

Report on the inspection of denominational education under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

Good Shepherd Catholic Primary School
Dunley Road
New Addington
CR0 0RG

Chair of Governors
Headteacher
Inspectors

Mr D. Prince
Ms A-M. Strachan
Mrs A. Oddy
Mr P. Moloney

Inspection date

22nd November 2012

Introduction

Description of the school

Good Shepherd School is voluntary aided. It is situated in the Croydon Deanery of the Archdiocese of Southwark and is maintained by Croydon LA. The principal parish which the school serves is Good Shepherd, New Addington. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholics is 51%. The average weekly proportion of discrete curriculum time given to Religious Education is 10% in all Key Stages. Religious Education is also included in other areas of study as part of a cross-curricular approach to learning. The school takes pupils from 3 to 11 years. The number of pupils currently on roll is 218. The attainment of pupils on entering the school is well below average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above average. 27% of pupils have special educational needs. 90% of pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds, with the largest group being Black African. The proportion of pupils from homes where English is an additional language is well above average. Pupil mobility is higher than average, particularly in Key Stage 2.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness as a Catholic school

Grade 1

Good Shepherd is an outstanding example of an effective Catholic school community. Committed leadership ensures the distinctiveness of the school in its philosophy, ethos and practice. Prayer and worship are central to the life of school, with pupils and staff forming a vibrant worshipping community, including parents and parishioners wherever possible. Pupils have a deep sense of belonging. They respect and celebrate the ethos of the school. Pupil behaviour is exemplary. Pupils are aware of the needs of others and their responsibility to the school community. They take full advantage of the opportunities the school provides for their support and development and as a result are confident, secure and happy. One said "This is a life changing school and has inspired me." Although standards on entry are well below the national average, the school has high expectations of its pupils. One commented "They make us believe we can achieve." Parents appreciate all that the school does and feel welcomed and involved, saying "This is more than a school, it is a community." The spiritual development of pupils is outstanding. Pupils have a high standard of religious literacy, enjoy their Religious Education lessons and relate them to their lives. Religious Education enjoys a high profile in the school curriculum. It is reflected in the high quality displays and resources throughout the school. It is well led and managed by the Religious Education coordinator, whose passion for the subject and commitment to the Catholic life of the school is clearly evident and encourages her pupils and colleagues.

The headteacher and deputy head are excellent role models, liked and respected by pupils, staff and parents. Governors, including the parish priest are fully involved in the life of the school. They monitor standards and the Catholic ethos as part of their role of support and challenge and effectively fulfil their role of “critical friend”.

School self-evaluation is good, with priorities identified and strategies put in place to address these. All the issues from the last inspection have been fully addressed.

What steps need to be taken to improve further?

- Work with other Catholic schools to moderate samples of levelled work in Religious Education to confirm and validate school judgements.
- Develop and extend the current good practice of developmental and interactive marking appropriate to all age groups so that it is consistent across each Key Stage.
- Offer opportunities for the Religious Education coordinator to extend her role, particularly with respect to the monitoring and evaluation of Religious Education across the school. To include opportunities for paired lesson observations and analysis of assessment data as part of the ongoing development of the monitoring schedule for Religious Education.

The Catholic life of the school

Leadership and management

Grade 1

Leadership and management of this Catholic school is outstanding. Leaders at all levels have a strong sense of the educational mission of the Church and provide clear direction for the Catholic life of the school. The headteacher and deputy head are energised by the task and are a source of inspiration for the whole school community. They are committed to promoting high standards as well as providing a nurturing Catholic community in which all are welcome. They are ably assisted by the Religious Education coordinator, who uses her own faith commitment and musical talents to enhance prayer and worship opportunities and to provide valuable support and encouragement for colleagues. The school is very effectively managed using resources well to provide an attractive and well resourced learning environment. School self evaluation and development planning is thorough and rigorous, providing self challenge and focusing on priorities. The inclusion of all pupils is a strength of the school and the welcoming nature of the school extends itself to staff, visitors, the parish and the community. Pupils and staff understand the school’s mission. They share its purpose and are keenly and actively involved in shaping and supporting it. Governors make a highly significant contribution to the Catholic life of the school, making regular visits and attending events. They are committed to supporting the staff team, communicating appreciation of the staff’s work for the school community. The school has highly successful strategies for involvement with parents and carers. Good links exist with the parish, the Diocese and external agencies.

Quality of provision for personal and collective worship

Grade 1

Provision for personal and collective worship is outstanding. The assembly observed was firmly rooted in the Catholic faith, with a strong Scriptural basis. It contained opportunities for reflection on moral development; possible courses of action were discussed and pupils encouraged to relate this to their own lives. High quality, joyful hymn singing led by the Religious Education coordinator gave prayer and worship an added dimension. Pupils and staff participated as a Christian community joined in prayer. Pupils are offered a range of opportunities, including Masses, liturgies and opportunities for personal prayer. Pupils pray actively, spontaneously and thoughtfully during the school day. Spontaneous offering up of their own prayers was an impressive feature of all the Religious Education lessons observed. The school participates in the prayer and worshipping life of the parish community. The parish priest makes a significant and valued contribution to the life of the school, celebrating Mass in school, welcoming the school to parish liturgies and celebrations and visiting the school to talk to pupils and staff. The prayer and worship at Good Shepherd school makes an excellent contribution to the spiritual and moral development of the pupils, who participate with reverence, confidence and ease.

Community Cohesion

Grade 1

Community cohesion at Good Shepherd school is exceptional. The central goal and shared vision of inclusion is actively working and evident in this school. All are welcome and all are encouraged to reach their full potential. A pupil commented "They push you to give the maximum 100%". Concern, respect and hospitality towards others are a feature of the school. Friendship bonds cross cultural and faith boundaries and pupils recognise the importance of this. They value every person as a member of God's family and are aware that they have responsibilities to each other. The headteacher is inspirational in her drive to celebrate the diversity of the school community, perceiving that building relationships between all members is key to the school's success. Governors represent a wide variety of roles, are keen to promote all aspects of community cohesion and work to improve the quality of education for all pupils. Parents from all backgrounds, including those from "hard to reach" groups are very much involved in the school and proud of their school community. The school provides practical, social and emotional support for families and holds a variety of cultural events. The international evening celebrating the many cultures within the school is a regular and very popular feature of the school year, mentioned by many pupils, staff and parents. The school has many links with local and global community groups and is active in fundraising for a number of charitable causes. Tolerance and understanding of the uniqueness of every individual is a strong feature of the Religious Education curriculum and evidence of this was seen in the assembly and Religious Education lessons observed.

Religious education

Achievement and standards in religious education

Grade 1

The standards pupils achieve in Religious Education are high given their attainment on entry. Standards of work compare favourably with those in other subjects. Pupils demonstrate interest and commitment in their learning in Religious Education and view it as one of their most important lessons. The great majority make very good progress and achieve well. Pupils are gaining knowledge, skills and understanding at a good rate across all Key Stages. Interventions, support and challenge ensure the progress of all groups. Pupils apply and develop a range of skills well, including the ability to engage with religious concepts and ideas and integrate them into their lives. They demonstrate exceptional levels of religious and emotional literacy; evidence of this was present in the lessons observed and in discussion with pupils. Behaviour in lessons was exemplary, with pupils highly motivated to learn and achieve their best. The school has a portfolio of samples of levelled work from all age groups. These have been moderated internally, this should now be extended to moderation in conjunction with other Catholic schools in order to confirm and validate the school's judgements.

Teaching and learning in religious education

Grade 1

Teaching and learning in Religious Education is of a consistently high standard. Outstanding lessons were observed and the quality of pupils' work was excellent. The teaching enthused the pupils and ensured that they learned well and made good progress. It provided appropriate levels of challenge and enabled all pupils to participate with confidence. The level of questioning helped all pupils to progress regardless of ability. Teachers displayed excellent subject knowledge. In the best lessons, good pace and a variety of teaching strategies stimulated pupil participation and secured very good progress; however in all lessons observed, pupils were engaged and achieved well. Detailed and thorough planning showed clear differentiation and built on previous learning. Assessment for learning was evident both in the lessons and in teachers' files and is used to inform planning. The quality of marking is high across the school. Developmental marking is well established. Interactive marking was present in most pupils' books but to varying extents and is responded to by pupils more in some classes than others. This should be more consistent together with teachers allowing time for pupils to respond and encouraging them to do so. Resources, including ICT were used thoughtfully and effectively to enhance and support learning. Spontaneous prayer by pupils was a feature of all Religious Education lessons observed and formed a reflective and meaningful ending to the lessons. It was clear how much their prayers were valued and how this contributes to the inclusive nature of the school; a pupil with special needs felt confident to express his prayer in class, sharing it with the other pupils. Pupils were challenged to think spiritually, ethically and theologically and to relate their learning in Religious Education to everyday life.

The religious education curriculum

Grade 1

The school has recently introduced the “Come and See” Religious Education programme, which is now established across the school. Curriculum provision fulfils the requirements of the Curriculum Directory and receives an appropriate time allocation. Pupils are encouraged to investigate and reflect, develop appropriate skills and attitudes and relate these to their own lives. Teachers are able to adapt curriculum provision to suit the needs and interests of their learners, resulting in thought provoking lessons relevant to the pupils and drawing on pupils’ own experiences. Consequently pupils enjoy Religious Education and independently investigate lines of enquiry within, or related to, the curriculum. There is a comprehensive approach to teaching about other faiths. Pupils are taught to respect other faiths and cultures and through this to deepen their understanding of their own Catholic faith. All pupils are enabled to access the Religious Education curriculum; support staff are very effectively employed. Religious Education is well resourced and receives a generous allocation from the school budget. The Religious Education coordinator supports staff in delivering the curriculum, providing help and expertise where necessary, particularly for newly qualified teachers. Resources are well organised and well maintained and effectively used by teachers, who understand the importance of resources being easily accessible to pupils.

Leadership and management of religious education

Grade 2

Leadership and Management in Religious Education is very good, with many outstanding features. The Religious Education coordinator, ably supported by the deputy headteacher ensures that teachers are well supported in delivering a high quality curriculum. She is an excellent role model, both in regard to her role as a lead teacher of Religious Education in the school and in relation to her commitment to the Catholic life of the school. Staff value her unobtrusive but generous support given whenever necessary and her efficient organisation of this curriculum area. Resources are excellent and well managed. High quality Religious Education displays featuring pupils’ work and often encouraging questioning responses from those viewing them are a feature of the school. They reflect and support the curriculum and enhance the learning environment. Priorities are accurately identified and form part of school development planning. The Religious Education coordinator maintains good links with the Diocese, keeping up to date with new developments and identifying training needs which would prove useful to her in her role. Systems of monitoring pupil progress are good, with regular assessment and pupil tracking. Book scrutinies and scrutiny of planning in Religious Education take place on a regular basis. Lesson observations have largely focused on Religious Education aspects in cross-curricular topics; this should now be extended to discrete lessons. The Religious Education coordinator is unquestionably committed to her role and is instrumental in the high standards being achieved. The school should now seek to develop her role further, to include more observation of lessons and analysis of assessment data.

Section 48 evidence form

inspector		school name and location			date		
inspection activity	lesson obs	worship	interview	work sampling	other		
subject	RE	PSE	EPR	other	pupils present	roll	time spent
course/ accreditation							
inspection focus (from PIC)				context			
evaluation and summary points							
judgement on overall quality of lesson/worship							
1 - outstanding 2 - good 3 - satisfactory 4 - inadequate							
grades for other aspects where there is sufficient evidence:							
Cath life: l & m	Cath life: worship	Cath life: comm. C	RE: achieve/ standards	RE: t & l	RE: curr	RE: l & m	
other comments							