



**DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION  
REPORT (Section 48)**

on

**THE CHRISTIAN LIFE OF THE  
SCHOOL AND RELIGIOUS  
EDUCATION**

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**School:** St. Edward's RC CE VA School

**Address:** Dale Valley Road  
Oakdale  
Poole  
Dorset  
BH15 3HY

**Telephone Number:** 01202 740950

**Email address:** stedwardsschool@poole.gov.uk

**School URN:** 113893

**Headteacher:** Mrs. Pola Bevan

**Chair of Governors:** Janet Morris

**Inspectors:** Mrs. N. Hardwick  
Roman Catholic Diocese of Plymouth  
Mrs. A. Davey  
Anglican Diocese of Salisbury

**Date of Inspection:** 15<sup>th</sup> June 2010

This Inspection Report is produced for the Rt. Reverend Christopher Budd the Bishop of Plymouth Diocese, (c.f. Code Canon Law, 804, 806), and for the Governing Body of the school (Education Act 2005, Section 48). The inspection reviews, evaluates and plans further improvements in the school's witness to the Christian faith and Curriculum Religious Education. This process begins with the school's own self-evaluation.

The inspection schedule follows criteria set by the National Board of Advisers and Inspectors.

## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

### **FACTUAL INFORMATION**

#### **Pupil Catchment:**

Number of pupils on roll: 875

Planned Admission Number of Pupils: 179 in year 8 174 in years 9-11

Percentage of pupils baptised RC: 47%

Percentage of pupils from other Christian denominations: 48.5%

Percentage of pupils from other World Faiths: 0.5%

Percentage of pupils with no religious affiliation: 4%

Percentage of pupils from ethnic groups: 7.3%

Percentage of pupils with special needs: 21.71%

#### **Staffing**

Percentage of Catholic teachers: 15.85%

Percentage of teachers from other Christian denominations: 38%

Percentage for which there is no current information: 46%

#### **RE Department Staffing:**

Number of full time RE teachers: 4

Number of part time RE teachers: 4

Percentage of Catholic teachers: 25%

Percentage of teachers for other Christian denominations: 75%

Percentage of teachers with CCRS or equivalent: 100%

#### **Percentage of learning time given to RE:**

Yr8 8% Yr 11 10%

Yr9 8% 6<sup>th</sup> Form 10%

Yr 10 10%

#### **Parishes served by the school:**

Roman Catholic parishes of Poole, Wimborne, Wareham and Swanage

Anglican parishes in the Poole Deanery

## Overall Effectiveness

1

## Capacity for sustained improvement

1

### MAIN FINDINGS

St. Edward's is an outstanding Joint Roman Catholic and Church of England school. The mission and ethos of Christian education underpins all that the school does. A significant expression of the deeply embedded ethos is in the way the pupils are known, valued and loved. It is an effective organisation which is committed to individual care, challenging exclusion and as the Head teacher put it, to "going the extra mile for vulnerable and complex pupils." Relationships between staff and staff, staff and pupils, and pupils and pupils are positive and supportive. The Senior Leadership Team is committed to and successful in modelling a collegiate approach. Together with supportive governors, empowered middle managers and dedicated staff they have created a "safe place" for faith to live, grow and be celebrated. As one pupil remarked "if there is something you don't understand you can stop and ask a teacher in the corridor who will help you, even if they are not your teacher."

Pupils demonstrate respect for and pride in belonging to their school community. There is an atmosphere of calm and order as they move around the school and they have positive attitudes to learning. The progress and attainment of pupils in Religious Education are excellent and the needs of all pupils are catered for. Pupils' level of participation in the prayer and worship life of the school are good and they benefit from the range of opportunities offered to contribute to the Christian life of the school. The school is outstanding in meeting the needs of its pupils through its distinctive Christian character.

The school provides an outstanding Christian education. There is sensitive care taken to value the distinct Christian traditions represented within its ecumenical community and a passion for living as a positive example of Christian unity. Its RE department promotes positive attitudes to learning and the innovative and bravely led team are excellent role models of lived faith for the pupils. The Religious Education curriculum provided is exciting and directed in its focus on continued raised standards. The needs of all pupils are at the heart of the curriculum and as a result of this standards of attainment and progress are outstanding. The quality of collective worship is good and pupils respond with respect and reverence. Staff throughout the school are enthusiastic and participate actively in offering a variety of experiences of reflection, prayer and worship.

The leadership and management of the school is good, with elements of outstanding practice. There is a deep commitment to the mission of the school and those within the community spoke with confidence about the various ways in which the vision is expressed. Leaders are enthusiastic about continuing to develop the Christian life of the school, "explicitly putting Jesus at the centre". Senior Leaders have a clear sense of direction for celebrating and improving standards as a Christian school. An example of this is the current bid for

Humanities specialist status in line with the school's whole-person centred ethos. The governors value and are supportive of the school's mission as a Joint Church community of faith. They are beginning to develop a more 'hands on' approach to working with the school and this is reflected in the development of link governors which is in its early stages.

The school's capacity for sustained improvement as a Joint Church school is outstanding because of the accurate and on-going self-evaluation it is engaged with.

### **What the school needs to do to improve further**

- Develop a system of formal monitoring of tutor reflection time as part of a wider evaluation of the pattern of worship within the school.
- To continue to develop the system of linking governors with curriculum areas to ensure governors grow in their intimate knowledge of the school community and to explore with the dioceses further ways of supporting governors in their particular role within a joint church community.
- To continue the process of evaluating the chaplaincy provision within the school community.

# PUPILS

**How good outcomes are for pupils, taking particular account of variations between different groups**

1
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Pupils at St. Edward's are very enthusiastic about Religious Education. They speak with energy and warmth about lessons and staff and have very positive attitudes towards their learning. Pupils spoke with gratitude about the staff who provided revision lessons in the holidays, which were well attended and valued. They are able to discuss their beliefs and raise questions of faith with confidence and security. One pupil spoke of how much RE lessons are enjoyed and looked forward to. The high regard in which RE is held is demonstrated by the high level of AS Level uptake. One third of the current year 12 cohort opted for Religious Studies and last year the retention rate from AS to A2 was 100%. The vast majority of Key Stage 3 pupils are already working to their target grades, which indicates a positive value added result by the end of the academic year. In 2009 83% of Key Stage 4 pupils achieved A\*-C in their GCSE, with 28% gaining an A or A\*. 47% of AS students in 2009 achieved A or B grades and 63% of A2 candidates achieved either an A or B grade. These results represent an outperformance of other core subjects at the end of KS4 and KS5. Pupils with particular learning needs achieve well in RE because their needs are accurately identified and support is adapted to meet them. The planned refinements in the tracking system will further support these pupils with early intervention and personalised support packages.

Pupils make a good contribution to the Christian life of the school and are enriched as people because of it. They are reflective and enquiring and appreciative of the importance of religious belief and spiritual values. They are interested in the religious life of others and are comfortable talking about their own beliefs. This attitude of openness has helped underpin the effectiveness of the school as an ecumenical community. Collective worship helps pupils to think beyond their own experiences and empathise with those in need in the world wide community. The Act of Worship inspectors attended encouraged pupils to reflect on inequalities between rich and poor, using scripture and the World Cup football competition as stimulus and context for their worship. There is evidence of peer ministry, with Year 8 pupils preparing and leading worship for other year groups. Year 8 pupils in tutor reflection time showed an empathetic understanding of the importance of supporting each others' learning and for campaigning against the injustice of lack of education in developing countries.

Pupils' response to and participation in collective worship is good. Opportunities to attend voluntary celebrations of the Eucharist in Roman Catholic and Anglican traditions are responded to positively. Collective worship contributes positively to the spiritual and moral development of pupils. Pupils are included in the evaluation of the experience of collective worship in the school along with staff and governors. However, an evaluation of the balance of reflection time and worship time and their frequency and pattern will enable the pupils to benefit further from more explicitly signposted daily acts of worship.

# LEADERS AND MANAGERS

**How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Christian life of the school.**

2

Leaders and managers promote and develop the Christian life of the school well. The Joint Church Mission is at the heart of all the school does and strives for and spiritual and moral development is at the core of its vision. The senior leadership team, supported by school governors have a clear understanding of the school's joint church role in the wider Christian mission. There is a strong Christian ethos and promotion of Christian values, which coupled with a committed staff body and good quality chaplaincy provision, enables pupils to feel part of a caring Christian community. Increasingly formal systems of monitoring, particularly of Collective Worship and Governor linking will ensure continued improvement in the life of this Joint Church school.

Rigorous systems are in place for the monitoring and evaluation of the provision for Religious Education. Leaders and managers are confident using data to plan for and bring about improvement in provision and in pupils' outcomes. The experienced subject leader is impressive in his energy and drive for development and for raising standards of attainment. The department is line managed by the Head teacher, who is affirming and supportive and has high expectations of this exemplary department. Clear steps for ongoing improvement are identified as a result of the effective whole school and departmental self-evaluation process.

Governors discharge their statutory duties with care. They fully support the Joint Church Christian ethos of the school. They spoke of their role within the community as contributing to the "building and living out of the Kingdom" and a conviction that "The Holy spirit is at work in the governing body too." They play an active part in supporting school events and were able to give examples of where their role as 'critical friend' has had an impact. In their self evaluation they showed an awareness of the need for developing a more 'hands on' approach to working with school. Further development of the existing cluster linking arrangement and feedback from governor visits towards more formal systems will enable the governors to acquire a more intimate knowledge of the school. Succession planning for foundation governors is underdeveloped and currently doesn't involve either of the two dioceses. The school is committed to the ongoing training of governors, which the governors themselves respond to positively.

Leaders effectively develop partnerships with other providers, organisations and services. A range of partnership projects contribute to the feeling of belonging, care and value of pupils, which is such a strength of the school community. Links with the two dioceses, parishes and local organisations providing support for health and wellbeing contribute effectively to the impressive pastoral care in the school. This has helped to engender the tangible feeling of warmth, esteem and respect felt around the school and witnessed in the positive relationships within the community.

Leaders and managers' promotion of community cohesion is good. The school is an inclusive community with a clear vision and a strong sense of belonging.

Pupils from different Christian traditions are given the opportunity to work together, share what they have in common and respect and celebrate difference. Displays around the school showed evidence of pupils' learning and celebration of other cultures. Pupils spoke with clarity and enthusiasm for their whole school support of the 'One Goal' project, raising awareness of poverty of education in developing countries and campaigning for justice in this regard. This is one of four such projects the school supports. Matters of community cohesion are central to a number of units within the RE curriculum and this promotes attitudes of respect and tolerance for those of other faith or none.

# PROVISION

## How effective the provision is for Christian education

1
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The quality of teaching in Religious Education is outstanding. It is linked to prior learning. A range of teaching styles, clear explanations, well paced lessons and good use of IT ensure that all pupils are engaged, interested and enjoying their learning. The staff use innovative and courageous techniques to inspire pupils, who spoke about RE lessons with energy and fervour. Pupils recognised that "RE teachers take risks and challenge you, they have quite a passion about the subject." All lessons observed were well paced, used space creatively, developed pupils' religious literacy and empowered pupils' ownership of their learning and progress. Links were made between learning about and learning from religion and positive relationships in lessons enabled pupils to learn.

The school has an accurate picture of pupils' achievement in Religious Education. Rigorous assessment, recording and tracking procedures are in place and they are reviewed constantly. The department has invested heavily in developing systems that enable pupils to raise standards through target setting. These targets are supported with the production of thorough resources and regular assessment opportunities. These systems are bearing impressive fruit with 83% of Year 11 pupils achieving A\*-C grades in 2009, well above other core subjects. While this is a department which has reached maturity in its systems, practice and results, there is no sense of complacency, with refinements of assessment, recording, tracking and intervention identified as areas for further development.

The differing needs of pupils are enriched through a variety of imaginative approaches. Lessons identify prior learning and all schemes of work are differentiated to meet the individual needs of pupils. This, along with new grouping procedures at KS4 provides pupils of all abilities with the expectation of attainment and progress. Programmes of study have been reviewed and developed to incorporate differentiated learning objectives based on the 'must, should, could' system which was used effectively in lessons observed. In line with the school's commitment to pupils with complex needs, the department's link teaching assistants are employed effectively, quietly supporting and enabling identified pupils. An intervention system to more thoroughly and regularly review struggling individual pupils is in development. The Joint Church nature of the school and its impact on the needs of pupils is held in sensitive balance by the RE Department. The subject leader displays a mature understanding of his need for awareness of the issues involved even if some questions, by their very nature, remain unanswered.

The quality of collective worship in the school is good overall. The calendar of themes on which worship and reflection is based is an effective tool in providing a sense of community, particularly as the restrictions of space make whole school worship strategically difficult. The school is currently reviewing its provision for chaplaincy. Currently the school employs a part time chaplain and has a chapel which is used as a space for individual members of the community to pray and reflect, and for liturgies, including Anglican and Catholic Eucharistic

celebrations. To move the quality of provision to outstanding, the school should consider introducing the formal monitoring of tutor reflection time to ensure that it forms an explicit and consistent part of the collective worship programme. This would aid an evaluation of the pattern, frequency and timetabling of opportunities for collective prayer to ensure that daily worship in a range of formats is experienced by the school community.

## SUMMARY OF INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

**Key for inspection grades:**

Grade 1    **Outstanding**    Grade 2    **Good**    Grade 3    **Satisfactory**    Grade 4    **Unsatisfactory**

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The school's capacity for sustained improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>How good outcomes are for pupils, taking particular account of variations between different groups</b>	<b>1</b>
• how well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education	<b>1</b>
❖ the quality of pupils' learning and their progress	<b>1</b>
❖ the quality of learning for pupils with particular learning needs and/or disabilities and their progress	<b>1</b>
❖ pupils' attainment in RE	<b>1</b>
• the extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Christian life of the school	<b>2</b>
• how well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship	<b>2</b>
<b>How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic life of the School</b>	<b>2</b>
• how well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Christian life of the school and plan improvement to outcomes for pupils	<b>1</b>
• how well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for RE and plan for improvement to outcomes for pupils	<b>1</b>
• the extent to which the governing body provides effective challenge and support for the Joint Church dimension of the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory and canonical responsibilities met	<b>2</b>
• how well leaders and managers develop partnerships with other providers, organisations and services in order to promote Christian learning and well being	<b>2</b>
• how effectively leaders and managers promote Community Cohesion.	<b>2</b>
<b>How effective the provision is for Christian Education</b>	<b>1</b>
• the quality of teaching and purposeful learning in Religious Education	<b>1</b>
• the effectiveness of assessment and academic guidance in Religious Education	<b>1</b>
• the extent to which Religious Education curriculum meets pupils' needs	<b>1</b>
• the quality of Collective Worship provided by the school	<b>2</b>

