



Diocese of Arundel and Brighton

INSPECTION REPORT

St Dunstan's Catholic Primary School

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DfES Number: 9363920

Headteacher: Mrs J. Birch

Chair of Governors: Mr P. Jones

Canonical Inspection under Canon 806 on behalf of the Bishop of Arundel & Brighton
and inspection of Denominational Education under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

Date of inspection: 7th May 2014
Date of previous inspection: 3rd July 2009

Lead Inspector: Mrs A. Oddy
Associate Inspector: Mr S. Beck

Description of School

St Dunstan's School is voluntary aided. It is situated in the Woking Deanery of the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton. It is maintained by Surrey Local Authority. The principal parish which the school serves is St Dunstan's, Woking. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholics is 97%. The average weekly proportion of curriculum time given to religious education is 10% in Key Stage 1 and 10% in Key Stage 2. The school has 476 pupils currently on roll and is larger than most primary schools. It takes pupils from 4 to 11 years.

An above average proportion of pupils come from ethnic minority backgrounds and the number of pupils who speak English as an additional language is also above average. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is lower than average. Two pupils have statements of special educational need. The proportion of pupils on the school's register of special educational need is broadly average. The attainment of pupils entering the school is below average. The school's mission is "to be a happy, caring and compassionate Catholic community where each child's gifts are developed to the full".

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1: Outstanding; Grade 2: Good; Grade 3: Satisfactory; Grade 4: Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of this Catholic school

St Dunstan's is outstanding as a Catholic community which encourages everyone to feel valued and to strive for personal excellence. Its happy atmosphere extends to staff, pupils and visitors. The school has a vibrant Catholic ethos centred around a strong prayer life. It is very much part of the parish. A parent commented "with the church close by, there is a strong community feel". The headteacher provides exceptional leadership to a cohesive and committed staff team. Governors are highly effective, understand their role of support and challenge and are very much part of the school. The parish priest and school chaplain play a pivotal role in the life of the school, providing support and guidance at all levels. Pupils enjoy school and are proud of their school community. Their behaviour is exemplary. They are caring and supportive of each other. Standards in religious education are extremely high. Effective succession planning is in place to ensure that this continues. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and appreciate the Catholic education it offers. "My children come home from school confident and happy in themselves and as worthy and loved children of God."

Grade 1

Improvement since the last inspection

Recommendations made by the last inspection have been fully addressed.

Governors' roles include a governor with responsibility for religious education and the governing body is fully involved in monitoring religious education and the Catholic life of the school.

Collective worship includes offering pupils opportunities to contribute to preparing and participating in school liturgies.

Monitoring of pupils' work in religious education is developmental and encourages pupils to reflect on their learning.

Grade 1

What the school should do to improve further

- Continue with the current very effective systems being put in place to prepare and equip the new religious education coordinator for her role.
 - Use focused monitoring in religious education to target specific areas e.g. differentiation, in order to continue to raise standards and ensure consistency across the school.
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The Catholic Life of the School

Leadership and Management

Leadership and management are excellent. Leaders at all levels are fully committed to the school's Catholic mission. The headteacher is an excellent role model, providing strong vision and clear direction for the school. She has created an effective team of staff who work together to form a cohesive Catholic community. Governors are exceptionally well informed regarding the school and enthusiastic in their role. They have a clear understanding of the mission of the Catholic school and its commitment to developing each child as a whole person, including academic achievement as well as spirituality and responsibility to others. The school is well resourced and provides an attractive learning environment. Excellent links exist with the parish and with other local schools. The school includes supporting families as part of its excellent and comprehensive system of pastoral care.

Grade 1

The Prayer Life of the School

Prayer is woven into the fabric of the school. Its prayer life is well established at all levels. It is evident in the beautiful prayer focus areas in every classroom, attractive artefacts and resources to aid prayer and the provision of prayer areas such as the Marian grotto in the school grounds. Each class has a prayer journal in which pupils can contribute their own prayers for use in class prayer times. Liturgy and worship show great reverence and spirituality; a view supported by priests, staff, parents and governors. The act of collective worship observed directly engaged pupils and staff in prayer and reflection and was an excellent example of the school as a worshipping community. A parent commented on the "melodic and joyful" nature of the worship. Pupils were involved throughout and were active participants. The school chaplain works in close partnership with the school in developing the children's sacramental understanding and their awareness that they are the Church.

Grade 1

How effectively does the school / college promote community cohesion?

The school is an inclusive community where all are welcomed and enabled to achieve their full potential. It celebrates its cultural diversity with international days and includes the study of other faiths as an essential part of the curriculum. Pupils are encouraged to consider and care for others and support a range of charities both local and international. They are taught to respect and help each other through a strong personal, health and social education programme linked to their religious education.

Grade 1

Religious Education

Achievement and Standards in Religious Education

Standards in religious education are very high. Pupils make excellent progress and achieve well. Many pupils have low starting points on entry to the school but achieve age related expectations or better by the time they leave. Teacher expectations of pupils' learning are high and result in high quality work. Pupils enjoy religious education and are motivated and keen to do their best. They are able to build on previous learning, are secure in the knowledge they have gained and are able to articulate this with confidence. All groups of pupils achieve well. Special needs pupils are appropriately supported.

Grade 1

Teaching and learning in Religious Education

Standards in teaching and learning are very high. Outstanding lessons were observed across all key stages. Lessons showed careful preparation and good pace. A range of teaching strategies and styles were employed effectively. These enthused and motivated learners. Lessons successfully built on previous learning, incorporated probing questioning and provided evidence of progress. High expectations of behaviour coupled with warm, supportive relationships created a productive atmosphere in classrooms where pupils were keen to work hard. IT is used to enhance learning. Pupils demonstrate high standards of religious literacy.

Assessment in religious education is comprehensive and established. It is being suitably adapted to the school's recently adopted Come and See programme of religious education. Pupil progress is tracked and levelled work is moderated at school and deanery level. Regular lesson observations, planning and book scrutiny monitor the quality of teaching and learning. The school should now consider a more focused approach to monitoring, targeting specific areas such as differentiation. This will facilitate its continuing quest to raise standards and ensure consistency across the school.

Grade 1

Quality of the Curriculum

The curriculum in religious education fulfils the requirements of the diocese and those of the Bishops' Conference. The school follows the Come and See programme although it is clear that religious education is at the heart of the whole curriculum and not confined to religious education lessons. Pupils are offered a wide range of activities to enhance learning. They enjoy their lessons and appreciate the relevance of religious education to their own lives. They are encouraged to develop questioning skills and to reflect on their learning. The curriculum is well resourced and appropriately funded. It includes the study of other faiths which is enriched by visits to other places of worship.

Grade 1

Leadership and management of Religious Education

Leadership and management of religious education are outstanding. Excellent systems of assessment, pupil tracking and monitoring are well established and contribute to the very high standards of religious education across the school.

The school has benefited considerably from the skills, expertise and commitment of the current religious education coordinator. It has had the foresight to offer the new coordinator comprehensive shadowing opportunities so that she now has the capacity and is well placed to continue to move the school forward. This succession planning at St Dunstan's is an exemplar to other schools.

All school staff are ably supported by the coordinator. Efficient induction ensures that all staff are well equipped and confident in their teaching of religious education. The governor with responsibility for religious education is actively involved in the school and regularly reports back to governors, who have a clear understanding of provision and standards in religious education.

Grade 1