



DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION REPORT

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

URN 1411156

St Margaret Clitherow Catholic Primary School

Trench Road

Tonbridge TN11 9NG

Inspection date: 15th March 2018

Chair of Governors: Mr C. Ricketts

Headteacher: Mrs A. Whittle

Inspectors: Ms A. Oddy

Ms M. Wilson

EDUCATION COMMISSION

St Edward's House, St Paul's Wood Hill, Orpington, Kent BR5 2SR
Tel 01689 829331

Interim Director of Education: Mr Stephen Bryan

Publication date 4h May 2018



Key for inspection grades

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

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Margaret Clitherow Catholic Primary School is situated in the Tunbridge Wells Deanery of the Archdiocese of Southwark. The school became an academy in 2014 and is part of the Kent Catholic Schools Partnership (KCSP).

The principal parish which the school serves is Corpus Christi, Tonbridge. 61% of pupils are baptised Catholics. 10% of curriculum time is allocated to Religious Education in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

The school takes pupils from 4 to 11 years. The number of pupils currently on roll is 393. The proportion of pupils with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) is in line with the national average. The proportion of pupils supported by an Education and Health Care (EHC) plan is in line with the national average. Pupil premium funding is received for 5% of pupils, this is well below the national average. The majority of pupils are of White British and Any Other White heritage. The proportion of pupils from ethnic backgrounds other than White British is in line with the national average. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is higher than the national average.

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SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

St Margaret Clitherow Catholic Primary School is an outstanding Catholic school because:

- It offers an exceptionally high standard of Catholic education within a warm and welcoming inclusive community. The mission statement and the school's Catholic ethos pervade all aspects of school life. The Headteacher is supported by a strong governing body and a cohesive staff team who share her vision of excellence in Catholic education.
- The school offers a wide range of prayer and worship opportunities. These reflect the traditions of the Catholic church and encourage pupils to deepen their relationship with God. The Catholic identity is evident throughout the school. Beautiful displays and prayer areas celebrate themes in Religious Education and inspire pupils and staff.
- Standards in Religious Education are high. All groups of pupils make good progress and achieve well. Pupils enjoy their Religious Education lessons and are able to relate them to their own lives. Effective systems of monitoring and evaluation serve to maintain and develop the school's high standards.
- Pupils are justly proud of their school. They are welcoming to visitors and eager to share their experiences of school life. Behaviour is exemplary in classrooms and around the school. Parents are appreciative of the school and value the Catholic education it offers.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- Continue to embed the newly revised systems of assessment and pupil tracking in Religious Education.



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.

- The school considers its Catholic Life central to its mission and vision, embracing and inspiring all members of the school community.
- Pupils are fully involved in the Catholic Life of the school. They are aware of the mission statement and its importance to school life and are reminded of this message in school assemblies and lessons. Pupils interviewed as part of this inspection spontaneously quoted the mission statement.
- Pupils know they have a responsibility towards themselves and others. The school offers them many opportunities to take responsibility. Examples include the buddy system, peer mediators and the school council. Pupils respond very positively, being happy to serve their school in this way and seeing it as their personal contribution to the smooth running of the school.
- Pupils appreciate the need to care for others, particularly those in need. They actively support a wide range of local, national and global charities. Examples include CAFOD, Cancer Research and Hospice in the Weald.
- Pupils are aware of their responsibility to care for the environment, seeing it as God's creation given to us as a gift. They participate in eco work and protecting wildlife. Within school this extends to developing and caring for the Prayer Garden.
- The behaviour of pupils is excellent. During this inspection they were exceptionally polite, thoughtful and courteous in lessons and around the school. They are kind and considerate to each other. They know the importance of forgiveness and can relate this to Jesus' message to us in the Gospels.
- Pupils play a significant part in shaping the Catholic Life of the school. They play an active role in the community, take pride in being ambassadors for their school and are active participants in the planning and delivery of assemblies and class prayer times.
- Parish links are strong. The Parish Priest is a welcome and regular visitor to the school. Many pupils are involved in their own parishes as altar servers and readers.
- Pupils are proud of their school and of its Catholic traditions. They speak confidently of the Church's feasts and seasons and enjoy celebrating these in school. At the time of this inspection pupils were preparing for Easter liturgies, including Stations of the Cross and the Easter production.



- Pupils take part in events with other Catholic schools, fostering their sense of belonging to a wider Catholic community. The school also takes an active part in Diocesan events including the Beginning of Year Mass at St George's Cathedral and Picnic and Praise.
- The inclusive nature of the school welcomes all pupils and their families, regardless of their faith or cultural background. Pupils have a great sense of community. They know that the beliefs and practices of other faiths and cultures should be respected and that all are welcome in their school family. They are keen to share their home languages and to celebrate the diversity of their school community on multicultural days.
- The strong supportive nature of the school community ensures every individual is valued, encouraged and enabled to achieve their full potential both academically and spiritually. All groups of pupils make very good progress and achieve well. Academic results are excellent.
- Pupils interviewed as part of this inspection described their school as a friendly and happy place to be. They felt safe at school and knew that adults at school were always there for them if they needed support. They recognised that the school helped them to grow in faith and appreciated the many opportunities for quiet reflection.
- Parents fully support the school and appreciate all that the school offers. A large number of parental questionnaires distributed as part of this inspection were returned. Responses were overwhelmingly positive, with no negative comments. A parent spoke for many with the comment, 'St Margaret's is a very happy, loving, supportive and inspiring community for the children to learn and flourish.'

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

- The school mission statement is central to school life and informs all policies and practice. This is exemplified by the parental comment, 'The Gospel values of Christ are continually on display and are at the heart of my children's education at St Margaret Clitherow.'
- There is a great sense of community in the school, with very positive relationships between staff, parents and pupils. Governors are very much part of this Catholic community and participate fully in the school's Catholic life, attending events and celebrations as well as fulfilling a monitoring role.
- The attractive learning environment reflects the school's Catholic identity. Prayer areas and displays invite prayer and reflection as well as celebrating the liturgical seasons of the Church and school events. Prayer areas such as the Sanctuary offer pupils quiet space, a calm atmosphere and spiritual stillness.
- The school has excellent systems of pastoral care in place for pupils and their families. An 'open door' policy offers accessibility and support where needed. Pupils



know that adults in the school will listen to them and sort out any anxieties. Strategies such as Talktime, Bubbletime and Early Help provide support and reassurance, whether the problems are small or very great.

- Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) policies are in place and well established in the school. Teaching is in line with the requirements of the Catholic Church.
- The school behaviour policy reflects its ethos, promoting a harmonious community of mutual respect and forgiveness. A pupil interviewed as part of this inspection commented on the importance of forgiveness and how everyone had a responsibility to be forgiving, even when it was difficult.
- Staff are committed to the Catholic Life of the school and to supporting its Catholic identity. They work cooperatively to support each other and to encourage pupils to exemplify the mission statement. Staff training includes training on 'The Catholic School' for teachers and support staff. Staff who are not Catholic are supported by their colleagues and welcomed into the harmonious community of this Catholic school.

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

- The school's leadership is wholeheartedly committed to the Church's mission in education and to ensuring this is fulfilled within the school and beyond. Leaders are excellent role models and have created a cohesive staff team with a strong sense of Christian community and the importance of the traditions of the Catholic Church.
- All leaders, including governors, recognise they have a part to play in contributing to the education of pupils in their own school, other Catholic schools and local community schools. The school provides regular and significant outreach to other schools. The school is a National Support School and a Teaching School. The school is part of the Kent Catholic Schools Partnership; the Headteacher is a Principal Director of the Multi Academy Trust (MAT) Board and Chair of the Achievement Committee, Leadership Group and a member of the Chair's Strategy Group, working for the good of many schools and exemplifying their Christian mission of service to others. Governors also work across the group of schools, sharing their expertise and time.
- The Catholic Life of the school is a high priority for school leaders. The governing body is well informed and ably fulfils its role of support and challenge. Staff and governors include parents and pupils in school self-evaluation. Robust systems and a range of opportunities ensure that school self-evaluation represents and reflects the views of all stakeholders and contributes to school improvement planning.
- Governors are wholeheartedly committed to ensuring provision for every child appropriate to his or her needs. They consider that every child is important and that the school should nurture their spiritual, academic and social development in this caring Catholic community.



- The Headteacher leads by example and is an inspirational leader. She is passionate regarding the school as a Catholic community and committed to excellence in all aspects of school life.
- Parents greatly appreciate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school and the foundation it provides for their children. A parent commented, “The school has a strong cohesive team led from the front, that is achieving its mission of forging young Christian men and women.” Older pupils interviewed as part of this inspection said the school strengthened their faith.
- The Parish Priest is the link governor for Religious Education and provides a wealth of support for the school’s Catholic Life. He brings pastoral care to the whole school community and takes an interest in every pupil, governor and member of staff. Recognising that the Parish Church is some distance from the school, he brings the Church to the children. He regularly greets parents and pupils at the school gates and ensures that he is a familiar face in the school, making a significant and valued contribution to school life.

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RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

1

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

- Pupils enjoy Religious Education lessons and appreciate its importance to their daily lives. They show excellent knowledge and understanding and a very high standard of religious literacy across all age groups.
- Pupils make good progress and achieve well. Attainment in Religious Education is high, with standards similar to those in other core subjects. The great majority of pupils achieve or exceed age related expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. Significant numbers of pupils achieve the higher levels, reflecting the school's high expectations and levels of challenge.
- All groups of pupils achieve well. Pupils with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) are appropriately supported.
- In the lessons observed as part of this inspection, pupils were focused and engaged. They demonstrated good subject knowledge and a high standard of religious literacy. They could talk confidently about their learning and were able to reflect on what they had learned. Behaviour for learning was of a high standard. Lessons were enriched by cross curricular links. In one lesson, through re-enacting and hot seating, the story of Palm Sunday was brought to life.
- Pupils are aware of their progress in Religious Education and their next steps towards improvement. These are shared with parents so that they can support their children effectively.
- Parents are kept informed regarding topics studied in Religious Education through termly curriculum letters, homework diaries, newsletters and the website.
- Work in pupils' books is of a very high standard. Pupils take a pride in their work and treat their Religious Education books as special books.
- Pupils enjoy Religious Education and appreciate its importance. Pupils interviewed as part of this inspection said, "Religious Education is fun and really interesting." Others commented on enjoying the creative aspects of their learning including artwork and role play. Pupils also valued the spiritual elements of their learning saying, "It's a time to be peaceful and really think about things" and, "Religious Education helps you to get closer to God".



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

- Standards in teaching and learning are high. School monitoring of lessons indicates that teaching and learning is consistently good or better, with much outstanding teaching. This is in line with lessons observed as part of this inspection.
- Four lessons, across three Key Stages, were observed as part of this inspection. Lessons showed careful preparation and interesting content. A range of teaching strategies and styles were used effectively to enthuse and motivate learners. In the best lessons, pace was excellent, ensuring all pupils were fully engaged throughout.
- Lessons successfully built on previous learning, incorporated probing and challenging questioning and provided evidence of progress within the lesson. Teachers had high expectations and pupils readily took up the challenge of these.
- Religious Education is effectively enriched by cross curricular links. Pupils are encouraged to develop and use a range of skills.
- Appropriate levels of challenge and support are provided for all pupils. Other adults in the classroom provide effective and sensitive support for pupils with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND).
- Marking is regular and affirmative. It includes targets to move pupils on to the next stage of their learning. There is evidence of developmental marking and a productive dialogue between teacher and pupil; this should now be extended to be consistent across the school.
- Assessment in Religious Education is comprehensive and systematic. Pupil progress is regularly tracked and reviewed. Moderation of assessment evidence takes place in school and at deanery level in order to validate teachers' judgements. The school has recently introduced new systems of assessment and pupil tracking. As these become embedded they will facilitate the monitoring of pupil progress and provide a comparison of the progress and attainment of individuals, groups and cohorts over time.
- Systems of self-assessment are in place which enable pupils to be more fully involved in their own learning. The school may now wish to consider introducing peer assessment as part of their assessment procedures.
- Quiet reflective music, a focal point set up by the pupils and the opportunity for prayer and reflection ensure a calm and peaceful start to Religious Education lessons and reinforce the message that Religious Education is a special time. Pupils respond very positively, with reverence and respect. This was clear in all lessons observed as part of this inspection.



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

- The school follows the 'Come and See' programme of Religious Education, enriched by cross curricular links. Curriculum time allocation is 10% in both Key Stages and is in line with the requirements of the Bishops' Conference.
- The school rightly considers Religious Education to be at the heart of the school. It is well resourced and receives an appropriate budget share.
- Leadership and management of Religious Education is excellent. Strong systems of monitoring and evaluation using a range of evidence sources ensure standards are high and that every pupil is enabled to achieve his or her full potential.
- School self-evaluation is comprehensive, accurate and reflective and informs school improvement planning. The school may wish to consider including 'Next Steps' and identified improvement priorities in the School Self Evaluation document.
- School development planning is thorough and detailed, with clearly identified areas for development, timescales and success criteria.
- Governors have a clear understanding of provision and standards in Religious Education. They visit the school frequently and take part in monitoring activities. They receive regular reports from the Headteacher and subject leader and fulfil their role of support and challenge.
- The teaching of Other Faiths is well established. Other Faiths are taught in rotation, ensuring pupils are aware of the beliefs and religious practices of others.
- The subject leader is passionate about Religious Education and conscientious in her role. She provides valuable support for colleagues and supports pupils in leading Collective Worship. She attends deanery and diocesan meetings to ensure up to date knowledge of current developments in Religious Education and disseminates this in staff meetings.

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COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

1

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

- St Margaret Clitherow school provides a wide range of Collective Worship and prayer opportunities. A good variety of style and approach ensures that pupils needs and interests are considered and addressed.
- The act of Collective Worship observed as part of this inspection was of exceptionally high quality. It involved the whole school and was led by the Headteacher, assisted by pupils. Calm, reflective music chosen by the pupils set the scene and the liturgy group set up the focal point with reverence and respect. Pupils enacted the Gospel story and the rest of the school greatly enjoyed providing the sound effects. Pupils responded well to the invitation to spontaneous prayer. They sang beautifully. It was an excellent example of a joyful worshipping community in which everyone was involved.
- Pupils are very much involved in school Collective Worship. They prepare the focal points and choose suitable music with care. Participation may include drama, writing and sharing prayers, music and signing.
- Collective Worship is often scheduled at the start of the school day as the school feels this enables pupils to gain most benefit from it. It provides a reflective start to the day and an opportunity to dedicate the day to God. Pupils interviewed as part of this inspection really valued this.
- Pupils have a sense of respect for each other and know the importance of including all members of their school community, regardless of their faith backgrounds. They enjoy coming together as a worshipping community.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the Church's liturgical year, seasons and feasts. They enjoy celebrations to mark these and speak confidently about them. Examples include the receiving of ashes on Ash Wednesday and the school's Harvest celebration. Class prayer focus areas reflect the liturgical season and invite pupils to engage in prayer and reflection.
- Pupils recognise the importance of prayer in their lives. They are familiar with the traditional prayers of the Church and are confident in composing and contributing their own prayers. They know that prayer can help them and others who need our prayers.



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

- Prayer and Collective Worship are central to the life of the school and an integral part of school daily life.
- Provision is of a very high standard. A wealth of varied prayer and worship experiences inspire and engage pupils, ranging from enthusiastic and joyful singing to quiet reflective contemplation. The school blessing was specially composed for the school. All pupils are familiar with it and sing it with great joy.
- Pupils and staff start and end the day with prayer, staff and governors' meetings include prayer and the many attractive displays and prayer focus areas encourage and enrich reflection and prayer. The Lenten promises in Reception were beautifully displayed and included every child.
- A sanctuary area, a prayer garden and areas for a quiet reflection are important prayer spaces for the school community, who value them as special areas. They have an aura of peace and calm which is immediately evident.
- Pupils play an active part in Collective Worship and school prayer. They are involved in the planning, preparation and delivery of Collective Worship and school liturgies and know they are taking responsibility for an important part of school life.
- Acts of Collective Worship are well resourced and planned.
- Worship themes reflect the liturgical calendar, Religious Education topics and events in the wider life of the Church or the school. Liturgies and Reconciliation services are celebrated for Lent and Advent.
- Parents are invited to join the school and are happy to be part of the worshipping community at St Margaret's Clitherow.
- The liturgy group take pride in their role and show great commitment to it. They feel honoured to be able to serve their school in this way and were impressive in their dedication to ensuring they fulfilled it with reverence and respect. They appreciate the creative aspects of their role and that they are given the freedom to think about the themes of worship and choose accordingly. Pupils said, "We feel we are making a difference and contributing to our school." Another added, "It is our service to God."



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

- Leaders and Managers are committed to high quality provision for Collective Worship and prayer. Careful planning and high quality resources help to ensure a rich and meaningful programme to nurture pupils' spiritual development and strengthen the school community, uniting it in prayer.
- School leaders are effective role models and support other staff in delivering prayer and worship opportunities, strengthening the school team.
- School newsletters and termly curriculum letters keep parents informed and involved and warmly invite them to participate in school liturgical celebrations. High attendance by parents, grandparents and parishioners is indicative of their support of the school as a worshipping community.
- The Headteacher and senior leaders invite feedback from pupils and colleagues regarding acts of Collective Worship. Responses have been overwhelmingly positive.
- Governors are well informed regarding the school's Collective Worship and prayer life. It is featured in the Headteacher's Report and is discussed at governing body meetings.
- Governors attend school Masses and liturgies as part of their monitoring role as well as participating as members of the school community.
- The Parish Priest is a regular visitor to the school. He celebrates Masses and liturgies and assists with evaluation of the school's Collective Worship. A parent commented, "A fantastic link with Church, home and school. Thank you."
- The school's Collective Worship and prayer life nurtures and develops pupils' spirituality and strengthens their faith development. A parent wrote, "The entire school works hard to ensure children can build on their own faith."

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