



INSPECTION REPORT

ST. GEORGE'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

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DfES Number: 865/5207

Acting Headteacher: Mrs A Hunter

Chair of Governors: Mr M Walsh

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: 26 & 27 January 2006
Date of previous inspection: 30 & 31 January 2001

Reporting Inspector: Mrs A Fowler

Description of School

St. George's is a voluntary aided school serving the parishes of St. George's, Warminster and St. Bernadette's, Westbury. It is in Wiltshire local education authority. At present there are 163 pupils on roll of which 57% are Catholic. Pupils are of broadly average ability on intake. A significant number of children have parents in the army which means that a number of pupils move into and out of the school as the regiment changes. The school believes firmly in its missions as a Catholic school and receives excellent support from both priest and parish. There is a strong supportive and caring atmosphere and staff and pupils show respect and concern for each other. Pupils like the school, feel safe and secure and behaviour is excellent. The Deputy Head has been Acting Headteacher since January 2005 and the school hopes to appoint a permanent head within the next term.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1: Outstanding;

Grade 2: Good;

Grade 3: Satisfactory;

Grade 4: Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of this Catholic school

The leadership and management of St. George's encourage a strong positive Catholic environment. The spiritual and moral development of pupils is good and a strength of the school, as is the prayer life, which encourages pupils to be reflective. The school acknowledges that more could be done to monitor teaching and learning in RE to ensure greater progression. Assessment needs to be used to greater effect to inform planning and raise standards in RE. The majority of staff have either a recognised national qualification in RE or a diocesan one and are well supported by the management.

Grade: 3

Improvement since the last inspection

Improvement since the last inspection has been limited. Monitoring and marking of pupils' work has begun however this still is not being used effectively to raise standards. Progress has been made in some year groups with making tasks in RE more challenging but this is not consistent throughout the school. However, progress has been made in ensuring that pupils are well motivated and remain on task although pace is still lacking in some lessons.

Grade: 3

The capacity of the school community to improve and develop
The governors, leaders and staff shared a strong sense of purpose. They are well supported in their mission by the priest and parish. The lack of a permanent headteacher has meant that effective monitoring and evaluation procedures have been slow to develop and are not fully in place. However the school has begun to reflect on

its own strengths and weaknesses and is committed to raising standards in RE. The school is aware that it needs to develop a more detailed evidence base for its own self evaluation. The school has the capacity to improve and develop further.

Grade: 2

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop effective monitoring and evaluation procedures that help improve standards in RE
 - Review Schemes of Work in RE to make sure there is sufficient progression across the year groups
 - Make sure that tasks in RE sufficiently challenge all pupils
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The Catholic Life of the School

Leadership and Management

The leadership of the school is strongly focused on the school's Catholic mission and there is a sense of shared mission, dedication and purpose amongst all staff. There are excellent links with the parish; some staff are catechists in the first communion programme. The school and parish are to be commended for their mutual support and interaction which is an outstanding feature of the school. All pupils and staff know of and value the work of the parish priest. Spiritual and moral development is strength of the school with staff providing excellent role models. Pupils value the school, show concern and respect for one another and the older pupils help the young pupils. Pupils did not consider bullying to be an issue and felt safe within the school. Parents are welcome in the school and some parents take an active part in lessons under the direction of the class teacher. The environment is stimulating and well cared for; displays and artefacts around the school make clear and enhance the Catholic ethos. The school's own self evaluation needs to be more detailed and be based on a wider evidence base. Procedures have been put in place for monitoring and evaluation but are not yet as effective as they could be. These need to be developed further if standards are to be raised in every year group.

Grade: 3

The Prayer Life of the School

Prayer is central to the life of the school. Pupils and staff pray formally together four times a day and many opportunities for quiet reflection are integrated into the life of the school. Pupils know formal prayers from the foundation stage and are encouraged to write their own prayers. Prayer corners exist in every classroom, though some need development. Pupils show reverence and respect during prayer time and older pupils are encouraged to take part in leading acts of worship. Themes are appropriate to the church's year and the 'Here I Am' syllabus. Some staff make effective use of dance and music in enhancing the prayer life. Parents and the wider church community support the prayer life of the school and the commitment of the parish priest to the school provides a very positive role model for pupils and staff. Class liturgies and Eucharistic

Services are prepared on a rota basis though the school may wish to review the timing of these. A detailed policy for collective worship has been recently developed and approved by the governing body. This policy has clear and detailed aims and makes provision for evaluation. Prayer enhances the spiritual and moral development of pupils.

Grade: 2

Religious Education

Achievement and Standards in Religious Education

Attainment is broadly in line with that expected though there is variation between year groups. Work in Key Stage 1 does not show sufficient progression and in some year groups the level of challenge in tasks set for pupils limits their achievements. Pupils are not always aware of how to improve their own work. In Key Stage 2 pupils are offered opportunities to work independently, within groups and demonstrate the ability to work co-operatively and focus on the task. There is no apparent significant difference between boys and girls attainment.

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning in Religious Education

During the inspection more than three quarters of the lessons observed were good and there were some excellent examples where drama and music were used in a skilful fashion to enhance the learning objectives. The best teaching is characterised by good planning, clear objectives which were shared with pupils and opportunities for pupils to reflect on their own learning. In some cases however there was insufficient challenge and a limited opportunity for pupils to demonstrate understanding. Too much reliance was placed on work that was merely copied. In all lessons relationships between staff and pupils were good. The relationship between RE and faith development was explored. Books are marked on a regular basis but comments rarely helped pupils improve their work. Assessment procedures are in place but are rarely used to inform planning and tend to be more summative than formative.

Grade: 3

Quality of the Curriculum

The school follows the diocesan recommended course and there is a strong emphasis in the curriculum to make pupils aware of their Catholic, moral and social responsibilities. There is evidence of teaching on other faiths, which contributes to the cultural development of pupils. The spiritual and moral development of pupils is enhanced by the curriculum and there are opportunities for prayer within all lessons; this is a strength of the school. Time allocated to Religious Education is in line with the Bishops' Conference recommendations. Resources are generally well used and the capitation for RE has risen significantly within the last year. The governors are considering adopting a new relationship education programme which would considerably enhance provision in this area. At present relationship education is taught through the PSHE programme but is a little ad hoc.

Grade: 2

Leadership and management of Religious Education

Managers are committed to developing the vision and objectives of the school's mission statement. Staff work together and all felt supported by the RE co-ordinator. Regular meetings take place where the curriculum is discussed and the co-ordinator has begun to monitor the lessons and work in books. Monitoring procedures need to be more effective. At the moment they do not contribute to promoting accurate self review or enable teaching and learning to improve through identifying strengths and weaknesses and acting on them. Assessment procedures are also in place but they are not being used effectively in planning and therefore have little impact on raising standards. The link governor is in school on a regular basis and governors support the work of RE. Good opportunities for inset are provided and non Catholic staff are being well supported.

Grade: 3