



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 137295

**Corpus Christi Catholic Primary School
Trent Road
London
SW2 5BL**

Inspection date: 2nd December 2015

Chair of Governors: Mrs Katy Byrne
Co-Headteachers: Mrs Jean Connery
Mr Robert Coyle
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EDUCATION COMMISSION

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SECTION 48

The school is a converter Academy in the Lambeth Deanery of the Diocese of Southwark. It operates on a split site albeit in close proximity. The principal parish which the school serves is Corpus Christi, Brixton Hill (76.5%) but pupils also attend from SS. Philip and James (9.5%), Herne Hill and SS. Simon and Jude (11.5%), Streatham Hill. 97.5% of pupils are baptised Catholics. The other 2.5% are primarily from Eastern Orthodox or other ethnic chaplaincies in communion with the See of Rome. The average weekly proportion of curriculum time given to Religious Education is 10% in all Key Stages.

The school takes pupils from 3 to 11 years. There are 440 pupils on roll. The attainment of pupils on entering the school is broadly around average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils who receive extra support in class is below average. The proportion of pupils from ethnic minority heritages is approximately 50%, although only a few pupils are at an early stage of learning English.

The school has a high attendance rate (98%), low pupil mobility and a tradition of strong academic achievement; progress and attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 placed the school in the top 60 primary schools nationally, and sixth in London. The school has recently been awarded an International School Award (British Council), Healthy School Award, International Eco School Certificate and membership of the London Mayor's Gold Club. The school is also an active part of the Lambeth Catholic Schools Partnership which consists of the nine Catholic Schools in the Borough of Lambeth. The partnership promotes cohesion amongst Catholic leaders and staff to secure the values of Catholic education and share good practice through working party cluster groupings.

Date of previous inspection:

11th November 2010

Overall Grade:

1

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1 Outstanding
Grade 2 Good

Grade 3 Requires improvement
Grade 4 Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school in providing Catholic Education

**GRADE
1**

Corpus Christi school has been rated as outstanding in its previous Section 48 and Ofsted inspections. The school has been through a change in leadership and it is to the credit of all members of the school community that it has in no way rested on its laurels and the inspectors have been able to confirm the school's own excellent self-evaluation that it remains an outstanding school.

The school is a shining example of Catholic Education being committed to high academic achievement and the all-round development of the pupils, reflecting its many strengths. Corpus Christi School is reflective by nature. As a result of excellent management it has grown in size, developed provision and retained its strong Catholic ethos through considerable periods of change over its long history. More recently the governors have managed succession planning that has seen a change of leadership to the inspirational strong leadership by the substantive co-Headteachers. They are well supported by the leadership team, a team of strong staff and governing body who combined are the key ingredient in the success of the school. Pastoral care is exceptional with all members of the school community working together to ensure good relationships exist between home, school and parish. Excellent teaching, a well-planned curriculum and an attractive and stimulating learning environment, enable the pupils to thrive and to make good progress. The behaviour of pupils is exemplary. They are extremely well mannered, very proud of their school and are considerate of each other. A significantly high questionnaire response was received from parents with virtually 100% being positive and overwhelmingly supportive and appreciative of their school.

The issues from the last inspection have been addressed and the school has excellent capacity to continue to develop, grow and improve. Two parents spoke for many as they wrote, "Our school is a shining example of Gospel values of respect, consideration, tolerance, compassion and helping others less fortunate than ourselves. One is really so privileged and so lucky to have children at such a school." Another parent stated in summary, "Great school, great attitude, lovely staff, really, really great, inspirational."

What steps need to be taken to improve further?

Governors, Headteachers and staff should:

- Consider revisiting the Religious Education self-evaluation form with governors and staff to bring it in line with the current inspection reporting framework.
- Secure opportunities for pupils to pose more of their own questions in lessons, with opportunities to enable them to undertake independent research to seek answers.

- Now the 'Come and See' scheme is embedded, consider linking assessment to the school's assessment systems for other core subjects.

Outcomes for pupils

**Grade
1**

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

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school is outstanding. The mission statement is central to the life of the school and is fully embraced by all pupils in their daily school life. Opportunities to participate in the evaluation of the Catholic life of the school are provided through the very effective School Council and Religious Education lessons. Pupils have a deep sense of belonging to their 'school family' and they all strive to do their best to promote the strong ethos within their school and the wider community. They are well aware of the needs of others, both locally and globally, seeking to support others through raising awareness and fundraising. Pupils take full advantage of the opportunities provided by the school for their personal support and development. Pupils are happy, confident and secure in their own stage of spiritual and emotional growth. An effective programme for Relationships and Sex Education allows pupils to develop and foster excellent understanding appropriate to their age. Pupils are very proud of their religious identity, deeply valuing the Catholic tradition of their school and its links to the parish community. They are regularly involved with parish and diocesan celebrations, benefitting from staff involvement in school and parish activities.

The religious provision of the school is the highest priority, which is reflected in the mission statement and in the way the mission of the school is lived out by all in a strong family community. There is a very 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 school is a prayerful and fun loving community that provides a stimulating learning environment to reflect the school's mission and Catholic character. Pastoral care for pupils is outstanding as a result of the commitment of all stakeholders and through having clear policies and structures in place. Pastoral programmes working alongside Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Relationships and Sex Education refer to Catholic teachings and principles. These programmes are designed to cater for the needs of all pupils with all staff playing an active part in its delivery to ensure the best possible outcomes for pupils. This is exemplified by the school's commitment to ensuring a number of staff are trained in counselling and the creation of a 'safe space' in the school where pupils can meet a trained member of staff for support. A parent commented, "I am proud and feel truly blessed that my children are

pupils at Corpus Christi and my only sadness is knowing how much better our society would be if all children had the benefit of such pastoral care.”

The behaviour of pupils in and around school is exemplary. They treat each other with high levels of respect and appreciate their behaviour has consequences and as a result accept with understanding responsibility for themselves and their actions. Pupils are given a number of opportunities to undertake a varying range of responsibilities which they do so with verve. For example they elect a Head Boy and Head Girl as well as their School Council, Green Team and Squabble Busters. The school is working to develop a pupil class chaplain role to further develop the spiritual life of the school.

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education

Pupils are passionate about Religious Education. They enjoy it immensely and many view it as their favourite lesson. They particularly appreciate the range of teaching strategies used by teachers to engage and enthuse them. As a result, pupils concentrate well and behaviour for learning is outstanding.

Teachers have high expectations of their pupils to which the majority of pupils rise securing high levels of attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 and progress across the school. Teachers know their pupils well and have an accurate understanding of their starting points. Work is differentiated and tasks are well matched to pupils' age and ability. Religious Education is at the heart of the school curriculum. It is taught both discretely and in a cross-curricular way. Pupils acquire knowledge quickly and in depth, linking their learning in religious education to other subjects. They are able to interpret sources and symbols, understand nuance and subtlety, which supports them in reflecting on their learning. The vast majority of pupils engage with religious ideas and integrate them into their daily lives. There are no perceivable differences between different groups of pupils. As a result almost all pupils are making rapid and sustained progress.

Corpus Christi school's commitment to developing the pupils' understanding of the diverse community which makes up the school and the local area is commendable. The school's last Section 48 inspection report noted, "The school is inclusive and welcoming and pupils and parents experience a strong sense of community" and this continues to be a considerable strength of the school. Good use is made of the new national curriculum to develop topic work, for example, 'People who help us' in Early Years teaches pupils the significance of important people in their local community, including the role of the parish priest. A whole-school Black History and International Week supports pupils to understand the development of communities within Brixton and the wider world. The teaching about other faiths is a strong element of the Religious Education curriculum with pupils having the opportunity to learn about the diverse nature of their local community and the importance of understanding other faiths to help inform their own. Years 3 and 4 visit the South London Liberal Synagogue as part

of their work on Judaism, and the 'Come and See' curriculum scheme allows pupils to learn about a variety of religious festivals and other faiths during the year. Pupils benefit from a range of visits arranged by parents and staff to discuss their lines of work and roles in the community, such as, insight into the work of CAFOD from a parent volunteer and an assembly to children about the work of a local homeless shelter. The parish priest takes an active role in the children's education, regularly participating in classes, e.g. explaining the sacrament of Baptism to Year 1 by a demonstration at the church and giving Year 6 children his own personal experience of Ordination.

How well pupils respond to and participate in Collective Worship

Pupil engagement and enjoyment of Collective Worship is evident. They are inspired and enthusiastic and this ensures the highest quality response. Singing, participation in prayers and responses are appropriately joyful and reverent. Pupils understand the importance of prayer and express the centrality of it in their lives. As they move through school, pupils take increasing responsibility for choosing and preparing resources, planning and the delivery of prayerful worship experiences. Older pupils independently prepare and lead worship, based on themes of their choosing. They use Scripture, silence, artefacts, music and other forms of prayer to engage their peers in a powerful way.

Pupils have a very good understanding of the Church's liturgical year, its seasons and feasts. They have a deep sense of social justice and a well-developed understanding of other faiths, which contribute positively to their outstanding spiritual and moral development.

Pupils participate in local community events including regular parish, deanery and diocesan projects. Within the parish, pupils attend Masses throughout the year, with a different class preparing Mass on each occasion. The school 'Green Team' engages in an ongoing project with the church garden, with a focus on the importance of green spaces within their community. A recent Deanery Mass was celebrated at the school with pupils providing music and readings.

The school visits vulnerable groups with the School Choir and the school band, sharing music and song with the elderly and infirm. Music is used to foster and strengthen links with Catholic primary and secondary schools, most notably St Mary's Clapham, for a music in worship day, a collaboration with Sacred Heart Camberwell for a senior citizens' Christmas Party at St Phillips and St James' parish and most recently a choir collaboration with the Cardinal Vaughan Memorial School to celebrate the feast of St. Cecilia. The School Choir and School Band have also represented the school and Catholic community at local events, including performances at the Lambeth Holocaust Memorial Day Service, carol singing for the turning on of Brixton's Christmas lights, and the Lambeth Music Festival at the Queen Elizabeth Hall.

Pupils proudly participate in a range of projects and activities such as Missio's Red Box appeal and fundraising for CAFOD. Appointed school councillors work with their classes

to fundraise for chosen charities throughout the year, promoting the importance of being alert to the needs of others beyond the school community. On the Saint's Day of each class, the pupils are encouraged to bring in tins of food to support a local food bank. The school has close links with the homeless centre, 'The Ace of Clubs' in Clapham, with ongoing fundraising throughout the year. The school community engages with disaster relief appeals with such events being celebrated and rewarded in whole school assemblies.

In 2014, Year 6 pupils travelled to Ypres in Belgium to attend the Last Post Ceremony and lay a wreath on behalf of the school. As part of the trip, pupils also visited Tyne Cot Cemetery and wrote prayers for soldiers who lost their lives in the First World War. Remembrance Day activities are furthered by visits from local veterans and encouraging pupils to research their family history.

Leaders and Managers

**Grade
1**

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

The manner in which leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life of the school is outstanding. The school's leadership is deeply committed to the Church's mission in education. The senior leaders in the school fully embrace the task and provide inspiration within the school community.

All leaders and managers, including the governing body, have high expectations for the promotion and continuing development of the Catholic life of the school. Senior leaders share the responsibility for the development and sustenance of the Catholic ethos. The school's self-evaluation is a reflection of rigorous monitoring, analysis and self-challenge. The Catholic ethos is palpable throughout the school and as such there is a great sense of naturalness conveyed in everything that goes on.

There is a clear focus on the Catholic life of the school. This leads to well-targeted ongoing planned improvements. There is an outstanding understanding of the school's mission. Staff and pupils share its purpose and actively participate in developing and supporting it as a result of high levels of collegiality among all members of the school community. The school engages very well with parents and carers to the great benefit of all its pupils. Parents have a very good understanding of the school's mission and are very supportive of it. Governors make a significant contribution to the Catholic life of the school and they are passionate about the school's mission and their participatory role in living out the mission. Governors are regular visitors to the school and are actively involved in the evaluation of the Catholic life of the school providing challenge and support as appropriate.

Pupils' reverence and respect at religious services is a particular strength of the school. As a result, their understanding of the importance of these events is also very strong. Pupils take an active role in preparing for acts of Collective Worship, discussing choice of prayers and readings, evaluating their roles and seeking to improve. This ownership they have of such celebrations contributes significantly to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Good use is made of the school's own prayer book within classrooms and collective worship.

The parish priest gives generously of his time to the school. He is supportive of the school's Religious Education curriculum providing much welcomed input whenever possible. In addition he provides a chaplaincy role to all members of the school community, which is both highly valued and appreciated. This adds a strong dimension to the Catholic life of the school.

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

Leaders, governors and managers are outstanding in promoting monitoring and evaluating the provision for the Religious Education of the school and in the way they plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils. The Co-Headteachers are outstanding in guiding Religious Education. They show great commitment in their roles and introduce new initiatives as appropriate. They work closely with governors who provide challenge and support in equal measure. They are accurate in their review of strengths and areas for development for Religious Education. They are aware that key members of staff can support the role of subject leader and share outstanding practice to drive the subject forward. Training provided by the Archdiocese is attended regularly. Continuing professional development opportunities are provided for staff. There is very effective communication between the Headteachers, staff, parents and governors. The Self-evaluation document identifies targets, timescales and lines of accountability although it would be an opportune time to review this in line with the current inspection reporting framework. Detailed documentation guides and directs all staff in the delivery of the subject and this is regularly updated as necessary.

Monitoring data is used effectively to evaluate the school's performance and plan for future improvements. Monitoring is timetabled and effective. Formal assessment tasks are undertaken, collated and tracked by the subject leader and shared with the leadership team and governors. Achievement and effort at Corpus Christi are always celebrated. The school's Ofsted report in 2010 noted, "Senior leaders and managers have high expectations and display a relentless drive to ongoing improvement, a vision which is communicated clearly and shared by all staff" and this is an equally true statement in regard to this Religious Education inspection. Religious Education features prominently within the school improvement plan, and clear direction is provided to staff by the Religious Education Coordinator. She demonstrates considerable potential to move Religious Education forward. Her documentation was extremely well presented and she articulated a clarity of vision that bodes well for the future standing of her subject.

The Religious Education policy is evaluated each year to ensure it is in line with current practice, and it is shared with staff on an annual basis. A rigorous system of tracking, monitoring, analysing and evaluating is employed by the Religious Education Coordinator. Each class submits sub-levels according to curriculum standards for each pupil in their cohort on a termly basis. Evidence of levels for a selection of pupils which represent the range of abilities in the class is also provided to help moderate teacher assessments and monitor progress year-on-year. The subject coordinator encourages staff to share good practice and moderate/evaluate other classes' work through a religious education 'Book Look', which takes place in a staff meeting. Staff are placed in cross-phase group teams to discuss pupils' work and progress and help provide areas of development for teachers.

In conjunction with the senior leadership team, the Religious Education Coordinator conducts observations across the whole school each year to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning. The Religious Education curriculum is evaluated each year, and opportunities are given to staff to feedback on its impact in class. Each year the Religious Education Coordinator creates an action plan of priorities for the subject, which feeds into the school improvement plan. The subject coordinator has a link-governor within the governing body and meets regularly to discuss developments in the subject, standards of teaching, learning and how the school fulfils its Catholic ethos.

Religious Education features prominently within the Headteachers' Report, detailing the school's liturgical calendar. The governing body reviews the school's Religious Education and Sex and Relationships Education policies on an annual basis. This programme is an exemplar to be shared more widely.

Provision

**Grade
1**

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

The quality of teaching and purposeful learning in Religious Education is outstanding.

There is an abundance of quality practice in lessons. These include maximum pace and progress in most learning. Both independent and group learning is well managed and resourced.

Pupils have clear direction for learning with lessons being well planned and supported by creative teaching. Teachers' discussion with and feedback from pupils is particularly effective. There is marked enthusiasm and enjoyment in lessons for teachers and pupils. Differentiation is focused on the needs of all pupils with work designed to secure

maximum participation and extension. Religious Education work is consistently marked to a high standard offering development and self-assessment opportunities for pupils. The process is valued by pupils because it impacts positively on their progress. Peer assessment is used particularly well. Pupils clearly take a pride in the completion and presentation of their written learning. Religious Education displays are of a very high quality benefitting from good use of pupils' work and are a strength of the school.

Lessons are differentiated according to pupils' needs, and additional learning needs are provided for through the effective training and deployment of teaching assistants. Teachers are acutely aware of the capabilities of their pupils and plan lessons which extend understanding and promote intellectual curiosity in Religious Education. Questioning is progressive and open-ended and always set out to challenge children. During lessons, pupils support each other through paired and group work, but also complete independent tasks. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate work through peer and self-assessment and are provided with written or verbal feedback by their teacher. They are given opportunities to respond to marking, which may involve answering a question set by the teacher to extend or consolidate their understanding. Marking and dialogue between teachers and pupils are consistently of high quality and this process could be more widely disseminated. Pupils are given opportunities to reflect on both their learning and their spirituality. Diagnostic and formative monitoring and assessment allows teachers to adjust future lessons according to their pupils' understanding and level pupils' progress on a termly basis. Achievement and effort are celebrated through positive feedback, marking, team points and in liturgical services and celebration assemblies.

Lessons observed were never less than good with the majority being outstanding or with outstanding elements. In the very best lessons, classroom management and teacher subject knowledge was of a high order. This approach starts in early years and is consistent through the school. A parent remarked, "My child has only been in Nursery since September and I have already seen indications of progress in religious knowledge and understanding as well as his spiritual development." A Reception lesson was impressive in the development of religious vocabulary and the rapport the teacher had with pupils enabled her to talk about Jesus being in Mary's tummy in response to questions from her class. A Year 6 lesson on the topic of Advent saw pupils on task throughout the lesson which was well paced benefitting from the teacher's provision of a variety of activities and frequent reflection on the learning and lesson objectives. Excellent cross-curricular links were established, most notably in the areas of literacy through strong development of vocabulary and understanding of writing in the first person. A depth of learning was achieved through strong question and answers, the use of talk partners, and the interactive whiteboard. Well managed teaching support which was discreet and appropriately focussed helped maximise the learning of specific groups of pupils. This very well planned, resourced and delivered lesson secured seamless progression in learning. The theme of 'Loving your neighbour' in a Year 3 class saw the teacher manage with aplomb the failure of technology with pupils developing the concept of a promise into a prayer written onto a cut out hand for a planned class wreath and this practical approach deepened pupils' understanding. Likewise in a Year 1 Class pupils undertook independent work leading up to the

formation of a class wreath from their individual input.

The willingness of teachers to give a context to pupils' learning through references to their own experiences was notable. A Year 4 lesson on the theme of 'Gifts and Friendship' was enhanced through the teacher's sharing of her experience of a surprise party. In a Year 2 lesson on the theme of 'How can I be a good Christian and spread the word' the teacher used her skills in questioning to ensure learning took place at all levels in a mixed ability class. Good progress in a Year 5 class on the theme of the Annunciation saw pupils engaged in considering the feelings of Mary at this time. A parent questionnaire response contained the following note, "Teachers always provide excellent learning from the time they start in Nursery and we could not ask for more."

Where lessons are less strong, pupils would benefit from opportunities to pose questions of their own and research answers and teachers who have the confidence to move off plan to extend opportunities to develop discussion generated by pupils.

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

The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum promotes pupils' learning is outstanding in meeting pupils' needs. The school is using the 'Come and See' Religious Education programme which meets the requirements of the Curriculum Directory for Religious Education. Appropriate levels of the programme are being followed in different classes which ensures complete Religious Education entitlement for each child. Pupils explore the beliefs and values of other faiths and religions which help to promote tolerance and respect for those who think differently. Teaching support assistants provide high quality support.

Of the total curriculum time, 10% is allocated to Religious Education fulfilling the requirements of the Bishops of England and Wales. Very good planning ensures full coverage of the Religious Education programme with imaginative and well planned strategies being deployed to enrich pupils' learning. The school implements new curriculum developments as appropriate with a range of enrichment activities, all having a positive impact on the school's curriculum as a whole. The Religious Education curriculum provides outstanding opportunities for pupils' spiritual and moral development and vocation being customised wherever possible to meet the needs of groups and individuals. This will benefit from ongoing school evaluation of the effectiveness of the assessment of the embedded 'Come and See' scheme.

The school's strong focus on developing challenging vocabulary across all Key Stages is forming pupils with high levels of religious literacy which they are able to effectively apply.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school

The quality of collective worship provided by the school is outstanding. The Eucharist and prayer are central to life at Corpus Christi School. Acts of collective worship reflect the strong Catholic character of the school through pupils' participation in a range of assemblies, liturgies and prayer. Corpus Christi provides very good opportunities for pupils to engage in learning about other world faiths. Opportunities are provided by the school for pupils to pray in a formal setting and informally and in the latter the pupils are confident in expressing their private intentions to their classes. Pupils take an active role in planning and leading worship and take pride in doing so.

The Religious Education Coordinator takes an active lead in guiding and planning for worship. There are very strong links maintained with the local parishes with the parish priests taking an active part in leading and supporting high quality collective worship. Parents appreciate the welcome they receive when they attend or participate in acts of collective worship.

Assemblies begin and end with prayer and reflection, and in each class, pupils pray consistently at different times of the day. Mass is celebrated throughout the year in the parish church, often with parishioners present. Whole school Masses take place at the beginning of every term, on certain feasts and Holy Days, and significant occasions. The children who make their First Holy Communion in Year 3 celebrate with a special Mass in school, to which their parents are invited. Staff also attend Communion Celebration Masses in each of the parishes that the school serves. All staff give positive witness by attending and participating in Collective Worship and some by serving as Ministers of the Eucharist at Mass. In the assembly attended inspectors felt that there was greater scope to develop spiritual aspects rather than solely concentrating on reminding pupils of their learning.

Singing is a considerable strength of the school as witnessed through preparation work for Christmas. The music leader's enthusiasm produced from the pupils' exceptionally high quality singing within an encouraging environment that challenged them to give of their very best.

Pupils are given age-appropriate Mass response booklets to help them learn responses and prayers for services as they move up through the school. Masses often provide teaching points for relevant lessons. Year 2 go to the Church to learn about the different elements of the Mass from the Parish Priest. Pupils learn about the seven Sacraments of the Catholic Church as part of the Religious Education curriculum. Year 2 pupils organise a Prayer Service with the Parish Priest where they receive their school prayer books.

Great importance is placed upon how the school environment represents the Catholicity of the school. Prayer tables in class represent class Saints, the Pope and pupils' religious contributions and are changed to reflect the Church's liturgical year. Crucifixes are prominently displayed round the school and in classrooms, as are statues and banners of class Saints. Assemblies across the school often have a religious theme and follow the Come and See curriculum scheme and the Church's liturgical calendar. Pupils are

highly enthusiastic about participating in acts of Collective Worship. In weekly assemblies, pupils are selected from the infants to help light the candle which represents Jesus' presence.

As pupils make their spiritual journey through the school, year groups are encouraged to lead various acts of Worship and liturgical activities in addition to whole school events, which parents are invited to attend. The school recognises and supports the individuality of 'Faith Journey' for all of its pupils and their families.

