



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 141907

Holy Innocents' Catholic Primary School
Mitchell Road
Orpington
BR6 9PT

Inspection date: 18th May 2017

Chair of Governors:	Dr Ian Wilson
Headteacher:	Mr Ryan Langford
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SECTION 48

Introduction

Description of the school

Holy Innocents' Catholic Primary School is an academy situated in Orpington and is in the Bromley Deanery.

The school attracts pupils from the parishes of Orpington, Petts Wood, Farnborough, Biggin Hill and Cray Valley. The intake is multi-cultural with a growing number of families from Other Faiths. 73% of the pupils are Catholic. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is significantly below the national average at 3%. The school receives pupils premium funding for 7.4 % of pupils. Special Educational Needs support is provided to 0.5% of pupils. This is below the national average. Though not a religious order school, there are strong links with the Sisters of Mercy.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school in **GRADE 2** providing Catholic Education

Holy Innocents is a good Catholic school. It is a caring and aspirational school community with a distinctive Catholic ethos where pupils enjoy their Religious Education lessons and are able to discuss the many ways in which they live out their faith. Holy Innocents' achieved good end of Key Stage results in 2016 and was one of the top 200 schools in the country for progress and attainment.

Governors know the school well and are keen to continue developing all aspects of school life. They are a strong presence and contribute significantly to the Christ centred philosophy that prevails all features of the school community. Governors, leaders and managers have a clear vision for the school going forward and express this confidently and with passion. The Religious Education link governor is a regular presence in the school, supporting pupils, families and staff. The dedicated teachers, supportive parents and committed leadership team gives the school a firm foundation.

Holy Innocents' provides good opportunities for liturgy and worship that are inclusive as the school is keenly aware of its multicultural composition. Holy Innocents' reaches out to two neighbouring Anglican parishes and they have taken part in ecumenical services during Epiphany Time. The school is very active in the local community and has a comprehensive programme of fund raising; locally, nationally and globally. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive and in recent surveys 100% of the parents who took part would recommend the school to a friend.

What steps need to be taken to improve further?

Governors, Headteacher and staff should:

- Provide CPD for teachers on how to develop opportunities for pupils to take on a leadership role in preparing and delivering liturgies.
- Governors and school leaders need to more closely analyse attainment and progress data in Religious Education, using the findings to set targets which will see that outcomes for pupils continue to improve.
- School leaders should look into establishing a planned programme of visits which would support pupils' knowledge and understanding in all aspects of Religious Education, including Other Faiths.

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

The school combines traditional and modern forms of worship to support each pupils' faith journey. Pupils are confident and enthusiastic about all aspects of worship and are well supported by a vibrant teaching staff. The school day begins with a prayer in the playground. Parents are part of this celebration setting the tone for the rest of the day. Pupils are respectful and reverent, responding well to the expectations of the community. The school is a rich resource of opportunities for prayer. In lessons, assemblies, and day-to-day interactions pupils reply with eagerness. They are very polite and extremely welcoming.

The school supports many charities including Cafod, the Catholic Children's Society and the local foodbank. A recent project with the foodbank helped pupils to appreciate that there is poverty in their local area. Pupils are engaged in the many fundraising activities organised throughout the year. The School Council play an active role in all school activities and have input into the charities and activities undertaken. The teaching staff also provide inspiration, for example, when one of the teachers ran in the London Marathon the school raised funds and cheered her on.

The school has a well planned programme of worship. There are regular calendar events for instance one of the governors described the Lenten Assembly led by Year 5 as a springboard for a deep contemplation of the whole Easter experience. The tradition of these events are well supported by the parents, governors and the parish community.

There is a good relationship with the parish as the Deacon is a regular visitor to the school. He visits classes to support the teaching of the topics and leads liturgies and Reconciliation services. The Religious Education link governor is an almost daily presence in the school acting as a spiritual adviser to staff, pupils and parents. The school participates in parish events such as '24 Hours with the Lord.' The 'Wednesday Word' is sent home weekly, after an assembly, to help build on the home, school, parish link and to help families engage with Sunday Mass.

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education

The school's internal assessment show that standards achieved in Religious Education, at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 are broadly average, and broadly in line with English and Maths. Pupils are keen and apply themselves well in lessons. They are engaged during lessons and offer thoughtful contributions using appropriate religious language.

All teaching staff are aware of the range of ability within the class and are sensitive to the needs of each pupil. There was evidence of good progress and differentiated work. The pupils enjoy learning in Religious Education and spoke with enthusiasm about the topics they had studied throughout the year. Religious Education permeates the school day and is an integral part of all the work carried out in the school. Pupils use religious language effectively and demonstrated enthusiasm and expertise for the subject. Pupils' books seen by inspectors, were well presented with some thoughtful work. Pupils talked to inspectors

about the given tasks and exhibited pride in their books. One pupil commented, "We take pride in our books because Religious Education is the most important subject."

Teachers marked thoroughly using next step marking to extend pupils' ideas and thoughts. Overall, teaching was well planned and often inspirational, consequently helping pupils to develop as spiritual individuals.

How well pupils respond to and participate in Collective Worship

At Holy Innocents' pupils show respect towards each other and display an understanding and tolerance of other faiths. They act with reverence during worship and seem extremely keen to participate. Pupils also demonstrate a thoughtful consideration of the liturgical seasons. This was demonstrated by the work witnessed in the books and discussion with pupils. The pupils stated that they love to pray, offering prayers readily in the assembly witnessed and at lunchtime in the beautiful prayer chapel. The chapel is a rich resource that is used effectively to support the work in the school. This is a wonderful focal point for pupils who are encouraged to use the space to reflect. The Religious Education link governor supports the range of collective worship on offer. Pupils were witnessed contributing to the prayer life of the school and there is now scope to develop this further with pupils taking more responsibility in planning and leading worship.

Every morning, the school gathers to pray before lesson time and this includes parents and carers. This beginning sets the tone for the rest of the day and leads to a calm start for the whole school. Attractive and child friendly prayer focal areas are in each classroom.

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How well leaders, governors and managers promote, monitor, and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life of the school and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils

Leaders, governors, and managers know the school well. They are aware of the strengths and the key areas for development. Religious Education is a regular item on Governor's meetings and is included in the School Improvement Plan. Governors and leaders ensure that Religious Education and Collective Worship are well resourced.

Leaders plan a comprehensive Induction Programme for all staff new to the school to help them to understand the focus of Holy Innocents' on the importance of all the aspects that contribute to the Catholic life of the school. All staff, told inspectors that they feel nurtured and supported by the school leadership. This induction and support means that pupils receive informed teaching from adults who are responsive to their needs as members of a worshipping community.

The Headteacher, who is also the Religious Education leader, sends out a termly newsletter to parents and carers so that they are able to support their children's learning in the subject. They are given information on the key concepts being taught each term as well as on the liturgical season.

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 have a strong commitment to school improvement and are keenly aware of the need to be more rigorous in scrutinising outcomes to improve standards further in Religious Education they are aware that assessment, tracking and monitoring analysis in even more depth will contribute significantly towards progress in Religious Education. Data has been shared with the Standards Committee but has yet to be fully analysed and used for target setting, so that outcomes for pupils are even better in future. The many informal discussions and reviews that take place amongst governors and leaders now need to be formally recorded to make sure that careful plans are in place to enhance the outcomes for all pupils in Religious Education

Two years ago the school switched to the 'Come and See' scheme for Religious Education. School leaders decided that 'Come and See' was more suited to the pupils' learning styles. Leaders ensured that teachers were properly trained in the planning and delivery of the new scheme. Teachers use the resources to help them plan lessons which are differentiated and engaging to pupils.

Good partnership with parents contributes to the improving outcomes for children. One parent commented, "We are extremely happy with the pastoral, spiritual and religious dimensions of the curriculum and feel that the school does an excellent job of providing for the children's needs in these areas."

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

Religious Education lessons are observed regularly by the Headteacher, and work sampling is conducted frequently alongside the Religious Education link governor. The school's own internal monitoring assess the teaching and learning within Religious Education to be generally good or better. The lessons witnessed during the inspection as well as a scrutiny of pupils' books evidence this judgement. Teachers plan lessons carefully and comment appropriately in books to support pupils' progress. Pupils enjoy the range of activities on offer and progress over time was in evidence.

Lessons were lively and relevant to age and ability. Pupils were engaged and responded with eagerness and interest. There was evidence in the books and during the lessons that careful consideration was given to different learning styles. Examples of good teaching saw the use of hot seating, paired activities, drama, and imaginative art work. These were also in evidence in the pupils' books. Teachers asked searching questions to scaffold pupils' learning successfully and challenge any misconceptions. Pupils in one lesson used the Bible effectively and were able to reason about why the Ten Commandments were important; this was also linked effectively to the New Testament. Older pupils were challenged about the importance of caring for others and why as Christians we are called to be compassionate. The work was clearly part of a sequence of lessons and the pupils were challenged to action. In a Reception lesson, friendship was explored through the physical action of joining a circle and breaking a circle. This activity was simple yet effective and powerful as it helped pupils to understand the idea of Jesus always being a friend who is there for us.

Prayer is an essential part of the day and threads throughout all the work in the school. Pupils are encouraged to participate in the spiritual life of the school and develop as individuals through a range of carefully planned teaching opportunities linked to the liturgical seasons. Teaching Assistants provide excellent support, examples include scribing for a pupil and filming a 'hot seating' session.

There is a complete folder for each year grade to support teachers on raising the standard of the work in each class. There is also a folder of annotated work samples which supports levelling.

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

Pupils are confident, interested and enthusiastic participants in Religious Education lessons. During each lesson, provision is made for pupils to develop spiritually. Through effective challenge and appropriate expectations pupils achieve good standards. Pupils are well supported. Cross curricular links are made and music is used effectively to create a calm purposeful atmosphere. The school should consider building on the good practice already in evidence by creating a planned programme of visits to support pupils' knowledge and understanding in all aspects of Religious Education but particularly looking at Other Faiths.

The Parish Deacon and some of the local Sisters of Mercy have given talks to classes about their vocations and what living a religious life means to them. In Year 5 and Year 6, pupils have received catechesis about Adoration, making the experience relevant to all the pupils.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school

Prayer is important to the school and opportunities are weaved throughout the school day and the school year. Significant events are celebrated during the year, for example Year 6 pupils go to Aylesford each September for a retreat with other Year 6 pupils within the Deanery. Collective Worship permeates all areas of school life and other curriculum areas. Music is linked intrinsically into the fabric of school life and helps to create a powerful atmosphere when used or for worship. The folk group from the local parish will often visit the school to accompany singing practice on Tuesday mornings.

Reception, Year 2 and Year 4 perform Nativity Plays each year which are very well attended and make a powerful contribution to the seasonal celebrations. In the lead up to Easter, Year 5 performs a liturgical Passion Play and this is always well attended by parents and parishioners. Pupils read at school Masses and at school led Sunday Masses.

The school has developed a quiet space as a school Chapel which was a project instigated by the Governors. Pupils are encouraged to use the Chapel at lunchtimes for quiet prayer and to add prayer leaves to the prayer tree. The Blessed Sacrament is brought up from the Church once a term so pupils can experience Adoration. This has been a particularly successful provision helping the pupils understand the idea of the real presence of Jesus.

During the season of Lent, pupils were taught about the Stations of the Cross which are permanently on display in the school hall. In May and October, pupils are encouraged to pray the Rosary at lunchtime in the Chapel. Also, the school organises a May Procession from the school to the Church where the Statue of Our Lady is crowned. School Masses at the start and end of term are held in the Church. On Holy Days of Obligation, pupils also attend Mass.