



# Archdiocese of Birmingham

## Section 48 Inspection Report

### ST PETER'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Whitefields Road, Solihull, B91 3NZ

Inspection dates:

19-20 November 2019

Lead Inspector:

Rachel Waugh

---

#### OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS:

**Good**

Catholic Life:

Outstanding

Religious Education:

Good

Collective Worship:

Outstanding

---

*Overall effectiveness at previous inspection:*

*Outstanding*

#### SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

This is a Good Catholic school because

- Catholic Life is at the heart of all policy and practice. A revised mission statement and the introduction of the Catholic School Pupil Profile has helped to enshrine Catholic beliefs and principles in all aspects of school life.
- The leadership of the school promotes Catholic Life at all levels and ensures it is given the highest priority. Staff are fully committed to the Catholic Life of the school.
- There is an informed understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Improvement plans drive the response from all in the school community.
- Religious Education is given the highest priority in terms of curriculum time, resourcing and staffing.
- Teaching and learning in Religious Education is good overall with well-planned and sequenced lessons incorporating a variety of approaches to engage pupils.
- A varied approach to Collective Worship ensures pupils have an opportunity to plan and lead a range of traditional and contemporary prayers.
- The sacramental life of the school is strong with Mass at the heart and regular opportunities for Reconciliation. The school is served well by a group of parish priests.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- There could be greater opportunity for pupils to inspire and lead the direction of Catholic Life in the school.

- The pupil chaplaincy team is in its infancy. It has the potential to drive Collective Worship and the Catholic Life of the school but needs to draw in more pupils and develop a more significant prominence.
- Religious Education is not always planned to challenge progress. There are some lessons where pupils are more passive and are not actively engaged.
- Feedback in Religious Education is inconsistent. As a result, pupils are not always clear on their own progress and are not always able to articulate what they need to improve on.

## FULL REPORT

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further develop and enhance student leadership of Catholic Life and Collective Worship especially, although not exclusively, in relation to the pupil chaplaincy team.
- Embed consistently outstanding teaching and learning in Religious Education in order to achieve outstanding outcomes for all groups of learners.
- Consistently implement feedback procedures in order to enable pupils to make expected progress.

## THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

The quality of the Catholic Life of the school.	<b>Outstanding</b>
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.	Good
The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school.	Outstanding
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision of the Catholic Life of the School.	Outstanding

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

- Most pupils appreciate, value and actively participate in the Catholic Life and mission of the school.
- Pupils participate in the school's evaluation of its Catholic Life through questionnaires, pupil forums and conversation with staff.
- Pupils demonstrate respect for themselves and others. Forgiveness is evident across the school and there is a clear sense of right and wrong. Pupils talk of the playground and unstructured times as examples of how well they work in a community based on shared foundations.
- Pupils accept the responsibility of living within a Catholic community. There is a strong tradition of supporting local, national and international organisations through charity work and social justice campaigns. For example, pupils: make back packs for Mary's Meal; support the homeless through a sponsored readathon and collect food for a local food bank. Pupils recognise that, in times of trial, the entire community comes together in response for the benefit of the common good.

- Chaplaincy provision is valued and has the potential to grow.
- Pupils respond well to retreat and pilgrimage experiences. Pupils identify Catholic Life as evident in several school visits, including a trip to Berlin. The school should continue to evaluate its provision of retreats and respond to pupils' needs. A retreat week held last academic year had a positive impact on the school community.
- Pupils are happy and confident. The pastoral support offered by the school is profound and demonstrates the care and compassion it provides for each pupil as created in the image and likeness of God. Pupil support nurtures the individual needs of pupils and promotes restorative justice effectively.
- Pupils have a good understanding of loving relationships. The school are ready and willing to respond to diocesan guidance in relation to the revised relationships & sex education requirements.
- There is a clear understanding of vocation amongst pupils. The careers programme is enshrined with vocation and pupils participate in a vocations day in Year 9. The vision of the headteacher includes the recognition that all pupils have been created with some definite service and that the mission of the school is to ensure their life of service is developed.
- Pupils demonstrate value and respect for Catholic traditions. There are examples of participation in parish life that are highly valued.

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

- The mission statement is at the heart of the school. The recent review and simplification of the mission statement has allowed all stakeholders to fully embrace what it means to state 'Faith is our foundation'.
- Staff are exceptionally committed to the life and mission of the school and a full range of staff actively engage with the Catholic Life. For example, all departments take their turn in leading staff prayer and all contribute in a unique way to the retreat week.
- Community and relationships throughout the school are exceptionally strong and based on the example of Christ.
- The school environment demonstrates a Catholic community. The Stations of the Cross developed by the technology department, as part of the retreat week, and the cross of discs created by the music department demonstrate the active contribution of all areas of the school to celebrating its mission and identity.
- Exemplary behaviour exists throughout the school. Staff are exemplary role models. A parent spoke to inspectors about the support her daughter received from a teacher of science who had helped her through anxiety associated with examinations; the advice and response given was faith filled. In addition, a parent said that she had never known of any unkind words expressed by the pupils to their peers.
- Catholic social teaching is embedded in the curriculum. The Key Stage 5 *Christian living* course has Catholic social teaching and action at its heart. Additionally, pupils spoke about the eco-friendly nature of the school as something they were proud of as it enabled them to develop their stewardship.
- Spiritual and moral development is extensive and audited thoroughly across all department areas. As a result, pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong rooted in the life and teachings of Jesus.
- Pupil response to charity is energetic and continuous. Pupils respond through fundraising and social action for local, national and international causes.
- The model of chaplaincy at the school is having a dramatic impact on both Catholic Life and Collective Worship. There are a range of staff skills and backgrounds being

incorporated into an inclusive and vibrant team. The extensive choir is an example of the fruits of the chaplaincy team to date.

- The school demonstrates clear policies and structures which are rooted in the Catholic Life of the school and the Catholic School Pupil Profile (CSPP). Most notably, the behaviour policy is effectively intertwined to incorporate the CSPP and instils Catholic principles.
- The pastoral needs of the staff are not only promoted but are at the heart of the mission of the school. This was directly observed throughout the inspection period.

### **How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision of the Catholic Life of the School**

- Leadership at all levels is deeply rooted and committed to the Catholic Life of the school. As a result, Catholic Life dictates all policy and practice through the school. The CSPP drives the work of all departments.
- Catholic Life is given the highest priority, as is clear in the headteacher's report to governors. Consequently, Catholic Life sets the tone for all of the school's work and actions.
- There is an honesty within leadership that is clear in identifying the strengths of the school and its areas to develop. This leads to planned and sustained improvement which is enshrined in development plans.
- Continuous professional development is evident through the planned INSET and induction programmes for staff, but equally important is the informal professional development taking place daily through the interaction of staff. As a result, new staff are confident in their role as educators in a Catholic school.
- All staff have an appraisal objective related to Catholic Life. Through discussion, the need for professional development is identified and responded to.
- The Catholic vision is shared with parents. The school website and newsletters epitomise the extent and importance of the Catholic Life of the school.
- The governing body is highly supportive of the school's Catholic Life and provides healthy challenge to senior leaders.
- The leadership of the school is enthusiastic in its response to diocesan policies, especially academisation.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

The quality of Religious Education.	<b>Good</b>
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.	Good
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education.	Good
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.	Outstanding

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

- Most pupils, including groups of learners, make secure progress in Religious Education in each key stage. Gaps in outcomes are known and responded to with appropriate intervention strategies. Boys' achievement and the desire to reduce the gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged are key foci.
- As a result of teaching and learning most pupils are religiously literate. Pupils are able to think ethically and theologically.
- In the main, pupils are actively engaged in lessons and committed to improving their knowledge and skills; most concentrate well. Pupils value the approaches to spiral learning and a knowledge-based curriculum and recognise that these are key features supporting their attainment and progress.
- Most pupils are interested in, and demonstrate enthusiasm for, their learning, as a result, behaviour in lessons is good. Pupils enjoy Religious Education and value the evaluative nature of the subject.
- Feedback is inconsistent. There are some excellent examples of dialogue surrounding pupil progress but, in some cases, pupils have not responded to guidance from staff. Furthermore, sometimes teachers' guidance is not moving pupils forward sufficiently. As a result, pupils are not always able to articulate their targets and current performance.
- Attainment at Key Stage 4 is above average. The first year of the new GCSE (2018) presented a particular challenge, however, the department have responded to the outcomes of this in a determined and pragmatic manner. As a result, outcomes in 2019 were in line with historical trends. Attainment at Key Stage 5 is above average. There are clear strategies in place to further improve pupils' attainment in Religious Education.
- The quality of written work is generally good. A growing number of pupils are embarking on the extended project at Key Stage 5, choosing to base their project on an issue of social injustice.

## **The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education**

- Teachers plan good lessons, as a result, teaching is mainly good. In a small number of lessons didactic teaching is dominant at the expense of pupils' learning.
- Teachers are confident in the subject matter and, as a result, most pupils are progressing.
- Teachers employ a range of strategies. Consequently, most pupils are motivated and concentrate well in lessons.
- Pupils have some understanding of how they are progressing, based on assessed tests and essays at Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5. However, they are not always able to articulate how to improve their work.
- The curriculum is sequenced effectively in order to build on skills and secure core knowledge.
- Spiral learning is used to good effect to support pupils' development. It is evident that a knowledge-based curriculum is enhancing pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- In the best lessons timing and pace is effective and leads to effective outcomes.
- Questioning is a strength, and, in the best lessons, there is an effective and probing use of questioning in order to secure and challenge pupils' knowledge, understanding and evaluative skills.
- Resources are used to good effect including other adults. The department work in collaboration in order to share the most effective resources for their learners.

- Teachers have high expectations which are communicated to pupils.
- The quality of feedback and pupil response is variable and does not always lead to secure progress being made. In the best examples, pupils respond to 'tips' provided by their teachers, which challenge their work and made the pupils think beyond their initial response. However, pupils do not always respond to the 'tips' and are therefore not always clear on what they need to do to improve further.

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

- Religious Education fully meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference.
- Curriculum time is appropriate at each key stage.
- Religious Education has full parity with other core subjects. Indeed, staffing in RE has been given the highest priority. As a result, the RE department are well placed to continue to develop.
- Self-evaluation is honest and demonstrates an explicit understanding of the strengths and areas to develop. For example, the *Christian living* course at Key Stage 5 is being developed in order to enhance the extended project qualification and the criteria for the social action elements of the course.
- The curriculum leader has a clear vision for, and commitment to, Religious Education and is striving for consistently outstanding teaching and learning. The Religious Education team is well placed to secure this vision.
- As a result of his vision there is an imaginative and creative approach to intervention, including a carousel approach to revision.
- Governors have observed lessons in Religious Education and as a result they are confident in the school's provision.

## **COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

The quality of Collective Worship.	<b>Outstanding</b>
How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship.	Outstanding
The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school.	Outstanding
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship.	Outstanding

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

- Collective Worship engages pupils' interest and inspires a heartfelt response.
- Enthusiasm is evident in the reverent participation and prayerful silence. Leaders recognise that the verbal responses of pupils are generally quiet and are working on a range of strategies to support pupils in developing their verbal responses.
- Pupils take initiative in leading worship. In form time, they plan and develop the worship based on the scripture and theme provided. The chaplaincy team provides even more opportunity for pupils to initiate and maximise pupil participation.

- Pupils are confident in the use of a variety of prayer and participate willingly in voluntary acts of worship, for example the voluntary Mass before school on a Tuesday morning. The Rosary has become a central feature of every Friday in school. Equally the mediums of music and drama are being developed in Collective Worship.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of the Liturgical Year as the Collective Worship programme is rooted in the liturgical season and calendar which is known and shared by the staff and pupils.
- Pupils regularly write prayers that are engaging and moving and incorporate the needs of the worldwide church.
- Pupils demonstrate a deep sense of respect for those of other faiths in their words and actions.

### **The quality of Collective Worship provided by the School**

- Collective Worship is central to the life of the school. It is an embedded feature of daily life for pupils and staff. Pupils and staff pray at the start and end of every day. The school prayer is the background on all computer screens around school and it is therefore never far away from the thoughts and actions of the pupils and staff.
- Collective Worship contains a clear purpose and message for pupils to take away and respond to. Collective Worship is rooted in the Liturgical Year and in scripture.
- Collective worship is given the highest priority in terms of planning, evaluation and resources. A recent survey on liturgical music prompted voluntary responses from a large proportion of the school community.
- Relevant staff have an excellent understanding of liturgical life and naturally make reference to the weekly gospel and priorities of the Holy Father.
- Staff are skilled in helping pupils plan and deliver Collective Worship. They are supported with excellent resources and guidance. As a result, staff are able to facilitate pupils' planning and development of Collective Worship.
- Adults fully appreciate the opportunity to share in the celebration of Holy Mass with Year 7 students on their very first day at St Peter's and subsequent events as appropriate.

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

- Leaders have highly appropriate knowledge and skills to deliver profound collective worship and the school utilise skills of staff exceptionally well to enhance the chaplaincy provision for pupils.
- The Church's year, seasons and feasts are understood and at the heart of planning for Collective Worship. Indeed, the school promotes collective worship in response to diocesan events. The recent canonisation of St John Henry Newman prompted a unique response through worship.
- The skills of the staff ensure the theology of the seasons and feasts are accessible to pupils in a contemporary context. The annual remembrance Masses include the Bede call of past staff and pupils of St Peter's. Pupils and staff alike were very moved by this tradition at the heart of Collective Worship.
- Leaders are not only skilled leaders, facilitators and models of outstanding practice of Collective Worship, but a visible presence and role models for other staff.
- The pupil chaplaincy team is relatively new and is ready to be developed further in order to provide a platform for pupil inspired and initiated Collective Worship.



- Continuous professional development incorporates Collective Worship as a focus both formally and informally. As a result of staff voice the leadership of the school continue to demystify Catholic teaching and practice for non-Catholic staff. The bespoke approach to continued professional development ensures that leaders instil outstanding practice.
- Self-evaluation of Collective Worship is embedded through form visits, assembly monitoring, the Catholic Life working party and student council meetings at all key stages. Pupils routinely reflect on the messages of an assembly on the following day demonstrating their ability to think theologically, ethically, spiritually, and morally. This enables leaders to monitor and evaluate the quality and impact of collective worship.
- As a result of self-evaluation and recognition that only a small proportion of the pupils describe themselves as practising Catholics, Mass has become an even more central feature of the provision for Collective Worship.
- Governors are directly involved in the Collective Worship of the school through their school visits and the head teachers report to governors.
- The school participated in the live stream of the rosary earlier this term, demonstrating their commitment to the additional requirements of the Archbishop.

## SCHOOL DETAILS

Unique reference number	104119
Local authority	Solihull
<i>This inspection was carried out under canon 806 of Canon Law and under Section 48 of the 2005 Education Act.</i>	
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Voluntary Aided
Age range	11-18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on roll	1290
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Peter Talbot
Headteacher	Mrs Marie Murphy
Telephone number	0121 705 3988
Website address	<a href="http://www.st-peters.solihull.sch.uk">www.st-peters.solihull.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:office@st-peters.solihull.sch.uk">office@st-peters.solihull.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	12-13 November 2014

## INFORMATION ABOUT THIS SCHOOL

- St Peter's is a larger than average sized secondary school; there are 1290 pupils on roll including 261 in the Sixth Form. St Peter's serves the Catholic community in South and Central Solihull and East Birmingham. It has close links with the local parishes and the priests are all regular visitors to the school.
- St Peter's serves the parishes of Our Lady of the Wayside, St Augustine's, Our Lady of Compassion, St Thomas More, St George and St Teresa.
- Despite the perception surrounding the school's geographical location, St Peter's is a truly comprehensive Catholic school and draws from a very wide geographical area.



One third of the children live in Birmingham, including many areas of deprivation as shown by analysis of the deprivation index.

- The percentage of Catholic pupils is currently 98% in Years 7-11 and 87% in the Sixth Form.
- The percentage of disadvantaged pupils (15%) is below the national average.
- The percentage of SEND pupils (7.9%) is below the national average.
- The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic origins (21.6%) is below the national average.
- The percentage of pupils with EAL (3.95%) is below the national average.
- Attainment on entry is above the national average.
- Since the last inspection there have been changes to the leadership group: a new deputy head has been appointed and is now the person in charge of Catholic Life. A second in department has been appointed in Religious Education and an assistant headteacher has a significant role in behaviour, care and guidance and the Catholic Life of the school.

## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION**

- The inspection was carried out by two Diocesan Inspectors: Rachel Waugh and Suzanne Horan.
- The focus of the inspection was on the impact, quality and leadership of the school's provision of Catholic Life, Religious Education and Collective Worship.
- The inspectors observed teaching across 13 Religious Education lessons to evaluate the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. All of 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, the impact of RE teaching on their learning over time and their experience of Collective Worship.
- Meetings were held with the vice chair of governors, the headteacher, the Religious Education subject leader, the person in charge of the Catholic Life of the school, chaplaincy staff and one of the serving priests.
- The inspectors attended a voluntary Mass, Year 8 & 10 remembrance Mass, form Collective Worship, assembly and undertook a tour of the school to look at 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, Analyse School Performance (ASP) data, the school development plan and the Religious Education action plan.