



DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION REPORT

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

URN 102687

Donhead Catholic Preparatory School

33 Edge Hill

Wimbledon

London SW19 4NP

Inspection date: 01 November 2019

Chair of Governors: Mr Paul Chitnis

Headteacher: Mr Philip Barr

Inspectors: Mr Stephen Beck

Mr John Bonnici

EDUCATION COMMISSION

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Director of Education: Dr. Simon Hughes

Publication Date 28th November 2019



Key for inspection grades

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

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Donhead Catholic Preparatory School is a two form Catholic independent day school for boys aged four to eleven years. It was founded in 1933 as a preparatory day school for Wimbledon college. The school operates as a charitable trust under the trusteeship of the British Province of the Society of Jesus. Priority is given to boys who are baptised Roman Catholic, although boys of other faiths are warmly welcomed if it is evident that they would benefit from a Christian education and contribute positively to the ethos of the school. Currently there are 332 pupils on the school roll with 66.3% being Catholic. It is notable that the school is almost at capacity from local applications that sees 80% of the school live within one postcode of SW19. This makes it a school very much of its local community.

Catholic families attend four main local parishes Sacred Heart Wimbledon, St John Fisher Morden, St Winifred's Wimbledon park and Christ the King Merton Park. The school has a close relationship with the parish priest of the demographically closer parish Sacred Heart Wimbledon.

The School has a diverse population including a number of European Catholic families and southern hemisphere Catholic families all of whom are welcomed with their backgrounds being celebrated. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities at 9.94% is below the national average with four pupils having an education, health and care plan (EHCP). The attainment of pupils on entering the school is generally above average. Approximately a third of pupils speak English as an additional language though the vast majority of whom are not at a low level of fluency. Those who are receive an appropriately modified curriculum that quickly skills them.



SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

Donhead Catholic Preparatory is a good Catholic school because:

- There is a very strong sense of belonging to this school community. It is felt and expressed by all stakeholders. There is an overwhelming feeling of being part of a nurturing and inclusive school family.
- The headmaster is a deeply committed and visible presence in the school. His commitment to the pupils, staff and parents of the school is excellent. He has formed a hardworking and dedicated team of staff who, with the pupils and parents, are committed to working and supporting the Catholic school and wider community.
- Religious education is at the heart of the school and is appreciated by staff, pupils and parents. All pupils are equally valued, respected and nurtured by the caring and dedicated staff team, so that they in turn value and respect each other.
- Teaching of Religious Education is consistently good with outstanding features. Standards achieved in the final key stage are mostly above average and progress is at least good or better.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER

- Share identified good practice in Religious Education lessons to secure a balance across the school between teacher input and pupils' tasks. This will facilitate consistency in pace and provide more opportunities for pupil-initiated learning.
- Revisit the school's Religious Education Action Plan to review the profile for moderation and assessment and the development of these areas over a given timescale.
- Promote a broadening of the range of liturgies experienced by pupils through more pupil-led worship. The role of the Chaplain should be developed in this area to enable her to work with colleagues to incorporate more use of the arts in these experiences.



Overall Effectiveness

How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education.

2

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

2

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.

2

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education.

2

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.

2

Collective Worship

2

How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship.

2

The quality of provision for Collective Worship.

2

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship.

2

CATHOLIC LIFE

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

- The behaviour of pupils both in terms of their courteous manners around the school and the behaviour for learning within school is excellent.
- Their involvement and commitment to an extensive number of charities, both planned and in terms of responding to disasters, is clear and goes way beyond their own school and local community. As well as charities based within their own town, they work for justice through national and internationally based organisations. This work both promotes and strengthens the pupils' understanding of their Christian values and inextricably links them with British Values and way of life. The school had an extended link supporting a school in Zimbabwe and is about to form a new link with another school in this region of the world.
- Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility and make informed choices.
- Donhead endorses a culture of being forgiven and forgiving others, recognising that things do go wrong, but there are ways that these can be addressed and reconciled. This ethos is evidenced in the positive responses to surveys undertaken.
- Pupils of Donhead are challenged to achieve in spiritual, academic, emotional, physical and aesthetic development. Pupils of the school embrace these challenges and as a direct result are happy, confident and secure in these areas according to their age and abilities.
- They would benefit from a richer range of teaching and learning styles to further meet the breadth of ability within the school.
- Older pupils act as role models for the younger members of the school community through 'Buddying' opportunities. In addition, they enhance the Catholic character of the school through a 'Companion group'.
- Pupils understand, in a way appropriate to their age, that they are privileged as a result of their life circumstances. Every appropriate opportunity is taken to help them understand that 'to those whom much is given, much will be expected'. This sets the scene for the pupils to begin to explore their own unique vocation and utilise their talents in God's world.
- Significantly the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) inspectors who visited the school commented that, 'Pupils' spiritual awareness is excellent and they deploy a substantial understanding of and appreciation of the non-material aspects of life. Pupils speak highly of the opportunities to attend Mass and private prayer in the chapel'. This was mirrored in this inspection.

The quality of provision of the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.

- The school actively promotes the Jesuit Pupil Profile (JPP) through Assembly, Mass, JPP time and PSHE and this is a valuable dimension of the school's provision.



- The outstanding leadership at Donhead permeates all that the school stands to represent in terms of the Church's mission in education. All leaders ensure that the Catholic distinctiveness of the School is at the forefront of all that they undertake. This can be evidenced in the feedback received from visitors to the school, as well as the responses from the pupils.
- Donhead is a very inclusive school community. The sense of both community and change is reflected in the symbolic and pertinent text written just inside the main entrance that Jesuit schools are places where children are honoured, cared for and believed in. Every child in this school must be cherished for who they are, a child of God. This school seeks to take care of the person, first and foremost. '*Cura Personalis*' in action.
- A particularly strong aspect of the Catholic life of the school is the home, school and Jesuit partnership. The dedication of the headmaster and all members of staff with the support from the priests and governors working together, means that the faith is always at the heart of the school.
- Parents are very supportive of the school's holistic approach to each pupil who are encouraged to make independent decisions. The notion of getting something 'wrong' is identified as an opportunity for growth and development and is linked to learning from the example of Jesus. Issues arising are often addressed and resolved through group discussions. The obligation and responsibility for discipleship is fostered through the recognition and reward of being someone who has lived out an element of discipleship.
- Pastoral care for all is clearly evident. The headteacher has an open door policy and talks and listens to members of the school community with care and compassion.
- At Donhead, the highest standards of moral and ethical behaviour are promoted through the clear and consistent communication of the school's expectations.
- As a parent wrote, 'The attitude of staff is amazing, as is the compassion they show towards the children.'
- A parent commented, 'I am very happy with the Catholic Jesuit education my son receives. He is knowledgeable about the JPP through class and assemblies'.

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

- Donhead has been through a period of staff changes with a new Headmaster being appointed in 2017 and new Religious Education Lead and Chaplain being appointed in September 2019. The school has maintained focus that sees it continuing to build successfully on its strengths, reflecting a strong capacity for ongoing improvement. A number of developments are, however, at an early stage.
- Parents are very supportive of the School. They are involved in the prayer life of the school and regularly attend Masses, liturgies and assemblies and this was seen during the inspection. All of this influences their understanding of the school's mission. The success of the many charitable events also builds this picture of support, understanding and care. The fact that a large majority of pupils are very local to the school is testament to the desire for parents to share this mission.



- The vision of the school is unmistakably shared and cascades throughout the staff team. The leaders and governors are committed and open to both maintaining and further developing the Catholic life of the school and highest priority is given to this area.
- The school provided a good self-evaluation for this inspection. It demonstrated the school's awareness of its strengths. This could be usefully updated to align with the current inspection reporting format. It would also serve as a more useful working document through the inclusion of identified areas for development with assigned responsibilities and timescales aligned to the school's Religious Education action plan.

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RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

2

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education is good.

- The school is rightly proud of the quality of their Religious Education lessons; nothing but good or better is acceptable.
- The quality of teaching impacts on pupils' spiritual, moral and vocational development. Teachers use higher order questions which ensure that pupils are challenged and advantage is taken of opportunities to develop pupils' thinking skills in all areas of learning in Religious Education.
- Pupils are enthusiastic and engaged in their learning clearly enjoying their work in Religious Education and benefit from it.
- In the best lessons observed, teachers made very good use of their personal life experiences, which created in pupils a sense of 'awe and wonder' and gives a context to their learning. An example of this involved pupils reflecting on the feelings of their teacher on giving some money to a beggar in Rome.
- Pupils develop a good understanding of other faiths through teaching that includes opportunities to visit other places of worship.
- Lessons would benefit from a review of the balance between teacher input and pupil tasks. This will facilitate a greater consistency in pace and opportunities for pupil initiated learning. Examples of current good practice could usefully be shared.

The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education is good.

- The inspection outcomes support and validate the school's view that teaching is good with some outstanding features.
- The school uses scrutiny of pupil books, pupil interviews and some internal moderation to ensure accuracy of judgements. This evidence shows that pupils at this school learn extremely well. This would benefit from more regular cross school moderation which the school is developing through their involvement in the Deanery cluster of schools.
- The knowledge, passion and commitment of the teachers ensures planning is of a high quality and that the tasks match the required outcomes.
- Throughout lessons and as an integral part of written feedback, teachers pose some good questions. They listen perceptively to pupils' responses on an individual level and respond appropriately in order to maximise learning for all, both in terms of re-shaping and/or challenging. A review of marking is planned and consideration should be given to ensuring pupils are clear with regard to their next steps to improve.
- At this school, there is a culture of succeeding. The staff are using a variety of teaching strategies to complement and extend the 'Come and See' programme. Their mission is to ensure that pupils have a deep and faithful spiritual journey that will equip them to be responsible people who understand themselves, care for others and are equipped to do God's work.



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

- At Donhead, Religious Education leadership has successfully worked to maintain the profile of Religious Education within the school curriculum. The correct amount of time is dedicated to the curriculum subject to meet the requirements of the Bishops' Conference.
- The school uses the Diocesan recommended programme, 'Come and See'. With the subject being well resourced both in terms of staffing and physical resources.
- This school has a supportive governing body which is fully committed to the ongoing development of the school. They are interested in Religious Education and how the pupils learn.
- Outcomes both in terms of progress and attainment, as well as ongoing changes and developments for Religious Education are communicated to the governors through reports from the Religious Education lead and the headteacher's report that keep the governing body informed so that there is both involvement and celebration.
- The head of Religious Education is very caring. She is fully committed to the Ignatian Religious Ethos of the school which she promulgates with passion and enthusiasm.
- It would be appropriate following the recent appointment of a new Head of Religious Education to revisit the school's Religious Education action plan in order to review the development profile for moderation and assessment and establish appropriate timelines for their development.

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COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

2

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

- Pupils are proud to be part of the school community. They know the school's mission and as well as living, loving and learning together, they included worshipping together. They are very clear about the values that underpin the school's work.
- Prayer and collective worship are at the centre of daily school life in which pupils participate with reverence. Music is used to support collective worship to enhance the prayerful experience for all.
- The school benefits from having a part time chaplain. Whilst newly appointed her role is developing. She has plans to develop a retreat programme for pupils and staff.
- In partnership with the Head of Religious Education, the chaplain is keen to develop the range of liturgy experienced by the pupils and intends to move forward the involvement of pupils in designing and delivering Collective Worship.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship and Prayer Life is good.

- The quality of Collective Worship and prayer life provided by the school is good. It has a high profile as a key feature of every day, and with every school celebration reflecting the school's Catholic character.
- Pupils have ways to engage through discussion, listening to the Word, responding and singing. Prayer and reflection times are regular throughout the school day; providing many opportunities for the school community to discern and grow in their relationship with God.
- Collective Worship plays a key part in meeting the spiritual needs of the pupils. The school makes good use of twitter to celebrate its liturgical life. Pictures can be seen of pupils engaged in liturgy, for example 'Stations of the Cross', Advent, Lent and on visits to the parish church and further afield.
- The school should consider building a portfolio of collective worship planning and evaluations from across the school to further develop opportunities to share good practice.
- Parents, parishioners and governors are given further opportunities to share in the spiritual life of the school through various acts of Collective Worship, celebrations and Mass.
- The parish priest and priests from the Jesuit community regularly visit the school and are well known to staff, pupils and parents. They offer valuable guidance and support to staff in terms of their formation and development and their contributions are welcomed and appreciated by all.

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship and Prayer Life is good.



- The Catholic life of Donhead is rooted in the school because of the commitment to faith by the headmaster and his leadership team. Staff at all levels are dedicated and wholehearted in their support of the school.
- The school's Collective Worship and prayer life would benefit from a review and the school is considering forming a liturgy group and tasking it to formulate a school policy covering these areas.
- Leaders and governors sustain and nurture the prayer life of the school community well and ensure provision and opportunities for prayer and collective worship are in place. They have a thorough understanding of the Church's liturgical year and act as role models for the school community.
- Governors are informed about the Catholic life of the school and are a supportive part of the school community.

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