

# **DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION REPORT**

Incorporating Canonical Inspection under Canon 806 on behalf of the  
Archbishop of Southwark

**URN 141481**

**St Vincent's Catholic Primary School**

**Harting Road**

**Mottingham, London**

**SE9 4JR**

**Inspection date: 7<sup>th</sup> February 2018**

**Chair of Governors: Christine Fisher**

**Headteacher: Jane Roche**

**Inspectors: Stephen Beck  
Rufina Ebenebe**

## **EDUCATION COMMISSION**

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**Director of Education: Mr Stephen Bryan**



# DENOMINATIONAL EDUCATION AND COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

## Key for inspection grades

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

## FULL REPORT

### INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Vincent's Primary School is a one-form primary academy which is part of the Bromley Catholic Schools Trust. It is situated in the Bromley Deanery in the Archdiocese of Southwark on the edge of the Mottingham estate, serving the parishes of Our Lady Help of Christians, Mottingham, St Patrick's, Chislehurst West and St Mary's, Chislehurst. It is an academy and is part of an umbrella trust with other Bromley Catholic Schools. The school is oversubscribed with the majority of its pupils coming from Our Lady Help of Christians, the principal parish which the school serves. 95% of pupils are baptised Catholics. The average weekly proportion of curriculum time given to Religious Education is 10% in all Key Stages.

The school takes pupils aged between 4 to 11 years. The number of pupils currently on roll is 215. The percentage of pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) is above the national average at 28.9%. Although pupil mobility for the school as a whole is close to the national average, it is high in Key Stage 2. The percentage of pupils receiving Free School Meals is 16.1%, which is below the national average; however, the school deprivation indicator score is 0.36 (compared to a national average of 0.24) which indicates that some eligible families may not be claiming this entitlement.

The school has a high percentage of pupils from ethnic minority groups and a steadily increasing number of pupils for whom English is an Additional Language (EAL) currently at 34%. Attainment on entry is broadly average.



## SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

St Vincent's is an outstanding Catholic school because:

It is a welcoming family community, helping pupils to develop their faith. Caring relationships and the principles of Catholic education underpin the school's work as a community of faith and learning.

The quality of Collective Worship is central to the life of the school and is a key part of every school celebration. Staff and pupils plan and lead high quality acts of worship and all pupils act with the deepest reverence and respect.

Governors, senior leaders and staff have high expectations and a shared vision with regard to the Catholic mission and ethos of the school. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the Catholic Life of the school taking a lead role in activities which promote the school's ethos within the school, parish and wider community.

The quality of Religious Education and behaviour for learning are outstanding because all pupils enjoy their learning and achieve highly due to the progress they make from broadly average starting points.

### WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER

St Vincent's is an outstanding school and there are no significant areas for development.

However the school should now consider:

- Developing new assessment processes as they move away from levels, towards the new assessment framework.
- Continuing the work to strengthen links with the parishes in order to further enhance the home, school, parish partnership.



## 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

1

**The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding**

- St Vincent's is a vibrant school with faith at its centre. Pupils are encouraged to take on roles of responsibility in the school and wider community e.g. as school councillors, monitors and funky fingers (helping younger pupils with dexterity games at playtimes and supporting younger pupils with reading).
- In addition to supporting parish events pupils are actively involved in developing the Catholic character of the school by raising awareness of and funds for a variety of charities at home and abroad.
- Pupils have a good sense of right and wrong and apply this in their personal relationships. They take an increasing responsibility for themselves and their actions and show great care and respect for one another. They understand that their school promotes values that will shape their lives and strive to behave appropriately at all times. On the day of inspection, behaviour throughout the school at all times was outstanding.
- The school's approach to Relationship and Sex Education has fostered positive attitudes in pupils. They respond well to the programme 'God's Loving Plan'. followed by the school. Pupils have a sense of personal worth, are able to express their feelings positively and confidently in new situations.
- Pupils praise and acknowledge the contribution of others. They show a readiness to embrace and celebrate their lived experiences. They take full advantage of the opportunities the school provides for their spiritual and emotional growth, and, as a result, they are happy, secure and confident.
- Pupils show respect and understanding of other faiths and religions and have learned about Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam. Visits to other places of worship are not currently provided but this is regularly reviewed. A number of representatives from the other faiths visit the school and present to pupils.
- A parent wrote, "I would like to say this school is outstanding and would choose it 100 times over for my children."

### **The quality of provision of the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding**

- St Vincent's was graded as outstanding at both its last Section 48 and Ofsted inspections. It is noteworthy how, in the light of some staff changes, that continuity has been maintained. The school has successfully maintained its outstanding levels of provision and continues to be a very forward looking school.
- The dedicated Headteacher, who sees education as a true vocation of service, is ably supported by her Deputy and the wider staff team. They are mutually supportive of each other in a truly collegiate approach that serves the whole school community effectively.
- The Headteacher leads by example and actively supports the development of her staff to secure both the best provision for the pupils as well as developing staff as future Catholic leaders. The school environment reflects its mission and identity through concrete and effective signs of the school's Catholic character. The Religious Education focus areas and displays give witness to this.
- All staff and leaders have high expectations and a shared vision with regard to the school's ethos and to the Church's mission in education. They are involved in living out the school's mission statement and are fully committed to providing quality opportunities to enable all pupils to know that Christ is at the centre of everything they do. There is a strong team spirit amongst all staff and sharing of knowledge and good practice is common place. All staff promote high standards of behaviour and are exemplary role models of mutual respect and forgiveness for pupils.
- Personal and Social Health Education (PSHE) and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) are thoughtfully designed, carefully planned, consistently well taught and celebrate Catholic teachings and principles. Parents are supportive of the programme, information about which could usefully be more widely disseminated to assist parents at home and ensure full governor awareness of the programme and its content.
- The school's pastoral support is commendable. This includes the school's Family Worker who is seen a crucial member of staff because the work she undertakes with families and with pupils has a huge impact on the lives of both. In line with the changing needs of the children her role involves play therapy, and, for an increasing number of children, counselling. She also supports parents in a variety of ways.
- Through the Family Worker a retreat is organised from the St Vincent's de Paul Society for children in need. This is always highly successful, with a child who attended this summer now stating he would like to be a Brother.
- There is a strong sense of community at all levels as evidenced by the quality of relationships and sense of unity that exists both among and between staff and pupils. The school is a happy and prayerful community and its Catholic character is effectively reflected through displays and artefacts in the learning environment.



- The school and the parish work closely together. The relatively new Parish Priest has already established a good working relationship with the school and this is being built on. The school also values the input from and time given to the school by the Parish Deacon. The strengthening home, school, parish partnership is having a positive effect on families links with their parish.
- The Parish Priest along with the Deacon are regular visitors to the school and work closely with the senior leaders to help them to deliver high quality worship and Religious Education.

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

- The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding. St Vincent's is a welcoming, inclusive, friendly community with a strong family ethos, where everyone is valued and pupils and staff flourish. Governors, managers and staff have high expectations and a shared vision with regard to the Catholic mission and ethos. There is a tangible sense of family and community in all aspects of school life which is evident in the quality of relationships that exist between all stakeholders.
- The Catholic ethos is clearly at the heart of all that motivates the school leadership. The Headteacher, ably supported by the Deputy, make their expectations regarding the Catholicity of the school clear and, as a result, all aspects of Catholic Life from display to behaviour and relationships between staff and pupils are consistently applied to a high standard across the whole school.
- Leaders are a source of inspiration for all. They see the continuing development of the Catholic life of the school as core to their role, and give it the highest priority. They self-evaluate accurately and reflectively. Effective monitoring provides clear evidence about the strengths and areas for development within the school.
- The school's rigorous self-evaluation is an accurate reflection of planned monitoring, analysis and self-challenge. The effective work of the Governing Body is evident in their understanding of the detailed evaluation and monitoring of Catholic Life across the school. The development and sustenance of an authentic Catholic ethos is viewed as a core leadership responsibility. Governors are role models of service and are proud to be associated with St Vincent's.
- The school engages very well with parents and carers who describe how well the school promotes the Catholic Life of the school through effective communication using newsletters and the website. They say that they feel well informed and part of the mission to transform the school and make it the best it can be for all pupils.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

1

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

- Assessment of attainment on entry to the Reception Class shows most pupils have a low level of knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith. From this start, excellent assessment and teaching ensures that pupils make maximum progress. Teachers use assessment activities each half term to inform future planning. The teachers' knowledge of the Religious Education assessment levels is secure. The school has analysed assessments and has devised a tracking system. This allows senior leaders to identify any groups of concern or highlight strengths within the school. The school makes good use of a portfolio of moderated work at all levels.
- Pupils told the inspectors that they enjoy Religious Education and they are extremely proud of their books, which they consider to be very special. Books are beautifully presented and show appropriate differentiation, challenge and variety.
- Pupils' engagement in and enjoyment of their learning and behaviour for learning is outstanding, as shown by their interest, enthusiasm and behaviour. In all lessons they displayed positive attitudes to their learning and demonstrate an eagerness to learn and improve their knowledge, understanding and skills as they become independent learners.
- Teachers use a range of learning styles and encourage pupils to record religious knowledge in a variety of ways, such as role play, Information & Communications Technology and art so that those pupils with special Educational Needs (SEN) or English as an Additional Language (EAL) are not reliant on their literacy skills to succeed.

### **The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education is outstanding**

- Teachers have very high expectations, which are communicated in a positive way. The objectives of lessons are clearly drawn up and intended outcomes are shared with the pupils. The pace and variety of tasks and activities are appropriate to the learning needs and styles of pupils.
- Teachers interact sensitively and skilfully in discussions with pupils and there is an appropriate balance between teacher input and pupil activity. Pupils in all age groups demonstrate good religious literacy and sound religious vocabulary, which they use when answering questions and in their written work.





- Teachers display excellent subject knowledge and teaching is consistently highly effective in ensuring that pupils are interested, engaged and make outstanding progress. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils in terms of work, attitude and behaviour.
- In meetings with inspectors, pupils spoke about how they found their lessons fun and how they 'learned a lot' in them. All agreed that they had to work hard. Pupils were articulate about their school's patron saint and linked his work with the present day St Vincent de Paul Society.
- Additional adults are deployed effectively to support learning. They are good role models and interact well with the pupils. It was obvious to inspectors that additional adults are well-planned for and play a significant role in pupils' learning. They work together closely with their teachers in meeting the needs of all pupils. Relationships within classes between adults and pupils are outstanding.
- Pupils are informed of their progress and how to improve both orally and through teachers marking of their work. The system of marking, used consistently by the staff, is effective in informing pupils of how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. It helps to promote pupils' self-esteem and is manageable for staff.
- The assessment of pupils' work in Religious Education is outstanding. The school has excellent assessment strategies which provide accurate and detailed information on the achievement of all the pupils. These are being updated in line with changes to assessment, which will help teachers to even better identify how well pupils are achieving and thereby tackle any underachievement.
- The teaching observed during the inspection was consistently outstanding. Lessons seen across all key stages were well planned with a good pace and displayed: strong teacher subject knowledge; clear learning objectives and success criteria; differentiation of delivery, questioning and tasks to meet pupils needs; excellent teacher questioning of pupils and strong classroom management. Teachers have high expectations of all pupils and regularly use a variety of pedagogy and cross curricular links to engage and enthuse their pupils.
- A parent responded on their questionnaire, "St Vincent's is a school that teaches good Catholic values and supports children in their spiritual and mental development and wellbeing. My child has good values and is taught to be a child of God. Pupils have good morals and work ethic".

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

- The monitoring and evaluation of Religious Education is very effective. The Headteacher as subject leader together with the shadow subject leader has established a system of electronic recording of pupil progress that facilitates the



interrogation of data. This is well used at leadership team level and is increasingly being utilised by staff in planning for individual pupil's needs. This will become even more useful and effective as the school widens its moderation of the assessment of pupils work.

- The two areas for improvement that were identified on the previous Section 48 inspection report have been addressed by the school. The Religious Education scheme that the school uses is, 'The Way, the Truth and the Life.' It is used appropriately, supporting pupils to grow in independence, have respect for themselves and others, foster an awareness of moral and social issues and to hold Christ and the Catholic Faith at the centre of their lives.
- Leaders and governors have an outstanding commitment to the Church's mission in Catholic Education and ensure that the Religious Education curriculum and the Catholic Life of the school remain at the heart of its ethos, mission and purpose.
- Governors are regular visitors to the school and provide appropriate support and feedback to the senior leaders in relation to Religious Education. They are proactive and are willing to challenge the school by asking leading questions about pupil performance and achievement in particular in relation to Religious Education. They ensure that the school's Religious Education budget is appropriately monitored and adequate to meet the school's identified priorities in Religious Education and Catholic Life.

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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 Vincent's is a prayerful community where pupils' response to and participation in Collective Worship is outstanding. Collective Worship is a central part of their experience from the earliest years.
- Pupils lead and prepare Collective Worship with enthusiasm and confidence. Under the guidance of staff and with welcome support from the parish, they have become increasingly skilled in using a variety of ways of praying and in using scripture, drama, religious artefacts and hymns in their worship. Pupils throughout the school know what constitutes the various elements of worship.
- Pupils understand there are different forms of liturgies and have a good understanding of the Church's seasons and liturgical year. They are able to prepare for these celebrations in relation to their age and ability. All of this contributes positively to their spiritual and moral development, which is outstanding.
- Collective Worship is given the highest possible priority in terms of planning and resourcing and there is a clear purpose, message and direction to all forms of worship in the school. The school distributes the 'Wednesday Word' each week via a pupil led assembly. Parents indicated they appreciate the 'Wednesday Word' being shared at home.
- Inspectors attended an assembly led by Year 4 which made good use of the 'Wednesday Word' as a resource. Excellent use was made of scripture which was enacted and the Year 4 pupils questioned their peers who were fully engaged throughout. The pupils read well and were very much in charge of the celebration. Good use was made of the projection of words for the assembly that enabled a range of readers to be involved. The celebration was supported by good singing and full participation by staff.

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

- It is clear that Collective Worship is at the heart of St Vincent's and the Catholic Ethos is explicit in all that happens in the school.
- Experiences of Collective Worship are of such high quality that all members of the school community cherish their participation in them. Parents appreciate how pupils are encouraged to create their own prayers, which they often use at home.
- Staff and pupils regularly pray together and this is part of almost all school celebrations. Praying together is a natural part of the school day and parents

commented on how much they value the school's Collective Worship, which is a strength throughout the school. Parents expressed appreciation at the many opportunities given to them to be present at a range of celebrations.

- The prayer life of the school is greatly enhanced by the provision of quiet areas that pupils may go to for reflection and private prayer. The school has recently established a Prayer Garden that encourages the children to talk to God. This has usefully been linked to involve older pupils in a Chaplaincy Role engaging with the younger children in helping them to talk to God.
- Parents commented that as a result of the 'Wednesday Word' and the work undertaken in school their children were enthusiastic about their faith and brought this into the family home. As a result of this and the occasions when the school takes the pupils to the parish church, parents felt comfortable themselves to attend Mass and appreciated the real sense of family and community provided through the school.

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

- The Headteacher as subject leader for Religious Education is shadowed by her Deputy who is a model of outstanding practice for both staff and pupils. She works closely with colleagues across the school and in the wider Diocesan family to provide the very best opportunities for Collective Worship. Her passionate promotion of Collective Worship ensures that liturgical and spiritual development are priorities in school and that time is devoted to them.
- The governors are a visible presence at many acts of Collective Worship; this helps them to have a clear understanding of the many strengths and also areas for development in Collective Worship.
- Due to the culture of receptivity that has been created, response to training is wholehearted and enthusiastic. This was evidenced in the excellent use of artwork in Religious Education lessons following on from in-service training provided by the Diocesan advisor.
- A parent commented, "I am very satisfied with the Catholic character of St Vincent's. The importance the school places on Catholic values has always been very clear and the pastoral care they provide is excellent. St Vincent's is a fantastic school and I am proud my child attends."