



Diocese of Arundel and Brighton

INSPECTION REPORT

Annecy Catholic Primary School

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D/ES Number: 3345845

Headteacher: Fiona McGonigle

Chair of Governors: Mrs Margaret Coyne-Prout

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: 2nd November 2011
Date of previous inspection: March 2008

Lead Inspector: Mrs C.Walker
Associate Inspector: Mrs B. Dowswell

Description of School

Annecy is a smaller than average all through primary school, situated in the town of Seaford. Most pupils are of White British heritage and a small minority are from different ethnic heritages. The school serves the parishes of St. Thomas More, Seaford, The Sacred Heart, Newhaven and the Immaculate Conception of Our Lady, Peacehaven. 45% of pupils at the school are Catholic, with a further 25% of pupils being from other Christian faiths. There are 22 pupils for whom English is an additional language. The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs is higher than the national average. Children are taught in single age classes from Reception to Year 3 and from Year 4 – 6 in mixed age group classes. The school has a number of recognised awards namely Healthy Schools, Active Mark and Sportsmark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of this Catholic school

The governors, head teacher, staff, parents, parish priest and pupils all work together to make this a cohesive community, which fosters a real appreciation of individual worth. Together they make the mission statement, "Jesus says I call you friends", a living experience. Pupils achieve well and make good progress in each key stage. Teaching is good overall, with some outstanding features. Assessment procedures provide good guidance on pupil achievement, however this needs to be embedded further with new staff.

Warm relationships, positive classroom management and detailed lesson planning ensure a consistently good standard of teaching throughout the school. Behaviour is very good. Issues from the previous inspection have all been addressed. Accurate self-evaluation procedures ensure that the school has a clear view of its strengths and is anxious to improve yet further. It is very well placed to do so.

Grade 2

Improvement since the last inspection

The main issues raised during the previous inspection have been addressed namely, there has been a clear focus to continue to develop assessment throughout the school. Higher order questioning is used to challenge and extend all pupils. There is now an opportunity to further develop pupil self-assessment to include targets in work books and develop a portfolio of pupils' levelled work to secure a greater understanding of attainment amongst all staff members.

Grade 2

The capacity of the school community to improve and develop

Accurate self-evaluation, rigorous systems for tracking pupil progress and an effective RE team ensures the school has the capacity to continue to improve and develop. Close parish links and a strong parent partnership reinforce the school's ability to fulfil its mission. The Parish Priest is a regular visitor. He plays a pivotal role in fostering the school's mission and securing this successful partnership. This school is not complacent about its success but is constantly striving to develop further pathways for progress. The head teacher provides strong leadership and with the newly established staffing structure the school has a good capacity for yet further improvement.

Grade 2

What the school should do to improve further

- Further develop teacher skills in the moderation and levelling of pupils' religious education work and introduce the use of a leveled portfolio of pupils' work to support all members of staff.
- Share the good practice that exists throughout the school by further exploring the use of coaching partners.

The Catholic Life of the School

Leadership and Management

The governors are proactive in regularly monitoring the Catholic ethos of the school through visits, attendance at assemblies and acts of worship and through a continual constructive dialogue. They are integral to the management of the school and in the promotion of the Gospel values, which underpin the daily lives of staff and pupils. The mission statement is lived out daily by all members of the school community.

The headteacher's calm leadership provides a strong role model as leader of a Catholic community. The headteacher has a strong, clear vision for the school. Working alongside the acting deputy head and religious education co-ordinator, she communicates a shared sense of spiritual direction and purpose. They monitor the religious life of the school both formally and informally and are always looking for ways to make improvements. School self evaluation is accurate and enables the identification of clear development priorities for the Catholic life of the school. The governing body are committed and supportive, bringing a wealth of expertise to the school. They fully understand their role in promoting the school's Catholic identity and, as regular visitors

they are well informed in monitoring performance.

Grade 1

The Prayer Life of the School

Collective worship, liturgical celebrations and prayer, contribute significantly to the spiritual and moral development of pupils. Pupils feel comfortable with different forms of prayer and are happy to engage in silent meditation and in sharing their personal thoughts. Prayer focus areas in each class signal the value placed on personal prayer. These are interactive through the use of class prayer trees, prayer boxes, pebbles and "Big Question" books. During the collective act of worship observed, pupils were focused, reverent and responsive throughout.

Pupils are encouraged to write their own prayers, pray spontaneously and use traditional prayers in their daily lives. A clearly planned overview provides the scaffolding for a broad range of collective worship experiences, which helps to further develop pupils' spirituality. One parent stated "They're are not just taught their faith, children are encouraged to ask questions." The weekly Gospel liturgy, led by the head teacher, provides a deeper understanding of the Gospel message. This is further communicated through the head teacher's weekly newsletter where this Gospel message is shared with the wider school community. The key elements from the Gospel message form part of a weekly display that remains in the school hall. The annual "Songs of Praise" liturgy provides a platform for pupils to celebrate their favourite hymn and a Bible reading they have been studying. Careful planning for Collective Worship ensures full participation by pupils, parents, staff and governors. All members of the school community are given rich opportunities to grow and flourish in their spiritual relationship with God. Pupils' individual faith journey is recognised and highly valued.

Grade 1

How effectively does the school promote community cohesion?

Annecy is a welcoming, inclusive community where a sense of belonging is fostered in all pupils, regardless of ethnic background. Pastoral care is excellent. Strong links with the wider community and firm partnerships between local and Deanery schools also nurture cohesion. While recognising their own good fortune, pupils show concern for those less fortunate than themselves and enthusiastically participate in a range of fundraising activities, such as The Good Shepherd, WAVES community project, St Anne's Centre for the homeless and CAFOD.

The school's teaching and curriculum has a significant impact on pupils' understanding of the United Kingdom and more distant global communities. Although still in their infancy, the school has taken positive steps to promote global understanding through an annual focus on countries of the world. The school's accurate self-evaluation has rightly identified that this is one strand of community cohesion that now needs to be explored further. The parents were highly supportive of the school's approach to developing their children's understanding and knowledge of other faiths. Parental partnerships are very strong and communication between home and school is exemplary. Parents are grateful for the many opportunities they are given throughout the year to be valued as member

of the school community through assemblies, liturgies, open house afternoons, parent forums and formal parent consultation meetings.

Strong links exist between the school and parish. Mass is celebrated both within the parish and the school. Sacramental preparation, which takes place in the parish, is strongly supported by the school. The participation and positive interactions between groups of pupils, parents and staff make an important and beneficial contribution to cohesion. The Catholic ethos of Annecy is far reaching as people are drawn into this cohesive community. One parent summed this sentiment up by saying "All children are treated the same regardless of faith, race or ability."

Grade 1

Religious Education

Achievement and Standards in Religious Education

The pupils' achievement in RE is good with the majority meeting age related standards at the end of key stage two. An increasing number of pupils is exceeding this level reflecting more targeted differentiation that meets the needs of individual pupils. Pupils are gaining knowledge, skills and understanding at a good rate across all key stages. Attainment in religious education matches that of literacy and pupils achieve expected levels in the Foundation Year and in both key stages. Pupils with special educational needs, those with English as a second language and those who are particularly able, make appropriate progress. Their oral skills are excellent and pupils listen and learn by asking relevant and searching questions from an early age. The engagement and behaviour of learners throughout the school is good and in some classes exemplary.

Grade 2

Teaching and learning in Religious Education

The overall quality of teaching and learning in Religious Education is good with outstanding features. Where lessons were good, there was a good pace to learning and questioning which challenged pupils thinking and understanding of key concepts. Outstanding teaching observed during the inspection demonstrated clearly differentiated tasks, highly skilled questioning and effective deployment of support staff. Activities were interesting and engaged all learners. Lessons are based on the diocesan programme of study for religious education and teachers use medium term plans and develop short term planning to match the needs of their pupils. Lesson objectives are identified in lesson plans and referred to continuously throughout the lesson. Teachers demonstrated good subject knowledge. In one lesson where pupils were being challenged to identify the facts about Baptism and Confirmation, religious education came alive through the skilful use of the teacher's questioning and pace of learning.

All pupil responses are valued and respected. As part of the school's strategic plan for religious education the head teacher and religious education co-ordinator have monitored teaching and learning through lesson observations and scrutiny of work.

Whole school planning meetings support the sharing of ideas and good practice in the teaching of religious education. The school is encouraged to share the good and outstanding practice that exists in the school through teacher peer observations.

Pupils have a confident understanding of scripture as observed in the majority of lessons. Through the effective use of resources and good teaching, learning is enjoyed and pupils deepen their knowledge and understanding. Marking is a real strength throughout the school. It is informative, consistent and constructively furthers pupils learning.

Grade 2

Quality of the Curriculum

The quality of the Religious Education curriculum is good. The school's Mission Statement is displayed and clearly understood by all members of the school community. The school ensures that 10% of the length of the taught week is given to religious education for each key stage.

The religious education curriculum meets all National and Diocesan requirements and promotes social cohesion through the study of other faiths and the identification of key times in their calendars. Interactive whiteboards were used in all lessons observed as a means for enhancing the quality of curriculum. The religious education curriculum is broad and balanced promoting the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and preparing them for the next stage of their education. This is further enhanced through the annual spirituality week.

Grade 2

Leadership and management of Religious Education

Governors, head teacher and staff share a common vision of the importance of religious education. Consequently the leadership and management of this subject are strong. The head teacher, religious education co-ordinator, and governors have been the driving force in embedding ambitious aspirations and standards for improvement in religious education. Open and honest dialogue, in an environment that offers support, means school leaders have an accurate view of staff development needs. A detailed religious education action plan provides clear, strategic development of the subject.

The leadership and management of religious education is very good. There has been an unsettled period due to staff changes. Working alongside the headteacher, there is now a team approach to leading and managing religious education which is proving to be most effective. Both the religious education co-ordinator and headteacher demonstrate clear, enthusiastic leadership, through their own personal faith. The team give excellent support to the rest of the staff. The governors are fully committed to the school and especially to the religious life of the school. The governors collaborate with the headteacher in monitoring and evaluating the Catholic life and religious education of the school and act as critical friends. The teachers monitor pupil progress through

ongoing assessments. There is a regular programme of lesson observations by the headteacher and the co-ordinator in order to ensure high quality teaching. The governors recognise and value the contribution of all the staff. Resources are good with funding for religious education matching that of the core subject areas. The success of the teaching and learning lies in the fact that the school is rooted in the vision of religious education which is at the heart of the school. On entry there is a clear awareness that this is a Catholic school and this is emphasised in everything that takes place.

Grade 1