



Archdiocese of Birmingham

Section 48 Inspection

ST. PETER'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Adams Hill, Bartley Green, Birmingham, B32 3QD

Inspection date	27 th March 2017
Reporting Inspector	Joseph Skivington
Assistant Inspector	Andrew Maund

Inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

Type of School	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils	5-11 years
Number on roll	207
Appropriate authority	The Governing Body
Chair of Governors	Fr Gary Buckby
Telephone number	0121 464 6921
E-mail address	enquiry@stpeterc.bham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	20 th February 2012
DFE School Number	330 3385
Unique Reference Number	103469

Headteacher	Ms Alison Pickin
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Previous inspection:	Good
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This inspection:	Good
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Evidence

- The inspection was carried out by two Diocesan Inspectors.
- The focus of the inspection was on the quality, leadership, and impact of the school's provision of Catholic life, collective worship, and religious education (RE).
- The inspectors observed teaching across 6 RE lessons to evaluate the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. These lesson observations were conducted jointly with senior leaders.
- The inspectors completed a work scrutiny and held discussions with pupils to evaluate their understanding of Catholic life, worship, and the impact of teaching on their learning over time.
- Meetings were held with the parish priest/ chair of governors, the head teacher and leaders from the Quad partnership.
- The inspectors attended class assemblies, a whole school assembly and undertook a learning walk to look at aspects of learning and teaching in RE, the presentation of the Catholic life of the school and pupils' behaviour.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of documents including the school's self-evaluation, data about pupils' attainment and progress, RAISEonline, the development plan, teachers' planning and learning journals.

Information about the school

- St. Peter's is a smaller than average primary school serving the parish of St. Peter's, Bartley Green, South Birmingham. The parish priest is also the chair of governors.
- The percentage of pupils from ethnic minorities and pupils with EAL is above the national average.
- The percentage of Catholic pupils is currently 67%.
- The percentage of pupils with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) is above the national average.
- Pupils enter the school with attainment typical for their age group.
- The head teacher is at present covering the role of RE coordinator.

Main Findings

- The provision for Catholic life, collective worship, and religious education is good, because the outcomes in these areas are consistently good.
- The school's leadership and management is good, because it has robust and increasingly reliable processes of self-evaluation; acting upon the previous inspection judgements the school has ensured that Catholic life, religious education (RE), collective worship, and sacramental life are clearly distinguished in the school's monitoring and evaluation.
- The pupils are confident in articulating what it means to be in a Catholic school. They recognise the enriching, inclusive community in which they learn, and are internalising its values. This is amply evident in their outstanding behaviour and respectful care for one another, and their practical concern for others in need.
- The pupils' response to collective worship is very positive. They participate willingly and reverently, and are developing the skills of planning and presenting their own acts of worship with growing confidence.
- The quality of teaching in RE is good overall, with some outstanding practice observed. This results in good or better learning outcomes, and good progress over time.
- The link between parents and school are strong thanks to good communication and the support of a full time senior learning mentor responsible for parent liaison.

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

Catholic life, collective worship and spiritual, moral and vocational development: provision and outcomes

- The pupils benefit significantly from the Catholic life of the school, and their input into developing this area of the school is growing stronger, especially their feedback through pupil voice with comments and observations on how the Catholic ethos and religious education could be enriched.
- They appreciate and value the special Catholic ethos of the school and they are able to articulate what makes their Catholic school different from others. Their understanding of the school mission statement is comprehensive and has been enhanced by their participation in the recent evaluation and re-interpretation of the mission statement – *'Loved by Jesus we love, learn, live and grow together for Him'*. This understanding is translated into practice, for instance, showing a genuine group care with extraordinary gentleness for less able pupils. Older children in particular are alert to the needs of those who need support and are quick to inform staff if there is a problem. The Year 5 pupils take particular care of the younger children.
- The Catholic Schools' Pupil Profile has been adopted and the virtues it enshrines are being successfully promoted, the subject of assemblies, and prominently displayed in the assembly hall and around the school.
- The liturgy group are beginning to take some initiative in planning collective worship, and have joined with the governors on learning walks to evaluate the impact of class assemblies, meditations, prayer table and displays. The group is keen for more responsibility in taking ownership of Catholic life, and the school recognises that pupils need more opportunities to lead and to become effective role models for their peers.
- The pupils organise their own charity fundraising events, demonstrating compassion for others in need, both locally and globally, such as the Little Princess cancer charity, working with others to care for the homeless, and CAFOD. The older children are becoming real animators in fostering among their peers a lively sense of vocation and service. However, the school has identified that there is still work to be done in giving more ownership and initiative to the pupils in developing the specifically Catholic character of the school.
- The quality of the provision for Catholic life is good. The whole environment of the school reflects its Catholic mission and ethos. It is an open and fully inclusive community where all children are invited to reflect on and live out the values embedded in the ethos of the school.
- The pupils' spiritual, moral and vocational development is carefully nurtured. There are opportunities to encourage pupils to help and serve, for instance, in doing class jobs or becoming playground buddies, but also to reflect on and discuss the 'big questions' which they respond to in terms of faith and spirituality. As a result, both pupils and staff are increasingly using religious language, and the language of the Catholic Schools' Pupil Profile. The whole school curriculum contributes significantly to communicating the distinctive beliefs, values and the story of the Catholic community.
- The sacramental preparation programmes are jointly planned and run by the school with the parish. Pupils can speak with some confidence about the basic theology and the importance of the sacraments in their lives, and this is reflected in their written work.
- The pupils' behaviour at collective worship is outstanding. Even the youngest respond with great attentiveness and reverence during prayer time and acts of worship, and this is due in no small way to the excellent role modelling provided by the older pupils and every staff member. The actors in the Prodigal Son assembly presentation, observed during the inspection, were well prepared and played their parts with clarity and expression. The pupils sing with enthusiasm and joy, using sign language to emphasise the words and their meaning.

- The pupils compose many beautiful prayers, which are displayed and used at the prayer tables, and this reflects their awareness of the different ways of praying and types of prayer. They are encouraged to monitor the quality of these focal prayer points, while the younger ones very quickly learn the symbolism of the religious artefacts on the tables.
- In conversation, pupils were keen to take more ownership of their prayer life and the school is addressing this area, enabling them to develop the skills of planning and organising their own liturgy. Staff would also benefit from further training to model the process, so the pupils will have the confidence, and opportunities, to take the initiative and create their own liturgies and assemblies.
- The school provides a good variety of liturgies, worship, and prayer both in and out of school. Collective worship in the classroom is an integral part of the day. The whole school assemblies reinforce the values and mission of the school, using the good example of pupils themselves to inspire their peers, especially at the Special Mention celebration assemblies. This role modelling sends out a powerful message to other children.
- The Big Book of Catholic Life has many examples of pupils' own prayers and a record of their collective worship through the year. The children say traditional prayers at relevant times of the day and according to the liturgical seasons. There is good progression in learning the traditional prayers of the Church. Pupils lead and participate in their daily class worship, which is normally directed by their teachers; pupils are not always fully involved at the initiation, planning and organising stages of this worship.
- All school Masses are celebrated 3-4 times termly in the nearby St. Peter's parish church, as well as alongside the parish on several Sundays. Special liturgies take place during Advent and Lent, as well as major feast days, in which the pupils participate with enthusiasm through drama, dance and music. The parish priest is a frequent and welcome presence in the school.
- The curriculum is effective in promoting the pupils' spiritual, moral and vocational development. There are many opportunities to develop their moral sense of responsibility towards others, especially in exercising their spirit of generosity through outreach to others less fortunate than themselves, and to live out their faith in practice and to meet Jesus in others. This is clearly seen in the many fruitful fundraising events run by the pupils in aid of local and global charities, but also in anti-bullying awareness and the instinct to help and care for each other.
- The pupils are able to articulate what it means to answer a vocation. They explore the lives of others such as St. Francis, or a calling to religious life. They produce insightful work in drawing up an advert to be an apostle, listing the qualities needed but also the commitment and difficult demands and choices that following a calling entails.
- The Catholic Schools' Pupil Profile is proving an excellent way to promote and inculcate Catholic values. The governors are very much involved in supporting this.
- Pupils have the opportunity to go on retreat and have time and opportunities to reflect on what they are learning.

LEADERSHIP

Leadership of Catholic life and collective worship

- Leadership of Catholic life and collective worship is good with some outstanding elements.
- The promotion and nurturing of the Catholic life of the school is of paramount importance to senior leadership and governors; the transcripts of the head teacher's reports, the school improvement planning, and governors' minutes provide clear evidence of challenge. Catholic and Sacramental life, prayer and RE are all monitored and evaluated as discrete elements making up the Catholicity of the school. In collaboration with the very supportive Quad

partnership with other Catholic schools, there is an ongoing audit of collective worship and vocational development.

- The leadership of the head teacher is inspirational. She successfully communicates her vision for the school's future, and has been able to implement improvement effectively.
- The school's mission statement - *'Loved by Jesus we love, we learn, we live and grow together for Him.'* is visually prominent and is often addressed and interpreted in assemblies and in lessons. There could be further opportunities for pupils to reflect on, and discuss their own interpretations of what mission means for them, and their own ideas on how to promote it.
- Links with parents and carers are strong thanks to the role of the senior learning mentor. Parents are invited to assemblies, Masses and other liturgies. They are made welcome and their feedback is elicited verbally and through questionnaires.
- The audits for spirituality and Catholic life have been very fruitful, leading to a growth in the variety of opportunities for prayer and worship, including provision for the staff's own spirituality and prayer life. Staff new to Catholic education are well supported by courses and training on the nature of a Catholic school, and specifically the teaching of RE.
- Leaders monitor the provision for collective worship and this data feeds into the school improvement plans. After identifying areas for improvement more rigour is needed to check the progress and impact of the actions taken, with detailed recorded evaluation on Masses, assemblies, prayer times and liturgies.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Leadership, outcomes from and provision for religious education

- Leadership of religious education is good overall. Outcomes and provision are also good.
- The head teacher and governors ensure in-service training to develop staff understanding and commitment to the Church's mission in education. This is vital for new teachers but all staff benefit from this good support, both for their own spirituality and to secure their RE subject knowledge.
- The structures to monitor and evaluate the impact of provision on RE outcomes are in place, through lesson observations and work scrutinies, as well as asking the pupils themselves what helps them to learn better. Provision and learning outcomes are improving as the leaders look more closely at the impact of their action plans.
- The school is making fruitful use of the diocesan attainment indicators, and sharing work and moderation with the other schools in the Quad. Assessment and moderation of pupils' work provide a clearer picture of progress, especially for the disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND, and this data is used to plan appropriate lesson objectives. Leaders are getting better at analysing and assessing the impact of this data on improving pupils' progress and achievement over time.
- On entry to the school, pupils' baseline knowledge and experience of the Faith and prayer life broadly match diocesan expectation. The early years children are given a secure start in religious literacy, symbolism - such as the candle representing Jesus the Light of the World, as well as story and meaning through the parables and miracles in the Gospels. By the end of Key Stage 1 most pupils are working at, and some above, diocesan expectation. This represents good progress year on year. Pupils in vulnerable groups and disadvantaged children make similarly good progress through targeted support and intervention by proactive learning assistants.
- The end of Key Stage 2 data shows that pupils have continued to make good progress if slightly slower than Key Stage 1 because of inconsistency in the level of teachers' challenge, and the effectiveness of the lessons' learning objectives.

- Pupils are keen to learn with very positive attitudes and excellent behaviour for learning. They experience different learning styles, including paired discussion, role play and drama, and some independent work; most pupils can explain how belief shapes lives and actions.
- Their written work often consists of short pieces of writing on a variety of topics, usually completed to a good standard. The number of pupils making more than expected progress would increase further if teachers set more challenging learning objectives, and well differentiated tasks pitched more nearly to individual learning needs. More extended, reflective pieces of writing would also enable teachers to assess individual progress more accurately.
- The quality of teaching overall is good, and where it is sometimes weaker, there is steady improvement through support and ongoing professional development. The best teaching challenges pupils to make real intellectual effort through keen questioning which demands response, but also checks carefully that understanding is secure.
- Teachers have secure subject knowledge, good rapport with their pupils, and plan their lessons well using a variety of strategies. These, together with the pupils' positive behaviour for learning, results in good progress over time. Progress in many instances is hampered by some teaching which is over instructive; this limits the extent to which pupils actively seek to improve their knowledge, understanding and skills, and develop as independent learners.
- The much improved procedures for recording and reviewing the quality of teaching, through lesson observations and book trawls, have highlighted the strengths and weaknesses in teaching, thus enabling precise, targeted support and advice to be given exactly where it is needed.
- End of unit assessment is becoming more accurate through fruitful collaboration on moderation with the Quad partnership schools. At present assessment data is not always dependable, with a number of over generous judgements which does not match the actual work in books. Monitoring must also take a closer look to ensure the learning tasks set in lessons match the ability of the pupils.
- Dialogue marking is having an impact when the formative comments made by teachers are challenging, and the written response by the pupils are more thoughtful and extended.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets all canonical and statutory requirements of the Bishops' Conference. The school is already working to ensure it is designed and modified to meet the needs of individuals and groups, so that there is continuity and progression within and between key stages. Some topics have been extended and made more relevant, such as role playing the Sacraments or exploring the parish church and identifying objects and symbols. This gives the pupils first hand experiences and increases their knowledge and understanding.
- Pupils have the opportunity to explore other faiths in the topics on world religions. Those pupils and their parents, who belong to different faith backgrounds, provide an excellent resource, which enables the other pupils to understand and respect other faiths and cultures. This is reinforced by the bi-annual World Faith Week. In alternate years pupils visit a religious heritage place such as the Oratory to gain an idea of pilgrimage.
- The relationship and sex education programme is in place and monitored to ensure it is consistent with the teachings of the Church and reflects Catholic teaching and values.
- The provision for the pupils' development of Catholic Christian values is good. The values listed in the Catholic Schools' Pupil Profile have been highlighted and they are referred to on a daily basis, through assembly topics and built into lesson planning. As a result, they have become part of the pupils' lives and awareness, many of whom are inspiring examples of their practice.

Recommendations

- Increase opportunities for all pupils to take ownership in the initiation, planning and presentation of their own prayer services, and to increase their input and responsibility for the promotion of the Catholic life of the school.
- Improve the consistency and quality of all teaching to match existing outstanding practice, by more intellectual challenge and demanding questioning, by using formative marking to drive progress over time, and by the use of learning tasks securely matched to pupils' ability.
- Develop the discrete role of the RE coordinator, beyond the role of the headteacher.