



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 100179

**Notre Dame Catholic Primary School
Eglinton Road
Shooters Hill
SE18 3SJ**

Inspection date: 14th October 2015

Chair of Governors:	Ms Susan Peach
Headteacher:	Mrs Margaret Carney
Inspectors:	Mr Stephen Beck
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EDUCATION COMMISSION

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SECTION 48

The school is voluntary aided. It is situated in the Greenwich Deanery of the Archdiocese of Southwark. It is maintained by the Royal Borough of Greenwich Local Authority. The principal parishes which the school serves are St Joseph's, Shooters Hill, and St Peter's, Woolwich. A small number of pupils also come from the nearby parishes of Holy Cross and St Patrick's. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholics has risen since the last inspection and is currently at 97% and this is an ongoing trend. The average weekly proportion of curriculum time given to Religious Education is 10% in all key stages.

This one form entry school takes pupils from 4 to 11 years. The number of pupils currently on roll is 204. The attainment of pupils on entering the school is broadly below average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at 12.5% is below average. 37 pupils receive extra support in class. 73% of pupils come from minority ethnic groups, with the majority coming from a Black or Black African heritage although the school intake reflects a broad range of ethnic minorities. The proportion of pupils from homes where English is an additional language is well above average. The local area has a high level of deprivation.

Date of previous inspection:

6th October 2010

Overall Grade:

2

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**

Notre Dame is an improving school with some strong features that identify it as a truly Catholic community. Its strengths lie in the warm family atmosphere and the quality of relationships between all members of the community. Pupils are friendly, helpful, polite and welcoming to visitors. An agreed and consistent approach to discipline and the management of behaviour has resulted in the behaviour of pupils being very good during lessons and around the school. Parents are supportive of the school and appreciative of the care and education their children receive. This is evident in the tone of the questionnaires received and clearly expressed in a written comment stating strong agreement with the strength of what the school offered and how it helps pupils' progress.

The life and work of the school are based on the aims and values of the mission statement. A developing sense of teamwork and clear direction permeates. Under the, excellent, very strong leadership of the Executive Headteacher, the focus is on developing the full potential of every pupil. High priority is given to pastoral care and personal development, offering pupils a welcoming, well resourced, safe and secure learning environment. Links with the parish are good.

The quality of teaching and learning has been variable in the past and the school has worked hard to secure increasingly higher levels of attainment. Assessment is developing and this will impact on the formulation of a more creative approach to Religious Education teaching as confidence builds further. Governors are very supportive and together with the Executive Headteacher and the new subject leader there is a strong and shared determination to continue to raise standards in Religious Education. The school has made progress on the issues identified in the previous report and is further developing planning and moderation opportunities.

The governing body is well informed, aware of the school's strengths and areas for development. As regular visitors they are able to monitor the work of the school as a faith community and make an important contribution to the Catholic life of the school. With this strong commitment from governors, the Headteacher and all staff, the school has a good capacity to improve further.

Notre Dame has experienced a period of transition following being placed in a 'requires improvement' category by Ofsted. In addition, the departure of the substantive headteacher and a significant number of teachers led to the appointment of an Executive Headteacher. It is to her considerable credit that the school has maintained its distinct Catholic identity and strives with success to include each individual and to make each pupil feel valued in accordance with its 'Golden Rules' *'We are respectful, We are kind and helpful, We are honest. We work hard.'* While recruitment of staff has been challenging, the school has done well to appoint staff with strong affinity to the school and its Catholic ethos.

Overall, from low starting points, pupils make good progress and their achievement is broadly good. Attainment overall is average in Religious Education but there is evidence of more able pupils' attainment being good in Key Stage 2. Pupils achieve well when they enjoy their work in Religious Education classes. The Religious Education curriculum is closely linked to the 'Come and See' programme which provides the themes for many of the school's acts of collective worship. Prayer and worship are significant in the Catholic life of the school so that pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good. They have a developing understanding of the Church's mission at home and abroad through their support for a number of good causes.

What steps need to be taken to improve further?

Governors, Headteacher and staff should:

- Follow up the need they have already identified for a fresh approach to the coordination and monitoring of Religious Education. The formation of this new approach should be given a priority to ensure that all staff are confident in delivering high quality Religious Education lessons.
- In consultation with parents, staff and governors review the school's policy on Relationships and Sex Education to ensure it meets statutory requirements and reflects Diocesan Policy, ensuring the appropriate training is delivered for teachers to feel confident in delivering the new programme.

Outcomes for pupils

**Grade
2**

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

The prayer life of Notre Dame is a real strength of the school.

The school places an emphasis on the importance of pupil voice and frequently seeks the views of the pupils on their aspirations, learning and also how important their Catholic education is to them, by providing opportunities for them to participate in the evaluation of the Catholic Life of the school.

The School Council works hard to identify needs: locally, nationally and internationally and strives to organise events to raise money for supporting charities. The children are always keen to support Catholic charities including CAFOD and MISSIO and have raised over £900 for these two charities in 2014/15. The school also raises money for local charities such as the Greenwich Food Bank.

Classes have been named after Saints, in consultation with the children. The class each has produced a display based on their class saint. Pupils commented on how much they enjoy taking home their class prayer books to write a prayer with their family and then bring it back to share with their class. Religious focal points and displays both in community areas and classrooms are of a very high standard and are well used.

Pupils have a deep sense of belonging to their 'school family' and they all strive to do their best to promote the strong Catholic ethos within their school and in the wider community.

They are well aware of the needs of others, both locally and globally.

Pupils take full advantage of the opportunities provided by the school for their personal support and development and are clearly very happy, confident and secure in their own stage of spiritual and emotional growth.

Pupils are very proud of their religious identity, valuing the Catholic tradition of their school and its links to the parish community.

The school is currently reviewing its Relationships and Sex Education policy with a view to updating provision and resources.

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education

Pupils make sound progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities and the new 'Come and See' scheme should support pupils in making greater progress as it becomes embedded. Currently there are no significant differences in performance between pupils of different gender. Outcomes for pupils with additional or special needs are also good.

Analysis of assessments undertaken provides evidence of pupils generally attaining appropriate levels for their age and stage of development in each key stage and an increasing number of pupils are starting to exceed this. Moderation of assessments now needs to be further extended to provide teachers with an accurate picture of higher levels of attainment.

Pupils are becoming increasingly more religiously literate. Their knowledge, understanding and skills are developing appropriate to their age or capacity. 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.

There is evidence in books and through discussions of pupils being encouraged to work independently and collaboratively. They are anxious to learn and improve their knowledge, understanding and skills as they move towards becoming independent

learners, which bodes well for their futures. Pupils' achievements and attainment in Religious Education are good where teaching is confident and assured. In these lessons progress is considerably enhanced by the pupils being challenged.

How well pupils respond to and participate in Collective Worship

Pupils' response to and participation in the school's collective worship is good. They are at ease in their worship and in times of reflection and prayer. Pupils compose their own prayers in a creative way and enthusiastically make use of a class prayer book. Acts of worship engage the majority of pupils and inspire them to respond thoughtfully, respectfully and reverently and with support they could move to greater involvement in preparing and leading worship in a variety of gatherings and settings. Most pupils are knowledgeable about and proficient in using a variety of ways such as scripture, music, silence and artefacts to pray and worship. The development of good quality collective worship is having a positive impact on pupils' spiritual and moral development.

The school environment very much reflects the Catholic nature of the school and its use as a place of worship. There is a planned programme of acts of worship, liturgies and Masses based on the Church's year which is age appropriate and contribute to the pupils' learning as well as their spiritual development. Other major festivals of those with different beliefs are acknowledged.

Parents and parishioners are encouraged to join in acts of worship including liturgies and Masses including Advent, Crowning of Mary, the Rosary and others. Visitors are invited to lead assemblies including representatives from charities, CAFOD, Greenwich Food Bank, athletes and others.

In an assembly attended pupils entered the hall in a very calm orderly manner. Good use was made of the 'Wednesday Word', to exemplify within scripture, the assembly theme of 'Greatness.' Use was made of paired talk in which staff participated actively. Singing enhanced the celebration as did the pupils' prayers which prompted the pupils to be aspirational saying, *"If we can't do it, we just can't do it yet"*.

Leaders and Managers

**Grade
2**

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

The school places a great emphasis on the home, school, and parish partnership. Links with parents are good. The school's leaders, managers and governors are unequivocally committed to their work and witness, ensuring that the Catholic Mission of the school with the spiritual and moral development of pupils are fundamental priorities for the school. They ensure that the provision of the Catholic life of the school permeates every aspect of school life on a daily basis. The Chair of Governors and Executive Headteacher are outstanding role models providing leadership and guidance at all levels and this is having a strong impact on improving outcomes for pupils.

Home visits are made when all new children enter the school. During the visits, parents will be asked about their attendance at church and are encouraged to attend Mass regularly and enrol their child in sacramental preparation if appropriate. This evangelising approach is beginning to have a positive effect both in the school and in the school's parish communities.

Parents are keen to be informed of what is being taught in Religious Education. In addition to receiving a weekly copy of the Wednesday Word, they are invited to attend school Masses and some assemblies and acts of worship. These include the annual nativity play and carol service, the dramatisation of the Passion of Christ, the Crowning of Mary and Harvest Festival. Parents spoke positively about these links and felt well prepared to support their children's faith journey at home. Surveys indicate that parents are very positive about recent developments at Notre Dame. This has seen senior leaders work closely with governors to ensure the education offered is distinctly Catholic.

The parish priest is a known member of the school community; among pupils, teachers and parents. He provides a valued chaplaincy role to all members of the school community. He and the Religious Education subject leader meet regularly to plan class Masses, whole school Masses and opportunities for children to participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. This year has seen an increase in the number of children preparing for the sacraments. Support by members of staff is given for the preparation of the pupils for the Sacrament of the Eucharist in the parish.

How well leaders, governors and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan and implement for improvement to outcomes for pupils

Leaders, governors and managers are beginning to evaluate the provision for Religious Education at Notre Dame. The planned development of the tracking of pupils' attainment and achievement will greatly strengthen improvement to outcomes for pupils. This will provide valuable robust data that will identify trends, progress and attainment for individual groups. It will also identify any gaps in provision and it will enable the school to effectively benchmark with other schools.

Professional development opportunities are provided and there is a commitment to ongoing professional development to enable all staff to gain secure subject knowledge and further extend their skills in teaching Religious Education.

The school's self-evaluation form (SEF) is detailed and clearly identifies areas of strength and areas for development. It is an opportune time to re-examine the SEF to take account of the new format of this report to further enhance and focus the religious education development plan in conjunction with governors.

The new Religious Education governor, who is experienced in primary education, together with the subject leader, have established a positive working relationship with a view to ensure that Religious Education across the school is going to be closely monitored. Over time this should have an impact on pupil progress and attainment.

Provision

**Grade
3**

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

Teachers are working in a challenging environment that is ethnically very diverse and sees increasing numbers of pupils at varying stages of English language development. The quality of teaching and learning in Religious Education has a number of strengths. Where teachers' subject knowledge is confident and secure they deploy a range of teaching styles to motivate and inspire pupils. Open questioning, hot seating and talk partners are used to develop pupils' confidence, challenge their thinking and enable them to make progress. Some teaching encourages pupils' enjoyment and enthusiasm of Religious Education. In the best lessons, teachers take into account pupils' prior learning and ensure differentiated tasks by both outcome and task when planning, so that the work consolidates, builds and extends pupils' knowledge and understanding. These teachers provide opportunities for pupils to work independently and collaboratively. Where lessons are good a stronger pace is evident and levels of independent learning present. Where this is used effectively, pupils are more productively engaged in a range of activities. Questioning techniques are of a higher order and teacher subject knowledge is strong. Examples of good practice should be widely disseminated across the school.

Teaching assistants where they are used effectively make a valuable contribution to lessons, supporting pupils with additional needs. Teachers make good use of ICT to support learning. Pupils are informed of their progress and how to improve both orally and through marking. They are given opportunities to discuss their work and how to improve. The assessment of pupils' work in Religious Education is supported by assessment strategies which provide information on the achievement of pupils.

Teachers are able to identify how well pupils are achieving and tackle underachievement and it is important to ensure this is consistently used across the school along with teachers providing pupils with opportunities to evaluate their own work.

Lesson observations in Religious Education are carried out twice a year. These include book scrutinies and talking to children about their work. The teaching of Religious Education is supported by the use of sufficient resources and presentation of work that is developing good writing skills.

The Religious Education co-ordinator attends most Diocesan provision to enable her to keep up to date with advances in the teaching of Religious Education. This needs to be more widely disseminated to all teachers. Most teachers are beginning to set high expectations of learning in Religious Education and children usually enjoy the challenges this brings.

In all lessons seen there was consistent practice in appropriately utilising focal points, starting lessons with a period of quiet reflection assisted by tranquil music or singing, thereby ensuring that the experience was both calming and spiritual. A Year 6 lesson provided pupils with the opportunity to interview the parish priest about his calling to the priesthood. This provided invaluable information which was then used in a range of challenging tasks on the theme of vocation. The teacher managed a well-planned and paced lesson to maximise pupil learning. A Year 5 lesson on the topic of 'What do we mean by mission?' was strengthened by the teacher's use of personal experiences building on pupils' understanding that through the Sacrament of Baptism we are all called to share the mission of Jesus. Pupil engagement was enhanced by a well-paced lesson that utilised a range of strategies including talk partners, group tasks, excellent use of open-ended questioning and strong teacher confidence that secured pupils' understanding of the concept of 'mission' by looking at well-known people and identifying the mission they exemplified. Vocabulary development was a considerable strength of the lesson. The environment created through the focussed prayer and singing at the start and end of the lesson created a strong sense of purpose to the learning. In a reception lesson building on a visit to the church to learn about Baptism pupils were able to respond to some challenging questions. Support staff provided good support to the group activities and general classroom management. Pupils would have benefitted from a shorter carpet time input at the start of the lesson. A Year 1 lesson on the topic of Baptism built successfully on previous learning, made good use of role play and saw very good classroom management. A greater pace and attention to the focus of pupils when utilising talk partners would secure greater progress.

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

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

Notre Dame uses the 'Come and See' Religious Education programme that fulfils the

requirements of the Religious Education Curriculum Directory. Age appropriate and relevant teaching aims to meet all pupils' needs while contributing to their spiritual and moral development are consistently applied. Learning walks and pupil interviews revealed the pupils' ability to speak confidently about their learning and why it is important to them.

In line with guidance 10% of teaching time is allocated to Religious Education. This fulfils the requirements of the Catholic Bishops of England and Wales. Religious Education underpins learning at Notre Dame by working to form pupils who are religiously literate, confident in their expressions of faith and open to the spiritual beliefs of others.

The school's growing collaborations with the Diocese, Deanery and other local schools will serve to challenge the staff to re-evaluate the Religious Education curriculum to meet pupils' changing needs.

The Religious Education curriculum contributes to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Cross curricula links are made, especially in English, IT, PSHE, music, topic and art. The Church's year is reflected in the school's year. The Rosary is said by classes during the months of October and May. Pupils are given the opportunity to attend the Sacrament of Reconciliation during Lent and Advent. Mass is celebrated on Holy days of Obligation, and there is a Crowning of Mary service as well as all children being given the opportunity to reflect on their beliefs after working with an external theatre group.

As the revised Religious Education scheme becomes embedded, the school will be in a better position to look to extending the depth of provision through adoption of a less didactic teaching approach and adherence to the framework of the Religious Education scheme.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is good. It reflects the Catholic character of the school. Collective Worship plays a key part in meeting the spiritual needs of the pupils with opportunities provided to enable full, active and conscious participation of the whole school community. Pupils are enabled to pray formally and informally using a variety of prayer methods and styles.

Teachers are providing the necessary resources and opportunities to help children to develop the skills necessary to plan, lead and participate in Collective Worship and to evaluate it effectively. This needs to be given time to become embedded.

Opportunities are provided for parents, carers, the local and wider faith communities to participate in a variety of celebrations. These are generally related to the Come and See programme and the Church's liturgical year. Acts of Worship are planned around this, the school year and by adaption to respond to major incidences that happen on a local,

national or international level.

The pupils act reverently and take an active part in Collective Worship in class and school assemblies. The use of the class prayer book encourages pupils to write their own prayers at home with their family and these are shared with the class and with the whole school regularly.

Collective Worship is used as a vehicle to develop the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are always keen to serve on the altar, read and take part in the offertory procession during Mass at school and in the parish church. They participate enthusiastically in religious drama and other acts of worship including the Crowning of Mary and the Passion of Christ.

