



INSPECTION REPORT

ST PATRICK'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

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D/ES Number: 8013411

Headteacher: Mr J Kilcline

Chair of Governors: Reverend G Grant

Canonical Inspection under Canon 806 on behalf of the Diocese of Clifton
and inspection of Denominational Education under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

Date of inspection: 20th – 21st March 2006

Date of previous inspection: June 1996

Reporting Inspector: Mr P Bates

Description of School

St Patrick's is an average sized primary school situated in east Bristol. It has 203 pupils on roll of whom 97% are baptised Catholics. Four fifths of the pupils are of White British heritage and the rest are from a range of other ethnic groups. A few pupils speak English as an additional language. Pupils come from a wide range of backgrounds but there are few eligible for free school meals. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is average. The school has a fairly stable staff with some long serving teachers, the majority of whom are Catholics. Parents are extremely supportive of the school and there are good links with the parish.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1: Outstanding; Grade 2: Good; Grade 3: Satisfactory; Grade 4: Unsatisfactory

Overall effectiveness of this Catholic school

St Patrick's is a good Catholic school with some outstanding features. The school provides a warm and welcoming environment where the Catholic ethos is very evident. The school motto 'Learning together with God' guides everything that happens in the school and is known by the school community.

The pupils feel secure and happy and are keen to learn. They generally achieve well and make satisfactory progress. The curriculum in RE is well planned and monitored. Teaching is good overall with some outstanding practice. The school has an accurate view of its own strengths and development needs giving a strong base for improvement. The behaviour of pupils in and around school, at Mass, in assemblies and in class is good. The headteacher leads the school well and is well supported by an inspiring RE co-ordinator and a committed staff.

Grade 2

Improvement since the last inspection

The last inspection was 10 years ago and the relevant Key Issues have been addressed. Assessment in RE has been improved but still needs to be further developed so that pupils are able to reflect on and improve their own learning.

Grade 2

The capacity of the school community to improve and develop

The school has a good capacity to improve. The strong commitment of the headteacher, staff, governors and parish community to the school, are factors in the maintenance of existing good policies and further development. Monitoring and evaluation are developing. The RE co-ordinator is enthusiastic and able to share her knowledge and expertise across the school.

Grade 2

What the school should do to improve further

- Continue to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning to ensure standards are consistent throughout the school
- Review the marking policy to ensure consistency of practice that includes suggestion for improvement
- Further develop Collective Worship as identified in the School Improvement Plan

The Catholic Life of the School

Leadership and Management

The leadership of the school is good. There is clear direction for the spiritual life of the school provided by the headteacher and the RE co-ordinator which is well supported by all the staff. Governors are developing their roles and each class has a link governor. They are kept informed about procedures and practices in the school by the headteacher and the RE co-ordinator. The RE link governor monitors the subject well by making regular visits to school and attending many Masses and assemblies. The leadership effectively promotes pupils spiritual and moral development and a strong Catholic ethos pervades the school. The strengths and development needs of the school have been identified and are being addressed. The impact of leadership is seen by the good progress made by most of the pupils, in the quality of Collective Worship and in the strong sense of community in the school.

Grade 2

The Prayer Life of the School

There is a variety of opportunity for prayer throughout the school. Pupils respond with respect and reverence. Pupils pray regularly each day, before and after meals and during RE lessons. When given opportunities for quiet reflection pupils respond well but this practice is not consistent throughout the school. Class assemblies are held regularly giving pupils the opportunity to share their own prayers and thoughts. Masses take place in the adjacent parish church and are well supported by parishioners and parents. They are real community celebrations. The Mass observed to celebrate St Patrick's Day was a joyous and prayerful celebration. It was well prepared, the pupils were fully involved in the readings and singing, they knew the responses and prayed with reverence. The parish priest's interaction with the pupils contributed greatly to the quality of the celebration.

Collective Worship appears on the School Improvement Plan and shows the school's desire to further improve on the good provision already in place.

Grade 2

Religious Education

Achievement and Standards in Religious Education

All pupils in Key Stage 1 including those with Special Educational Needs make good progress in Religious Education. By the time they reach Year 2 they have a good religious vocabulary and they are able to talk fluently about their work in Religious Education. They have a good knowledge of stories from the Bible and a good understanding of the life of Jesus. At the lower end of Key Stage 2 pupils continue to make good progress due the high quality of teaching. Pupils are able to link their own feelings with those of Jesus e.g. 'I felt frightened before I went on a ride at Alton Towers, just like Jesus must have felt before he was crucified'. However, by the time pupils reach Year 6 they show less confidence in dealing with questions such as what Jesus taught us and are unable to see the symbolism of some of their practical work.

Pupils enjoy their Religious Education lessons and in the lessons observed they were well behaved, worked well and made suitable contributions. There are a variety of styles of written work in the pupils' books. This is comparable with their standards in their literacy work. A considerable number of pupils and parents are involved in the local parish, taking part in the liturgies thus having a positive impact on the lives of all members of the community.

Grade 3

Teaching and learning in Religious Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory with some areas of undoubted strength and some areas for development. In the most successful lessons teaching is lively, pupils enjoy their learning, are interested and work well. Teachers use a good range of different teaching styles to meet the needs of the pupils, including the use of interactive whiteboards. They have good questioning techniques and set work that matches pupils' needs. Good support is provided by the Learning Support Assistants.

Written tasks enable pupils to write independently in a range of genres some of which are quite challenging. Assessment is generally supportive but not consistent throughout the school. Assessment for learning needs to be improved so that students are able to reflect on and improve the quality of their own work. Teaching supports and develops pupils' spiritual and moral growth. It relates Jesus' teaching and example closely to pupils' own lives, values and behaviour.

Grade 3

Quality of the Curriculum

The curriculum in RE is well planned and meets the needs and interests of learners. The time allocation meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference. The school follows the approved Diocesan scheme for RE and is adopting the personal relationship programme, 'In the Beginning'. Documentation is clearly organised and presented and planning is thorough and well considered. Good cross-curricular links are in place particularly with literacy, but also with Music and Art. The after school Art club contributes substantially to the vibrant RE displays throughout the school. The Year 6 pupils look forward to their retreat day led by the parish priest. It is held after Easter in order to deepen the pupils' knowledge and understanding of this

key season. Pupils' social development is generally good; they learn to respect themselves and each other.

Fund raising is strength of the school and the whole school community generously support their chosen charities e.g. Catholic Children's Society and CAFOD. Curriculum provision in RE makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual and moral developments.

Grade 2

Leadership and management of Religious Education

Leadership and management in Religious Education is very good. The outstanding RE co-ordinator together with the Headteacher have ensured RE has a very high profile in the school. She supports the staff to help improve teaching and learning in RE, monitors planning, pupils' work and together with the Headteacher has carried out lesson observations in all classes. This is impacting positively in raising standards. The coordinator supports close links with the Parish helping organise Masses and other liturgical services both in church and in school.

Since the RE coordinator has been in post a considerable amount of new resources have been purchased. Accommodation is good with each classroom having attractive prayer areas and displays. The high quality displays around the school enhance its Catholicity. The provision for RE is held in very high regard by parents, particularly for the values and the standards of behaviour it teaches their children. The Governors effectively discharge their responsibilities for the leadership and management of Religious Education. The link Governor and Chair meet regularly with the Headteacher and RE co-ordinator and are kept informed about the strengths and areas for improvement.

Grade 1