



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 100628

**St. Bernadette Catholic Junior School
4 Atkins Road
London
SW12 0AB**

Inspection date: 2nd March 2017

Chair of Governors:	Ms Marcia Marshall
Headteacher:	Ms Deborah Hogan
Inspectors:	Mrs Eileen Watson Mr Stephen Beck.

EDUCATION COMMISSION

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SECTION 48

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Introduction

Description of the school

St Bernadette's Catholic Primary is voluntary aided. It is situated in the Lambeth Deanery of the Archdiocese of Southwark and is maintained by Lambeth local authority. The principal parishes which the school serves are St Bede's Clapham Park, Corpus Christi, Christ the King (Polish) and St Simon and St Jude. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholics is 60% with a combined Catholic / Christian population of 98%. The average weekly proportion of curriculum time given to Religious Education is 10% in all Key Stages.

The school takes pupils from 7 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 eligible for pupil premium funding is above average. 4% have statements of Special Education Needs (SEN) or Education and Health Care Plans (EHC). In addition, 13% pupils receive support for Special Educational Needs. The pupils come from a wide range of minority and ethnic heritages. The school has a high percentage of pupils who speak English as an additional language, with many pupils at an early stage of learning English.

Key for inspection grades

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

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St Bernadette's is a warm and welcoming school with an outstanding Catholic ethos. The pupils flourish in its supportive and inclusive atmosphere. All members of the school community are committed to the school's mission as summed up in their motto of "Work is Prayer. Pupils are happy and show exemplary behaviour in lessons and around the school. Parents and carers are encouraged to be part of the school community. One parent wrote, "Our children learn and love, play and pray and grow in grace, this is learning for life which they will take with them long after they leave St Bernadette's."

Pupils have an excellent sense of belonging to the school. Its values and ethos are visibly reflected in the exemplary attitudes and relationships between all members of the close-knit community. St Bernadette's is an oasis whereby everyone feels safe and is loved for who they are. Pupils enjoy their lessons and achieve well, taking pride in their work. The Catholic life of the school is central. Links with the parishes and priests enrich the school's programme of liturgical worship. The local parish priest is well known to the pupils. The parish priest works closely with the school, providing valuable support and guidance as well as fostering links with the parish. Visiting priests from other countries arrange Masses and confessions in home languages. People from the community are welcomed to attend Masses with the school. Leaders and managers are committed to the school's mission and are fully involved in all aspects of school life.

The provision offered by the school in Religious Education is thoughtful and relevant and plays an important part in the moral, social, spiritual and social development of pupils.

The school has successfully met the recommendations from the previous inspection and 10% of curriculum time is now allocated to Religious Education. A developed programme and structured approach to the teaching of Other Faiths has been ~~introduced~~established.

What steps need to be taken to improve further?

Governors, Headteacher and staff should:

- Further develop the current good practice in marking in Religious Education by including diagnostic next steps and target setting as consistent practice across the school
- Continue to demonstrate their common fundamental commitment to Catholic Education in its widest, all embracing sense, whilst continuing to aim for the highest academic standards for all pupils

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

The Catholic life of the school embraces and engages its pupils. Pupils are willing and active participants in the school's Catholic life. They understand their responsibilities towards others and are proud to serve and share in the common vision of the school of true inclusion. They are aware of the needs of others evidenced through their support of various charities such as the local 'Ace of Clubs', 'CAFOD' and 'World Vision.'

Pupils celebrate and embrace each other's cultures participating fully in multicultural and international evenings. They are aware that their diverse local community is comprised of many different faiths. The pupils' visit the 'Knitted Bible' at the local Pentecostal Church strengthens ecumenical links.

The supportive and inclusive nature of the school encourages pupils to achieve their full potential, nurturing pupils' academic and spiritual development. Pupils of all abilities make good to outstanding progress and achieve well. The school's Catholic ethos encourages all pupils to develop spiritually and morally, enhancing their relationship with God. They are regularly involved in school, parish and Diocesan celebrations, benefiting from staff and parental involvement. The school's federation with St. Bede's is enhanced with the motto of 'Two schools, one parish, one community' which promotes strong ties across the partnership.

Pupils' behaviour is excellent, both in lessons and around the school. They love to take on responsibility, for example as school chaplains, and recognise that the main reason for doing so is to help others and to work towards the common good. As one pupil expressed, they want to "make a difference."

Pupils across the school demonstrate an understanding of the importance of prayer. They know a variety of traditional prayers and are encouraged to write their own versions in their class prayer books to increase their understanding.

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education

Pupils clearly enjoy their Religious Education lessons and consider it an important part of their learning. Pupil interviews reflect this. One Year 6 boy commented that "I enjoy my RE lessons because I can learn about Jesus and the teachers make it fun!" another added "Our opinions count and we get listened to."

Teachers have high expectations of their pupils. They know them well and have accurate understanding of their starting points. Work is differentiated and tasks are well matched to the pupils' ability.

Learning behaviour in lessons observed was excellent, with all pupils on task and motivated by their learning at all times. This upholds the school's records from observations. Walking around the school, it was evident that the atmosphere is one of purpose and focussed learning.

The school's self-evaluation stated that pupils enjoy Religious Education and that they can talk about a piece of work which inspires them. This was witnessed by inspectors who found that pupils displayed confident religious literacy and had a good understanding of their faith story.

How well pupils respond to and participate in Collective Worship

St Bernadette's is a very prayerful and spiritual school where prayer and worship underpin the school community. Pupils take an active part in assemblies, Masses and liturgies. On Holy days, all classes attend Mass at St Bede's Church with parishioners and parents, where pupils read the bidding prayers. Pupils' prayers are used in Masses and daily prayer, including prayers written in the home language of children for whom English is an additional language. This was evident in the prayer gathering of Polish students with the visiting Polish priest.

Each classroom has a dedicated prayer corner which is changed and updated in line with the Church's liturgical calendar. Pupils respond well and participate reverently in the school's Collective Worship. They appreciate the importance of coming together as a worshipping community and the need to include all, whilst understanding respect for the beliefs of others.

Pupils demonstrated deep reverence and engaged in heartfelt response during the Lenten Assembly, with time for quiet reflection and prayerful silence.

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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 deeply committed to the Church's mission in education and to exemplifying this at St. Bernadette's. School leaders and governors have a clear vision of the school's mission, the importance of its Catholic life and the spiritual development of the pupils. The Headteacher communicates this vision clearly to the school community and leads by example. She models the valuing of every member of staff and every pupil and this permeates down through the Senior Leadership Team and to all members of staff and to the pupils. Staff are encouraged to participate fully in the religious life of the school, deliver assemblies and to pray with pupils. The Parish Priest supports the school which is endorsed by the parent questionnaire responses.

The Governors, Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher ensure the highest possible standards are achieved in all areas of the school's work. Governors take an active role in school life attending specifically focused learning walks and accompanying classes on trips to the Jewish Museum and to Wintershall. Governors are fully committed to their monitoring role. Prayer and reflection are part of every Governing Body meeting and the Collective Worship of the school is regularly reviewed in discussion. Leaders and managers revisit the School Vision at the beginning of each academic year, to ensure it is still current and relevant. There is a clear understanding of the boundaries between the strategic role of governance and the operational role of the Senior Leadership Team, clarified in governor training.

There is unequivocal and explicit evidence that the Catholic mission of the school is a priority along with the spiritual and moral development of pupils. This is reflected in the school's self-evaluation. Self-evaluation within the school is a coherent reflection of rigorous monitoring, searching analysis and self-challenge. Staff receive training on the school's Catholic ethos as part of their induction into the school.

How well leaders, governors and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan and implement for improvement to outcomes for pupils

The school has a comprehensive system of monitoring and evaluating Religious Education standards and provision. Assessment data is recorded half termly which enables individual pupil progress to be monitored, with support put in place as appropriate. Monitoring and evaluation enables the school to identify strengths and targets for future development. Leaders involve themselves, at the appropriate level, in all action planning for the provision, impact and outcomes for Religious Education.

The Headteacher and Religious Education leader are passionate in their drive to ensure excellence of Religious Education provision and pupil outcomes. They provide inspiration and support for the cohesive staff team.

Continuing Professional Development opportunities are provided for all staff. These include staff meetings, inset training and Diocesan courses, ensuring that staff are up to date with developments in the teaching of Religious Education and are provided with new ideas and resources to inspire them and deliver provision for the pupils.

The Religious Education leader models good practice and provides coaching sessions for staff, enabling them to develop their knowledge and skills.

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

The school's monitoring and SEF indicate that teaching is consistently good or better. The school follows 'The Way, The Truth and The Life' Religious Education curriculum. The curriculum is adapted to meet the needs of different groups and individuals. Non-Catholic staff are well supported by the Religious Education Subject Leader.

In all lessons observed, pupils were very attentive, responsive and demonstrated excellent behaviour for learning with pupils rarely off task and lessons proceed without any interruptions.

Teachers use their subject knowledge well. Teaching observed was at least good with some outstanding and was highly effective in enthusing pupils. Role play, meditation, multi-media presentations were observed on the day of inspection. Pupils say that teachers take a lot of effort in providing them with interesting and exciting lessons.

In an observed outstanding lesson the pace maintained by the teacher created a sense of dynamic learning, energy and eagerness. Transitions ensured that learning remained fresh throughout the lesson; the balance between teacher provided input and pupil response was very good. Progress made in this lesson was rapid. This outstanding practice should be shared within the school.

Pupils demonstrate very good religious literacy appropriate for their age and development and responded thoughtfully to teachers' questioning. In whole class discussions, pupils are happy to contribute orally, and to answer questions. They are reassured in this by their understanding that "there are no wrong answers." Relationships between pupils and teachers were excellent.

The Religious Education curriculum provides outstanding opportunities for pupils' spiritual and moral development. This was seen being undertaken in an outstanding manner in a lesson with the work undertaken by a Year 3 class on the topic of 'Conscience'.

Work in pupils' books is beautifully presented and reflects the high expectations of the teachers and the care taken by pupils. Marking is regular, affirmative and linked to the learning intention. Good or better progress is made by all groups. Pupils are involved in evaluating how well they achieve and are made aware of how to improve their work. They appreciate collaborative work when they share their ideas with each other.

Self assessment and developmental marking strategies have been introduced. There is some evidence of these in pupils' work; these now need to be consistently applied across the school, together with pupils being allocated to respond to teachers' comments.

Additional adults are effectively deployed to support pupils' progress and the pupils' clearly enjoyed working with them.

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

Pupils achieve good standards in Religious Education and make good progress. End of key stage results show that pupil outcomes are good, with significant numbers of pupils

achieving the higher levels. Pupils with disabilities or special educational needs are effectively supported to achieve their full potential.

The school follows 'The Way, The Truth and The Life' programme of study for Religious Education, enriched by cross curricular links where appropriate. Curriculum time allocation is in line with the requirements of the Bishop's Conference. The Religious Education Leader manages the subject extremely well. Through enthusiastic commitment, good subject knowledge, excellent organisational and strategic skills and highly effective training and mentoring she has been instrumental in raising achievement and standards in Religious Education. Data analysis, Religious Education portfolios, lesson observations and work scrutiny ensures the information needed to maintain standards and work out strategies for future developments.

The Religious Education curriculum includes the provision of the teaching of Other Faiths. This is enriched by visits to mosques, synagogues, temples and orthodox churches which are arranged to extend pupils' learning about other faiths. Pupils explore the beliefs, values and customs of other faiths such as Judaism and Islam. This helps them to show tolerance and respect for all members of society.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school

The school provides a wide range of prayer and worship opportunities and seeks to include parents, carers and families wherever possible. There are opportunities for the whole school community to participate in Eucharistic and non-Eucharistic liturgies, collective acts of worship and prayer. Collective Worship opportunities are well planned to reflect the liturgical year and school life. All year groups attend the Chapel in a local Catholic secondary school for the Stations of the Cross during Lent. Opportunities for pupils to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation are available three times a year.

Monthly Masses are organised by year groups. Pupils lead the readings and bidding prayers. The Parish Priest visits the school regularly helping pupils to experience what it means to belong to, and take part in the worshipping community of the Church.

Pupils are extremely respectful, act with reverence and are keen to participate in a variety of gatherings. On the day of inspection pupils were thoroughly engaged and gave heartfelt responses when both praying and singing during the themed assembly on Lent. Pupils led the assembly, asking questions of each other and reading bidding prayers written by them. Pupils enjoy being part of a worshipping community and appreciate that this forms part of their spiritual development, with a message for their daily lives and how they should behave towards others.

Vibrant displays and outstanding relationships evident in the classrooms and around the school illustrate powerfully the school's Catholic mission. This is further enhanced by the excellent management and care shown for the school environment by the whole school community.