



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 102595

Our Lady Immaculate Catholic Primary School
399 Ewell Road
Tolworth
Surrey
KT6 7DG

Inspection date: 12 March 2014

Chair of Governors: Miss Isobel George
Headteacher: Mr Timothy Sheehan
Inspectors: Mrs Ann Oddy
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EDUCATION COMMISSION

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SECTION 48

Introduction

Description of the school

The school is voluntary aided. It is situated in the Kingston upon Thames Deanery of the Diocese of Southwark. It is maintained by Kingston upon Thames LA. The principal parishes which the school serves are Our Lady Immaculate, Tolworth and St Catherine of Siena, Chessington and Hook. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholics is 97%. The average weekly curriculum time given to Religious Education is 10% in Key Stage 1 and 10% in Key Stage 2.

The school takes pupils from 4 to 11 years. The number of pupils currently on roll is 417. The attainment of pupils on entering the school is slightly below average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils receiving extra support in class is above average. The majority of these pupils have specific learning difficulties. Eleven pupils have statements of special educational needs. About half of the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, which is above the national average. The number of pupils learning English as an additional language is also above the national average.

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
1

Our Lady Immaculate is an outstanding school. It is a vibrant Catholic community. Pupils enjoy school and achieve well, with pupils challenged and supported as appropriate. The school's inclusive nature provides a nurturing environment for pupils with special educational needs, enabling them to reach their full potential. Pastoral care is excellent; pupils feel safe and well cared for and know they will be helped with any problems or worries they may have. The Headteacher has built a strong staff team committed to providing excellent Religious Education and supporting and developing the Catholic life of the pupils. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and willing participants in their children's school life. One parent said, "It is an excellent school. I am very pleased with the strong Catholic ethos, which has enabled our children to develop spiritually and responsibly." Governors are frequent visitors to the school and fulfil their role of support and challenge. The school has very good links with the parish and is seeking to extend this to include the parish of St Catherine of Siena. Good practice is shared with other schools and transition is facilitated by working with local secondary schools.

Leaders, governors and managers at all levels are very committed to developing the Catholic life of the school. Recommendations from the last inspection have been fully addressed.

What steps need to be taken to improve further?

Governors, Headteacher and staff should:

- Further develop and monitor the progress of high achievers in Religious Education across the school.
- Include measurable targets and success criteria as part of the Religious Education School Improvement Plan.

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

The school has a distinctively Catholic ethos, evident in the many attractive displays around the school and well-resourced prayer focus areas which include children's own prayers and work.

The school works closely in partnership with parents and the parish community to develop the academic and spiritual life of the pupils. Relationships within the school are excellent and encourage pupils to be caring, compassionate and supportive of each other. Pupils express their own views and beliefs with confidence and are able to refer to the teaching of Jesus and Gospel values. They value and respect the Catholic tradition of the school and their mission to help others less fortunate than themselves, generously supporting charities locally, nationally and globally. Importance is given to events in the liturgical year; a wealth of liturgical celebrations take place during the school year and often include invitations to the wider school community to participate in these. Parents appreciate their involvement in school life and regular and informative communications from school help them support their children's faith development. Pupils are proud of their school and describe it as a happy and friendly community.

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education

Pupils achieve high standards in Religious Education and make excellent progress. This was evident in the lessons observed. Pupils were attentive and reflective, often showing a deeper understanding of religious concepts. They were encouraged to explore complex issues and responded thoughtfully and with consideration. A Year 2 class exploring the reasons for prayer suggested, "talking to God so that He wasn't lonely" in addition to the more usual reasons such as thanksgiving and petition. A Year 6 pupil suggested that the Bread of Life meant, "Jesus will be in us and we will not be separated from him. He gives us real life". Pupils responded well to skilful questioning and demonstrated significant religious literacy. They clearly enjoyed Religious Education and were keen to participate and achieve well.

How well pupils respond to and participate in Collective Worship

Pupils participate in collective worship with reverence and respect. A well planned class mass allowed all the pupils to participate, which they did so with confidence and enthusiasm. Pupils are offered a wide variety of opportunities for prayer and worship, including visits to the church for the Rosary and Stations of the Cross in the appropriate liturgical seasons. Many pupils also enjoy their roles as altar servers in the parish community. Pupils appreciate that prayer and worship are an integral part of the school. A parent described class masses, assemblies and religious celebrations as having, "a real heart" and that, "the children participate because they clearly want to and have a sense of belonging."

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

Leaders, governors and managers are deeply committed to the school as a Catholic community and to the Church's mission in education. The Headteacher and the Religious Education coordinator are excellent role models and support all staff in participating in and developing the Catholic life of the school. The Parish Priest works closely with the school, providing valuable support and guidance. He works with classes preparing their class masses and liaises with the Headteacher and Religious Education coordinator regarding the many liturgical celebrations that are an integral part of school life. School self-evaluation and strategic planning include provision for the Catholic life of the school; this is also considered and discussed by the Governing Body as part of the school development planning. Governors are very much part of the school's Catholic life; they are frequent visitors to the school and participants in liturgical celebrations as part of their monitoring role and as members of the school community.

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

The Headteacher and Religious Education coordinator have an effective programme of monitoring and evaluating provision for Religious Education in order to secure the best possible outcomes for pupils. They recognise the importance of working with other schools to share and improve good practice and are part of the deanery network of local Catholic schools. This has facilitated external moderation of levelled pupils' work, validating the school's own judgments. Governors are well informed and receive regular subject and data reports, which are subject to discussion and questioning in line with their role of support and challenge. They make regular monitoring visits to the school. School self-evaluation is well established and reflects comprehensive systems of assessment and monitoring that inform school improvement planning. These include lesson observations, book scrutinies and planning scrutinies as part of the monitoring and evaluation of Religious Education. The school has accurately identified the attainment of more able pupils in Religious Education as a focus for further development. This now needs to be part of target setting, with clearly measurable outcomes reflecting pupil expectations and attainment in other key subjects across the school. This will enable year on year progress to be tracked with groups and whole cohorts of pupils. Similarly, the school improvement plan includes Religious Education and the Catholic life of the school; it should now also use school data to set measurable targets using pupil outcomes, as part of this.

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

Four lessons were observed, two were securely good, with outstanding features and two were outstanding. Teaching was highly effective in enthusing pupils and ensuring good pupil progress. Lessons were well planned and resourced. Good teaching strategies included higher level questioning, building on pupils' previous knowledge and excellent class management. Pace was very good, as was teachers' subject knowledge and enthusiasm. Provision for the pupils' spiritual development was excellent. There were opportunities for prayer and reflection and the creation of a special atmosphere during the lesson by using candles and music effectively to enhance pupils' experience. Lessons were inclusive and additional adults used effectively to support pupils. Lessons related well to pupils' own lives and experiences. Examination of pupils' books showed a wide range of activities. Books had been marked regularly and showed evidence of pupil self-assessment. Marking was affirmative and developmental: Pupils should now be given the opportunity to respond to teachers' comments.

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

The Religious Education curriculum is in line with the requirements of the Bishops' Conference and is appropriately tailored to pupils' needs. The school has recently introduced the 'Come and See' programme of Religious Education and this is now used across the school. Staff have received appropriate training and deliver the curriculum with confidence and enthusiasm, skilfully adapting the lessons to the needs of the learners. The curriculum is effectively linked with collective worship and the Catholic life of the school. Pupils are enthusiastic and highly motivated learners and receive many opportunities to improve their spiritual, moral and cultural values. They are taught to respect the beliefs and practices of others as part of their study of other faiths and as part of a diverse and multi-ethnic school community.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school

The school provides a wealth of opportunities for the pupils to develop spiritually through acts of collective worship. Worship is central to the life of the school. Adults associated with the school are often invited to attend and are clearly pleased to do so. Prayer is very much part of the school day; pupils compose their own prayers as well as knowing and using school prayers and the traditional prayers of the Church. Prayer also forms a regular part of staff and governor meetings. Year 6 pupils take part in a retreat day of reflection and Year 4, 5 and 6 pupils are given the opportunity for individual Reconciliation during Lent. Collective worship is carefully prepared and planned, including by the children themselves. Parents and pupils speak appreciatively of these occasions; "the children feel ownership when participating in masses and assemblies."