

Report of the Denominational (Canon 806 & Section 48)
Inspection of

(Inspection was carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005)

**St. Mary and St. Peter Catholic Primary
School**

DfE No: 9263403

URN: 142737

For Catholic Diocese of East Anglia



Chair of Governors: Mr. John Harris

Executive Headteacher: Mrs Priscilla Crane
Deputy Headteacher: Mrs Kerryann Ricketts

Denominational Inspector: Mrs Margaret Stewart
Associate Inspector: Mrs Anne Marie Price

Dates of Inspection: 15th July 2019

Date and grade of previous inspection: 21st May 2013 Grade 2

DESCRIPTION OF THE SCHOOL

St. Mary and St. Peter Catholic primary school serves the parishes of St. Mary's in Great Yarmouth and St. Peter's in Gorleston. In April 2016 it became a member of the St. John the Baptist Catholic Multi Academy Trust. The new executive headteacher took up her post in February 2019 and a newly appointed head of school will join the leadership team in September. There are 220 pupils on roll from ages 3 to 11 with 50% being Catholic. There are 7 classes plus a Nursery where pupils attend for mornings only. There are 11 teaching staff in total of which 27% are Catholic. 21% of pupils have been identified as having a special need or disability (SEND) and there are 4 children with an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP) with 2 more pending. 36% of pupils have English as a second language.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL AS A CATHOLIC SCHOOL. Grade 2

St. Mary and St. Peter Catholic primary school is a good school. It is evident that the whole community benefits from belonging to the school because it has a strong and supportive Catholic ethos underpinned by its newly revised mission statement and dearly held Christian values. The newly appointed executive head teacher and experienced leader for religious education have a clear vision for the development of Religious Education (RE). They are ambitious that everyone has the opportunity to live its mission statement both in and beyond school, and believe in driving actions with 'Christ at the Centre'. It is a school where the Catholic identity is clearly visible in its child friendly, thought provoking displays and in its warm and supportive relationships. The school is highly valued by governors, parents, staff, pupils and parish. Outcomes from the parent questionnaire and interviews on the day confirms a clear confidence in the school to provide for the spiritual and moral development of the children based on strong Christian values. The governors and chaplains are proactively involved in all areas of development and have a significant impact on supporting the Catholicity of the school. Links with other schools in the Catholic Multi Academy Trust (CMAT) has provided effective and mutual support for all areas of school development and the benefits of these partnerships are highly valued by school leaders as a strength for the school.

What the school needs to do to improve further?

- For more pupils to take on roles of leadership and responsibility within RE and the pastoral areas of Catholic Life of the school.
- Develop effective links between religious education (RE) and Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) and other areas of the new curriculum.
- Formalise systematic monitoring in all areas of RE so that effective strategies in teaching, learning and leadership can be identified and evaluated and lead to improved outcomes for pupils.
- Build a deeper awareness of the links between the rhythms and seasons of the liturgical year and how these are integral to the way of life in a Catholic community.

CATHOLIC LIFE:

Grade 2

Pupils have many opportunities to contribute to the Catholic Life of the school. They demonstrate that belonging to St. Mary and St. Peter brings with it a responsibility to be good local and global citizens through their extensive charity work and engagement with their community. Supporting St. Martin's Housing Trust, a local homeless charity, and fundraising for the Air Ambulance has given pupils an understanding of how they can make a difference to those in society who are most in need of support. The work of the Minnie Vinnies group is now embedded in school and is an active group involved in organising whole school events and monitoring prayer life. Pupils regard themselves as part of a wider Catholic community by being involved in diocesan and Catholic Multi Academy Trust events such as Masses at the Cathedral, a pilgrimage to Walsingham and a celebration of Pentecost. Pupils are able to express their ideas about belief and faith with confidence and enthusiasm evidencing that the spiritual and moral development is strong.

The centrality of the revised mission statement and the vision to 'Set Sail to Success' has invigorated the focus of the work of St. Mary and St. Peter school. The pupils and their families benefit from an actively inclusive culture where everyone is valued and supported. There is a strong pastoral team prioritising support for individuals, groups and classes in a variety of ways according to specific needs. The initiation of 'Togetherness Cafes' has been well received and attended. Here, parents can learn and share strategies to support them in their role as parents. There are also support groups for families provided in the parish 'Faith Club' which is run by the chaplain and is increasingly well attended. Parents and children take part in activities together and discussions promote dialogue around faith formation. Behaviours for learning are effective and positive. In nearly all classes there is evidence of pupils engaged and focussed on their learning. Staff model positive, respectful relationships between each other and with the children and this promotes a safe, caring and supportive environment for all to thrive in. A member of staff said 'I feel looked after as a person, not just a member of staff'. Those pupils who have SEND are fully involved in all aspects of school life and are given opportunities to demonstrate their values and life skills in appropriate ways.

The executive head teacher and RE leader have robust plans in place to ensure that the provision and monitoring of the Catholic life of the school will be prioritised. The incoming head of school and the executive headteacher gave examples of how working with the RE leaders within the CMAT will impact further on improvements in RE. Some aspects of monitoring are not yet systematic or embedded but this is identified and planned for in the next school year. Governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas of development. They contribute consistently to the strong community and have a deep sense of pride in the school. They stated 'We feel appreciated for what we do and our children are cherished as individuals'. They attend many events throughout the year and accompany trips out of school. Parents and pupils are aware of the governors' involvement and appreciate the commitment and hard work given to ensure continuing whole school improvement.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:

Grade 2

There has been a marked improvement in pupils' RE work since the beginning of the spring term in both quantity and quality. Careful monitoring and evaluation has impacted on the quality of written work, feedback and marking and the development of pupils' self-evaluation. Pupils demonstrate that they enjoy their learning in RE and they talk enthusiastically about the challenges in some of the topics. For example, one child said 'RE is so interesting, it makes me think really hard', he was learning about transubstantiation. In year 5, pupils worked enthusiastically, sharing resources, to compare similarities and differences between Christianity and Islam. Discussions around the topic promoted thoughtful questions and extended their religious vocabulary. A balance of recorded, active and creative learning is employed to demonstrate responses in RE. Many artistic displays celebrating learning and deeper thinking were observed around the school. Attainment in RE is broadly in line with other core subjects and progress overall is better. Inconsistencies in achievement have been identified and targets within the RE development plan are in place to address these.

All staff have taken on ideas for new learning from quality continuing professional development (CPD) provided by the RE leader in school and from colleagues within the MAT. Teachers have used this new knowledge to effectively plan and evaluate pupils' learning and reflect on their own teaching. The staff are committed to developing their own professional development to drive improved outcomes for pupils and this has led to improvements in all curriculum areas. The school has worked hard to embed the use of the new standards in RE for effective planning and assessment. They are now incorporated in the schools' Pupil Asset system to give comparable, end of term information on assessment in RE. The RE leader has adapted the new I Can statements to produce child friendly grids that help pupils to self-evaluate their learning and provide differentiated challenge for pupils. The launch of a 'Big Questions Book' has promoted deeper questioning and religious literacy skills for all year groups.

RE leaders and governors have a clear vision for improvement in teaching and learning in RE. Ensuring RE is understood as a core subject within the curriculum is a priority and they strive to communicate this to other governors, parents and pupils. 10% of curriculum time is now dedicated to RE in all classes. The parish priest who recently became the RE governor is supported in his role by the RE leader and has begun to carry out monitoring tasks in the subject. The RE leader has also planned and provided quality CPD to staff in all aspects of RE and this is a real strength of the school. In particular, new teachers have benefitted from additional, informal CPD so that when help and advice is required, it is confidently sought. This has had a significant impact on teacher subject knowledge and skills in teaching RE. Through monitoring of RE workbooks with governors and other colleagues in the CMAT, areas for improvement have been identified and quickly addressed. Specific feedback related to the learning in RE has begun to be more effective and the strategies of the 'Rapid Improvement Plan' has had a positive impact on learning in RE. A systematic cycle of monitoring and evaluation with appropriate timescales will ensure continued improvements and consistency.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP:

Grade 2

Pupils are keen to participate in the range of daily opportunities for collective worship offered in school during the liturgical year. They mark the seasons of the church's year allowing pupils to experience different forms of prayer ranging from the traditional prayers of the church, litanies and personal prayer. Weekly class Masses led by the parish priest are prepared and presented by the pupils. The priest is continually impressed with the pupils growing enthusiasm for taking greater leadership roles in these Masses. Pupils enjoy singing enthusiastically and on the day of inspection, pupils signed parts of the hymn during the Gospel assembly. As part of their end of year performance, they sang uplifting songs with real passion. Collective worship in all its forms is inclusive, for example, during the Lenten reconciliation service, pupils who had not made the sacrament of Reconciliation were welcome to a talk and receive a blessing from the priest. The preparation of First Holy Communion is provided by the parish and to celebrate the sacrament with the school community a special assembly is held in school. Older pupils are beginning to take roles of responsibility in leading whole school collective worship and they said they would welcome the opportunity to plan and lead these more fully in the future. The Minni Vinnies group have been proactive in encouraging pupils to put their faith into action by leading an assembly on almsgiving during Lent. A whole school fundraising event followed, supporting a local homelessness charity.

Collective worship is central to the life of the school and forms part of every school celebration. It is a daily experience for the staff and pupils. Collective worship is supported by quality resources such as Jack in the Box, CAFOD, Worship Workshop, and the IGNITE team, promoting a deeper pupil engagement while supporting teachers to develop contemporary skills in leading prayer. Younger children using the prayer garden with joy and enthusiasm, sharing their treasure box of prayers confidently, demonstrated a clear understanding that we can say and write prayers for others in need. Prayer trails with themes of Mary and Zero Heros are used effectively to nurture pupils' personal spirituality and prayer experiences. Pupils experience other liturgies and forms of collective worship outside school with other schools in the CMAT widening the boundaries of their experiences of collective worship. During Advent, Key Stage 1 visited the Anglican Cathedral to explore the messages of the season. The Mass Toolkit, designed by the RE leader is an important resource used to ensure the quality and consistency of preparation for Mass for teachers. Alongside this, teachers lead assemblies based on the school values, using the Values Assembly resource and planning advice from the RE leader. All staff attend and participate in collective worship, respectfully valuing the important place of prayer in the life of the school.

The RE leader regularly attends CPD led by the diocese and she is proactive within the CMAT meetings. Areas for improvement are identified and recorded on the RE action plan. Links with other outside agencies including religious publications and digital resources support current and relevant practice and research into engaging collective worship. The chaplains are active in supporting the prayer and sacramental life of the school and can talk about how the school is facilitating and often driving the faith formation of the families within the parish. A governor who comes into school, shares 'Open the Book' assemblies with the pupils. This form of collective worship explores the message and meaning of bible stories in

an age appropriate manner and is valued and appreciated by the pupils. Informal monitoring and feedback has supported improvements within collective worship and leaders have planned to implement a more formal process in the new school year.

The diocesan inspectors wish to thank the executive headteacher, staff, pupils, governors and the whole school community for their very warm and friendly welcome and their valuable input into the life of St. Mary and St. Peter Catholic Primary school.



EAST ANGLIA DIOCESAN SCHOOLS' SERVICE

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Letter to pupils explaining the findings from the Diocesan Inspection

15th July 2019

Dear Pupils

Diocesan Inspection of St. Mary and St. Peter Catholic School

Thank you very much for the very warm welcome we received when we came to visit your school. We were impressed with how hard you worked in your religious education lessons and how enthusiastic you are about your learning. We looked carefully at the work in your RE books and we were impressed with the colourful displays around school and in your classrooms. We also enjoyed talking to you about life at school and hearing about how proud you are to belong to St. Mary and St. Peter.

Here are some of the things we especially liked:

- Everyone works hard to make St. Mary and St. Peter a place where everyone is welcomed and valued
- Your school gives you many opportunities to become active Christians in today's world, serving others through all your charity work
- You work hard and with enthusiasm in your RE lessons and this is helping you to improve your learning

We have asked your teachers to consider:

- That you take on extra responsibilities in planning and leading liturgy
- Making exciting links between RE and other areas of the curriculum
- Finding ways of making sure you are learning and achieving to a very high standard in RE
- Helping you to understand that our Masses, celebrations and prayer times fit into a special calendar called the 'liturgical calendar'

Thank you again for helping to make our visit so enjoyable. We wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Margaret Stewart
Diocesan Inspector

Anne Marie Price
Associate Inspector