



Diocese of Arundel and Brighton

INSPECTION REPORT

St Charles Borromeo Catholic Primary School

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DfES Number: 936 3918

Headteacher: Mr Stephen Holt
Chair of Governors: Mrs R. Kornberg

Canonical Inspection under Canon 806 on behalf of the Bishop of Arundel & Brighton
and inspection of Denominational Education under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

Date of inspection: 12 March 2014
Date of previous inspection: 9 June 2009

Lead Inspector: Mr Stephen Beck
Associate Inspector: Mrs Gillian Howell

Description of School

St Charles Borromeo is a one form entry voluntary aided school with a fifty two place nursery. It is maintained by Surrey Local Authority and is part of the Deanery of Weybridge in the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton. The school serves the parish of Christ the Prince of Peace, Weybridge. The school lives out its mission statement 'to grow, learn, work and follow' within a strong community built on extensive home, school, parish partnerships and benefits from a direct link between the school and church buildings. The school takes pupils from 3 to 11 years. There are currently 261 pupils including nursery on roll, 96% of who are baptised Catholics. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage, but the school has a diverse range of nationalities also represented. The proportion of pupils who have English as an additional language is below average. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below average. Attainment on entry to the school is slightly above average. The number of pupils with special educational needs at 10% is below average. The majority of teachers are of the Catholic faith.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of this Catholic school

St Charles Borromeo was graded as outstanding at the time of its last inspection and continues to be so. Its success lies in the view that it cannot rest on its laurels and complacency is not an option. It is a highly effective, distinctly Catholic school that places equal value on academic achievement and the pupils' personal faith development. It strongly recognises the individuality of 'faith journey' in a caring, nurturing Catholic community that embraces pupils of all abilities and background. Prayer and worship are a vital part of the life of the school and are of considerable quality. The school states that the words of its mission statement, 'Learn, Grow, Work and Follow' are central to all the school does and this is certainly lived out in the daily life of the school and continues to drive the work of the school. As soon as you enter the school the strong Catholic ethos is clearly evident and the school is welcoming from the point of first contact. It has a coherent sense of mission and purpose. The drive to develop the whole child and to nurture individual worth is embedded in school culture. Pupils are encouraged to strive for excellence in all areas of their academic and personal development. They, in response, learn to respect all members of the community as equally valuable. Very strong home, school, parish partnerships are a strength of the school and the school strives to further nourish this by continuing to build and improve on the effectiveness of these links.

The key to the school's ongoing success is the strength of leadership. The headteacher gives outstanding direction to staff and pupils as he nurtures and empowers them to give of their very best. The school's high quality leadership team, coupled with outstanding subject leadership by the dedicated religious education coordinator, ensures dissemination of the school's clear vision, thereby creating a common sense of purpose among the community as a whole. They provide excellent role models and are given, along with all staff, a wide range of development opportunities to which the school gives a high priority.

Governors are passionate about the ongoing development of the Catholic ethos of the school providing both support and challenge when discussing priorities for improvement. They know their school well. They confidently question and call the school to account to ensure that the school's Catholic identity is maintained and developed. They undertake a range of training courses to equip them to carry out their role. All leaders work together to secure outstanding provision for the care, guidance and support of pupils. Relationships are excellent and pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Numerous opportunities for personal and collective worship result in the pupils' spiritual and moral development being outstanding. Pupils make good progress because of a well-planned curriculum that develops in pupils a strong understanding of their Catholic identity, enriched through a creative curriculum and strong partnerships with all involved in the school. It meets the pupils' differing needs while consistently excellent teaching also challenges their thinking. This is underpinned by effective systems for assessing pupils' attainment. It is commendable to see the whole school community working together to develop and maximise opportunities for the benefit of all pupils and the school community as a whole.

It is noteworthy that with 64% questionnaire returns, 100% were positive. As a parent responded in their questionnaire, *'This is an excellent, caring and nurturing school that cares deeply for each and every child. It encourages children on their spiritual journey without forcing the belief on a child, which is the way it should be.'*

Grade 1

Improvement since the last inspection

The school was advised at the time of the last inspection to, *'continue to build on its excellent practice and address the areas for development already identified in the school improvement plan.'* It has taken this on wholeheartedly and maintained ongoing accurate self-evaluation, which is appropriately addressed within the school improvement plan. It is to the school's credit that it continues to have no significant areas for improvement. It has a strong capacity to maintain, improve and develop, largely as a result of comprehensive and accurate self-evaluation that the inspectors have been able to validate. There is a shared vision with regard to the next steps. This is supported by good evidence of effective monitoring of teaching, learning and provision for prayer and collective worship. There is a strong sense of purpose, drive, and an ability to move the school on in a culture of continuous lifelong learning for all.

Grade 1

What the school should do to improve further

- Continue to use its rigorous self-evaluation procedures to secure yet further improvement as it embeds the new scheme of work 'Come and See'.
- The religious education coordinator with the senior management team should develop an even more cohesive approach to the assessment of 'Come and See' through linked target setting and consistent good quality interactive marking in line with the Curriculum Directory.

The Catholic Life of the School

Leadership and Management

St Charles Borromeo is an exceptionally well led school, reflecting the cohesiveness and commonality of purpose between leaders, governors and managers. They all have an appropriate strategic place in the school's management structure in which they work very effectively, with distributive leadership proving to be a key element to its success. Leadership is deeply rooted in a personal commitment to Christ and his Church. Promoting the Catholic life of the school is given the highest priority by leaders and governors, who have embedded the concept of their school's mission, enabling all members of the community to grow in faith. Religious education is rightly placed and seen to be placed, at the core of the curriculum. Catholic life at the school is exceptionally well promoted, monitored and evaluated. The provision for the Catholic life of the school and in the way it is planned and implemented secures ongoing improvement to outcomes for pupils. The headteacher provides outstanding focused leadership and lives out his vision successfully, creating a caring and hardworking community. There is a culture of high expectation that sees pupils develop considerable self-esteem and confidence. They take on a range of responsibilities with dedication and determination to do their very best at all times. Pupils are self-disciplined and positive about their education and school, in which they are justly proud. Staff provide excellent role models and demonstrate outstanding levels of care and empathy to pupils.

The school's self-evaluation is accurate and well managed. It provides strong evidence of the school's monitoring and self-challenge and demonstrates a clear understanding of its strengths and areas for development. Governors know their school well and fulfil their responsibilities. They have effectively helped to shape the direction of the school and continue to do so. They take pride in the school's very close and well established links with the parish community and move the school forward encouraging a 'genuine faith journey'.

The parish priest is a central and supportive part of the school family. He visits regularly to celebrate Mass and other liturgies over the course of the school year. There are positive relationships at every level within the school. The school benefits greatly from the work of an excellent, parish based pastoral assistant, who as part of the parish team has established an outstanding relationship with the school, further strengthening home, school, parish links. Parents are consulted regularly and involved in a variety of ways in the life of the school e.g. a regular newsletter which covers governor news, parish news and PTA news, with the curriculum being supported through a termly religious education newsletter.

Grade 1

The Prayer Life of the School

Pupils' responses to and participation in collective worship are outstanding. There is a variety of prayer opportunities provided, thus ensuring that prayer is central to the life of the school. From a young age pupils are able to lead and respond to prayer in different ways. They are reflective and focused during prayer and collective worship. Pupils enjoy singing and are enthusiastic. They speak highly of the different ways they pray in school and through participation in prayer, dance and song they demonstrate their understanding of the Gospel message. The pupils have a good understanding of religious seasons and festivals and of the Church's liturgical year and are able to apply their knowledge and understanding to class discussions and religious education lessons.

The quality of collective worship is a priority for the school. It is effectively monitored and evaluated and a suitable policy is in place that ensures the spiritual needs of all pupils are met. Prayer is at the heart of the school community and is inclusive and reflective. It is evident that from the beginning of their school life pupils are encouraged to have a special relationship with God through prayer. Staff show skill in planning a range of opportunities to ensure that pupils are able to participate in prayer in different ways. A variety of good liturgical and prayer opportunities enable parents and the parish communities to join the pupils in worship and prayer. An excellently constructed Key Stage 2 assembly provided a range of opportunities for pupil participation, made good use of scripture, allowed for invitations to spontaneous prayer and concluded with thoughts to be reflected on during the day. Pupils spoke with clarity, understanding and confidence.

The school is very fortunate to be so well supported by their parish priest who gives a significant amount of time in supporting religious education and the wider life of the school. Collective worship has a significant impact on the spiritual and moral development of pupils.

All staff follow the excellent example of the school's leadership team in modelling best practice when leading collective worship ensuring that this has a good impact on all pupils. They expose pupils to all aspects of the liturgical year and ensure that there are many opportunities for them to share in these. As a consequence pupils respond well to all that is provided for them.

Grade 1

How effectively does the school promote community cohesion?

Pupils, parents and governors all described their school as a very happy and safe place to be. The school lives by the phrase from its mission statement 'Grow, Learn, Work, Follow', which emphasises the need to 'work together to make the world a better place'. Through work on 'Values Education' links have been forged with other local schools of different faiths. In addition the school has worked within the local community through work with the elderly, local and national charities. This has been supported through themed weeks and workshops on topics such as 'Canine Partners' and 'Just Different'.

The teaching of other faiths is exceptionally well delivered and is related to life through a range of visits to other places of worship, synagogues, gurdwara, mandirs and mosques about which pupils talked effusively. Guest speakers are also utilised to share their religion in an age appropriate way. Parents expressed significant satisfaction for this aspect of the programme. Ethnic diversity within the school is also celebrated via themed weeks. St Charles Borromeo School is an inclusive community that continues to welcome its pupils and their families, valuing them equally. It is actively promoting community cohesion through its PHSCE policy which supports pupils to grow in security and confidence to become healthy, independent and responsible members of society giving respect to themselves and others. Pupils have an awareness of their own identity, differences and the importance of valuing the gifts and talents of each other.

Pupils enjoy taking responsibility. They are given opportunities to do so through membership of the school council, peer mentoring and buddying. School council members felt they were able to influence decision making and gave the example of wishing to develop an area of waste ground next to their trim trail into a prayer garden. The school could consider developing the school council further to make it more operationally independent.

As a community St Charles Borromeo School takes its responsibility to others less fortunate than itself very seriously. The school contributes to a broad range of charities both home and abroad including, Shooting Star Chase Hospice, the SVP through Harvest Festival collections, CAFOD, Mission Together and parish charities.

Grade 1

Religious Education

Achievement and Standards in Religious Education

Catholicity is the heart of St Charles Borromeo School. As a result of the Catholic ethos and the caring atmosphere which leads to high emotional intelligence within the classrooms, pupils are empowered to discuss their own beliefs and traditions of the Church. This is further supported in class work. Pupils at St Charles Borromeo School achieve high standards at the end of Key Stage 2 that generally exceed expectations. Pupils are motivated and enthusiastic about their learning in religious education and this is evidenced in enthusiastic responses and high standards.

Everyone at St Charles Borromeo School is valued as an individual. The school provides an innovative curriculum that supports and promotes pupils' learning, is inclusive and capable of responding to the needs of all pupils. They are encouraged to maximise their learning opportunities within a curriculum that relates to their own life experiences. Pupils' workbooks are clearly special to them. The curriculum is greatly enriched by a variety of special events, visitors and visits. There is a culture where it is acceptable to be wrong and to make mistakes as part of the learning process. This has led to good attitudes to learning where all views are respected. Enrichment activities, religious education focussed visits and visitors to the school with subject specific objectives boost the interest of all. Cross curricular links are a strength and contribute significantly to the pupils' high achievement and standards. The school's provision for EPR is embedded and able to support individual needs. Opportunities for pupils to help specific projects (local and international) provide a rich source of motivation. Spiritual and moral development is integrated into all aspects of school life and impacts on all pupils' development. The curriculum is driven by an excellent subject coordinator who is enthusiastic about all aspects of her role. She supports staff well. Her documentation is exceptionally well ordered and presented.

Teaching and learning is consistently of very high quality. Expectations in religious education are as equally challenging as those in other subjects. The pupils are highly motivated, engaged in, and enthusiastic about their learning. Behaviour is exemplary. Progress is made across all key stages. It is notable that there are no significant variations between targeted groups and that progress by less able pupils can match their peers. This reflects the high quality input given by learning support assistants reflecting the clarity of their role, how well it is planned for and how competently it is delivered. Levelled assessments for the scheme are carried out and this enables the staff to track progress and ensure that work is appropriately matched to individual pupils' abilities. Pupils are thereby able to apply their learning to their own lives and wider issues. Pupils have a very positive attitude to religious education, being focussed on their learning and expressing positivity and enjoyment towards religious education lessons. They have a good understanding and are able to articulate their understanding of Gospel values and how they impact on their behaviour and that of others.

Grade 1

Teaching and learning in Religious Education

Pupils are confident within lessons due to the supportive and affirming approaches that are consistently applied by teachers across the school. This is achieved through the establishment of mutual respect and clear boundaries, which are a living out of the school's mission statement. There is a strong work ethic in the school and pupils enjoy and take ownership of their learning. Planning is clear and covers all key areas with differentiation shown on planning. Good use is made of Makaton in the early years with signing being appropriately used in assemblies and hymn practice to support inclusion.

The majority of teaching seen was outstanding. Good lessons had a number of outstanding elements. These were supported by evidence in pupils' books over time. The teaching team has great strength and subject expertise. The school places a high value on religious education in-service training, which has contributed to the high standards of religious education teaching and the range of resources available in the school. In the very best lessons teachers use the 'Come and See' religious education scheme imaginatively, supplementing it with the use of a range of teaching methods and extension resources. Teaching is marked by very strong classroom management and teachers high expectations of pupils, to which they rise. The regular use by teachers of drama, various forms of writing, ICT and class discussion, reflect a high level of cross curricular links. Lessons are planned to a high level with clarity in regard to differentiation, which is well balanced between task and outcome. Extensive use of scripture supports very engaging teaching.

A Year 6 lesson used the raising of Lazarus to develop in pupils an understanding of Christian belief on death and new life. The teacher's excellent question and answer skills and use of talk partners supported extensive learning throughout the lesson. Good use was made of cross curricular links with ICT and art through the use of a painting by Tontorello and a video clip. The lesson was challenging and developed high levels of religious vocabulary in pupils. A Year 5 lesson made good use of role play and hot seating. The lesson was enhanced by the teacher's participation in the role play and her clear empathy with pupils. A Year 4 lesson built successfully on previous learning about Ash Wednesday and Lent. Religious vocabulary was developed well, with the notion of almsgiving being emphasised through pupils donating a coin to a charity which was incorporated into a display of a cross which held the coins. Pupils also brought a toy to give up for Lent which was placed in a box to be returned at Easter. The teacher shared her own Lenten promise to support the pupils' learning and brought humour into the lesson engaging the pupils further. One group of pupils listened to an excerpt from the 'Thought of the Day' radio programme and were given the challenge to produce their own broadcast to be shared in a future school assembly. The lesson provided significant challenge for all pupils. A Year 3 plenary successfully drew the learning together by relating 'How Jesus gave to others' and how this could be mirrored in pupils' daily lives which they were challenged to do over the lunchtime. Year 2 pupils discussed their religious education books with enthusiasm and clearly enjoyed these lessons. They were able to select past work and discuss it in depth. Year 1 pupils are particularly confident in talking about their religious education lessons. They articulated the benefits of their classroom focal point and valued their religious education corner demonstrating a joy, pride and respect in this area. Their learning was securely grounded as witnessed in their ability to talk with knowledge and understanding. Reception pupils are challenged through very strong cross curricular work that saw them composing Lenten promises for display. The class religious education board was beautifully presented containing the pupils own thoughtful reflections. It is commendable the teaching in Nursery is equally strong at an age appropriate level giving pupils an excellent start to their religious education.

As a parent wrote, *"The school provides a nurturing environment that supports children of all abilities. The teachers led by the Headteacher should be commended on their commitment and quality of teaching,"*

Grade 1

Quality of the Curriculum

The national religious education guidance confirms that 10% of curriculum time should be allocated to religious education. The St Charles Borromeo School's curriculum more than meets this requirement. The school has adopted the 'Come and See' scheme of work which is the updated version of the diocesan recommended scheme 'Here I Am'. Plans are appropriately in hand to bring assessment in line with the new scheme of work, to embed target setting and secure consistent interactive marking. The school has managed this transition seamlessly and it is quickly becoming embedded. The curriculum is well supported through strong cross curricular links and with a staff experienced in the teaching of religious education. The support and input given by the local priest is appreciated and valued by all. The subject is well resourced with good budgetary provision that provides for a range of up to date materials.

Teaching assistants were well deployed in all lessons seen and their role clearly defined. Their input is sensitively given and their expertise and active participation in lessons greatly supports and enhances learning and progress. The school has successfully developed creative approaches within lessons. The willingness of staff to use a range of approaches and resources to generate enthusiasm and participation to a high level greatly strengthens the religious education curriculum. Parents are kept appropriately informed in regard to religious education through a regular religious education newsletter.

It would be an appropriate time following the introduction of the new religious education scheme to review the school's Education for Personal Relationships to embed a whole school programme in line with diocesan policy.

Grade 1

Leadership and management of Religious Education

The governors, headteacher and co-ordinator provide a clear direction for religious education and ensure that it has a high profile across the school. The co-ordinator is an outstanding leader. She is knowledgeable, committed and an excellent role model for staff. She has a very clearly defined monitoring programme which covers all aspects of the subject.

As a result she has an accurate picture of standards, attainment and the quality of teaching and learning. Any issues arising from monitoring activities are fed into her termly targets which also incorporate new developments and initiatives, both local and diocesan.

The link governor for religious education works closely with the co-ordinator and is proactive and enthusiastically supportive of the school and co-ordinator. She undertakes both formal and informal monitoring as well as meeting regularly with the co-ordinator. She, therefore, has a very good understanding of attainment and areas of strength and development, which she regularly feeds back to the governing body, who in turn visit the school for learning walks and to meet pupils. Staff receive very good support from the co-ordinator both formally and informally.

This, together with a range of in-service training, has resulted in staff who are well prepared to deliver the 'Come and See' programme. All teaching staff are committed to delivering good quality religious education which has resulted in the high levels of attainment across the school. All staff contribute to the strong Catholic ethos of the school and help to create and maintain a lovely environment both in school and in the grounds. Great care is taken to celebrate pupils' progress and efforts through attractive displays of photographs and pupils' work throughout the school.

St Charles Borromeo School seeks quality in all it does. This is reflected in the pride shown in the production of an annual leaver's book for pupils which celebrates their time at the school. High quality pastoral and emotional support is provided to pupils through the school's adoption and training of staff to deliver the 'Rainbow' programme.

The governors approve funding to enable all Year 6 pupils to attend the outdoor play 'The Life of Christ'. The religious education coordinator meets regularly with the parish priest whose involvement in the life of the school is greatly welcomed. He provides a highly valued chaplaincy role to the whole school community and willingly offers curriculum support to staff as required. This support greatly enhances the leadership and management of religious education at St Charles Borromeo School.

Grade 1