



INSPECTION REPORT

Corpus Christi

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Headteacher: Ms Caroline Hostein
Chair of Governors: Dr Andrew Denny

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: 30 & 31 January 2007
Date of previous inspection: 24-27 June 2002
Reporting Inspector: Mrs A Fowler

Description of School

Corpus Christi is a voluntary aided Catholic primary school serving, in the main, the parishes of Corpus Christi, Our Lady of Lourdes and St. Joseph's. It also takes pupils from Our Lady Queen of Apostles in Cheddar. Approximately 11% of the pupils are designated as having English as an additional language. The inclusion of EAL pupils is a strength of the school. The school takes its commitment to the values enshrined in the 'Every Child Matters' agenda very seriously and has recently been granted the Healthy Schools award and the Active mark. It also runs a breakfast and after school club for pupils. There are very strong links between the school and the parish and good use is made of the local Church which is adjacent to the school. The present head has been in post since September 2005 and a new Chair of Governors was appointed in November 2006. There are plans for additional buildings to take place this year which will expand and improve the good facilities the school already has.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of this Catholic school

Corpus Christi is well led by the headteacher who has the support of the governors in maintaining and enhancing the Catholic ethos and witness of the school. Collective worship, community cohesion and the spiritual and moral development of pupils are good and strengths of the school. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and plans are in place to improve attainment. Assessment and monitoring procedures now in place are beginning to impact on standards. The school is popular with parents many of whom were also pupils at the school, they have a high regard for the school and identify care for individuals as a strength.

Grade 3

Improvement since the last inspection

Issues identified in the last inspection have only partially been addressed. The quality and consistency of marking was identified as an issue for improvement and this still remains an issue, however recent steps put in place for monitoring and evaluating should begin to impact on this area.

Grade 3

The capacity of the school community to improve and develop

The headteacher and the governors know the school well. The school's own self evaluation has highlighted well the areas where improvements need to be made and a highly detailed development plan is in place to tackle the issues identified. The capacity to improve is good. The monitoring and evaluation procedures that are now in place should begin to improve standards. Performance management is satisfactory and firmly linked to improving standards. The school has some innovative teaching in RE which if shared throughout the school should lead to improvement. All teachers are now involved in self evaluation; book scrutiny and shared planning are now in place.

Grade 2

What the school should do to improve further

- Assessment for learning should continue to be developed throughout the school
 - Marking should become more diagnostic
 - Pupils should be encouraged to take ownership of prayer and worship
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The Catholic Life of the School

Leadership and Management

The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and this is shared by the governing body. They are committed to raising standards and have detailed plans in place to bring this about. The Catholic mission of the school is underpinned by the example of the head and governors who act as good role models. The inclusion of all learners is central to the school's vision and this is demonstrated by the excellent progress EAL students make. There are excellent links between the school and parish. The parish priest is a supportive presence in the school and all pupils are encouraged to participate in prayer and worship. Pupils feel safe and secure in the school and older pupils were able to articulate the distinctiveness of the school. "We treat each other well because that's what Jesus did and what he wants us to do". The governors are well informed about the school and the new chair has a well informed and clear understanding of his role. Pupils themselves are being encouraged to become leaders and are consulted about their views. The school's mission statement is clearly in evidence around the school though in its present form is too difficult for pupils to understand. Monitoring and evaluation techniques are now in place but the effects of this and other initiatives in raising standards in RE are not yet visible.

Grade 3

Collective Worship

The quality of the provision for prayer and worship is good. There are a range of opportunities both formal and informal offered to pupils including class Masses, whole

school Masses, reconciliation services etc. The liturgical life of the school is well planned and celebrated and linked to themes studied in RE. Parents are encouraged to attend and take part in the religious life of the school. In an innovative move the school, during Lent and Advent, held prayerful reflections in the school hall to which parents were invited to drop in and the school's newsletter offered parents advice on how to prayerfully celebrate these seasons. The year 6 class Mass seen during the inspection was a good example of the school's practice. Parents (and grandparents) were invited to the school, met by pupils and escorted to the classroom. During the Mass every single pupil was involved in the liturgy, through reading, serving, writing their own prayers or singing. Afterwards the community development continued with visitors being offered the opportunity to stay for drinks and talk informally to the staff. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on issues and make connections between faith and life. In one assembly seen, photographs taken around the school were used as part of a reflection on how we treat each other. The strong visible links between the school and parish are clearly evident and the parish First Communion Programme is held on the school premises. Pupils knew the church well and had a high regard for the work of the parish priest. Prayer and worship are also used to promote spiritual and moral development with the link between faith and action clearly evident through the many community and charity events the school takes part in, including CAFOD and the 'shoe box' appeal. There are many visible signs of the school's Catholic nature around the school and pupils were encouraged to contribute to prayer corners in classrooms by writing their own prayers. Pupils are now consulted for their views on prayer and worship and are ready to take more ownership of the planning and delivery of assembly. The leadership of the school wishes to facilitate and encourage the pupils in taking on more responsibility and this is to be commended.

Grade 2

Religious Education

Achievement and Standards in Religious Education

Standards are broadly satisfactory but there are differences between oral work and written work with oral development being significantly more developed than written work. Some learners, particularly gifted and talented pupils under perform especially at Key Stage 2. Written work consists mainly of short answer questions or rewriting existing Gospel stories which offers little opportunity for extended or evaluative writing. The school is now developing strategies to improve this. On interview pupils were articulate about their work and younger pupils had a very good grasp of some difficult concepts, empathy for example, but their knowledge was inconsistent in places. Pupils entering the school with English as an additional language made good progress in the school.

Grade 3

Teaching and learning in Religious Education

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall with some excellent practice. In all lessons observed objectives were shared with pupils and lessons thoroughly planned. Where teaching was excellent expectation was high, the pace challenging and a variety of activities used. Assessment for learning is being adopted as a teaching strategy and in a reception class lesson, children as young as four were able to grasp the idea of a response partner. Most staff were encouraging students to pause before answering a question. In one lesson observed pupils were working on the Gospel narrative of Jesus teaching in the temple as a child. The pupils were asked to role play part of the story and form their own questions that characters in the story might ask. All pupils were able to assess this task, the level of cooperation between pupils was excellent and the response from some pupils very sophisticated. Where expectations were lower, pupils tended to rely on greater teacher input and less creative tasks. All bar one classroom is now equipped with interactive whiteboards and ICT is now being used to enhance the lessons. Although books are marked comments are not diagnostic and pupils are not certain how to improve their work. Teaching assistants make a valuable and effective contribution to the lessons. The issue of differentiation has not yet been sufficiently addressed. All lessons observed attempted to link faith to life.

Grade 3

Quality of the Curriculum

The curriculum in RE is based on the 'Here I Am' syllabus. Teachers have begun parallel planning which is improving the progression of the work but this needs to be extended to include looking at the development of a theme across all key stages to ensure effective progression. The curriculum is being used to develop the pupils' understanding of other faiths and cultures. Displays in the classroom enhance the delivery of the curriculum though the quality of displays does vary. Some whole school assemblies are also used to deliver part of the curriculum and to focus pupil's attention on learning from the subject as well as learning about. Bishop's conference requirements are fulfilled. At present the school has no relationship and sex education syllabus in place but has plans to adopt one in the immediate future.

Grade 3

Leadership and management of Religious Education

The RE Coordinator is relatively new in post and due to illness has not yet had sufficient opportunity to make an impact on the subject. They have received inset on the role of a coordinator. Assessment for learning is in its early stages but as yet does not fully impact on standards; the use of success criteria in RE for example is not consistent throughout the school. The department has begun the process of monitoring and evaluating through book trawls and lesson observation. It is not yet the case that data collected informs future planning. Issues have been correctly identified but plans proposed as a result of this have not yet impacted on standards in RE. More resources are needed to support the delivery of the curriculum and those staff that are not

Catholic would benefit from access to more background knowledge. There is a strong focus on disseminating good practice within the department and staff welcome the opportunity to plan together. Future priorities for the subject are well thought out and should lead to improvements in standards and achievements.

Grade 3