



## 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 101787

Margaret Roper Catholic Primary School  
Russell Hill Road  
Purley  
CR8 2XP

Inspection date: 14 November 2014

Chair of Governors: Mr Michael Hearne  
Headteacher: Mr Dermot Mooney  
Inspectors: Mrs Ann Oddy  
Mrs Deirdre Wright

### EDUCATION COMMISSION

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# SECTION 48

Publication date: 16 December 2014

# Introduction

## Description of the school

Margaret Roper Catholic Primary is voluntary aided and is situated in the Croydon Deanery of the Archdiocese of Southwark. The school is maintained by Croydon Local Authority. The principal parish which the school serves is St John the Baptist, Purley, although in 2014 a significant number of Reception pupils were from other parishes, including St Gertrude's, South Croydon and St Dominic's, Waddon. This is mainly due to the addition of an extra Reception class for 2014/2015. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholics is 98%. 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 takes pupils from 4 to 11 years. The number of pupils currently on roll is 238. The attainment of pupils on entering the school is broadly average. The proportion of pupils receiving pupil premium support is well below average. The proportion of pupils with additional educational needs supported at school action is above the national average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with statements of additional educational needs is below the national average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is above the national average. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage and pupils with African, Mixed and Other White backgrounds are the next largest groups. The proportion of pupils speaking English as an additional language is below the national average.

Date of previous inspection:

22 October 2009

Overall Grade:

2

## Key for inspection grades

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

Margaret Roper School is a warm and welcoming inclusive Catholic community. Its Catholic identity is clear at many levels; on the school website, in the many attractive displays linked to Religious Education and in its wealth of religious artefacts. Pupils feel safe and happy, they enjoy coming to school and are proud to be its pupils. All groups of pupils achieve well and make good progress throughout their time at the school. Their spiritual development is nurtured by the school's strong Catholic ethos. Parents appreciate all that the school offers. One wrote, "I believe that the special ethos that is present at Margaret Roper helps my children to thrive and achieve, regardless of ability. They love attending this school and are happy each day. I believe that the Gospel values, which appear to permeate every aspect of their day and learning help them to thrive and develop as learners and as Christians."

Leaders and managers are fully committed to the school's ethos and mission. Governors are fully conversant with their responsibilities and enjoy sharing the life of the school. The Headteacher and Deputy are excellent role models and lead a strong staff team dedicated to school improvement. Staff are supportive of each other and the mission of the school. The mission statement is at the heart of the school and informs all policies and practice. Areas for development recommended by the last inspection have been addressed.

## What steps need to be taken to improve further?

Governors, Headteacher and staff should:

- Ensure that standards in Religious Education match those in Literacy and Numeracy, with particular reference to higher attaining pupils.
- Enhance and enrich the teaching of Religious Education by increasing the use of class prayer focus areas and reflection opportunities within Religious Education lessons.

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

Pupils are fully involved in the vibrant Catholic life of the school. They are aware of the school mission statement and know it is at the heart of school life. This is reinforced annually as each class focuses on the mission statement at the beginning of each school year. Pupils are proud of their school and their opportunities to raise funds for those less fortunate than themselves. A well established and enthusiastic CAFOD club takes responsibility for CAFOD fundraising and also contributes to the spiritual life of the school. Pupils are encouraged to take on responsibilities in school and respond very positively. The school is a caring and nurturing environment. Its inclusive nature embraces and supports all groups and individuals. Pupils are considerate of each other and adults and visitors; they are well behaved, pleasant and polite in class and around the school. They understand that others may have different faith beliefs and practices and appreciate the need to respect these. The school is a strong member of its local community, participating in many events with other schools and in the wider community. Parents appreciate that the school encourages the spiritual and moral development of its pupils. One commented, "I am very impressed with the moral education provided by the school. . . . there is a clear emphasis on caring and sharing which pervades the school."

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

Pupils enjoy their learning in Religious Education and achieve well. The great majority achieve age related expectations or better. Although a good proportion achieve the higher levels, this does not match pupil numbers achieving these levels in mathematics and English. The school should ensure that sufficient challenge is available for the more able pupils.

Progress is good across all key stages and for all groups of pupils. Pupils with additional educational needs are supported to achieve their potential.

Pupils clearly enjoy their Religious Education lessons and are able to talk about their learning. They appreciate its relevance to their own lives and can relate Gospel values to everyday school life and beyond.

In the lessons observed, pupil enjoyment and enthusiasm was evident. They were keen to do well and to make the most of opportunities to extend their learning.

## **How well pupils respond to and participate in Collective Worship**

Pupils make significant contributions to planning and preparing school Mass and liturgies. They write their own prayers for use in the school's Collective Worship and are pleased to participate in the readings, music and drama. Pupils are also given opportunities for quiet prayer and reflection; the Peaceful Prayer Room is a popular and well used resource. They enjoy school Mass and liturgies and participate thoughtfully and with reverence. The parish priest is a regular visitor to the school and helps pupils to prepare liturgies, Mass and assemblies, providing a valuable and much appreciated link between school and parish. Pupils and parents contribute to class prayer books which are used throughout their time at the school.

## **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 fully committed to the Catholic mission of the school. The school's Catholic life is monitored as part of the school's schedule of self-evaluation which informs school development planning. The views of all stakeholders form part of this self-evaluation; pupils and parent questionnaires are used to offer the opportunity for feedback and to ensure a representation of their views.

The school provides effective induction for new staff and professional development opportunities to foster and enhance understanding of the school's mission in education. It participates in Diocesan training and events and is an active member of the Croydon Deanery Catholic schools cluster.

Governors are actively involved in the Catholic life of the school. They are regular visitors to the school and join in the school's many celebrations. The Catholic ethos and mission of the school are a regular part of the discussion at Governing Body meetings.

## **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 at all levels are fully aware of their responsibility to monitor and evaluate the Religious Education provision in the school. Governors are linked with classes that they follow throughout their time at the school. The governor with responsibility for Religious Education meets with the Religious Education subject leader on a regular basis and keeps the Governing Body informed regarding provision and progress. Religious Education is a core subject and forms an important part of school improvement planning. Assessment is effectively used to inform planning for improvement to outcomes. Pupils' work is regularly assessed using formal and informal assessment tasks. Levelled samples of work are moderated in school and in partnership with other schools within the deanery. School self-evaluation is accurate and reflective. It informs the school development plan, which has clear targets and timescales. School monitoring and evaluation of Religious Education is well established. Lesson observations, book and planning scrutinies and learning walks are part of a regular schedule.

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

Lessons observed as part of this inspection were generally of a good standard. Teachers demonstrated good subject knowledge and were enthusiastic in their approach. In the best lessons, interesting and clearly Religious Education focused tasks engaged and motivated learners, leading to good pupil outcomes. Probing questions encouraged children to think deeply and to use previous learning and skills as well as acquiring new knowledge. Pupils with additional educational needs were appropriately supported. Differentiation was not always immediately evident, although work in pupils' books is of a high standard. Marking of pupils' work is variable. The best examples show developmental marking and an effective dialogue between pupil and teacher; this should be extended to all classes where it is age appropriate.

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

The school follows the "Come and See" programme of Religious Education. Curriculum time is in line with the requirement of the Bishops' Conference, in addition Religious Education permeates all areas of the curriculum and is enriched by cross curricular links. Drama, art and music are all effectively used to enhance learning, technology and other resources are used to advantage. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about carrying out independent research, such as, when finding out about their favourite saint. Diocesan and deanery events and celebrations form an enjoyable part of pupils' spiritual journeys and enhance the curriculum. A comprehensive programme of staff development provides teachers with up to date knowledge, strategies and resources to improve pupils' learning. Attractive prayer focal areas are a feature of all classrooms; increased use of these and more opportunity for reflection within Religious Education lessons would further enhance pupils' learning and spiritual development.

### **The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school**

Acts of Collective Worship are central to school life. A wealth of assemblies, liturgies and Mass take place throughout the year; many are well attended by parents and governors. Celebrations are also related to special events and the liturgical year. There is a range of formal and informal opportunities for daily prayer for both pupils and staff. Pupils are fully involved in preparing liturgies and Mass, writing their own prayers and choosing appropriate music and readings. Prayer and reflection are important to the pupils; they appreciate the availability of prayer areas and resources and are at ease with spontaneous prayer as well as the traditional prayers of the church.

The celebration assembly observed was an opportunity for the school to come together as a worshipping community, praying together and sharing successes and events of the week.