



DIOCESE OF BRENTWOOD



Inspection Report

Name of School: St Pius X Catholic Primary School
Unique Reference Number: 115192
Inspection Date: 20 March 2013
Reporting Inspectors: Mr Patrick Moloney and Mrs Penny Rickard

This Inspection was carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of School: Primary
School Category: Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils: 4-11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 207
Appropriate Authority: The Governing Body
Date of previous Inspection:

School Address: Tennyson Road
Chelmsford
Essex CM1 4HY

Tel. No. 01245 354875
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Chair of Governors: Mr Jeremy Milligan
Headteacher: Mrs Anthea Caddy

Introduction:

The Inspection was carried out under Section 48 of the Educational (Schools) Act 2005 by two inspectors appointed by the Diocesan Bishop at the request of the Governing Body of the school.

The Inspectors acknowledge and are appreciative of the full support, co-operation and courtesy they enjoyed from the Governors, Head teacher, Staff and Pupils of the School both before and during the Inspection. The Inspectors wish to express their gratitude to all concerned.

The focus of the Section 48 Inspection was:

- Classroom Religious Education
- The Catholic nature of the School through:
 1. Worship
 2. Links with the Catholic and wider community
- Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development

The Section 48 Report

**St Pius X Catholic Primary School
Tennyson Road
Chelmsford
Essex CM1 4YH**

Head Teacher: Mrs Anthea Caddy

Date of Inspection: 20 March 2013

Description of the School:

St Pius X Catholic Primary School is an average sized school situated in the County of Essex and in the Diocese of Brentwood. The school serves the Catholic parish of the Blessed Sacrament.

What the School does well:

St Pius X Primary is a good Catholic School but with some areas requiring further improvement. The School lives out its Mission Statement, gives pastoral care and inclusion a high priority and pupils are taught by teachers who are aiming to ensure that all are given opportunities to develop their talents and skills. The School prepares pupils for life in the community and the loving care which the pupils receive reflects the work of the Church.

Parents are well informed about the Catholic life of the School and about what their children are taught. They expressed a high level of satisfaction with the school and spoke of their delight in being invited to share liturgical celebrations, feast days, assemblies etc.

The school has a good relationship with the parish and the Headteacher and the Parish Priest work well together. The Parish priest regularly attends the school for class Masses, Liturgies and Governing Body meetings.

Provision for Religious Education (RE) is good and is an area of high focus in the school. The behaviour observed in the classroom during lessons and throughout the school was very good. Pupils work well together and particularly in response to the focused form of questioning that was observed in some lessons. Effective use is made of interactive white boards.

The RE development plan has been reviewed but its value could be enhanced by including dates for accomplishment and further review of objectives as well as naming the precise staff allocated to initiatives.

The Headteacher, who is also the RE coordinator, has a clear vision for the school and is well supported by staff and pupils. Prayer and Collective worship is taken very seriously and is recognised as the core of the Catholic community. Particular care is taken to ensure that it is child centred and the music is reflective of the age and experience of the children. This was evident in the whole school assembly led by the Headteacher, that was observed at the start of the day. The assembly included active pupil participation.

Each classroom has a well-used prayer focus table and prayers are said at the beginning of the school day, as well as meal times and other appropriate times. In some classes children lead the prayers and this good practice could be extended throughout the school.

The Religious artefacts - crucifixes, statues, candles etc. – around the school are of a high quality. The Mission Statement is well thought out and is displayed around the school. Its precepts act as a motivating force throughout the whole school community.

The Governing Body supports the work of the school, which they know well through their visits and links with the local community. They have good awareness of admissions and the curriculum and were involved in drawing up the Mission Statement and RE policy but recognise the need to increase the challenge they offer the school.

The RE curriculum, based on the “Come and See” Religious Education programme of study and recommended by the Bishop of the Diocese, is closely followed in lessons. The school recognises that further training is necessary in order to improve the use of the “Come and See” materials in classrooms.

The school meets the national and diocesan requirements for the allocation of curriculum time for taught RE. Teachers have good subject knowledge but there is not enough sharing of good practice in the classroom. Teaching observed during the inspection was good but some aspects of lessons are teacher dominated and restrict pupils to take their learning forward at a more rapid rate. Teaching assistants observed were well versed in the teaching of RE but some are inconsistently used in lessons to help the teachers consolidate learning.

The marking of pupils work is inconsistent in some classes because it doesn't give pupils enough information about what they need to do next in order to improve their work. There are too few opportunities for pupils to respond to teachers marking or to evaluate the quality of each other's work.

Pupils are engaged in learning because explanations, standards of behaviour and presentation are clear. However, teachers do not always check pupil understanding during the lessons or raise the quality of answers expected when necessary, for example, through insistence or reasons for an answer given and how the pupil arrived at the conclusion.

Plans are now been drawn up to enable staff to be more securely focused on raising achievement and supporting all learners in RE. Teachers are aware of their responsibilities and accountability for pupil results and progress. Monitoring of RE has been refined but the impact of tracking is not always clear in teachers planning. The Headteacher, who is also RE coordinator, works tirelessly to ensure that the place of Religious Education in the school is given top priority but needs to delegate some of the responsibility to another member of staff.

The pupils are offered many opportunities to become responsible citizens. This is evident in their concern for each other and for those less fortunate than themselves. This was particularly evident in the meeting with the School Council and the other pupils we met during the day. They talked about their generous fundraising for charities which they usually initiate. They sometimes plan and run fundraising events in school without adult help.

Plans are in place to develop the provision for sex and relationship education through the Diocesan guidelines and the resource "A journey in Love".

There are good links with the Catholic schools in the area, particularly St John Payne Secondary School and Columbus Special School where the year six pupils work with their students on art projects. Children celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation in the parish with their parents. They are strongly supported in this respect by the Headteacher, Governors and Parish Priest.

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a growing strength of the school.

What needs to improve:

- **Set up a system to track individual pupil progress throughout the school in order to inform planning at the different levels**
- **Consistency in the checking of pupil understanding during lessons in order to improve learning**
- **Consistency in marking – to include comments that encourage further the pupils learning.**

Overall St Pius X is a good Catholic Primary school. The Headteacher works well with all members of the school community to ensure good behaviour and relationships underpin rising achievement in Religious Education. She is aided in her work by the support of parents, the parish priest and an experienced governing body.

The inspectors endorse the areas identified by the school for improvement in the Section 48 Self-Education forms.