

DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION REPORT

incorporating Section 48 and Canonical Inspection under Canon 806 on
behalf of the Archbishop of Southwark

URN 138612

St Thomas Becket Catholic Primary School

Becket Close

Birchanger Road

London, SE25 5HQ

Inspection date: 10th July 2018

Chair of Governors: Mr M. Humphreys

Headteacher: Mr N. Campbell

Inspectors: Mrs A. Oddy

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EDUCATION COMMISSION

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Key for inspection grades

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

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Thomas Becket Primary School is an academy situated in the Croydon deanery of the Archdiocese of Southwark. They are a member of the Croydon Catholic Primary Schools Umbrella Trust. The school mainly serves the parish of Our Lady of the Annunciation but also draws from the parish of St Chad's and other parishes within the locality. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholics is 96%. The average weekly proportion of curriculum time given to Religious Education is 10% in Key Stage 1 and 10% in Key Stage 2.

The school takes pupils from 4 to 11 years. The number of pupils currently on roll is 434. The attainment of pupils on entering the school is broadly average. The proportion of pupils for whom pupil premium funding is received is 11%, which is lower than the national average. 1% of pupils have statements of Special Educational Need (SEN) or an Education and Health Care Plan (EHP) ; a further 9% of pupils receive extra support for Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND). 67% of pupils are from a range of ethnic minority backgrounds. 21% of pupils come from homes where English is an additional language (EAL).

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SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

St Thomas Becket Primary is an outstanding Catholic school because:

- St Thomas Becket is a warm and welcoming school providing a high standard of Catholic education. Its attractive and well-resourced learning environment clearly reflects its Catholic identity in the many beautiful displays and artefacts relating to Religious Education and the school's Catholic life. The school's inclusive nature embraces all cultures and abilities and ensures everyone is valued and included. Staff, governors, pupils and parents all speak warmly of being part of "the Becket family."
- The school's strong Catholic ethos permeates all aspects of school life and is evident in the caring and considerate relationships that exist between all members of the school community. Inspirational leadership communicates a clear sense of mission, both within the school and to the wider community. The headteacher inspires and enthuses his cohesive staff team as they seek to develop the full potential of every pupil, academically, socially and spiritually. Governors are fully involved in the life of the school. They know their school well and are conscientious in their monitoring role. They are committed to a constant drive towards school improvement and to the school's mission both within school and to the wider community. Parents are very supportive of the school and greatly value the Catholic education it offers. The Parish Priest is a regular visitor to the school and the school has strong links with the parish.
- Pupils are happy members of the school community. They feel safe and secure and know any worries will be addressed and resolved. They are kind and considerate to each other. Pupil behaviour is exemplary in classrooms and around the school. They are enthusiastic learners and achieve well. Standards in Religious Education are high, with all groups of pupils making good progress. Religious Education lessons interest and engage pupils, encouraging them to think about and reflect on their learning. Cross curricular links enrich the Religious Education curriculum.
- The school offers a rich variety of collective worship and prayer opportunities to develop and nurture the spiritual growth of pupils. Pupils respond very positively, recognising that prayer and worship develop and deepen their relationship with God. They enjoy coming together as a worshipping community and are active participants in all aspects of collective worship.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

With no significant areas for improvement, the school should:

- Continue with the school's identified focus on further development of assessment in Religious Education to facilitate the transition from levels of attainment to age related expectations.

Overall Effectiveness

How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education:

1

Catholic life

1

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

1

The quality of provision for the Catholic life of the school.

1

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life of the school.

1

Religious Education

1

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.

1

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education.

1

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.

1

Collective worship

1

How well pupils respond to and participate in the schools' Collective worship.

1

The quality of provision for Collective worship.

1

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective worship.

1



CATHOLIC LIFE

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

- Pupils have a strong sense of belonging to the school community and are keen to contribute to the Catholic life and mission of the school. They appreciate that they have a responsibility towards making their school a caring Catholic community and have a part to play in shaping its mission, within the school and beyond.
- They are aware of the school mission statement and its role at the heart of their school. They have written their own versions, which are displayed centrally.
- Through pupil voice, they are able to contribute to suggesting and implementing school development initiatives.
- The school offers pupils many opportunities to take responsibility; pupils respond to these very positively, seeing these as exemplifying their service to others and their school. Examples include School Council, Digital Leaders and Playground Leaders.
- Pupils understand the importance of respect and care for others. They are friendly and helpful to each other and know the importance of looking after each other and being forgiving. During this inspection, pupil behaviour was exemplary, in classrooms and around the school.
- Pupils are enthusiastic in fundraising for a wide variety of charities, local, national and global. Examples include St Christopher's Hospice, The Royal Marsden and CAFOD.
- They enjoy being part of the wider community, taking part in Croydon Catholic Schools Sports and Quizzes, creating artwork for the Norwood Junction Community Garden and singing in the Fairfield's Shopping Centre at Christmas. The school's Harvest Festival offerings support Nightwatch, a charity which is part of a local Church of England initiative.
- Pupils value and respect the Catholic tradition of the school and its links with the parish, deanery and diocese. The annual Carol Service and the Passion production take place in the church. Parish links are strong; the Parish Priest is a regular visitor to the school and a member of the governing body. As part of the Umbrella Trust there are excellent links with other schools in the deanery. Pupils also take part in diocesan events.
- The Catholic tradition of the school is celebrated in the many attractive displays and artefacts around the school. These feature the liturgical year, Religious Education themes and school events. An example is the beautiful "Water into Wine" display featuring pupils' written and art work.



- Education in Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is well established in the school, enabling pupils to understand loving relationships and sexual development. The school uses “A Journey in Love” and “All that I Am” throughout the school. Teaching is in accordance with the teaching of the Church.
- Pupils feel safe and happy at school. They know that they will be supported if they have any anxieties and that problems will be speedily resolved. Digital Leaders and work on cyber bullying help to raise awareness and enable pupils to have a good understanding of e-safety. As a result they are confident and secure.
- Pupils interviewed as part of this inspection commented that, “Everyone is kind and everyone supports everyone else,” and “everyone helping each other makes the school what it is.” Another said she valued the school, “because of the friendships we make and the way we care for each other.” It is clear that the strong Catholic ethos of the school embraces all its pupils.
- Parents feel part of the school community and appreciate the Catholic education it offers. Parental questionnaires distributed as part of this inspection showed an exceptionally high rate of return and were overwhelmingly positive regarding the school, its benefit to the pupils and the great sense of community. One wrote, “I don’t have family in this country and thanks to the school my child has a strong sense of belonging and love for everyone.” Another commented, “We have been extremely happy with all the care, attention and guidance given by all the staff in school. We feel really proud to be part of the Becket family.”

The quality of provision for the Catholic life of the school is outstanding.

- The school’s mission statement is at the heart of school life and informs all policy and practice. It is regularly reviewed and is well known to staff, governors, parents and pupils, who appreciate its importance to the school, knowing that it represents a shared vision.
- Staff are a cohesive team and are fully committed to the Catholic life of the school. Effective induction, training and support ensure that they are able to actively participate in activities related to the school’s Catholic life. All staff promote high standards of behaviour, relating this to the mission and vision of the school. A Good Samaritan award for pupils celebrates and recognises good deeds and care for others.
- There is a strong sense of community in the school, characterised by supportive relationships between members at all levels. This also extends to the parish, with good links between school and parish groups. A parent commented, “As a result, we have a great sense of community in the area and our children benefit massively from this in building relationships, taking part in events and learning from others.”
- Effective provision for pastoral care supports pupils, their families and staff and is a strength of the school. Examples include Speech and Learning support for pupils, an



Early Help adviser and a Family Support worker. A school counsellor works with identified vulnerable pupils, holds drop-in sessions open to all pupils and also works with families. Senior staff have an open door policy for staff with any concerns and are mindful of staff well-being and workload when introducing new initiatives.

- Pupils are given many opportunities to enhance provision for the Catholic life of the school and to make their contribution to learning and the well-being of others. Examples include older pupils acting as guides and buddies for new Reception pupils. Friendship benches support vulnerable pupils at playtimes.
- The school's behaviour policy is firmly rooted in its Catholic ethos. High expectations of behaviour, age appropriate approaches and strategies together with the Christian principles of forgiveness and reconciliation are clearly in place. Pupils respond very positively, resulting in a calm and harmonious learning community. A pupil commented, "The school is a calm and relaxed environment, this helps me to think and encourages me to learn."
- The Catholic life of the school fosters and supports the academic, moral and spiritual development of its pupils. It is a joyful and supportive community providing an attractive and inspiring learning environment. Provision for spiritual development is comprehensive. A parent wrote, "We are very pleased with the Catholic ethos and spiritual teaching and support offered by the school. The school works well to help every child reach their full potential academically, spiritually and personally. The school works in partnership with parents and parish to achieve this."

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life of the school is outstanding.

- School leaders and governors are deeply committed to the Catholic life of the school and to promoting its Catholic identity. They are effective role models and actively engaged in ensuring the Catholic life of the school supports and nurtures the academic, moral and spiritual development of its pupils as well as demonstrating the school's commitment to the Common Good. They have a clear vision of the school's Catholic life and ethos and are constantly striving for excellence in all aspects of this.
- Governors are active in their support for the school's Catholic life. They attend school celebrations and events and are frequent visitors to the school. They are conscientious in their monitoring role and fulfil their role of support and challenge. They undertake training and regularly review all policies related to the Catholic nature of the school. They attend the spring Parents Evening sessions, distributing parental questionnaires which include questions on the Catholic ethos of the school. In the last survey, 100% of parents who replied agreed that the school had a very strong Catholic ethos.
- The Catholic life of the school is part of school self-evaluation and informs development planning, taking into consideration the views of all stakeholders, including parental surveys and pupil voice.



- The school website, newsletter and half-termly Religious Education newsletter ensure parents are fully informed about events in the school and parish, welcoming them to join in the school's Catholic life. A parent wrote, "I have always felt informed about the religious calendar of events and have always felt welcome to join in events at the church" and another said, "We feel very privileged to be part of this Catholic community."
- The Parish Priest supports and enriches the Catholic life of the school, providing a pastoral presence on the Governing Body and around the school, as well as providing valued support for school liturgies, celebrations and the Religious Education curriculum.
- Leaders and governors also show great commitment to the school's mission in the wider community. The Headteacher and the Chair of Governors are leading figures in the Umbrella Trust, working for the good of local schools.

Publication date 2nd October 2016



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

1

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education is outstanding.

- Pupils make good progress in Religious Education and show high standards of attainment. In 2017, almost all pupils attained or exceeded age related expectations by the end of Key Stage 2, with a significant number of pupils working at greater depth. Standards in Religious Education are similar to those in other core subjects.
- All groups of pupils, including those with SEND, make good progress and achieve well, reflecting the effective support provided by the school. A parent of a child with special needs spoke very warmly of the school and how pupils from the school still treat him with love and affection, even though he has now left the school.
- Pupils enjoy their Religious Education lessons and appreciate its importance to their own lives. They speak confidently about their learning and enjoy displaying and explaining their work. A Year Five pupil said, "I like thinking about all sorts of things and what Jesus would do," relating it to his lesson on CAFOD, social justice and care for God's world. Another pupil demonstrated thought and reflection as he said how he would ask for prayers as well as funds in the role of CAFOD ambassador. Year 4 pupils were keen to relate showing God's love by their actions in their own lives and knew this was part of their responsibility as members of God's people.
- During the lessons observed as part of this inspection, behaviour for learning was excellent. Pupils were interested and attentive and responded well to teachers' questioning. Pupils demonstrated excellent subject knowledge and were able to use prior learning to support their answers and ideas.
- Work in books was well presented and shows that pupils take a pride in their work. They show a high standard of religious literacy in books and lessons. In lessons observed as part of this inspection, a Reception pupil was able to explain that a Psalm was a song and Year 2 pupils were familiar with the Gloria as a song of praise. In both these lessons, pupils were engaged, and enthusiastic and pupil outcomes reflected teachers' high expectations.
- Religious Education lessons are enhanced by cross curricular links such as Art, Drama and Writing. Pupils spoke appreciatively of how much they enjoyed the variety of approaches and activities employed in the teaching of Religious Education. A Reception teacher used Religious Education words and phrases to model phonics and punctuation. Older pupils wrote speeches for a CAFOD representative.
- The teaching of other faiths is well established in the school. Pupils are aware of the need to respect the beliefs and faith practices of others and enjoy learning about diversity of belief and celebrations. The curriculum is enhanced by visits and visitors, an example being a visit to a local synagogue.

The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education is outstanding.

- Four lessons, across three key stages, were observed as part of this inspection. All were securely good or better, with some demonstrating clearly outstanding elements. Pace was good and high-quality resources used effectively. Good questioning skills enabled pupils to explore and deepen their understanding. Cross curricular links were used to enrich the lessons and enhance pupils' interest and enjoyment. Teachers demonstrated a high level of subject knowledge and used a variety of teaching strategies to engage pupils. Clearly differentiated activities catered for all pupils' needs. Other adults in the classroom provided effective support for SEND pupils and groups. Class management and behaviour for learning were excellent. This high-quality teaching and learning resulted in excellent pupil outcomes, as evidenced by their written work and their responses in the lessons in all classes observed.
- Marking in pupils' books is regular and affirmative. There is some evidence of a dialogue between pupil and teacher, but this is not apparent in all age groups. Pupils are also familiar with using self-assessment and enjoy being able to contribute to their learning in this way. The school has identified greater consistency in developmental marking as a focus for development.
- Formal assessments are completed regularly and are moderated at school and deanery level. The school has been focusing on developing assessment in Religious Education to facilitate the transition from using levels of attainment to the use of age related expectations and this is in line with the recommendations of this inspection.
- The school works closely with other Catholic schools to share good practice and ideas to enhance the teaching, learning and assessment of Religious Education.

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education is outstanding.

- The school uses the 'Come and See' programme of Religious Education enriched by cross curricular links. Curriculum time allocation is in line with the requirements of the Bishops' Conference.
- Leaders and governors ensure that provision for all aspects of Religious Education has full parity with other core subjects, including resourcing, professional development training, monitoring and self-evaluation.
- Monitoring in Religious Education is comprehensive and thorough. It includes learning walks, lesson observations, planning scrutiny and book scrutiny. Results feed into school self-evaluation and inform development planning. Governors, including the link governor for Religious Education, fulfil their monitoring role by regular visits and receive informative reports from the headteacher and subject leader.



- The link governor for Religious Education is conscientious in her role. She liaises with the subject leader on a regular basis to discuss all aspects of Religious Education in the school.
- The Religious Education subject leader is enthusiastic and committed to excellence in provision and outcomes. She is rigorous in monitoring teaching and learning and provides reports for the headteacher and governors. She has been active in developing new assessment procedures and recording to facilitate the requirement for assessment without levels, bringing Religious Education in line with other core subjects. She provides staff training in school, sharing good practice and cascading information from deanery and diocesan meetings, as well as providing support and guidance for colleagues.
- Religious Education is imaginatively and thoughtfully planned to meet the needs of all pupils to ensure high standards of teaching and learning throughout the school. It successfully inspires pupils, encourages deep thinking and prepares them for life in today's world.
- Parents are informed of the topics followed in Religious Education in newsletters, the website and the Wednesday Word. A parent wrote, "The school's weekly Learning Sheet provides an effective overview of what the children will be learning in Religious Education each week. Very pleased with that!"
- Religious Education also contributes to the wider curriculum. This was noted by a schools adviser, whose report on standards and progress in the school commented, "The use of Religious Education themes to consolidate and further develop skills in the core curriculum is outstanding, as is work in the humanities." Provision for Religious Education is greatly enhanced by input from the school's resident artist. Pupils have produced outstanding art work to complement their work in Religious Education, as evidenced by their books and impressive displays in the school.



COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

1

How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective worship and Prayer Life is outstanding.

- Prayer and worship are at the heart of the school community. The school offers a wide range of prayer and worship opportunities and pupils respond very positively, enjoying playing an active part in this important aspect of school life.
- Pupils enjoy coming together as a worshipping community. The act of worship observed as part of this assembly was a Key Stage 2 assembly led by year 4 and 5 pupils. They had planned the assembly, produced the materials and resources and presented it with pride. The theme of the assembly was "Our responsibility as stewards of creation" and was clearly related to scripture and the Pope's message of Laudato Si. Pupils sang joyfully and tunefully, enjoyed the rap performed by three year 4 pupils and listened with reverence and respect throughout. Pupils were invited to contribute spontaneous prayers and did so with confidence. It was an excellent example of a prayerful worshipping community.
- Pupils are involved in planning and leading worship. They enjoy the responsibility involved and are happy to be contributing to worship in school, choosing music, readings and prayers with care. They are confident in composing and contributing their own prayers and are also familiar with the traditional prayers of the Church. Year Six pupils prepare and model collective worship for other classes in the school, developing their own faith commitment and that of others. Year 5 pupils help other classes to explain and explore The Wednesday Word.
- Pupils show an excellent understanding of the Church's liturgical year, its feasts and seasons. The Stations of the Cross assembly, Nativity and Passion plays are examples of how these are celebrated in school, developing pupils' understanding and offering them opportunities to participate in marking events in the Church year.
- Every term each class leads a whole school assembly, using dance, drama, music and prayer to explore and communicate a topic of their choice such as a Gospel story, a feast day or a Religious Education topic. This offers them the opportunity to lead and participate in worship and they respond very positively, with pupils commenting on how much they enjoyed these occasions.
- School prayer books feature pupils' own prayers and prayers exploring themes in Religious Education and in other areas of the curriculum, contributing to a cross curricular approach. Prayer boxes are located close to class prayer tables for pupils to contribute prayer intentions and their own prayers. Examples in classes showed they are well used. Prayer focus areas invite pupils to reflection and prayer. An example was a bowl of marbles and a cross, "When we hold a marble, we pray."
- The school shows exceptionally good practice in facilitating all pupils' development in preparing and leading worship. This is not restricted to any particular group of pupils



and gives all the opportunity to be directly involved. Pupils spoke appreciatively of these opportunities and really value them.

The quality of provision for Collective worship and Prayer Life is outstanding.

- Collective worship and prayer are central to the life of the school. A rich programme of collective worship unites the school as a worshipping community and prayer is woven throughout the school day. Staff and pupils pray together regularly and prayer is an integral part of school celebrations. Parents and parishioners are often invited to join the school in worship and appreciate these opportunities.
- Collective worship has clear purpose, message and direction. A carefully planned programme for the year reflects the liturgical season, themes in Religious Education and school events.
- A wealth of celebrations include Harvest, the Rosary prayer group in October, Remembrance Day and the Leavers' Mass as well as celebrations for Christmas and Easter. 'Lent in a Bag' resources support pupils' Lenten journey and strengthen home/school links.
- The school supports pupils on their Sacramental journey. The parish based First Holy Communion programme is supported by the school working with the catechist to complement the children's preparation and holding a school celebration for the First Holy Communion children. During Lent, Reconciliation services are held for junior pupils.
- Staff are skilled in helping pupils to plan and deliver worship, with the Headteacher and subject leader providing guidance, support and training as appropriate.
- The school's provision for collective worship and prayer inspires pupils to compose and contribute their own prayers. These reflect their close relationship with God. A pupil said, "When I pray, I feel safe because I'm becoming closer and closer to God." Another said, "You can speak to God if you're feeling a bit lost or need to say sorry and ask for forgiveness." A pupil's prayer poem included, "God is in every single soul so when you think peace think me, think you, think everyone."

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective worship and Prayer Life is outstanding.

- School leaders and governors are committed to providing high quality collective worship as an essential part of school life. School leaders are skilled at planning worship opportunities. The link governor for Religious Education and the Parish Priest help school leaders to shape the programme of worship for the year.
- Monitoring and advisory visits from diocesan advisers and Religious Education consultants have helped to broaden and enrich provision, as well as contributing to



school self-evaluation. School leaders model good practice and promote pupil involvement in planning and leading worship.

- Governors, particularly the link governor for Religious Education, attend assemblies and acts of worship as part of their monitoring role. Discussion at Governing Body meetings feeds into school self-evaluation. School self-evaluation is accurate and reflective and effectively informs development planning.
- Parents are kept informed of celebrations in school and warmly invited to attend. The Wednesday Word also strengthens the link between home, school and parish and reinforces the Gospel message heard at Sunday Mass.
- The subject leader provides resources to enrich collective worship and undertakes the booking of outside visitors to offer an additional dimension. Examples include Ten:Ten Theatre and members of other faiths.

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