



# DIOCESE OF **Arundel and Brighton**

## DENOMINATIONAL (S48) INSPECTION REPORT

### St Francis Catholic Primary School

Address: Whyteleafe Road Caterham Surrey CR3 5ED

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School Unique Reference Number: 125203

<b>Headteacher:</b>	Ms Maria Wheeler
<b>Chair of Governors:</b>	Ms Angela Brouner
<b>Lead Inspector:</b>	Mr Stephen Beck
<b>Associate Inspector:</b>	Ms Fiona McGonigle
<b>Inspection date:</b>	Tuesday 21 <sup>st</sup> March 2017

<b>Overall Effectiveness</b>	Previous Inspection: 1
	This inspection: <b>1</b>
<b>Catholic Life:</b>	1
<b>Collective Worship:</b>	1
<b>Religious Education:</b>	1

### SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

St Francis is an outstanding Catholic school because:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ The school is a warm and welcoming inclusive community where the mission statement and the school's Catholic ethos pervade all aspects of school life.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ There is a range of opportunities provided to inspire and engage pupils.</li><li>▪ Pupils enjoy opportunities for worship and demonstrate outstanding behaviour and reverence.</li></ul> |
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The headteacher provides inspirational collegiate leadership. She is ably supported by a strong governing body and a cohesive staff team who share her vision of excellence in Catholic education.</li> <li>▪ School self-evaluation is accurate and reflective and is strongly evidence based. It is focused on continuing improvement and raising standards across the school. School development planning is well structured and comprehensive.</li> <li>▪ The school community embraces and nurtures all within it. Excellent relationships between staff, parents and pupils are a feature of the school.</li> <li>▪ Pupils are polite and courteous. Their behaviour is exemplary. They are proud of their school and enjoy being part of their school community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The subject leader is outstanding in guiding religious education. Outstanding documentation guides and directs all staff in the delivery of the subject.</li> <li>▪ Staff and pupils plan and lead prayer opportunities with reverence and a palpable sense of joy, especially when joining in communal singing.</li> <li>▪ Prayer, worship and the liturgical life of the school respects difference, values diversity and ensures equal opportunities for all.</li> <li>▪ Pupils readily share their positive memories and experiences of worship, showing enthusiasm, pride and depth of thought in their involvement.</li> <li>▪ Every pupil is supported to be ‘the best that they can be’ with a clear focus on spirituality in action.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The mission statement is at the heart of the work of the school and is clearly put into action each day by both staff and pupils, providing the whole community with opportunities to develop and grow in faith together.</li> <li>▪ All members of the school community feel a deep sense of belonging and enthusiastically take part in the many opportunities open to them to live out their faith, in both the school and parish community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Standards in religious education are high. All groups of pupils make good progress and achieve well.</li> <li>▪ Pupils’ work is presented in ways that mark it as special, indicating pupils’ pride in their work.</li> <li>▪ Pupils enjoy religious education and appreciate its importance to their own lives.</li> <li>▪ The Chair of Governors is excellent in challenging the school in a supportive manner that places pupils at the centre of all decision making.</li> </ul>

## FULL REPORT

### INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Francis’ Catholic Primary School is an oversubscribed two-form entry voluntary aided primary school in the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton. It is situated in Caterham within the Redhill Deanery, and is maintained by Surrey Local Authority. The principal parishes the school serves are the Sacred Heart parish of Caterham, Whyteleafe and Godstone and the joint parish of All Saints, Oxted and St Ambrose, Warlingham. The average weekly proportion of curriculum time given to religious education is at least 10% in all Key Stages.

The school takes pupils from 4 to 11 years. The current enrolment is 391, 81.4% (319) of whom are baptised Catholics. The majority of pupils are from a white British heritage,

but a significant proportion of them are from other ethnic minority groups of which the proportion who speak English as an additional language is well below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The number of children eligible for free school meals is also well below average. There are onsite Breakfast and After School Clubs which serve the pupils well, being an integral part of the school.

## WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER

Since the last inspection the school has successfully progressed the identified points for action. It has a clear capacity to maintain and build on its strengths. It should now:

- Further improve levels of expectations for progress across the school, to secure even better outcomes, in particular for more able pupils, through more opportunities for older pupils to engage in higher level skills and independent research.
- Complete the planned renovation of the school’s prayer garden to further enhance the prayer life of the school.
- Consider reviewing the school’s ‘Education for Personal Relationships’ (EPR) policy in consultation with parents, staff and governors with a view to securing a whole school, cross curricular approach, with reference to diocesan guidance for a curriculum map for EPR.

## CATHOLIC LIFE

### THE QUALITY OF THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

- The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.
- The quality of provision of the Catholic Life of the school.
- How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school.

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### The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school

- Pupils and staff have a palpable sense of belonging to this vibrant Catholic school community. They flourish in an atmosphere where everyone is valued and is expected to achieve.
- All stakeholders have been involved in the shaping of the school’s mission statement which is lived out each day in school.
- Pupils are very proud of their school and its religious identity and they eagerly take part in school, community, parish and diocesan celebrations and activities. They are able to contribute to the school’s evaluation of its Catholic life through the school council.

- It is creditable how the school having been rated as outstanding at the time of its last Section 48 inspection has not 'rested on its laurels'. This forward looking community acknowledges in its excellent self-evaluation that '...there are always improvements to be made...' and there is an evident drive to strive to improve even further.
- Pupils talk with pride about the activities they have been involved in through which they serve others. This is reflected in the school's engagement with the wider world in living out the Gospel message, for example through an enduring commitment to charitable work. During Lent, the whole school took part in the CAFOD 'Splash!' campaign. During Eastertide, it supported the Missio Appeal and during Advent CAFOD's "World Gifts", raising £1008.
- The behaviour of pupils is exemplary at all times. Pupils are alert to the needs of others, they are ready to support each other and celebrate each other's qualities and successes. Good works are publicly recognised through the achievement assembly.

### **The quality of provision of the Catholic Life of the school**

- The school's mission statement, *'In God's love and inspired by our faith, we respect, reflect and achieve together'* is lived out daily in the school and is well known and understood by pupils as demonstrated in meetings with them.
- The school's St Francis Song, is sung several times throughout the year and reminds all of how to live out its stated mission.
- The school is a supportive and joyful community where the quality of relationships is outstanding. The school's Catholic character is evident in the learning environment, where it is enhanced to an outstanding degree by being regularly updated by the school's Prayer Monitors.
- Pastoral care of pupils is of a very high standard; there is a commitment to the most vulnerable in both policy and practice. The school is equally attentive to the pastoral needs of the staff, who benefit greatly from high quality relationships and the support of other colleagues.
- The parish priests, Father Sean (Caterham) and Father Simon (Oxted and Warlingham) give generously of their time to the school. They play a highly valued and increasing role in the life of the school. They visit classes weekly throughout the year and celebrate Liturgies and Masses at St Francis. They also visit for Reconciliation during Advent and Lent. Father Sean introduced the school community to the Icon of Mercy and blessed the new Bibles donated to the school by the parishioners of Sacred Heart. Each Bible contains a dedication to members of the community. Fr Simon also leads the school's Meditation Group on Fridays. The input given by the priests provides not only a chaplaincy element but also greatly enhances the school's strong religious dimension.
- Parents were complimentary regarding the termly religious education newsletter containing a 'Value of the Month' which is sent home to all families and is shared via the school's web-site.
- It would be an opportune time for the school to undertake a review of its EPR policy in consultation with staff, parents and governors.

## How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school

- Leaders, governors and managers are outstanding in promoting, monitoring and evaluating the provision for the Catholic life of the school and in the way they plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils.
- Leaders, governors and managers are outstanding in the way they use monitoring data to evaluate the school's performance and to celebrate and plan future improvements. Their involvement also includes regular programmed and informal visits to the school.
- Excellent opportunities are provided for the staff and pupils to play an active part in the Catholic life and mission of the school. They live out the values of the Gospel in the everyday life of the school, especially in the way they treat each other. They make full use of the 'Come and See' religious education programme. All leaders are involved in producing the self-evaluation document and the school development plan and are knowledgeable of the aims.
- The self-evaluation document provides evidence of the school's monitoring, self-challenge and development. It is an excellent working document that with the religious education action plan clearly identifies the school's strengths and areas for development, which inspectors were able to validate at this inspection.
- A parent summed up by saying, *'I have observed the school doing wonderful things to ensure that it is a school where there is a real feeling of Catholic life.'*
- The school ensures that all staff avail themselves of very good induction and in-service training to enable them to further understand the Church's mission in education and play their unique part in it.
- The quality of collective worship is a priority for the school. It is effectively monitored and evaluated by leaders, governors and managers. An up to date and very good policy is in place. Prayer, worship and the liturgical life of the school respects difference, values diversity and ensures equal opportunities for all.
- As the school has developed over time opportunities now exist to consider growing a bespoke religious education team for the school to support future progress and succession.
- There are very positive relationships at every level and these are a strength within the school. Parents are consulted regularly and involved in a variety of ways in the life of the school, notably by the high levels of attendance at assemblies and Masses.
- Governors are outstanding in fulfilling their responsibilities. They have effectively helped to shape the direction of the school drawing on their own strengths and areas of expertise.
- *Lectio Divina* meetings are held for pupils, staff, governors and parents regularly; a reflective Meditation session for the older pupils is held every Friday. As a parent commented, *'The recent introduction of Lectio Divina for parents is an example of the many ways that parents are really engaged in the Catholic life of the school.'*

## COLLECTIVE WORSHIP / PRAYER AND PRAYER LIFE

- How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship and Prayer Life
- The quality of provision for Collective Worship and Prayer Life
- How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship and Prayer Life

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### How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship and Prayer Life

- The Catholic character of the school shines through in times of worship and prayer. Collective worship follows the liturgical year; liturgies and prayer life provide pupils with opportunities to develop spiritually and enhance their beliefs and values. Pupils readily share their positive memories and experiences of worship, showing enthusiasm, pride and depth of thought in their involvement.
- The development of pupils' faith is rightly identified by the school as one of its main strengths. By further developing pupil-led liturgy, this already prayerful school community has blossomed further so that every pupil is supported to be 'the best that they can be' with a clear focus on spirituality in action.
- Pupils are engaged during collective worship; they act with reverence and interest, responding prayerfully and in song. Pupils are keen to offer contributions, including spontaneous prayer linked to events in their own lives.
- Pupils play an increasing part in the leadership of worship: they use dance, song and drama to enhance their presentations to others, creating stimulating and thoughtful moments during whole school gatherings. Pupils comment that their involvement in leading worship '*helps with our confidence*' as well as having a strong impact on their spiritual development.
- Older pupils help their younger counterparts in preparing and leading class-based worship. The next step would be to extend the liturgical opportunities so that they are more readily available to all and for younger pupils to take the lead more frequently in planning and leading their own liturgies.
- Pupils show respect for those of other faiths: as one pupil said, '*They want world peace like we do.*' This prayer-based school community has a visibly inclusive policy, embracing the involvement of all in collective worship.
- Parishioners of the Sacred Heart donated Bibles to the school in May last year. In each one there is an intention written by the parishioner: these are honoured respectfully by the teachers and pupils when the Bibles are used.
- Other Christian groups are invited to lead assemblies with a view to enhancing the spiritual life of the school and the children. This provides very positive learning experiences and helps secure strong tolerance and understanding of the beliefs of others.

## **The quality of provision for Collective Worship and Prayer Life**

- The quality of collective worship and prayer life provided by the school is outstanding, providing a rich and varied liturgical life through pupils and staff being given many opportunities to pray individually and in groups of varying sizes.
- Collective worship and prayer are central to the life of the school and at the heart of every event and celebration. Praying together is a natural part of the school day for all staff and pupils.
- Collective worship is planned for and resourced very effectively. As a result, collective worship is of a high quality and pupils are motivated to add resources and to continually improve the quality of provision.
- As part of the school's ongoing review of provision it plans to renovate the school's prayer garden which will serve to further enhance the prayer life of the school.
- Pupils enjoy prayer both in the classroom and in the surrounding area. The themes chosen for collective worship reflect a deep understanding of the liturgical year.
- Prayer opportunities are stimulating, attracting adult participation. Parents and carers expressed a joy in the school's collective worship which has them 'hooked', and wanting to come back for more.
- Teachers are skilled at enabling pupils to lead collective worship. They have a thorough understanding of the forms prayer can take and are increasingly creative in how they pray with pupils.
- During the year, other faiths are experienced by the whole school community. Pupils experience religions outside of the Catholic faith. Trips to the Croydon Synagogue have been very successful, with parents writing in to thank the school for a wonderful learning opportunity. A trip to the Croydon Mosque is planned for the Summer.

## **How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship and Prayer Life**

- Leaders and managers have a clear vision for worship and prayer in school. They monitor and evaluate the provision through talking to pupils and parents, governor visits and the use of parental questionnaires. As a result ongoing development is clearly evident.
- Collective Worship is delivered well by school staff and as a result it has meaning and relevance to pupils' lives. Pupils clearly learn from the positive examples they see and as a result model this best practice in their own planning and delivery of worship.
- Professional development in leading and supporting pupils in the planning of prayer and liturgy has been given high priority and as a result the confidence and reflectiveness of staff is outstanding.
- Excellent resources are available for collective worship and prayer. Staff have been given a collective worship box for each classroom. Within this box, there is a candle, cloths of various colours for use throughout the liturgical year, objects to be used as a stimulus for reflection and incense. All classes also have enough Bibles so that pupils are able to use these easily during collective worship and religious education lessons. Plans indicate that resources will continue to be a high priority within the school in support of the school's strong programme of collective worship and prayer.

- The Chair of Governors and the religious education Link Governor have been to training courses at DABCEC marking the school's strong commitment to ongoing training and formation.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

### THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.
- The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education.
- How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.

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### How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education

- Pupils' keenness and commitment to their learning in religious education is very evident in the classroom and in their workbooks.
- They tackle a variety of tasks with enthusiasm, and are very willing to contribute to class discussions, collaborative activities, such as taking on a role-play or a side of an argument in a debate and in undertaking sustained individual tasks.
- Pupils' attainment is good, with the standards mostly above average in the latter years of Key Stage 2. This represents good progress by the majority and outstanding progress from some, given the range of starting points on entry to the school and the significant percentage who enter school with no faith background.
- An increased focus by teachers on the importance of scripture within religious learning has contributed significantly to a rise in attainment. The school's introduction of a 'best practice' model for the teaching of religious education has impacted positively on pupils' enjoyment of their learning, particularly in regard to giving them more regular opportunities to reflect at the start of lessons.
- It is noteworthy how the school has developed and exploited cross curricular links to maximise religious education learning opportunities.
- The development of religious literacy is given a high priority. Key vocabulary is shared and used explicitly with pupils in lessons, as well as being evident in religious education displays. A *Spelling Bee* using religious vocabulary took place on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2017 and pupils would further benefit from this being regularly revisited.
- With virtually 100% positive responses in the high number of questionnaire returns it is notable that among the comments included a parent responded saying, '*St Francis School not only teaches my child about the foundations of their Catholic faith (and that of other religions too), but more importantly helps them to live out the faith. It feels like there is a real partnership between school, parish and home that guides my child on their faith journey*'.

## The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education

- No teaching observed was less than good with a number having outstanding features, particularly in the areas of behaviour for learning and vocabulary development.
- A range of teaching styles, good questioning skills, clear explanations and well-paced lessons ensure that pupils are consistently interested in their learning and most make good progress.
- Teachers have strong subject knowledge which inspires and promotes pupil confidence. This secure teaching now lends itself to more opportunities being developed for independent learning and choice.
- Support staff are very effectively deployed and less able pupils are supported well in their learning. The curriculum is enriched by a programme of visits and creative activities which engage and motivate pupils and facilitate high levels of enjoyment.
- Effective assessment systems are in place and monitoring is securing improvement. Assessments are regular and systematic and both internal and external moderation shows levelling is accurate.
- Pupil progress is tracked and is being used to produce targets for pupil attainment. Teachers mark work regularly using religious education level descriptors and their positive comments support learning.
- The school recognises that pupils' skills in self-assessment could be developed further.
- The opportunities provided to pupils to be religiously active is commendable. A parent reported, *'My child has enjoyed being a prayer leader and as a result of encouragement is very questioning. They say how much they love their religious education lessons and worship and often come home and talk about 'discoveries' made and how this connects with Mass. Their growth in understanding and faith is very impressive'*.
- *Another parent wrote, 'My child loves religious education and this is from the teaching at St Francis. I have only the highest praise for the school and its teaching'*.
- An excellent Key Stage 1 lesson moved pupils' learning forward through strong classroom management and a well-planned, resourced and paced lesson. Pupils were challenged through good question and answering, the use of 'hot seating' initially modelled by the teacher and then undertaken by the pupils in table groups. The teacher skilfully utilised floor and table work at intervals throughout the lesson that served to maintain pupil engagement. Good use was made of ICT resources through the projection of a challenging video clip on the Easter story. Clear explanation of the good range of tasks that followed secured the achievement of learning outcomes.
- A lower Key Stage 2 lesson saw pupils fully engage with the reading of scripture. Good use was made of talk partners that enabled pupils to reflect thoughtfully on the empty tomb following the resurrection of Jesus. A strong element of this lesson was the successful building on previous learning. Some good cross curricular links were facilitated with language development where difficult vocabulary was experienced. More opportunities could be given to explore definitions at greater length, with care being taken to balance carpet time and teacher input with tasks.
- An Early Years lesson was marked by very good layered learning, along with good reinforcement that both supported and moved pupil learning on, giving them an excellent depth of knowledge of the topic of Good Friday.

- A Key Stage 1 lesson on the Stations of the Cross and the way they are important to us generated some very good writing that focussed on pupils' understanding of feelings and related the topic clearly to aspects of their own lives, providing a strong context to their learning.
- An upper Key Stage 2 lesson developed the pupils learning through well-structured scripture tasks with links to the Beatitudes and the Eucharist.

### **How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education**

- Leaders, governors and managers are outstanding in promoting monitoring and evaluating the provision for the religious education of the school and in the way they plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils.
- Monitoring data is used effectively to evaluate the school's performance and plan for future improvements.
- There is a robust programme for the monitoring and evaluation cycle. Teaching and learning is monitored regularly and appropriate feedback and support given as necessary.
- Good practice is shared and celebrated with continuing professional development opportunities being provided for all.
- Assessment information is collated and tracked by the subject leader and shared with the leadership team, governors and parents. Formal assessment tasks are undertaken in line with Diocesan guidance.
- The subject leader is a member of the leadership team and is outstanding in guiding religious education. She shows great enthusiasm and commitment, and introduces new initiatives when appropriate. Outstanding documentation guides and directs all staff in the delivery of the subject. This is regularly updated. The headteacher is likewise securing religious education as a truly core subject at St Francis through her symbiotic approach to the leadership of religious education.
- The school benefits from an excellent designated religious education link governor who is in regular contact with the subject leader through emails and meetings. This year they have observed lessons and assemblies together.
- Documentation identifies targets, timescales and lines of accountability with governors being active participants in school self-evaluation.
- Curriculum outlines are provided for parents who are consulted on different issues depending on the topic being covered. Achievement and effort are celebrated.
- The Chair of Governors is excellent in challenging the school in a supportive manner that places pupils at the centre of all decision making.

## Summary of Inspection Judgements

How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education.

**1**

**Catholic Life**

**1**

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.

**1**

The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school

**1**

How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school.

**1**

**Collective Worship and Prayer Life**

**1**

How well pupils respond to and participate in the schools' Collective Worship and Prayer Life.

**1**

The quality of provision for Collective Worship and Prayer Life.

**1**

How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship and Prayer Life.

**1**

**Religious Education**

**1**

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.

**1**

The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education

**1**

How well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education

**1**