous. They were welcoming and helpful to visitors, clearly enjoying being ambassadors for their school.
- Parents are very appreciative of the school and of the Catholic education it offers. They described the school as approachable and open and felt very much part of the school community. One said, "The school has my heart."
- The Parents Association is an important part of the school community, participating in school events and raising funds to enhance and enrich school provision.

**The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.**

- All members of the school community appreciate the importance of the mission statement as central to the life of the school. It informs all policies and practice. It is regularly reviewed, most recently in 'Mission Statement into Action' in 2018.
- Staff form a strong and committed team. They support each other and provide guidance and support for pupils. Effective induction of new staff ensures cohesiveness of the staff team. Staff show a sense of dedication and vocation to the school's Catholic life, fostering and nurturing pupils' spiritual life and wellbeing.



- Pastoral care is a strength of the school. All members of the school community care for each other. The open, approachable nature of the school and the availability of counselling supports those in need. Vulnerable pupils and their families are sensitively supported.
- High quality displays relating to Religious Education, the liturgical year and events in the Catholic life of the school reflect its strong Catholic identity. One of many examples is the beautiful Prayer Tree in the school entrance area, to which pupils and parents contribute prayers. These prayers are later used in assembly.
- Attractive, well kept prayer focus areas are a feature of every classroom. They are well resourced, feature pupils' own prayers and celebrate pupils' achievements. They inspire pupils to prayer and reflection and are featured as part of Religious Education lessons.
- Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is well established in the school and is in line with the teachings of the Church. Pupils are encouraged to explore and discuss moral and ethical issues and the importance of these in our world. A parent wrote, "My children have all grown up to have a great attitude to society and a great respect for their religion, which they were all taught by the caring staff at the school."
- A range of prayer and worship opportunities are central to the school's Catholic life and to the school as a worshipping community.
- The Catholic identity of the school takes prime position on the inspiring and attractive school website. Parents commented on the effectiveness of home/school communication with regular newsletters, the 'Wednesday Word' and 'Reach' keeping them well informed.
- Parents commented on the excellent provision for the school's Catholic life and how this nurtured pupils' social, spiritual and academic development. One said, "There is a strong sense of community at the school between staff and students" and another said, "My child comes home from school putting into practice what they have learned about kindness and sharing and says we should be more like Jesus."

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

- Leaders and governors are deeply committed to the Catholic life of the school and to ensuring it is the embodiment of a caring community living out the teachings of Christ. Governors value the centrality of the mission statement and ensure it is part of the Home School Agreement and reflected in all aspects of school life.
- The Headteacher is an excellent role model and leads by example. His strong sense of vision and direction ensures that the school's Catholic life is constantly developing and evolving to suit the needs of all pupils and their families. His care for all members of the school community is immediately evident. He works closely with the highly motivated Religious Education subject leader to ensure the exceptional provision for the school's Catholic life.



- Close parish links enrich the provision for the school's Catholic life. The two priests visit the school weekly to talk to staff and get updates for the week ahead. The Parish Priest and Deacon serve on the Governing Body. Their comprehensive and valued support helps to ensure the strength and quality of the school's Catholic life.
- Governors are active in monitoring and evaluating the Catholic life of the school, regularly attending liturgies, events and celebrations. They know their school well and are wholeheartedly committed to all aspects of the wellbeing of the school community.
- Planning for Religious Education and the Catholic life of the school is clearly set out in the Religious Education Action Plan. This is informed by school self evaluation. An appropriate budget share reflects its importance to the school. School self evaluation shows that the school systematically reviews its provision for its Catholic life and plans for its improvement.
- The school provides effective training and support for all staff. Detailed induction for new staff ensures that all are full and active participants in the Catholic life of the school.

Publication Date 16th May 2018



## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

1

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

- Pupils enjoy their Religious Education lessons and are keen to do their best. In the lessons observed as part of this inspection, pupils were interested and engaged. Pupil outcomes were excellent.
- Pupils are proud of their Religious Education books and are confident in displaying and talking about their work. They speak appreciatively of their lessons and recognise the importance of Religious Education lessons to their own lives. A pupil commented, "We learn to be more like Jesus."
- Pupils greatly enjoy the cross curricular links which enrich their learning in Religious Education. Links with drama and art help pupils to explore and express their learning in different ways. Enrichment activities have included organising a Senior Citizens event and being involved in the annual Christian Unity Service.
- All groups of pupils achieve well. Attainment is high with most pupils achieving or exceeding age related expectations by the end of Key Stage 2. A significant number of pupils are working at greater depth. Standards of attainment in Religious Education are similar to those in other core subjects. Differentiation and appropriate support ensures that all are challenged and enabled to achieve their full potential. Pupils who have additional needs receive targeted and effective support.
- Behaviour for learning is outstanding. Lessons proceed smoothly and pupils are motivated and responsive. Pupils show reverence and respect for Religious Education and are enthusiastic in their learning.
- Pupils demonstrate a high standard of religious literacy. They are reflective and think carefully about religious concepts, asking and answering questions to deepen their understanding. In one class, pupils studying The Last Supper were asking 'Wondering Questions,' demonstrating a high level of thoughtful enquiry.
- Pupils show good subject knowledge and are able to draw upon previous learning. They are confident in using bibles to look up scripture references. They talk to each other to readily share their ideas and their faith.
- The school uses pupil conferencing and pupil surveys to provide feedback regarding pupils' attitudes to their learning in Religious Education. This informs school development planning.



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

- Four lessons, across three Key Stages, were observed as part of this inspection. All were of an exceptionally high standard. Well planned lessons, good subject knowledge and skilful use of a variety of teaching strategies maximised pupil involvement and participation and secured high outcomes. In all lessons observed, Religious Education was clearly a special time, with candles, music and prayer an important part of the lesson. Prayer and reflection were skilfully woven into the fabric of the lesson, making it a spiritual as well as an educational experience.
- Teachers have high expectations of their pupils. Planning includes differentiation, providing support and challenge appropriate to pupils' needs. Other adults in the classroom support pupils sensitively and unobtrusively. They are encouraging and affirmative and deployed appropriately.
- Skilful and probing questioning helps pupils to explore religious themes and concepts and to deepen their understanding. The school's use of 'Growth Mindset' fosters enthusiasm and relevance and enables pupils to engage in self assessment. The use of drama and hot seating help to develop pupils' skills of empathy, which further enriches the curriculum.
- Celebration of pupils' work helps to enthuse and motivate pupils. Pupils' work is featured in many areas of the school and is beautifully presented and displayed.
- Work in pupils' books is of a very high standard, both in quantity and quality. Work shows good coverage of the curriculum.
- Marking is regular and affirmative. In some cases there is evidence of a dialogue between teacher and pupil, leading to extending pupil learning and also some evidence of self assessment. The school should now consider making this consistent across the school.
- A comprehensive system of monitoring and assessment includes learning walks, book scrutiny, lesson observations and gathering assessment data. Moderation takes place at school and deanery level to validate teachers' judgements.
- Monitoring and assessment data is used to inform school self evaluation and improvement planning as well as tracking the progress of individuals and groups. Newly revised systems of assessment to conform with recent diocesan guidelines are being trialled and implemented, working in collaboration with other schools. A portfolio of moderated work to support this is planned. This is an identified focus for further school improvement and the findings of this inspection concur with this.
- The teaching of other faiths is well established throughout the school and is welcomed and enjoyed by pupils. Pupils said they liked learning about other faiths. A parent commented that her daughter had come home and said, "We all share God's world" and felt that this was a direct result of the teaching of the school. Many parents expressed the view that the diversity of the school community was an



enriching feature of the school and one that the school valued and celebrated, preparing pupils for life in a modern Britain.

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

- The school follows the 'Come and See' programme of Religious Education, enriched by cross curricular links and drawing on other materials as appropriate to provide greater depth to the curriculum. Curriculum time allocated to Religious Education is 10% in both Key Stages and is in line with the requirements of the Bishops' Conference.
- Parents are well informed regarding topics and activities in Religious Education and encouraged to support their children's learning. Information is provided on the school website and newsletters.
- Leaders and governors are committed to high quality provision of Religious Education. They ensure that it receives an appropriate budget share and curriculum time allocation.
- Governors participate in monitoring activities and receive regular reports regarding Religious Education from the subject leader and as part of the headteacher's report. They are conscientious in their role, monitoring the progress of the Religious Education Action Plan and playing a very active part in school life.
- The Religious Education subject leader plays a key part in raising and maintaining standards in Religious Education. She is effective in planning for improvement and monitoring outcomes. She is conscientious and dedicated to her role and provides support and encouragement to colleagues.
- The school is diligent in seeking the views of parents, staff and pupils and using these to monitor the impact of actions taken to secure improvement as well as suggestions to feed into the Action Plan. Parental questionnaires distributed as part of this inspection were overwhelmingly supportive of the Catholic education the school offers.
- The Religious Education curriculum is enhanced by links with the local parish, the community and wider agencies.
- Sacramental preparation takes place in the school. It is celebrated within the school community and is embedded in the Religious Education curriculum. The First Holy Communion programme is led by school staff, who give generously of their time and expertise.
- Training opportunities have included work on developing the mission statement, developing assessment in Religious Education and Mindset (Learning Growth).
- The Parish Priest is actively involved in monitoring and supporting the Religious Education curriculum and the school's Catholic life.
- The school has a Religious Education self evaluation group, who meet regularly to review school self evaluation and the Religious Education Action Plan and communicate their findings to governors.



## COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

1

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

- Pupils are active and enthusiastic participants in the school's Collective Worship and prayer life. They are increasingly involved in planning and leading worship; School Chaplains have recently taken a lead in Key Stage assemblies. Pupils lead class Masses and class assemblies. Pupils could now be encouraged to be part of the monitoring and evaluation of the school's collective worship.
- The act of Collective Worship observed was whole school collective worship led by a Key Stage 2 class. It was an inspiring and prayerful occasion which sensitively told the story of The Last Supper using drama, song and ICT. The assembly was strongly scripture based and included a message for pupils to take out into their day at school. The behaviour of pupils was outstanding. An atmosphere of stillness and spirituality was evident. Pupils spoke and acted with confidence, clearly enjoying presenting their message to the school. It was well attended by parents, the Chair of Governors and the parish priest, demonstrating their support and commitment to the school community.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the Church's liturgical year and celebrations are linked to its feasts and seasons. They appreciate the opportunity to participate in activities such as the Rosary Club and the First Communion choir. Seasonal activities such as an Advent calendar of 'A Promise a Day' helps pupils to understand the true meaning of these times. Booklets containing activities and prayers are provided to every pupil in Advent and Lent.
- Pupils are familiar with the traditional prayers of the Church and are also confident in contributing their own prayers as part of Collective Worship. They have a good understanding of spontaneous prayer. One pupil described it as, "speaking to God from your heart." 'Leading Lights' pupils interviewed as part of this inspection were happy to lead the inspectors and a group of pupils in prayer. They did so spontaneously, without hesitation and with great joy.
- All pupils and their families, regardless of their beliefs or faith affiliation are welcomed into the school's Collective Worship and enjoy coming together as a worshipping community. They are offered opportunities to reflect on the importance of tolerance and respect for the faith practices of others and know this is important to their school and the wider community.
- Pupils enjoy leading a parish Sunday Mass once a month. This has increased Mass attendance on these occasions and offers pupils a chance to share their faith with the parish community.



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

- The school provides a rich and varied provision for Collective Worship. This is linked to the liturgical year, themes and topics in Religious Education and events in the life of the school and the wider world.
- Collective Worship is an important part of school life. It is skilfully woven into the school day and school calendar. It makes a significant contribution to the pupils' spiritual and moral development.
- Parents value the school's Collective Worship and prayer life, with many seeing it as contributing to their own faith journey. They are often invited to celebrate with the school and high levels of attendance indicate their appreciation. This was evident in the act of Collective Worship observed as part of this inspection. Parents interviewed by inspectors said they really valued the opportunity to share in their children's worship at school.
- Collective Worship is well planned and well resourced. Prayer focus areas enhance classroom prayer opportunities. High quality classroom displays and artefacts remind pupils of the school's Catholic identity and encourage them to be reflective and prayerful.
- A wide range of prayer and worship styles provide for the needs and preferences of all pupils. These include joyful participation, quiet reflection and sustained meditation.
- Prayer is part of school life at all levels. It is woven through the school day and is part of staff and governor meetings.
- The Headteacher is conscious of the importance of pupils appreciating and valuing the church as a sacred space. Regular visits to the Parish Church enable pupils to understand this and to participate fully in the Mass.

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

- Leaders and governors are deeply committed to ensuring high quality provision for collective worship and prayer. Worship is carefully planned so that style and content offer a range of provision to all pupils and members of the school community.
- Senior leaders act as models of good practice in leading worship and in developing these skills in the pupils. They seek the views of parents, staff and pupils and incorporate these in school development planning.
- The Parish Priest provides invaluable support for school liturgies and celebrations and also fulfils a monitoring role. Governors attend school worship on a regular basis, both as members of the school community and to monitor provision.



- Leaders and governors are committed to including parents and keeping them informed. The 'Wednesday Word', 'Reach' and books issued to individual pupils in Advent, Lent, Christmas and Holy Week provide information and an invitation to prayer. The school website also provides information regarding school celebrations.
- The school provides a rich and fulfilling experience of the Church year, encouraging pupils to understand its traditions and to make these an enriching part of their own lives. Pupils speak highly of school celebrations and are keen to play their part. Parents are very appreciative and show this by their excellent attendance and feedback comments.
- Pupil chaplains and 'Leading Lights' make a significant contribution to the provision of school collective worship and prayer. Although this is a relatively recent development, it is an excellent example of leaders and governors enriching provision and promoting greater involvement of pupils.

Publication Date 16th May 2018