



Diocese of Arundel and Brighton

INSPECTION REPORT

St Hugh of Lincoln Catholic Primary School

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DfES Number: 125226

Headteacher: Mrs T Bullen

Chair of Governors: Mr J Doherty

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: 29 March 2011
Date of previous inspection: 21 October 2008

Lead Inspector: Mrs A Ireland
Associate Inspector: Mrs C Walker

Description of School

St Hugh of Lincoln is an average size school serving a suburban community. It is situated in the deanery of Woking in the diocese of Arundel and Brighton. It is maintained by Surrey LA. The principal parish which the school serves is St Hugh of Lincoln, Knaphill. A small number of pupils come from the parishes of St Dunstan's, Woking and Our Lady Help of Christians, West Byfleet. The mission of the school is 'to grow together in faith' whilst 'working for success'. There are currently 211 girls and boys on roll, 96% of whom are baptised Catholics. Attainment on entry to the school is generally about average. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. The number of pupils with special educational needs is just below average. The majority of pupils are White British. The remaining pupils come from mainly Asian backgrounds. The majority of teachers are Catholic and well qualified to teach religious education.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of this Catholic school

St Hugh of Lincoln is an outstanding school. Its strong Catholic ethos is evident in all aspects of school life, creating a caring, welcoming community where all are valued and their gifts and talents celebrated. The headteacher provides excellent leadership. She is strongly supported by her deputy, senior leadership team, staff and governors who all share her determination for continuous improvement while at the same time maintaining the real sense of community within the school. Relationships are excellent and morale is high. The care given to pupils is outstanding, as is the behaviour of the pupils. The very strong partnerships with both parents and the parish contribute to the school's success. Progress in religious education is good. Assessment is developing well and is beginning to impact positively on attainment. The prayer life of the school is outstanding and helps pupils to deepen their relationships with God and gain an understanding of what it means to be a worshipping community.

Grade 1

Improvement since the last inspection

The previous inspection judged the school to be outstanding in most aspects. The new headteacher, strongly supported by her deputy, senior leadership team and governors has continued to build upon these strengths. The school has rigorously addressed the issue relating to assessment procedures. Electronic tracking of individual pupils' progress is now in place, enabling the school to quickly identify any pupil underachievement. In line with other core curriculum areas, the coordinator regularly tracks the attainment of six pupils in each class as they move up through the school. Pupils' attainment in Religious education is discussed during the regular pupil progress meetings and the headteacher conducts a regular scrutiny of pupils'

work to compare standards in religious education with English. Staff continue to improve the quality of assessment strategies in order to ensure sufficient challenge for the more able pupils.

Grade 1

The capacity of the school community to improve and develop

This is a self reflecting community. All aspects of school life and academic growth are carefully and regularly monitored through the detailed and comprehensive school development plan. Rigorous processes for monitoring standards and practice ensure that the school has an honest and accurate view of its own performance and areas of development and strengths. Under the excellent leadership of the headteacher, the school has demonstrated that it is open to new initiatives and intervention strategies which have led to improvement. The strong sense of teamwork amongst the school community and a commitment at all levels to accelerate progress still further indicate that the school has an excellent capacity for improvement.

Grade 1

What the school should do to improve further

- Continue to develop the tracking of individual pupil progress so that the information it provides has an even greater impact on progress.
- Ensure that developmental marking is consistently applied and reflects the excellent practice evident in some classes.

The Catholic Life of the School

Leadership and Management

Strong and effective leadership at all levels ensures that the school provides outstanding opportunities for pupils to grow spiritually, morally, academically and socially. The succinct mission statement and the new school aims drive the work of the school. They are reinforced by the school covenant which was written and designed by pupils. The headteacher is an excellent leader. Her vision and determination to move the school on is successfully shared with her deputy, senior leadership team staff and governors. Together they ensure that the Catholic life of the school and its academic successes continue to grow. The strong Catholic identity is evident throughout the school and is celebrated through lovely displays, such as the 'All united in the love of God' display in the hall, and the many pictures and artefacts around the school. The governing body know their school well. Governors effectively fulfil their role in relation to the school's Catholic foundation. They regularly visit the school and in some cases help on a regular basis with pupils' learning. Because they monitor the curriculum, are fully involved in annual review days and contribute to various committees, they have a very good understanding of the school's areas of strength and development. They offer excellent support and challenge in order to move the school on. Staff relationships are excellent. Staff work as a mutually supportive team. They know their pupils and their families well. Their high expectations and approach to behaviour management with an emphasis on self discipline and respect result in exemplary pupil behaviour. Pupils themselves are polite, friendly and supportive of each other and the adults they meet. The care, guidance and support given to all

pupils are excellent. The partnership with parents is strong and in recognition of this the school has been granted a 'Working in partnership with parents' award. Parents are kept well informed through regular communications and a helpful web site. Their views are regularly sought and are represented in the school development plan. Parents help in school and many run after school clubs. Parents themselves have very positive attitudes towards the school and value the hard work and dedication of staff. This was summed up by a parent who wrote, 'I feel very lucky to be able to send my child to this amazing school' and another who wrote, 'the caring approach of this school is excellent'. Links with the parish are very strong. The parish based First Holy Communion programme is coordinated by a teacher and the support given by the school is excellent. The parish priest is a welcome and active member of the school family and is well known to pupils and their families. In addition to celebrating the liturgical and spiritual life of the school, he regularly visits classes and works closely with the headteacher and religious education coordinator. His involvement helps to significantly strengthen the school and parish partnership. The school works closely with other schools in the deanery initiating in-service such as the 'Rainbows' training. It supports the work of the diocese including the recent 'How to be a saint' project.

Grade 1

The Prayer Life of the School

The provision for prayer and worship is outstanding and is instrumental in guiding the life of the school. Opportunities for daily worship are provided through a varied programme of Masses, assemblies, class liturgies and celebrations such as services of Reconciliation. They reflect the Liturgical Year and the religious education programme. Of particular note is the way in which significant events in pupils' school lives are marked with special liturgies, such as the services of commissioning for the school council and Year 6 pupils. Acts of worship are characterised by song, music, drama and reflection and offer very good opportunities for pupil participation. They follow the format of Gather, Proclaim, Respond and Go forth and help pupils to gain and understanding of the importance of ritual in their lives as well as deepening their relationship with God. The whole school assembly on the theme of 'A new life in Jesus' cleverly linked pupils' preparation for Lent with the Sunday Gospel reading and the Pope's recent visit. Pupils contributed their own prayers and reflections which were both moving and spiritual. Those watching the assembly were most attentive and prayerful. They sang very well and with obvious enjoyment. In addition to whole school Masses, pupils in Years 4 to 6 take turns to attend a weekday Mass at the church each term. The weekly morning Mass celebrated in school before the start of the school day offers parents, staff, pupils and parishioners an excellent opportunity for whole community to worship together. Prayer is deeply embedded in the life of the school. Prayers are said throughout the day and most displays are embellished with a short prayer or invocation. As a legacy of the Year of Catholic Education pupils have chosen a patron saint for their class whose intercession is regularly sought in class prayer time. Pupils are taught the traditional prayers of the Church and are encouraged to compose their own. Each class writes their own prayers at the beginning of the year. These are not only used by the class but also by the school at assembly time. Very good opportunities are provided for pupils to engage in a wide range of prayer forms, including reflection and meditation. Older pupils have also written their own guided meditations which are of very high quality. All classes have prayer areas which are consistently good, relevant to the prayer life of the class and well used. Class reflection and the 'Big Question' books encourage pupils to reflect in a spiritual way on aspects of life and faith. The school provides very good opportunities for voluntary prayer during May and October when the rosary is prayed at lunch time. The school also has a quiet prayer area for pupils and staff to use when they wish. Each year, Year 6 pupils make a retreat at Wintershall as they prepare for the next stage of their school life.

Grade 1

How effectively does the school promote community cohesion?

One of the aims of the school states that in partnership with parents and the community, the school aims to, 'create a safe, stimulating and enjoyable environment which is underpinned by Gospel values'. In achieving this, the school has created a welcoming and inclusive community. Respect is a key feature in all relationships, and as a result, pupils thrive. Diversity is celebrated through the curriculum, acts of worship and events such as the celebration of Chinese New Year and the Multicultural weeks. The school has embraced the opportunity to participate in a local authority 'Promoting Diversity' project which aims to address issues of stereotyping and other issues of diversity. The care, guidance and support given to all pupils, but especially those pupils with special educational or emotional needs, are outstanding. The school fosters open relationships with parents and carers and maintains excellent links with outside agencies in order to support pupils and their families. The Home/School link worker who is now part of the pastoral team works closely with a number of pupils and their families. The introduction of the conflict management programme 'Kelso's Choice' and the provision of the 'Rainbows' bereavement programme training support pupils' emotional well being. The provision of the recently built group room indicates the commitment shown by the school to nurture pupils by providing a quiet purpose built environment so that they may fully access the curriculum. Pupils' gifts and talents are encouraged through the curriculum and a wide range of clubs, such as Irish dancing, cooking and Italian, and are celebrated on the special 'Celebrate Me' board in the hall. Pupils are keen to exercise responsibility and contribute to the well being of others. All classes have 'learning partners' whilst older pupils act as 'Special', 'Playground' and 'Reading' Buddies. The pupil voice is respected and listened to. The school council is well organised and councillors take their responsibilities seriously, involving themselves in the general life of the school and taking responsibility for events such as the recent 'Rainbow Day'. Pupils are encouraged to care for others in the wider community and beyond and engage in a range of fundraising activities many of which they organise themselves. Pupils also show an awareness of the needs of the local neighbourhood when, for example, they wrote to residents to inform them about the proposed erection of a 'Poly tunnel' in the school grounds. All pupils learn about Fair-Trade issues and there is a school steering group of pupils and staff to guide this initiative. The school maintains excellent links with other schools in the vicinity happily sharing good practice within the confederation of schools and at local authority level. Links with a school in France and a mission school in Argentina give pupils the opportunity to gain an insight into the life experiences of pupils in different parts of the world

Grade 1

Religious Education

Achievement and Standards in Religious Education

Attainment on entry to the school is generally about average. Progress is good throughout the Key Stages and by the time they reach Year 6, pupils reach levels that at least match national expectations and are sometimes above. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress due to targeted support and appropriate activities. Pupils have very well developed oral skills. They are articulate and can express their ideas and knowledge with confidence. This was demonstrated in the Year 5 class, where groups of pupils were given the task of looking at different artists' interpretations of the Stations of the Cross. The level of group collaboration and discussion was particularly good and showed the application of critical thinking skills amongst the more able pupils. Across the school pupils are developing a good religious vocabulary. Well developed empathetic skills were evident across the age range. Pupils have a good

knowledge of scripture and of the structure of the Bible. This was observed in a Year 4 class, where pupils were able to look up Bible references referring to the crucifixion with real confidence. Pupils are well able to relate what they have learnt in class to their own lives. For example, when talking about her work on Lent, a pupil said, 'Jesus did nice things for everyone and told us to do the same and that is what I am trying to do'. All pupils use a range of skills gained in other curriculum areas, such as art, role play and ICT, in order to progress. An example of this was observed in the Reception class where groups of learners were writing prayers, making hot cross buns from play dough, looking for signs of new life in the outside area and engaging in role play in the lovely role play area which had been set out as a church. Pupils have very positive attitudes towards religious education. They particularly enjoy their lessons when they are challenged. They listen carefully, answer up well and ask questions with confidence. They work well with learning partners and in paired and group discussion. Their behaviour in class is excellent. All pupils are able to record their work in a variety of ways including ICT, empathetic writing and questionnaires. Their work in books is generally neat and well presented and pupils take pride in what they do.

Grade 2

Teaching and learning in Religious Education

Teaching is good and often outstanding. Outstanding teaching is creative and challenging resulting in high quality work and very good progress. All teachers clearly articulate learning objectives and the steps to success so that pupils know what is expected of them. Very good questioning by all teachers across the school helps pupils to progress. Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subject which impacts positively on teaching and learning. There is a good balance of teacher direction and pupil interaction. For example during a lesson on the events of Good Friday, the teacher in the Year One class made excellent provision for paired discussion to enable pupils to share their ideas and thoughts throughout the lesson. Teachers make great efforts to provide resources to enhance learning including researching the internet in order to make lessons interesting. Their classroom organisation and behaviour management skills are very good. Relationships within the class are excellent resulting in a very inclusive class community. Teaching assistants are well deployed and well prepared. The positive relationships between teachers and the other adults working in the class are very strong and provide very good role models for pupils. Assessment is good and has developed well since the previous inspection. Pupils' progress is now tracked and recorded electronically. Tracking of pupils' progress needs to continue to develop so that all teachers are able to act on the data provided more effectively and so raise attainment still further. Staff regularly moderate pupils' work against national attainment levels in order to ensure agreement of judgement and consistency across the school. Focussed moderation of religious education results are regularly compared and contrasted with those in English. All teachers mark pupils' work and there is evidence in some classes of very good constructive and interactive marking. This now needs to be consistently applied across the school and to reflect the good practice seen.

Grade 2

Quality of the Curriculum

The time allocated to religious education is in line with the Bishops' requirement of 10% of curriculum time and is very well used. The school uses the 'Here I Am' programme and all themes and topics are fully covered. Teachers' planning is very good. It is detailed and thorough. Teachers plan together to ensure there is continuity and progression. They plan for a range of differentiated activities which are creative and enjoyable and are sufficiently challenging for all pupils including the more able. Education for personal relationships and the integration of ethos statements into the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL)

programme, together with Circle Time, support the religious education programme and contribute significantly to the spiritual and moral development of pupils. Exciting and stimulating activities introduced during the themed weeks such as the Christmas and Easter weeks and events like the Big Assembly enhance the curriculum. The teaching of other faiths is very well taught and resourced. The multi cultural week, which introduces visitors and cross phase visits to places of worship, such as a synagogue and a Hindu temple, is greatly enjoyed by pupils and adds to their knowledge and understanding of other faiths. The Sex Education policy follows diocesan guidance and is firmly rooted in the teachings of the Church. The curriculum is very well supported by internet research and a range of resources including sets of Bibles to encourage independent work. Parents are kept well informed about their children's progress and what they are taught in class. For example, parents receive termly information on 'Here I Am' and SEAL topics to be taught with suggestions of activities to do with their children in order to support the work done in school.

Grade 1

Leadership and management of Religious Education

Outstanding leadership and management of religious education ensure that the subject remains vibrant and standards continue to rise. The religious education leader, who is also the pastoral director, is a senior member of staff, indicating the importance the school places on the subject. She is a committed and enthusiastic leader, who strongly supported by the headteacher, works tirelessly to ensure that religious education remains firmly at the heart of the curriculum and that standards continue to rise. She has a well defined monitoring role which enables her to accurately assess the quality of teaching and learning, assessment and provision, and identify areas of strength and development. Information provided from monitoring activities is fed into the school improvement plan with a focus on raising standards. The link governor who is the parish priest monitors both class practice and pupils' work in books. He liaises closely with the coordinator and the headteacher. Through his monitoring role and his participation on the children and learning committee he has a very sound knowledge of classroom practice and pupil attainment. The coordinator gives very good support to colleagues both formally and informally. Staff meetings, the 'Before you Begin' sessions and appropriate in-service training ensure that staff are well qualified to deliver high quality religious education. The coordinator makes very good use of diocesan support in order to enhance the quality of religious education in the school. Resources are plentiful and of very good quality. The coordinator ensures that they are kept up to date, and are relevant and sufficiently challenging. They are easily accessible and well used. The budget allocated for the subject is in line with the other core curriculum areas. All staff work hard to create a really attractive environment in which pupils are encouraged to learn. The many lovely displays celebrate children's achievements and the Catholic life of the school.

Grade 1