



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 118775

**St William of Perth Catholic Primary School
Canon Close
Rochester
Kent
ME1 3EN**

Inspection date: January 25 2016

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SECTION 48

Introduction

Description of the school

St William of Perth is a voluntary aided school, which is situated in the Chatham Deanery of the Archdiocese of Southwark. It is maintained by Medway Local Authority. The principal parish, which the school serves, is St John Fisher, Rochester. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholics is 66%. The average weekly proportion of curriculum time given to Religious Education is 10% in all Key Stages

The school takes pupils from 4 to 11 years. The number of pupils currently on roll is 211. The attainment of pupils on entering the school is broadly average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below national average. Around 20% of the pupils receive extra support in class. While the majority of pupils are from a White British background, an increasing number, currently 31%, come from a wide variety of other ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils from homes where English is an additional language at 12% is below average.

Date of previous inspection: 25th January 2011 Overall Grade: 2

Key for inspection grades

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

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St William of Perth is an outstanding school. It is a shining example of dedication to its vocation as a Catholic School and its forward looking approach in seeking ongoing improvement to secure the best possible outcomes for its diverse intake of pupils. It has a stoic approach in seeking to continue the journey of improvement, identified in the last inspection. It is a very inclusive school and is to be commended for the work undertaken since its last inspection to maintain and build on the strengths noted at that time. All of the areas identified for improvement have been addressed.

Display work around the school is of a very high standard and showcases pupils' work, reflecting the strong Catholic identity of the school. The quality and presentation of work in pupils' books has improved significantly since the last inspection and pupils demonstrate considerable pride in these books.

More able pupils are now being better served and would benefit from increased opportunities for research and self-initiated learning. Assessment procedures are now well embedded. Internal and cross school moderation validated the increased number of higher level attainers and whole school judgements.

The school benefits from an aspirational Headteacher whose symbiotic partnership with the Deputy Head has seen leadership of St William of Perth establish transparent protocols that encourage all members of the school community to feel part of the 'William of Perth Family'. The welcome at point of first contact marks the school as special and throughout the school building there is a tangible feeling of a respect agenda, which in turn percolates through all aspects of the school's management and organisation. It is a school which manages change well, having succeeded in maintaining its strengths in the areas of outstanding pastoral care and provision for prayer and worship. Parents are extremely supportive of the school, as one parent wrote, *"My child loves going to school and I am constantly amazed at his knowledge. He loves religious education lessons, to read the Bible and learning about religious figures. I feel it gives him a fantastic grounding on how to treat people and be respectful. I feel lucky to be a part of St William of Perth."*

The leadership use all available resources to support a holistic philosophy and are proud of the achievements gained in recent years. The Headteacher has gained the professional and personal respect of all within the school community and is seen as the key driver and mentor for the school's continued improvement. Her knowledge of the community and extensive pedagogical understanding, has provided the staff with a role model which they acknowledge has influenced, their own individual, direction and success.

There is a fellowship within the school that provides the children and parents with an environment which celebrates success of the individual and encourages participation. The school enjoys a committed and dedicated governing body who

are seen as actively participating in all aspects of school life. They are recognised as appropriately challenging the leadership and are eager to gain a greater understanding of the changing nature of the teaching environment. The school remains strongly placed to maintain and continue its work as an important part of its own and the wider diocesan Catholic community.

What steps need to be taken to improve further?

Governors, Headteacher and staff should:

- Having secured a strong Religious Education curriculum, move to the next step of providing pupils with increased opportunities for research and self-initiated learning.
- Complete the current revision of the school's Relationships and Sex Education Policy (RSE) through consultation with parents.
- Continue the work commenced on developing a Marian garden to further enhance prayer opportunities in the school

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

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding. The mission statement is central to the life of the school and is fully embraced by all pupils in their daily school life. Opportunities to participate in the evaluation of the Catholic Life of the school are provided through the very effective School Council and during Religious Education lessons. Pupils have a strong sense of belonging to their 'school family' and they all strive to do their best to promote the strong ethos within their school and in the wider community.

They are well aware of the needs of others, both locally and globally, seeking to support them through awareness raising assemblies and fundraising. The generosity of the pupils and their families is tremendous. With their fund raising and charity work, they demonstrate that they are aware of the needs of others and generally seek justice for all within and beyond the school community. In merit and celebration assemblies, the pupils are quick to congratulate and be pleased for the achievement of others. The needs of these in the community, are promoted throughout the year. Fund raising events are organised for local, national and global charities such as, CAFOD, Children in Need, Red Nose Day, Love in a Box, Mission Appeal, The Poppy Appeal, Demelza House and MacMillan Nurses.

Pupils take full advantage of the opportunities provided by school for their personal support and development. They are happy, confident and secure in their own stage of spiritual and emotional growth. An effective programme for Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) allows pupils to develop and foster excellent understanding, appropriate to their age and a review of the school's policy for this area is nearing completion subject to a consultation with parents. Pupils are very proud of their religious identity, valuing the Catholic tradition of their school and its links to the parish community. They are regularly involved with parish and diocesan celebrations, benefitting from staff involvement in school and parish activities.

Pupils are given many opportunities to take on roles of responsibility which they do with commitment and enthusiasm, for example as, School Council members, prayer pilgrims and monitors. Prayer Pilgrims is a new initiative that places responsibility on elected pupils to lead prayer particularly with their class. The pupils are exceptional in their humble and meaningful approach to this role which should be widely celebrated and disseminated.

The school has developed excellent, harmonious and mutually supportive relationships with its geographically close Parish Church and regular liaison with the Parish Priest. The Parish Priest has helped to secure virtually seamless links in the Home, School, Parish Partnership whilst bringing to the table the opportunity to develop these links as the partnership moves forward. The clear openness to change is a credit to all concerned and appreciation was expressed

regarding the new Parish Priest's work in establishing his chaplaincy role to all members of the school community, thereby continuing the work of his predecessor.

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education

Pupils' achievements, enjoyment and attainments in Religious Education are very good and in a number of cases are exceeding expectations. This reflects increasing levels of attainment as a result of the work that has gone on to develop opportunities to extend pupils' learning. Pupils make at least good progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities, which is significant, as on entry to school many pupils do not have a good knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith.

Analysis of assessments undertaken provide evidence of pupils generally attaining appropriate levels for their age and stage of development in each Key Stage, with a number of Key Stage 2 pupils now exceeding age related expectations. In order to ensure the validity of these assessments, internal and external school moderation has been undertaken, including cross school moderation in partnership with other deanery Catholic schools.

Pupils are becoming increasingly more religiously literate. Their knowledge, understanding and skills are developing appropriate to their age and capacity. These skills are enabling them to reflect spiritually, think ethically and theologically and become more aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life. Pupils' engagement in and enjoyment of their learning is very good, as shown by their interest, enthusiasm and behaviour. Pupils are encouraged to work independently and collaboratively and are anxious to learn and improve their knowledge, understanding and skills, as they become more independent learners.

Evidence in pupils' books reflects growing levels of cross curricular links and high levels of religious vocabulary. Work is well presented and reflects coverage of the Religious Education curriculum. The work recorded is largely descriptive and reflects pupils' subject knowledge. Marking is developmental and is increasingly proactive with pupils being given opportunities to respond. Pupils' learning should now be extended through teachers' planning and development of skills for the range of pupils in their classes and provide opportunities for older pupils to undertake research and self-initiated learning.

How well pupils respond to and participate in Collective Worship

Provision for Collective Worship at St William of Perth is outstanding. It is a prayerful and spiritual school where there is a wide range of worship opportunities that are a regular and meaningful part of the daily life of the school. All pupils are inspired by, and enthusiastic in, their response to Collective Worship. This is evident in their keen participation in liturgies, particularly their gathering, joyful singing and prayerful reflection. They listen

well, show respect and offer heartfelt responses. Pupils are taking an increasing lead in planning, preparing and leading liturgies in class and larger groups throughout the school. They are gaining confidence in using resources and are beginning to develop an increasing variety of prayer and liturgical styles which they use appropriately. From the earliest ages pupils recognise the special nature of liturgical symbols and show respect. They are aware that religious beliefs are important, demonstrating respect for their own faith and the faith of others. This is greatly helped by a programme of visits to other places of worship, which have recently been extended to include a local Church of England church. Adults provide excellent role models for pupils in their response and participation in liturgy.

The school has strong, well established links with its parish, parents, other schools, and the local community and is actively seeking to develop and extend these links. There is a current focus on developing parental partnerships to support faith learning and understanding of Other Faiths linked to work on the theme of the 'Year of Mercy'. The school remains ever mindful of the individual faith journeys of its pupils and their families.

The strong programme of Collective Worship is attended by parents and parishioners who are regularly invited to these celebrations. The depth and breadth of this provision makes a very positive impact on the spiritual and moral development of pupils.

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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

The school's leaders, managers and governors are unequivocally committed to their work and witness, ensuring that the Catholic mission of the school is their fundamental priority together with the spiritual and moral development of pupils. They ensure that the provision of the Catholic life of the school permeates every aspect of school life on a daily basis.

Leaders and managers are excellent role models providing leadership and guidance at all levels. They, with governors effectively monitor and evaluate provision for the Catholic life of the school and collective worship. Leaders and managers have clearly defined monitoring structures and policies in place which enable them to self-evaluate accurately and this was reflected in the school's self-evaluation form which accurately identified the school's strengths and areas for development.

Leaders ensure that parents know what is going on at school and how their children are progressing through regular communication, as well as information on the excellent school web site. This is commendable for its use in celebrating both the school's Religious Education curriculum and the wider Catholic life of the school and is an exemplar for others. The school obtains regular feedback by regularly seeking the views of parents, pupils and staff which is seen as important in ensuring that leaders are aware of any concerns or where improvements can be made.

The weekly issuing of 'The Wednesday Word' and a school newsletter is greatly appreciated by parents who felt both well informed by the school on the Religious Education curriculum and also in supporting their children's spiritual development at home.

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

Leaders, governors and managers are good in evaluating the provision for the Religious Education of the school and are increasingly focussed on planning and implementing improvements to outcomes for pupils through the effective use of monitoring and data to evaluate the school's performance and plan for future improvements. Teaching and learning is monitored and this now needs to be reviewed to secure appropriate feedback and support as necessary. The identified good practice needs to be shared widely and celebrated. Continuing professional development opportunities are provided for all, through the

Diocesan and school based training. It is noteworthy how very good the school is at ensuring achievement and effort are celebrated.

Assessments are completed and information is collated and tracked by the subject leader. The subject leader is very good in guiding Religious Education and maintaining it as a core subject. He shows commitment, is enthusiastic and introduces new initiatives when appropriate and demonstrates both personal and wider school capacity to guide Religious Education forward. His documentation is well ordered and presented and he ably supports, guides and directs staff as appropriate in the delivery of the subject.

The school has established a Religious Education Governing Body Committee which meets termly. These meetings are minuted with themes and foci explored. This group is very proactive in attending Collective Worship within the school. Members of the Religious Education Committee have attended lesson observations led by the school's senior leadership team. Members of the governing body regularly attend Diocesan governor training. Members of the Religious Education Committee attended a moderation meeting among neighbouring Catholic schools. A governor shadowed and supported the subject leader in leading the First Holy Communion programme in 2015. Each class has an allocated governor who meets regularly with them during the year. The class governor remains with the class as they journey through the school, ensuring consistency in relationship. The governors are critical friends to the Head and Deputy Headteacher offering both challenge and support.

The school achieved a high return (over 50%) of parental questionnaires with a very commendable 100% positive response. As a parent commented on their form, *"Teachers, leaders and the governing body have created a highly positive learning environment under an umbrella of high expectations in all areas including that of learning behaviour and home study. My child loves her school and I thank all teachers and staff for their unrelenting hard work and dedication."* The school currently has an arrangement of joint Chairs of Governors who whilst relatively new in post have quickly established themselves and in partnership with an excellent Vice Chair of Governors are securing very strong governance for the school.

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

The quality of teaching and purposeful learning in religious education is good. On the day of inspection, the lessons observed were never less than good with a number reflecting outstanding features. Parents noted that, *“My child is enjoying her school life where she feels secure, loved and happy. We are very proud to have our daughter attending an outstanding school. We strongly believe that the Catholic character of the school has enriched our daughter with a deep appreciation of life.”*

Teachers display good subject knowledge and deploy a range of teaching styles to motivate and inspire pupils. Around the school and in classrooms displays are bright and appealing. Appropriate artefacts are used, reflecting Religious Education themes and prior learning. In lessons observed, effective planning and teaching strategies ensured pupils were engaged. Teaching encourages pupils' enjoyment of and enthusiasm for Religious Education. Teachers have excellent relationships with all pupils. Across the school teachers share experiences and link Religious Education to their own lives, inviting pupils to do the same. Careful planning, challenging questions, guided discussion and quality resources encouraged pupils' enthusiastic responses.

There is some evidence of differentiated tasks that help to consolidate and build pupils' knowledge and understanding. Differentiation should continue to be further widened to ensure challenge for all pupils. In the Foundation Stage, themes are reinforced through appropriate and well planned continuous provision. Good quality resources are used within lessons and teachers employ appropriate use of Information Communication Technology (ICT) to maximise learning, particularly through the use of interactive whiteboards. Teaching Assistants provide excellent care and support to pupils. They are deployed effectively and show sensitivity to pupils' needs, working hard with a focus to ensure all pupils in their care reach their full potential, reflecting teachers' clarity in planning their inputs.

Pupils are given opportunities to discuss their work and assessment for learning was used in some lessons observed. This good practice should be shared across the school. Pupils are informed of their progress and how to improve both orally and at times through marking. Marking shows positive and encouraging comments and should continue to improve by challenging pupils on their next steps. The school effectively assesses pupils' achievements and the expectations for able learners will continue to be reviewed as the Religious Education programme, 'The Way the Truth and the Life' is further developed.

The use of pupil self-assessment and target setting are developing well and as they become consistent across the school will impact on levels of attainment. The emphasis the school places on celebrating effort and achievement at all stages of learning is a strength of the school. Teaching is consistently effective in enthusing pupils and ensuring that they learn well. Teachers and teaching

assistants are very aware of their pupils' capabilities, their prior learning and understanding, planning effectively to build on these. Classroom management is consistently strong. In a Year 2 lesson the teacher built very well on previous learning and pupils showed considerable insight during discussion on the parable of the Ten Lepers. Good links were made with the assembly and the teacher made good use of a venn diagram to record pupil responses and links with an understanding of the Holy Trinity. More opportunities could be given to pupils for in depth discussions in talk partner time and class feedback.

Impressive use was made in a Reception class of the parable of the Feeding of the 5000 to provide opportunities to secure strong vocabulary development. The teacher provided an excellent learning environment in which pupil's demonstrated confidence and keenness to respond to excellent questioning techniques employed by the teacher.

A Year 4 lesson looked at parables and how Jesus came to teach us how to live. Pupils explored the concept of talents and how we use them. The lesson reflected the strong prayer life of the school and the teacher's strong subject knowledge.

A Year 6 lesson on the topic of the Last Supper was marked by a clear learning objective, the building on previous learning, links with the Jewish faith, good use of the Interactive White Board and the forming of links with the concept of sacrifice in our own lives at home and in school. There was a consistent linking of the teaching with the pupils own lives providing high levels of relevance, for example in the context of their move to secondary school at the end of the year.

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

Pupils clearly enjoy Religious Education lessons and they understand their value. They are able to apply what they have learnt in the context of their daily lives. They are focussed, concentrate well and are eager to complete tasks independently. They can discuss what they have learnt and show that they are reflective, not only in lessons, but generally. Progress is evident within lessons and over time as reflected in pupil workbooks. Pupils settle quickly to work and behaviour in class and around the school is exemplary.

Children have explored the beliefs and values of other faiths and religions. This helps to promote tolerance and respect for those who think differently. Visitors have been invited into school to share their faith with the children. There is an established strong programme of visits to other places of worship. Class focal points are well used and displays around the school are of a very high standard.

The school, using 'The Way the Truth and the Life' programme meets the requirements of the Curriculum Directory for Religious Education. Appropriate levels of the programme are being followed in different classes ensuring complete Religious Education entitlement for each child. Of the total curriculum

time 10% is allocated to Religious Education, fulfilling the requirements of the Bishops of England and Wales.

Planning ensures full coverage of the Religious Education programme. Well planned strategies are deployed to enrich pupils' learning with the school implementing new curriculum developments as appropriate.

The Religious Education curriculum provides very good opportunities for pupils' spiritual and moral development and vocation with elements of the curriculum customised to meet the needs of groups and individuals which could now be further refined.

Impressively the school's SENCO plays a significant part in providing resource support for SEN pupils to access the Religious Education curriculum. Her enthusiasm for ensuring and monitoring progress for vulnerable groups is a strength of the school.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is very good. It reflects the Catholic character of the school and takes into account the variety of faith backgrounds among the pupils. Collective worship plays a key part in meeting the spiritual needs of the pupils. Opportunities are provided to enable full, active and conscious participation of the whole school community. Pupils are enabled to pray formally and informally using a variety of prayer methods and styles. The school provides opportunities for staff to develop the skills in planning, leading and evaluating collective worship. Teachers provide the necessary resources and opportunities to help children to develop the skills necessary to plan, lead and participate in collective worship and to evaluate it effectively. With time this will become embedded. Provision would be further enhanced through the development of a consistent programme to monitor and evaluate collective worship and good practice shared. Opportunities are provided for parents, carers, the local and wider faith communities to participate in a variety of celebrations of 'The Way the Truth and the Life' programme and the Church's liturgical year.

Each year group class is named after a Saint, whom the children study and investigate. Prayer is central to the life of the school with the pupils praying and giving thanks at regular times throughout the school day. A well-used class prayer book is shared between school and home for individual pupils to write prayers to share with the class. Class prayers are also used as a focus for worship during whole school assemblies

The assembly attended provided good cross curricular links through the use of Dürer's Praying Hands and the pupils' own drawings based on this. Good use was made of a range of resources securing pupil attention and reverence with the celebration being greatly enhanced by some beautiful and moving liturgical dance. Pupils were generally good at projecting their voices in a large hall making good use of scripture, prayer, music and opportunities for reflection.

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