



# **DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION REPORT**

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

**URN 131520**

**Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School**

**Este Road**

**Battersea**

**SW11 2TD**

**Inspection date:** 06<sup>th</sup> December 2018

**Co-Chairs of Governors:** Mr Rex Wickham /  
Mr Andrew Coyne

**Executive Headteacher:** Mr Jared Brading

**Associate Headteacher:** Mrs Nicola Byrne

**Inspectors:** Mr Stephen Beck  
Mr David Hennessy

## **EDUCATION COMMISSION**

St Edward's House, St Paul's Wood Hill, Orpington, Kent BR5 2SR  
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**Director of Education: Dr Simon Hughes**



### Key for inspection grades

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

## FULL REPORT

### INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School is situated in the Wandsworth Deanery of the Archdiocese of Southwark. It is maintained by Wandsworth Local Authority. It is part of a federation of two Catholic primary schools in Battersea. Both schools are led by an Executive Headteacher with an Associate Head in place in each school. It is a two form of entry school, with a nursery and an attached Local Authority base called 'Hilary House' which opened in September 2012 for primary aged pupils with autistic spectrum disorders (ASD).

The principal parish the school serves is Sacred Heart, Battersea although it also has links with St Vincent de Paul, Clapham Common and St Mary Magdalene, East Hill. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholics is 69%. The average weekly time given to Religious Education is 10% in all Key Stages.

The school takes pupils from 3 to 11 years. The number of pupils currently on roll is 414. The attainment of pupils on entering the school is generally below average. 34% of pupils are entitled to free school meals and the school is in the highest deprivation indicator bracket. Around 13% of pupils are eligible for additional support and 27% are eligible for pupil premium. The school has a high proportion (67.5%) of pupils from black and minority ethnic communities which is significantly higher than the national average. Additionally the number of children exposed to and living with parents who speak languages other than English is even higher.



## SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

Sacred Heart is an outstanding Catholic school because:

- The Catholic Life of the school is outstanding. Sacred Heart has a distinctively Catholic ethos that permeates all aspects of the school. There is a real sense of belonging to the school, to the parish, to the wider Church and the global community, along with a strong feeling of personal involvement.
- It is effective in developing pupils' experience of the richness of a Catholic way of living and believing. The vision of the school's leadership and governing body, supported by the parish priest and deacon, are instrumental in ensuring that within an inspirational academic environment worship and prayer remain central to the life of the school and are well planned and resourced.
- The high level of teaching enables the pupils to make good progress. Many lessons are interesting, exciting and varied. A variety of teaching styles are used to deliver the learning objectives, which are shared with the pupils. Pupils at Foundation Stage are being provided with an excellent start to their education in a language and discussion-rich environment, which is successfully extended as pupils move through the school.
- The school provides a rich experience of worship that enables pupils to both understand and live out their faith. This is within a context of understanding the nature of an individual's faith journey and is manifestly enhanced by the input and support of the parish priest and deacon.

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

- Ensure upper Key Stage 2 pupils are provided with more opportunities to widen their learning through extended independent research.
- Revisit the inspection self-evaluation form to develop it as a working document to identify the school's key strengths and areas for development so as to provide greater clarity to the Religious Education section of the school development plan.
- Review the Religious Education content on the school's website so that it more readily celebrates the excellent breadth and depth of the school's Catholic ethos, range of liturgical celebrations and the Religious Education curriculum.



## 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.

2

### 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.

2

### 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



## CATHOLIC LIFE

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

- Sacred Heart is an outstanding Catholic school in challenging circumstances. Pupils are aware of the school's mission statement as it is in a prominent position in classrooms and around the school. They bear witness to their faith within school through their exemplary behaviour, manners and positive relationships with their peers and the adults who teach and care for them.
- Pupils are proud of belonging to Sacred Heart Catholic School and being part of the Battersea network of Catholic schools of which it is a founder member. This group focuses on the common good for young people through the parishes, schools and local religious communities.
- Pupils talk positively about the links with the parish and the local community.
- They are actively engaged in fundraising activities and often instigate and plan these in response to local, national or global campaigns, thus taking on roles of responsibility and leadership that develop the Catholic Life of the school.
- Most pupils have an understanding of, and many can articulate, what it means to have a vocation, and understand the importance of using their skills and talents for the service of others.
- Through their work in Religious Education lessons, most pupils have an understanding that religious beliefs are important for many people and that some people may have different beliefs to their own.
- Pupils participate in celebrations throughout the liturgical year. These are well supported by the parish priest and deacon whose formal and informal participation in the life of the school provides a high level of chaplaincy support to the whole school community.
- During the inspection, pupils showed a good understanding of the season of Advent and could talk maturely about how their behaviour and preparations for Christmas were influenced by the season, in both a religious and secular context. This was likewise reflected in pupils' workbooks.
- The school's mission statement based on the growth of a mustard seed resonates with pupils who relate this to their own aspirations.

### **The quality of provision of the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding**

- There are strong relationships throughout the school, which lead to high staff morale, and a commitment to the Catholic vision articulated by the senior leadership team and shared by all.
- The learning environment reflects the strong Catholic character of the school. Displays, religious artefacts and prayer tables encourage pupils to engage with their faith and develop their understanding of liturgical seasons.
- Sacred Heart has a strong sense of community with a high number of pupils acting as altar servers in their parishes.



- Staff are committed to the pastoral needs of every pupil. They understand their backgrounds and build links with the families. As a consequence, pupils feel safe, secure and well cared for.
- Generations of families have attended the school and many parents seen on the day of the inspection commented on the 'family' ethos and the attention given by staff to each individual child.
- Staff communicate high expectations of behaviour for pupils; as a result, a calm and productive atmosphere runs throughout the school.
- A parent wrote, *'My child enjoys Religious Education very much, we discuss what they have done at school. We also love the 'Wednesday Word', which we read through and work together. It is lovely that this goes so well with what we do at church each week and makes a good link between home, church and school'.*

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

- The Associate Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher and Religious Education leader complement each other in leading Religious Education and this collaborative partnership is a strength of the school. There are numerous examples of good practice that have been established and are bearing fruit. Consolidation of this work, and a focus, on ensuring greater cohesion between monitoring, evaluation and development planning in order to build on the significant strides they have made will secure the school's current strengths.
- The school is larger than average and the impact the Catholicity of the school is having on the pupils is obvious on a day-to-day basis.
- The school makes good efforts to communicate with parents and involve them in their childrens' education. The leadership team is sensitive to the needs of the community and endeavour at every opportunity to reach out to parents to achieve positive benefits for the pupils.
- Governors are well organised and knowledgeable about the school. Their monitoring of the Catholic Life of the school is developing well. They visit the school regularly and actively seek the views of parents and carers. They forge strong links with the parish and are keen to promote the school locally.
- The Executive Headteacher is deeply committed to the Church's mission in education and provides a role model for staff and pupils. He is a visionary leader who has maximised the benefits of the Federation with St Mary's. He has established joint working, provided expertise and overseen the sharing of resources.
- The relatively newly formed PTA is already working with the school to support additional provision for the pupils and further build engagement between home and school.



## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

1

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

- Pupils report that they enjoy Religious Education and this was clearly illustrated during the inspection where pupils were engaged and motivated during lessons.
- As pupils progress through the school they are able to identify stories from both the Old and the New Testaments. They are able to explain how these stories affect their lives.
- Pupils begin school with attainment well below age-related expectations in Religious Education. However, they make rapid progress through the Foundation Stage and enter Key Stage 1 with the majority attaining in line with expectations.
- As a result of this progress, which continues through Key Stage 1, pupils begin Key Stage 2 with a strong foundation on which to build.
- Progress continues throughout Key Stage 2 and by the end of Year 6, most pupils' attainment is in line with expectations with an increasing proportion achieving at a higher level. Progress is good for all groups of pupils, including those with English as an additional language and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- A pupil commented, *'This school has lead me to a good path in learning'*.

### The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education is outstanding

- Teaching is consistently good or better. Teaching over time has been maintained as good quality since the last inspection and this has contributed to the pace of learning for pupils and groups of pupils over time. This in turn has generated strong outcomes and capacity for ongoing development.
- Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the curriculum in Religious Education and most are using a range of approaches and resources to engage pupils and stimulate active participation in lessons.
- Religious Education lessons are well planned to extend pupils' previous learning, understanding and knowledge. Teachers use creative ways to make learning enjoyable often engaging pupils using a cross curricular approach.
- Teachers are aware of pupils' prior learning through accurate assessment procedures and plan activities that meet the needs of all pupils.
- Teaching assistants are generally used effectively to support learning. Sharing good practice in the use of effective and differentiated questioning would provide a greater level of challenge for all pupils, both in small supported groups and whole class discussions.
- Marking and constructive feedback are performed regularly and accurately.
- Pupils are given time to respond to marking, but greater consistency in this area would enable pupils to become more fully involved in the evaluation of their work.
- Teaching at Foundation Stage is outstanding. It is language and discussion rich with skilled adults using well-chosen resources. Pupils are consistently on task. Excellent



cross curricular links support the learning. Pupils articulated the context of their learning, for example, *"We are like the shepherds looking after our sheep"*,

- There is a prayerful atmosphere in lessons that makes good use of up-to-date focal points. The strong community ethos of the school permeates lessons and impacts on pupil interactions.
- All lessons are well linked to pupils' lives and are made relevant to the way they should live.
- Teachers' expectations of pupils are high. Pupils rise to these leading to a consistently strong ethos of behaviour for learning.
- In upper juniors, care needs to be taken to maximise progress through the impact of teaching on outcomes for pupils. This could be further evidenced in books.
- Responses to marking are very strong. Pupils are clear of their next steps and these support progress.
- Consistent use of learning journals across the school effectively capture key religious moments.

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

- Governors are well informed about standards in Religious Education and expertise on the governing body has been used effectively to support the school's work.
- The curriculum is well planned using the 'Come and See' programme. It is matched accurately to the needs of the pupils.
- Leaders' provision of Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education was refined and improved last year with the introduction and training of staff using the Promoting Alternative THinking Strategies (PATHS) programme. This was facilitated across the federation by the National Health Service (NHS) and Barnardo's. The programme fits well within the culture of pastoral care already established in school. There is an established policy in place for Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), which was developed with the parish, governors and staff. It is planned that in the spring term this policy will be reviewed. Parents indicated that they were very happy with this aspect of the school's curriculum.
- Plans to further improve the analysis of data and more closely track attainment and progress will serve to fine tune pupils next steps. As part of this process, consideration could be given to focussing monitoring to ensure pupils are provided with a range of opportunities to undertake some pupil-initiated independent learning.
- The school mission statement is a clear expression of the educational aims of the school. The statement was developed as part of the Federation by pupils, staff and governors, to link gospel passages to the lives of all pupils and staff. Leaders and governors have established a strong, well understood ethos, built on the words of St Matthew: *'A man took a grain of mustard seed, and sowed it in his field. Indeed, the seed is smaller than all seeds, but when it is grown it is greater than the herbs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in its branches.'* (Matthew 13.31) This stands out as the mantra of the school community.





## COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

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

- Pupils respond with reverence and respect to Collective Worship. They enjoy participating in liturgy and have developed a good understanding of the Mass.
- Prayer is an important part of the Religious Education lessons.
- Pupils are involved in setting up for Collective Worship. As developing age appropriate opportunities to prepare and lead worship across the school progresses, the school will successfully build on the outstanding practice currently demonstrated by older pupils.
- Pupils join in community prayers appropriately and with confidence.
- Pupils know the importance of stillness and silence during times of reflection and prayer.
- On the day of inspection, worship engaged the pupils' interest, inspired reflection and enabled them to respond meaningfully.
- 'Faith Friends' are becoming well established and are keen to contribute even more to the prayer life of the school and this is commendably already part of the school's development plan.
- A parent responded on their questionnaire, *'The school is doing really well to develop childrens' spiritual life, especially with things like the rosary group with the priest and Executive Headteacher. We are grateful for all their help and support in our child's faith upbringing'*. Another commented, *'My child is a Faith Friend and really enjoys being part of the school group of children that 'help get ready for prayers'. The parish priest and deacon are always seen around the school and play a huge role in the school and church and my child knows them well. My child especially enjoyed the Lenten retreat last year and I felt the school valued their development during the Holy Communion year'*.

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

- Staff and pupils pray together regularly. Prayer is an important part of every day and almost all school events and celebrations. School leaders feel this is an important aspect of their role in evangelisation.
- Staff and pupils speak very positively about Collective Worship and are able to recall memorable moments that were inspiring and had an impact on their lives.
- Resources are well used. Teachers are supported by senior staff in planning worship in addition to developing their role in and opportunities to lead Collective Worship.
- Collective Worship is well planned and follows themes from the 'Come and See' Religious Education programme and the liturgical seasons of the Church. Good use is made of a variety of resources to engage and enthuse the pupils. These include signed hymns, Mass commentaries and religious images.
- The school encourages parents and carers to attend pupils' class assemblies and Masses often offering personal invitations at the beginning of the school day. The



response to these invitations is variable, but when they do attend, parents and carers comment on how they are moved by these occasions.

- The school is proactively working to foster increased parental engagement and this is beginning to have an impact in a number of aspects of school life with resultant benefits for the pupils.
- The parish priest is a regular visitor to the school and enjoys celebrating and worshipping with the pupils.
- Most staff are skilled in helping pupils to plan and deliver good quality Collective Worship. Where staff are new to teaching or to Catholic education, they are given appropriate support to gain an understanding of the purpose of Collective Worship and the various forms it can take.
- The parish deacon is very involved in the Catholic Life of the school. He comes in regularly and supports the school's well-attended prayer groups including a thriving rosary group. He also visits and supports in classes.
- The generosity of time given by the parish priest and deacon are recognised and valued by the school community, which parents and staff described as "*second to none*".

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

- The Associate Headteacher and Executive Headteacher are skilled in the planning and delivery of good quality Collective Worship that engages and inspires the pupils.
- Pupils understand the Church's liturgical year, seasons, rites and symbols and work hard to lead the school in an appreciation of these traditions.
- The Associate Headteacher and Executive Headteacher model of effective practice and support staff well in the planning and leading liturgy. The personal commitment of the Headteacher in developing this aspect of the school has influenced positively the level of participation and engagement by pupils and staff.
- The Headteacher and senior leaders use a variety of monitoring activities to assess the impact of Collective Worship. There is a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development and the school improvement plan accurately reflects this.
- More opportunities for all staff especially those new to teaching, to receive formation in the development of their spiritual and liturgical understanding would further strengthen provision.
- Sacred Heart School is blessed with a mutually beneficial parish priest and deacon partnership. Their symbiotic approach and their knowledge and understanding of education are a great asset. They know the school, its surroundings and its community incredibly well. This has enabled the school to foster an exceptionally strong home-school- parish partnership.
- As a result of the time commitment of the parish priest and deacon, a very broad range of worship is experienced by the pupils. This provides a rich experience of worship that enables pupils to both understand and live out their faith. This is within a context of understanding the nature of an individual's faith journey.