



## **DIOCESE OF BRENTWOOD**



### **Inspection Report**

**Name of School: St Antony's Catholic Primary School**

**Unique Reference Number: 131926**

**Inspection Date: 26 March 2013**

**Reporting Inspectors: Dr. Michael Sutherland-Harper and  
Mrs. Maureen Perry**

**This Inspection was carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005.**

**Type of School: Primary  
School Category: Community  
Age range of pupils: 3-11  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 420  
Appropriate Authority: The governing body  
Date of previous inspection:**

**School Address: Upton Avenue  
London  
E7 9PN**

**Tel. No. 020 8552 3670  
Fax No. 020 8470 2580  
Chair of Governors: Miss Mary Grisdale  
Headteacher: Mr Brian Lucey**

## **Introduction:**

The Inspection was carried out under Section 48 of the Education (Schools) Act 2005 by two inspectors appointed by the Diocesan Bishop at the request of the Governing Body of the School.

The Inspectors acknowledge and are appreciative of the full support, co-operation and courtesy they enjoyed from the Governors, Headteacher, Staff and Pupils of the School both before and during the Inspection. The Inspectors wish to express their gratitude to all concerned.

## **The focus of the Section 48 Inspection was:**

- Classroom Religious Education
- The Catholic nature of the School through:
  1. Worship
  2. Links with the Catholic and wider community
- Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development

## **The Section 48 Report**

**St Antony's Catholic Primary School**  
**Upton Avenue**  
**London**  
**E7 9PN**

**Head Teacher: Brian Lucey**

**Date of Inspection: 26 March 2013**

## **Description of the School:**

St Antony's Catholic Primary School is a larger than average-sized Catholic primary school. There are two classes in each year group from Nursery through to Year 6. The school serves the Catholic parish of St Antony's, Forest Gate. It is situated in the London borough of Newham and in the diocese of Brentwood.

### **Record of Evidence Base:**

Two Diocesan Inspectors were in the school for the equivalent of two inspection days.

- The study of pre-inspection documentation including the Self-Evaluation Form/ Denominational Provision (SEF/DP).
- The observation of 14 lessons.
- Participation in two assemblies.
- Scrutiny of pupils' written work.
- Meetings with the Headteacher, the Religious Education (R.E.) Coordinator, the parish priest, two governors including the Chair of Governors, a group of staff, the Brilliant Club and the School Council.
- Observations of R.E. displays in the classrooms and around the school.

### **What the School does well:**

St. Antony's Catholic primary school is a good Catholic primary school with strengths in its close relationship with the neighbouring parish, the determined leadership of its headteacher and the careful way in which all pupils and staff have come together to form an inclusive community. In the words of its mission statement, the school is successfully demonstrating its commitment to 'work together', 'share our gifts' and 'respect each other'.

Pupils achieve well in most lessons because expectations of good behaviour are clear and pupils know that they are in the school to learn. The school meets the national and diocesan requirements for the allocation of curriculum time for taught R.E. It is at an early stage of implementing the new 'Come and See' scheme of work. Resources have been purchased and training for staff is under way to ensure a seamless transition from the existing models. Teachers make good use of questions to check pupil understanding. Work is regularly marked and, in most cases, pupils respond to the questions which teachers have written in pupils' books to guide them forward in their understanding. In a few cases, these responses are limited to one word answers but pupils can usually come up with a reason for their answers as well. In class, pupils are capable, articulate and eager to answer; however, sometimes the lesson is too teacher-led and opportunities for pupils to take their learning forward by working on their own are more limited. Pupils' attainment levels are recorded when reached but are not dated to indicate the speed at which individual pupils progress. Teachers record assessment levels on separate sheets but do not always add a comment to help them fine tune future planning.

Pupils make good progress from their starting points. In some books, next step marking shows them how to proceed but teachers' understanding of the work which pupils must produce to reach the very highest levels needs some further guidance in Religious Education (R.E.). Pupils concentrate well in lessons. In a number of lessons, girls are quicker to answer than boys and the blend of resources used so that the subject appeals to both groups requires some further thought. Pupils value rewards and show increased

ability to develop as extended writers as they move through the school although there is some variation in the quality of presentation. The school helps them to progress by the clear emphasis it places on the development of literacy skills in all lessons observed. Pupils are very supportive of the school and keen to develop an emerging role as school ambassadors because they have a growing belief that the school can help them to reach the heights and be whatever they want to be. They value recent initiatives like the Brilliant Club which meant that some of the more able pupils had a chance to visit Oxford University and thereby develop their aspirations to reach the highest levels. Pupils took a leading role in delivering an assembly about the Last Supper during the inspection. They spoke confidently and articulately. As one pupil said, 'We feel we are being heard now'. This confidence has been assisted by the work of the recently arrived parish priest who, together with very supportive and ambitious governors, is keen to involve the school and its pupils as an integral part of the local community. Parents and carers are proud of their school. They speak highly of the way the school responds to their needs and is helping their children to turn into responsible achievers under the astute guidance of its dedicated headteacher.

Opportunities for prayer and worship are good and developing. Pupils welcome chances to participate in collective worship at church and in assemblies. Whole-school Masses are now held regularly in the local church to strengthen the links between school and parish. In class, not all lessons begin or end with a prayer and these are at present more often teacher-led. However, pupils are well aware of the importance of prayer in their lives. Prayer corners are prominent in most classrooms. Some have pupil prayers above them but in others, the corner is still an area for further development, which could be led by pupils. Excellent display around the school in the main corridors helps to communicate the Catholic ethos of the school; in classrooms, display about the faith is less prominent than that which signals the importance of literacy and numeracy. Displays generally highlight the different aspects of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development which is a growing strength of this inclusive school community.

Leaders, governors and managers are effectively promoting the Catholic life of the school, both within the school and outside as links with parents and carers continue to grow, including through the work of the parents' association. The headteacher has led by example with a clear vision of the high quality school he wishes St. Antony's to be and which it is increasingly becoming. Relationships are good and staff are supportive of each other. The whole school is committed to developing attainment levels and assessment procedures in R.E. so that an increasing number of lessons lead pupils to the very highest levels observed in some outstanding teaching during the inspection. Governors are looking at ways to increase their involvement with the school and with parents and carers to promote the message that this is a good and improving school. The school development plan includes a separate section on R.E. but the subject is not mentioned in the overall school plan or linked sufficiently with other subjects to develop its role at the centre of learning in the school. The R.E. coordinator has well thought out plans to develop her subject; at present, these lack dates for review and sharing of responsibilities so all tasks do not fall to her. Sharing of best practice, and its identification across the school, is at an early stage of development but there is enough good or better teaching to

enrich the teaching in all key stages. In many lessons, teaching assistants are well used but in others, they are inactive for longer periods when the lesson is teacher-dominated.

Whilst some lessons are outstanding and most are good or better, a number of lessons, especially in Key Stage 1, require improvement. Expectations of what pupils can do are not as high as they could be and are limited by the fact that teachers talk for too long or miss opportunities to link the topics under consideration to pupils' own experiences and thereby bring them to life. Communication has increased with parents and carers to support children's learning. Lessons have a clear structure and some match of work to pupils' abilities but activities are not often timed to add extra pace and challenge, especially for more able learners. Tracking of pupils' progress to identify possible underachievement is developing but not yet fully in place and teachers do not consistently check that pupils have retained what they learned in the last lesson before moving on to the next topic. Where lessons are teacher dominated, opportunities for reflection by pupils are limited and pupils are too passive as learners but good use of questioning to ask how or why pupils have reached a conclusion is becoming more widespread. Teachers' subject knowledge is generally good but variable and would benefit from further in-service training, which the school is already planning, to ensure consistency of approaches.

#### **What needs to be improved?**

- **Develop opportunities for the sharing of best practice between teaching staff**
- **Ensure that expectations of the quality of pupils' presentation of work are consistent and high**
- **Embed assessment procedures to ensure consistent approaches across all year groups and key stages**
- **Increase opportunities for pupils to lead their own learning and to act as ambassadors for the school in promoting the high-quality education it offers**
- **Provide additional in-service training to ensure consistent approaches and subject knowledge about the new schemes of work in R.E.**

The Inspectors endorse the areas identified by the school for improvement in the Section 48 Self-Evaluation Form.

St Antony's Catholic primary school offers its pupils a good and improving Catholic education. Parents and carers support the school because of its strong ethos and values. The ethos is buttressed by good behaviour for learning, strong links with the local parish, clear and determined leadership at all levels and pupils whose aspiration levels are rising all the time.