



DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION REPORT

incorporating Section 48 and Canonical Inspection under Canon 806 on
behalf of the Archbishop of Southwark

URN 101683

Bishop Challoner School

228 Bromley Road

Shortlands

BR2 0BS

Inspection date: 4th-5th February 2020

Chair of Governors: Mrs Patricia Colling

Headteacher: Mrs Paula Anderson

Inspectors: Mr Tom Cahill

Mrs Maureen Jackson

EDUCATION COMMISSION

St Edward's House, St Paul's Wood Hill, Orpington, Kent BR5 2SR
Tel 01689 829331

Director of Education: Dr Simon Hughes



Key for inspection grades

| | | | |
|---------|-------------|---------|----------------------|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding | Grade 3 | Requires improvement |
| Grade 2 | Good | Grade 4 | Inadequate |

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Bishop Challoner School is a co-educational independent Catholic day school situated in the London borough of Bromley and within the Archdiocese of Southwark. The school was established in 1950 by two local parish priests originally as a boys only Catholic school. It is now a mixed all through school for pupils aged 3 (nursery) to 18 and welcomes pupils of all faiths. At the time of the inspection, there were 341 pupils on roll including 17 pupils in the sixth form. 38% of all pupils are baptised Catholics and the majority of other pupils belong to other Christian denominations. The majority of Catholic pupils come from three parishes local to the school, including St Edmund's, Beckenham in which the school is located.

Pupils attending the school come from a range of socio-economic backgrounds. Approximately 35% are from White British backgrounds and the other pupils come from a wide range of other minority ethnic groups. Although pupils are required to sit an entrance examination, the prior attainment of pupils on entry to the school is around the national average. There are no pupils with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and a significant number of pupils join the school other than at Nursery, Reception or Year 7.

The school has not been subject to a Section 48 inspection prior to February 2020 as there was no requirement to do so. The school is regularly inspected by the Independent Schools' Inspectorate. Reports are published and available from the school.



SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

Bishop Challoner is an outstanding Catholic school because:

- Pastoral care at Bishop Challoner is outstanding. This has resulted in a highly inclusive and welcoming learning community where the pupils feel safe and very well cared for. Consequently, relationships between pupils and their teachers are excellent, as are the peer to peer relationships.
- The behaviour of the pupils is generally excellent reflecting the high expectations of the school. The pupils also display strong and positive attitudes to their learning allowing them to make good progress.
- The provision for Catholic life is outstanding and is supported by a highly effective chaplaincy team. The chaplain also provides inspirational support to pupils and staff, ensuring the Catholic ethos permeates all aspects of daily life.
- Highly effective leadership and governance has created a school of high expectations and constant improvement. The excellent balance of challenge and support at all levels has ensured that staff are happy and feel valued. This has resulted in high morale which is reflected in low staff turnover.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER

- Maintain the school's focus on improving the quality of teaching in Religious Education to transform more good teaching into outstanding teaching.
- Maximise the number of pupils who achieve or exceed their target grades in GCSE Religious Education and ensure all pupils are entered for this exam in Year 11.



Overall Effectiveness

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 governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school.

1

Religious Education

2

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

2

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education.

2

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.

1

Collective Worship

1

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

2

The quality of provision for Collective Worship.

1

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship.

1



CATHOLIC LIFE

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

- Pupils benefit greatly from being part of this outstanding Catholic school where the pastoral care of the pupils lies at the heart of the work of the school. As a result, pupils feel safe, secure and happy in a family environment where each person is welcomed, valued, respected and cared for. The school lives out its mission statement each day, which can be summarised as 'To Live, Love and Learn like Christ'. The mission statement is displayed around the school and in each pupil's school planner. Pupils know and understand the mission statement and really are loyal and excellent ambassadors for their school. They wholeheartedly embrace the motto of the school: '*Quantum potes, tantum aude*' or 'Dare to do your best'.
- Pupils very much value the hard work and commitment of the staff whom they say go the extra mile to keep them safe and ensure they are provided with a well-rounded education in a community where the Catholic ethos and gospel values promoted by the school permeate all aspects of school life.
- Pupils have many opportunities to strengthen their faith and develop their spirituality throughout their school career. The school offers pupils the opportunity to experience the sacrament of Reconciliation and make their First Holy Communion in Year 3. The highlight of the programme is the First Holy Communion Mass celebrated in the school chapel in June each year. A Confirmation programme is also offered by the school for senior school pupils, in conjunction with the local parish of St Edmund's.
- The school provides pupils with many opportunities to develop their leadership skills and to be of service to others in their community and beyond. This includes roles such as chaplaincy prefects, charity prefects, sixth form mentors for junior pupils, altar servers, buddies to younger pupils, monitors and Year 11 prefects.
- The school is fully committed to supporting the common good and putting into action Christ's command to 'love thy neighbour'. Pupils and staff have raised significant amounts of funding for charities such as CAFOD, Mary's Meals, Royal Marsden Cancer Centre and Duffus Foundation, the Joshua Tree, the Rainbow Trust and Genes for Jeans as well as the annual Christmas shoe box appeal. Sixth formers spend a night in the open in the school grounds to raise awareness and funds for the homeless.
- Pupils relish many opportunities to deepen their faith and their spirituality through attending retreats at Aylesford Priory, the diocesan retreat centre at Whitstable and Lourdes. A retreat to the shrine of Our Lady of Fatima is planned for 2020. During the inspection, Year 10 were on a residential retreat to Kintbury, led by the school chaplain and other school staff. The chaplain also organises a number of in-house retreats. Pupils learn about other faiths through the annual multi-faith week and festivals of other beliefs are celebrated, including Diwali and Chinese New Year. Dance, music and drama are skilfully used in these celebrations.
- The school provides many other opportunities for pupils to develop their potential and support them to become well rounded and grounded individuals. Trips within this country and abroad are offered and pupils have the chance to participate in the Duke of Edinburgh programme as well as numerous clubs. Of particular note is the Eco club where pupils work hard to encourage recycling within the school. The school has also



created a 'Forest School' for pupils in nursery and reception. This open space on site promotes outdoor independent learning as well as a love of the environment and the importance of caring for it as part of God's creation. The school provides a crèche facility as well as a breakfast club to support working families.

- Pupils are elected as form representatives to their school council and through this forum have a pupil voice. Pupils feel they are listened to by staff. A buddy bench was recently provided to encourage pupils to feel included and develop friendships, as a result of a suggestion from the school council.
- Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. They very much appreciate the caring and nurturing ethos fostered by the school. They are kept fully informed through the weekly Challoner newsletter. They also very much appreciate being regularly invited into school for Mass and assemblies as well as other school celebrations. The school hosts a regular coffee morning to encourage parents to come into school. In response to the support offered by the school, there is a flourishing PTA which raises significant funds to help make improvements at the school. As one parent said, 'This is a brilliant and nurturing school, just what we were looking for and we have not been disappointed'.

The quality of provision of the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.

- The school has a distinctly Catholic ethos that permeates every aspect of its daily life. There are many beautiful religious icons and images located around the school to reinforce its Catholic identity. The most recent addition is an impressive illuminated art installation displaying all the Catholic values the school promotes and with Faith and Spirituality at its centre.
- The school also has the beautiful 'Chapel of the Annunciation' which lies at the heart of the school both geographically and spiritually. The wonderful icons of Mary on either side of the altar help to create a deeply spiritual atmosphere for pupils and staff in a place where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved. The Stations of the Cross are also displayed in the chapel. The chapel is open at all times and is regularly used by classes as well as by individuals.
- The Catholic life of the school has been strengthened by the relatively new appointment to the school of a chaplain. The school is well supported by local parish priests who celebrate weekly Mass at the school as well Masses for special feast days and holy days of obligation. The Chaplain offers pastoral support to the pupils and their families and pupils also have access to a school counsellor employed by the school.

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

- Leaders and governors have a clear and shared vision which underpins the Catholic life of the school. They know the school very well. They have identified the many strengths and few areas that need to improve and are taking appropriate action to bring about further improvements at the school.
- The school's Catholic life committee meets termly to share views and ideas on how the Catholic life of the school can be further improved. Members of the trustees attend this meeting. The views of staff and pupils are also taken into account.



- The commitment of the trustees to promoting the Catholic life of the school is clearly evident in the appointment of a salaried chaplain and the funding of the major refurbishment of the school chapel.
- The school benefits from experienced and committed trustees who are regular visitors to the school. The chair of governors has a very long association with the school, which has encouraged continuity and stability. Governors have correctly identified the need to attract more Catholic families to the school. The school is building strong links with local parishes as well as with local Catholic primary schools.
- Although an independent school, it has been very proactive in building links with other schools in the Diocese as well as becoming involved in Diocesan life. It welcomes the support it receives from Diocesan advisers and participates in Diocesan celebrations such as the Good Samaritan Mass at St George's Cathedral and the annual Diocesan Mass at the start of each academic year.
- Effective leadership from governors and senior leaders has created a school with a strong moral purpose.
- The school has an up-to-date Relationships and Sex Education policy which is in accordance with Diocesan guidelines.



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

2

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

- Pupils enjoy their Religious Education lessons and feel they are well taught by their teachers. They enjoy learning about other faiths and the discussions which take place in their lessons and during multi-faith week.
- The behaviour of the pupils is excellent. Pupils enjoy very positive relationships with their teachers and with their peers. They have very good attitudes to learning which ensures they make good progress in their Religious Education lessons.
- The progress of pupils at key stages 1 and 2 is very good and pupils have acquired strong subject knowledge by the time they leave the school.
- The outcomes of pupils in Religious Education are good. At GCSE, the outcomes are above the national average and are higher than those achieved in other core subjects i.e. English and mathematics. However, too many pupils do not achieve their target grades, particularly the middle and lower attaining pupils. Almost all pupils are entered for GCSE Religious Education each year, although 2019 was an exception. A significant proportion of pupils in 2019 were not entered for GCSE Religious Education for a number of reasons including health issues. As all pupils were entered for English and mathematics, it is difficult to compare the 2019 GCSE Religious Education results with the other core subjects. However, that results over the last three-years confirm that Religious Education outcomes are stronger than English and mathematics. The school has indicated that 2019 was an exceptional year, which is borne out by historic data. The school is fully committed to ensuring all pupils are entered for the GCSE examination in Religious Education.
- Pupil progress is good, particularly for those pupils who have attended the school from Year 7 or who attended the junior department. Inspectors noted that a significant number of pupils join the school in Years 9 and 10, some of whom speak English as an additional language or who may not have studied Religious Education at Key Stage 3. A small number of these late entrants have attended other local schools but have transferred to the school for a number of reasons.
- Outcomes at A Level are very good but the number of pupils in the sixth form studying A Level Religious Education is small, reflecting the small number in the sixth form at the school.

The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education is good.

- Religious Education teaching throughout the school is good. Teachers have strong subject knowledge and specialist staff are very well qualified and experienced. They ensure lessons are very well prepared and challenge the pupils, although sometimes the work is not sufficiently differentiated to enable all pupils to make the progress they should.
- Although teaching seen during the inspection was consistently good, there is clearly capacity for teachers to transform good teaching to teaching which is outstanding. This will enable pupils to make even better progress and enable more pupils to reach their target grades at GCSE.



- In a Year 2 lesson seen during the inspection, pupils were exploring the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand by Jesus. Music and imagery were skilfully used to engage the pupils. The teacher also used very good questions to probe pupils' understanding and to link it with present day issues of homelessness and lack of food. Pupils discussed Mother Teresa and explored how they might spread love like her.
- Assessment systems are well-developed at key stage 3 and above. In Early Years and in the junior school, assessment is at an early stage and this is a priority for the school.
- Pupils who have special needs and/or disabilities are well supported by teachers and the school's SENCO. These pupils grow in confidence and build resilience following advice, enabling them to thrive.

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education is outstanding.

- In the junior school, the teacher with responsibility for Religious Education provides very effective leadership to classroom teachers.
- In the senior school, the subject leader provides outstanding leadership for the department. She is very experienced and hardworking and this is reflected in the very significant improvements within the department since her appointment to the school. However, she also has a major responsibility as head of key stage 4 and this creates other challenges.
- Leaders and governors have clearly indicated their commitment to Religious Education by increasing curriculum time for the subject so that it meets all the requirements of the Bishops' Conference at all key stages and the sixth form.
- The Religious Education programme in the junior school and key stage 3 broadly follows 'The Way, the Truth and the Life', national programme.
- At GCSE, the school has opted for the AQA Syllabus B scheme which includes the study of Catholic Christianity, Judaism and Ethics.
- At A level, pupils follow the Eduqas syllabus with modules in Philosophy and Ethics.
- Taking into account the courses offered above, the Religious Education curriculum offered by the school meets the needs of the pupils and is in accordance with guidance issued in the Curriculum Directory.
- The chair of governors is the Religious Education link governor and in conjunction with the headteacher, keeps the trustees fully informed of the effectiveness of provision.
- Leaders and governors have ensured that Religious Education classrooms are spacious, bright and have excellent standards of display as found around the rest of the school.
- The school is proactive in seeking the advice of Diocesan advisers and is building links with other schools.



COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

1

How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship and Prayer Life is good with many outstanding features.

- Pupils respond positively to the high-quality opportunities they are given to participate in prayer and worship. They enjoy being able to plan their own assemblies and being involved in presenting the assembly through drama, dance and music, as well as through readings from the Bible and the use of videos. The response of pupils is strongest in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the junior school.
- In an excellent assembly seen during the inspection, a reception class delivered an assembly looking at the planets of the solar system and linked it to God's creation of the world. Although only Reception age, they sang and danced with mime to engage the junior age pupils. All the pupils then sang the hymn heartily. The behaviour of the pupils was exemplary. They were always respectful and communicated a sense of thanksgiving. It is clear that the behaviour of all pupils during prayer and collective worship is always of this high standard because of the high expectations set by the staff.
- In a service of reconciliation in the school chapel during the inspection, Year 3 pupils responded impressively to the idea of sin and how it can weigh people down. Pupils were given a small pebble to represent sin and were invited to place the pebble in a dish as a sign that they wished for forgiveness and to remove the weight of sin from themselves. The service was skilfully managed by the teacher and involved pupils in prayer, reflection and praise. The behaviour of the pupils was outstanding.
- In a sixth form assembly observed during the inspection, a sixth former led the worship and reflection on the theme of forgiveness and used a recent local tragedy to engage the pupils.
- Pupils and staff also enjoy being involved in meditation and contemplation which is organised by the chaplain. Their respectful and mature behaviour ensures they fully participate and gain spiritually from the experience.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship and Prayer Life is outstanding

- Leaders and managers ensure pupils have an extensive range of opportunities to participate in prayer and worship. Prayers are said at the start of the school day, lunchtimes and at the end of the day as well as in lessons. Prayers are often written by the pupils or pupils lead the prayers. In the junior school, a class prayer book is taken home by a pupil each Friday to write a prayer which they then share with their class on the following Monday.
- All classrooms have a focal point or prayer table to help engage all pupils. The colours and icons on the prayer tables reflect the different seasons of the liturgical year.
- Mass is celebrated in the school chapel or hall on a weekly basis. Whole school Masses take place for major feast days as well as Ash Wednesday, the start of the academic year and Founders' Day. Services of reconciliation are also a regular feature of school life. Each year during the month of May, the chaplain leads the Rosary procession around the school site, involving the whole school community. At Christmas, the



school carol service takes place at St Edmund's, where parents and the wider community can celebrate with the school.

- The school choir makes a significant contribution to the quality of collective worship, which engages the pupils and ensures their active participation.

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship and Prayer Life is outstanding

- Leaders and governors are fully committed to developing the prayer life and opportunities for collective worship at the school. They ensure time is always given for Masses and other liturgical services to take place during the normal school day as they rightly see prayer and worship at the centre of school life.
- The chaplain and the chaplaincy team ensure staff have access to high quality resources to deliver high quality collective worship which meets the needs of all the pupils. The chaplain ensures that celebrations follow the liturgical year. Leaders and governors are proactive in monitoring the quality of prayer and collective worship and take into account evaluations written by the pupils and the chaplain. Governors are regular visitors to the school and attend services and other celebrations.
- Leaders and governors ensure pupils have access to resources for reflection and prayer by ensuring all pupils have access to the Redemptorist school planner and by ensuring all families receive a copy of the Wednesday Word.