



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 118779

St Augustine of Canterbury Catholic Primary School
Deanwood Drive
Rainham, Kent
ME8 9NP

Inspection date: 21 November 2014

Chair of Governors:	Mr Clive Mailing
Headteacher:	Mrs Katharine Sexton
Inspectors:	Mrs Ann Oddy Ms Frances Honis

EDUCATION COMMISSION
St Edward's House, St Paul's Wood Hill, Orpington, Kent BR5 2SR
Tel 01689 829331 Fax 01689 829255
Director of Education: Dr Anne Bamford

SECTION 48

Introduction

Description of the school

The school is voluntary aided. It is situated in the Chatham Deanery of the Archdiocese of Southwark. It is maintained by Medway LA. The principal parish which the school serves is St Augustine of Canterbury, Parkwood and Wigmore. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholics is 43%. The average weekly time given to Religious Education is 10% in Key Stage one and 10% in Key Stage 2.

The school takes pupils from 4 to 11 years. The number of pupils currently on roll is 183. The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is well below the national average. The proportion of pupils with additional educational needs supported through school action or school action plus is above average. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage.

Date of previous inspection:

30 September 2009

Overall Grade:

2

Key for inspection grades

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

St Augustine of Canterbury is a good Catholic school. Pupils are happy, enjoy coming to school and achieve well. It is an inclusive and welcoming school and provides an attractive and well-resourced learning environment. Its Catholic identity is clear in the many beautiful displays relating to Religious Education, the inspiring prayer focal areas and the school mission statement prominently displayed throughout the school. Standards in Religious Education are good. Effective teaching and learning ensure that pupils make good progress and enjoy their lessons. Leaders and managers are committed to the Catholic life of the school. Governors are fully aware of their responsibilities. They carry out their monitoring role conscientiously and enjoy being part of the school's Catholic life. Parents appreciate all that the school offers. One said, "We feel our child receives an excellent Catholic education in a caring school." Areas for development identified by the last inspection have been addressed.

What steps need to be taken to improve further?

Governors, Headteacher and staff should:

- Ensure that higher achieving pupils are offered challenge and opportunities that will allow them to attain the higher levels in Religious Education.
- Develop the Religious Education Action Plan to include objectives directly linked to pupil outcomes in order to continue to raise standards and drive improvement.

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

Pupils feel safe and happy and are proud to be members of St Augustine's school and part of its Catholic life. They are encouraged to take responsibility as reading buddies, new pupil mentors and playground buddies and respond very positively. They are able to communicate opinions and feelings either in class or by using 'golden' or 'worry' boxes and know that their concerns will be listened to and addressed.

Pupils' achievements and successes are recognised and celebrated. They are kind and considerate to each other. They know it is important to care for others, in their school community and beyond and are active in fundraising for local, national and global charities. They know that others may have different faith beliefs and practices and appreciate the need to respect these.

Pupils are given many opportunities to develop their spiritual life. Prayer and worship opportunities are many and varied and enhanced by enrichment activities such as the Year 6 spiritual retreat at Aylesford Priory.

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education

Pupils make good progress and achieve well in Religious Education.

Standards of work in books is very high and generally matches the standard of written work in literacy books.

All groups of pupils make good progress; pupils with additional educational needs are supported to attain their full potential; however teaching and learning in Religious Education needs to ensure that higher attaining pupils are enabled to achieve the higher levels of attainment, matching those in other core subjects. Pupils enjoy their Religious Education lessons and are able to relate them to their own lives. They are keen to do well and are reflective and inquiring.

Religious Education lessons observed as part of this inspection engaged and interested the pupils. Teaching was imaginative and creative and pupils responded very positively.

Parents are involved in their children's Religious Education. They are regularly informed regarding topics studied and are invited to comment on their children's work. They appreciate their children's growing knowledge and practice of their faith. One commented, "Since starting school in September my child has learned the Sign of the Cross, prayers and Grace. He has also developed a more mature and respectful attitude at home and in church."

How well pupils respond to and participate in Collective Worship

Prayer and worship are central to school life. Collective Worship opportunities are many and varied. A wealth of assemblies, liturgies and Mass take place during the school year. During the act of Collective Worship observed, pupils participated with interest and enthusiasm. They sang joyfully and joined in the actions to the hymn. One year group led

the bidding prayers which they had prepared previously. The hymn had been chosen by another year group, who were invited to explain the reasons for their choice. They had chosen 'Peace is flowing like a river' because "God wants us to have a peaceful world and love one another." Pupils are happy to contribute to spontaneous prayer as well as joining in responses and the traditional prayers of the Church. They appreciate the need for reverence and are able to spend time in quiet reflection and meditation. Pupils have the opportunity to write their own personal prayers and responses to Scripture in their own Class Prayer Books and Guided Meditation books. Prayer areas within the school, the school chapel and the Holy Garden offer a range of venues for quiet and personal prayer. Pupils enjoy a range of activities contributing to Collective Worship, including liturgical dance, drama and signing actions to the hymns.

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 show great commitment to the Church's mission in education. The school has a rich programme of events related to the Catholic life of the school and welcomes all members of the school community to join in its celebrations.

INSET has been provided to staff to help them develop their skills in planning assemblies and Mass in order to provide interesting and engaging liturgies to promote the pupils' spiritual development and enjoyment of Collective Worship. Parents and carers are invited to school celebrations and to the wider life of the school. Response is very positive and parents clearly feel they belong in the school community.

The school has strong links with the parish, supporting the pupils in parish based sacramental programmes.

Staff are supportive of the Catholic ethos of the school. Induction of new staff ensures their understanding of the school's mission and offers support and guidance as appropriate.

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 committed to the importance of Religious Education as a core subject in the school. A comprehensive programme of monitoring activities include lesson observations, planning and book scrutinies; these effectively inform school self-evaluation and development planning. Areas for improvement are identified and form the Religious Education Action Plan, which has clear objectives and timescales. This should now also include objectives directly related to pupil progress, in order to drive improvement and continue to raise standards in Religious Education. The Action Plan should also record when objectives have been achieved and their impact. Governors are actively involved in the monitoring of Religious Education. The governor assigned to Religious Education has participated in lesson observations, pupil conferencing and observations of liturgy as well as providing a link with the parish community. Governors receive regular reports and information regarding Religious Education and it is a regular discussion item at Curriculum Committee meetings.

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

Standards in teaching and learning are high. Four lessons were observed as part of this inspection; all were good or better. Lessons showed good planning built on previous knowledge and included pupils' own experience. Questioning allowed pupils the opportunity to reflect on their learning. Effective use of group work allowed pupils to experience and share a variety of activities, although pace was occasionally an issue. High quality prayer focus areas in every classroom enrich teaching and learning in Religious Education. Pupils' written work is of a very high standard; marking in Religious Education is focused and demonstrates an effective dialogue between teacher and pupils. Assessment tasks are carried out on a regular basis. These are moderated internally and the school has identified external moderation as an area for development. Pupil attainment is tracked throughout the school. This monitoring should now be used to effectively create opportunities for higher attaining pupils to be appropriately challenged in order to achieve the higher levels.

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

The school follows the 'Come and See' programme of Religious Education. Curriculum time allocation is in line with the requirements of the Bishops' Conference. Religious Education activities are varied and often cross-curricular in approach, enriching the learning experiences of the pupils. Pupils with additional educational needs are appropriately supported. Pupil outcomes are good and standards of written work are high. The Religious Education curriculum is enhanced by many events and activities within and outside school, including visits to the parish church, fundraising and community activities. The study of other faiths is well established and includes visits to other places of worship. Class prayer books and guided meditation books contribute to pupils' spiritual development and relationship with God. One pupil said, "I love Religious Education because we have lots of time to pray and when we pray it's like using a telephone to talk to God."

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school

The quality of Collective Worship is good. Pupils are given a range of opportunities to help them develop spiritually. This includes a range of formal and informal opportunities for prayer during the school day.

The act of Collective Worship observed was well planned and of high quality. Music and candles contributed to the prayerful atmosphere. The assembly was strongly Scripture based, related to pupils own lives and gave them a message to reflect on during the day ahead. It included pupils' own prayers as well as the traditional prayers of the Church. Parents are regularly invited to join the school community in acts of worship; these are always very well attended. The school celebrates the feasts and seasons of the liturgical year as well as its own patronal feast.