



INSPECTION REPORT

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF CANTERBURY CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Boscombe Crescent, Downend, Bristol, BS16 6QR

Telephone: 01454 866690

e-mail address: pete.upton@southglos.gov.uk

DfES Number: 803 3437

Headteacher: Mr P A Upton

Chair of Governors: Dr D Marsh

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: 8th – 9th June 2006
Date of previous inspection: 1st & 8th November 2000

Reporting Inspector: Mr P Bates

Description of School

St Augustine's is a popular, above average size primary school, situated in South Gloucestershire. There are 299 pupils on role of whom 71% are baptised Catholics. They come from a wide catchment area stretching into Bristol as well as into the growing area of Emerson's Green. The majority of the pupils are of White British heritage and the rest are from a range of other ethnic groups. Pupils come from a wide range of backgrounds and their attainment on entry to the school is slightly lower than the national average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is smaller than in most schools. Parents are supportive of the school and there are close 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 Augustine's is a good Catholic school with many very good features marked by a strong caring and family atmosphere, which establishes a good climate for work. Pupils achieve well and make good progress during their time at school. Teaching is good overall and there is a willingness amongst staff to share experiences and ideas to further improve good practice. The catholic ethos of the school is strong with excellent provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral and social development. Pupils' behaviour is very good. The Headteacher, RE Coordinator and the Governors provide very good leadership.

Grade 2

Improvement since the last inspection

Since the last inspection the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist have been carried out within the parish and are well supported by the school. The school environment has been improved with the addition of an indoor quiet area and an outside courtyard, which give pupils the opportunity for reflection and prayer. Assessment is being carried out following the Diocesan guidelines, but the school acknowledges that monitoring needs to be further developed.

Grade 2

The capacity of the school community to improve and develop

The school has a very good capacity to improve. Self evaluation is of a good quality and the areas for development have been correctly identified. The strong sense of shared purpose between the staff, governors and parish community are factors that promise the maintenance of the good standards that are in place and the provision for further improvement.

Grade 1

What the school should do to improve further

- Continue to monitor teaching and learning regularly to ensure standards are consistent throughout the school.
 - Review the marking policy to ensure consistency of practice that includes suggestions for improvement.
 - Ensure that pupils are given sufficient opportunities for reflective prayer.
-

The Catholic Life of the School

Leadership and Management

The leadership and management in this area is very good. The Governing Body carries out its responsibilities in relation to the Catholic life of the school effectively. They are kept well informed about procedures and practices in the school by the Headteacher and involve themselves with subject responsibilities. They provide both support and challenge to the Headteacher as well as having a good understanding of the strengths of the school and areas for development. The Headteacher has a clear vision of the nature of the Catholic school and for the development of the subject. The Headteacher and the RE Coordinator have shared the leadership and management of the subject over the past year due to illness. The school's Mission Statement is regularly reviewed by staff and governors. It is evident that it is 'lived' by all members of the school community. The inclusion of all pupils is central to this mission through the belief that all children are unique gifts of God. Good links exist with the parents, parish, diocese and other local Catholic schools, which support the education and leadership in the school.

The impact of the leadership is seen in the good progress made by most pupils and in the strong sense of community in the school.

Grade 1

The Prayer Life of the School

Provision for prayer throughout the school is good. Pupils respond to all forms of worship with respect and reverence. There is a variety of opportunity for prayer and worship throughout the school and this contributes to the spiritual and moral development of the pupils. However, during the period of the inspection, pupils were given no opportunities for periods of quiet reflection during acts of collective worship or in their RE lessons. Whole school Masses are celebrated on major feast days and at other significant times in the school year. These are held in the adjacent parish church or in the school hall and are well attended by parents and members of the parish. During the assembly, ably led by the parish priest, and during acts of worship, pupils responded well and prayed with reverence. The Sacramental programmes are organised and run within the Parish, well supported by parents and the school. The pupils are eager to be involved in their own Acts of Worship as seen by the large number who attended a 'Stations of the Cross Club' before Easter.

Grade 2

Religious Education

Achievement and Standards in Religious Education

The level of skills and knowledge of pupils on entry to the school is slightly below the national average. Pupils make good progress during their time in school and by the end of Key Stage 2, standards in Religious Education are very good. Pupils with Special Needs make good progress. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of their faith and are able to talk fluently about the work they are doing. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils produce high quality, well thought out work.

Pupils' spiritual development is clearly rooted in the beliefs of the Catholic Church. They have a secure and deep understanding of the life and teaching of Jesus, and are able to apply His teaching to their own lives. In one lesson a pupil wrote "God's wonderful love flows like the waves in the sea", showing a deep spiritual awareness of God's love for all.

Pupils enjoy their Religious Education lessons and in those observed they behaved, worked well and made suitable contributions. In some classes, computers are used to enhance the development of knowledge, but this is an area that needs further development. A variety of work can be seen in the pupils' books which is comparable with the standards in their literacy work. However, there are some inconsistencies in the standards and quantity of work produced, which needs to be addressed. Pupils, generally, have a clear understanding of right and wrong and the school provides very well for their moral development.

Grade 2

Teaching and learning in Religious Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good with some areas of excellent practice. In the best lessons there was a lively pace and the pupils' thinking skills were constantly challenged. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use very good questioning techniques. Planning and the support of teaching assistants, for pupils requiring individual or small groups, helps meet the needs of the pupils well. Generally, expectations are high and pupils are required to produce independent writing in a variety of genres and to explain the meaning of biblical stories. Some differentiation in lessons was observed but this is recognised by the school as an area for development. Assessment takes place at the end of a topic. Marking, though positive, is not consistent and there are only a few examples of it being developmental.

The school's provision for spiritual development through prayer and collective worship is good. Moral development is very good and pupils are taught to show respect to all members of the school community.

Grade 2

Quality of the Curriculum

The curriculum is well planned following the Diocesan scheme for Religious Education. The school has recently adopted the recommended Personal Relationship Programme, 'In the Beginning'. The allocation of time meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference. Good cross curricular links are in place, in particular with literacy, but also with Art, Music and Drama.

The curriculum provides a broad range of opportunities meeting the needs and interests of all pupils. The school art club contributes to the vibrant RE displays around the school, in particular, the stained glass windows. The mosaic cross in the hall was produced by all year 3 children with the help of a visiting artist. Pupils are encouraged to use their talents for the benefit of others and enthusiastically help those in need through prayer and actively supporting various charities. They have an active link with the Parish's Soup run, supporting the homeless by collecting items. During the time of the inspection they were collecting deodorants for them. Due to their enthusiasm they easily exceeded their challenging target. Curriculum provision in RE makes a very good contribution to the pupils' spiritual and moral development.

Grade 2

Leadership and management of Religious Education

The Headteacher, the RE Coordinator and the School Team are committed to a shared vision for the future development of Religious Education. The monitoring of teaching and learning has been affected in the past year by the illness of the RE Coordinator. This has led to a drop in standards in some areas of the school, but is now being addressed. The accommodation is very good with attractive displays and prayer areas in all the classrooms. There is a reflective area in the school, together with a quiet outside area for use by Year 6 pupils. Outdoor Masses have been held in the attractive school grounds.

Additional resources have been purchased recently with an emphasis on other faiths, but suitable new books are needed to replace the ageing books in the school library. The school has a number of Catholic teachers but only three have a Religious qualification. This is an area that could be addressed with the aim of achieving higher standards throughout the school. The provision for RE is held in high regard by the parents, particularly for the values and behaviour it teaches to their children, but they would like more reports on the work their children are doing.

Grade 2