

## INSPECTION REPORT

St Peter's RC High School, Manchester, M12 4WB

Inspection date 17<sup>h</sup> March 2015

Reporting Inspector Sister Judith Russi  
Mr Colin Mason

Inspection carried out in accordance with Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

Type of School	Catholic High School
URN	131880
Age range of pupils	11-16 years
Number on roll	929
Appropriate authority	The Governing Body
Chair of Governors	Mr W. Egerton
Head teacher	Mr John McNerney
Date of previous inspection	February 2010

The Inspection judgements are:	Grade	Explanation of the Grades  1 = Outstanding  2 = Good  3 = Requires Improvement
Overall effectiveness of the school	2	
The quality of Catholic Leadership	1	
The quality of the Word of God community	2	
The quality of the Welcome community	1	
The quality of Welfare	1	
The quality of Worship	1	
The quality of Witness	1	
<i>The following pages provide reasons to support these judgements</i>		

## **CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT OF THE SCHOOL**

St Peter's is an average sized Catholic High school serving a wide range of pupils many of whom come from challenging circumstances. Pupils are drawn from a large number of parishes across Manchester 53% of teaching staff are Catholic, 39% of support staff and 61% of pupils are baptised Catholic. Since the last inspection a new Religious Education Centre and Chapel have been built. The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well above average. About 75% of students are from a wide range of ethnic minority backgrounds. The proportion of students that speak English as an additional language is well above average. The proportion of students supported through school action is broadly average. The proportion of students supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average. A significant number of new to the country pupils join the school at other than normal times; many of whom are non-English speakers. The English Minority Achievement (EMA) department provides specialist education and social support for pupils from ethnic minorities. The school meets the current government's floor standards.

## **OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL IS GOOD**

St Peter's is a good school with many outstanding features. The governors and senior leadership team have made significant progress and are fully committed to meeting the many challenging circumstances of educating within an inner city context. Governors are proactive and rigorous in their governance and hold the Head teacher and his team to account. Significant progress has been made in building up a good Catholic learning community with many outstanding and innovative features. The school is now well placed to consolidate its improvement to move from good to outstanding in the area of Word and is outstanding in all other areas. The recently reviewed Mission Statement "*Jesus said, 'Follow me.' Stay with us, Lord, on our journey*" is a focus for the whole school as they strive to be the best they can be. The leadership team's passion for learning, personal development and the well-being of all members of the school community ensures that all pupils receive an integrated Gospel based formation and education.

## **KEY STRENGTHS OF THE SCHOOL INCLUDE:**

- The vision and commitment of the Governors, Head teacher and his leadership team in creating the climate for every pupil to excel is outstanding.
- The inclusivity, option for those in the greatest need and personalised care for each individual was found to be inspirational.
- The resourcing and development of prayer and worship, providing meaningful experiences and opportunities for spiritual development is outstanding.

## **THE QUALITY OF LEADERSHIP IS OUTSTANDING**

The Governors, Head teacher and the leadership team's commitment to providing the very best education for all has led to a diverse and extensive range of innovative strategies for improving teaching and learning. Governors have a detailed knowledge of their school and are proactive in monitoring and evaluating school performance. A report on the Catholic life of the school is given to the Governing body at each meeting by the Head Teacher which is closely followed up by Governors through learning walks, meetings with key staff and pupils. Governors were clear in their understanding of the next steps for improvement and courageous in their decision making in support of those in the greatest need. Parents spoke enthusiastically of the ways in which their children's needs were the top priority in decision making, even when meeting these requirements incurred a considerable

financial commitment. St Peter's works closely with its partner primary schools and Catholic sixth form providers. Primary Heads spoke highly of the excellent transition procedures and communication between the schools. St Peter's is fully committed to the notion of a self-improving school system and is a leading school in the MSA Teaching School Alliance, leading on School Direct through the provision of a high quality programme of training for all staff. This commitment to development and leadership is further evidence through the work of the Head teacher as a National Leader of Education and four senior staff who are Specialist Leaders of Education. St Peter's is a National Support School. Pupil leadership is clearly evidence and being developed through opportunities such as the School Council, prefects and the school Pupil Chaplains.

### **THE QUALITY OF WORD IS GOOD**

The outstanding leadership of the RE department is significantly impacting on teaching and learning. In the best lessons pupils were clear about their objectives and success criteria were used effectively. The levels of religious literacy of some pupils was high and the majority of pupils were clearly enjoying their learning. Where learning was strongest lessons moved at a good pace and questioning was challenging and called for thoughtful reflective responses. Pupil achievement and attainment are much improved with 54% of pupils making three levels of progress and 31% making four levels of progress. 56% of pupils at GCSE achieved A\*-C grades. A greater consistency in marking would enable all pupils to have a clearer idea of their next steps for learning. The revised structures for learning, ongoing review and evaluation with frequent monitoring are all working together to impact positively on teaching and learning across both key stages. The recently revised provision for SMSC is planned, mapped and well delivered across the curriculum. The leadership of the school is aware that in order to take RE to outstanding in both key stages, there needs to be an increased personalised support for pupils not yet achieving their potential, through inclusion into the support for learning programmes in key stage 3 and 4 and the already very good one on one intervention provided for some pupils. The raising of expectations at key stage 3, building on the recognised high levels of prior knowledge in many pupils, would also secure outstanding progress. In some lessons pupils demonstrated an exceptionally high level of knowledge of scripture and were able to bring this into their discussions. This would be further enhanced by a greater degree of challenge through higher order questioning and critical thinking in all classes. Behaviour for learning and relationships in all lessons was found to be respectful, sensitive towards the needs of the individual and generally outstanding.

### **THE QUALITY OF WELCOME IS OUTSTANDING**

St Peter's welcomes pupils from 64 countries, with 68 different languages spoken. The religious and cultural diversity of the school is a real cause for celebration and richness. The annual international evening celebrates the school's extensive cultural diversity. Outreach to the local community includes a number of activities such as Macmillan coffee mornings, parenting skills classes, little Sisters of the Poor Christmas party and work with various charities, all of which the school contributes to generously. Pupils spoke frequently of how welcome and safe they felt and that their diversity was instrumental in ensuring that it really reflected the true meaning of being part of God's family. The leadership of the school actively seeks ways in which all cultures are encouraged to share their customs, rites and rituals whilst at the same time being encouraged to discover a common humanity as people made in the image and likeness of God. The quality of welcome from support staff was clearly much appreciated for its warmth and readiness to take the first step in reaching out to visitors. Pupils were confident and demonstrated a keen interest and readiness to help in any way they could. Parents spoke of the warmth and sincerity of the welcome they received on visiting the school as well as feeling supported and encouraged by St Peter's explicit Catholic culture.

### **THE QUALITY OF WELFARE IS OUTSTANDING**

The welfare of all within the school is outstanding in its quality, care, and diversity. Pupils new to the country are well supported through the Ethnic Minority Achievement (EMA) department which provides specialist education and social support for pupils from ethnic minorities. Horticultural Therapy is provided for vulnerable pupils, selected through EMA & SEN. Further evidence of the desire by the leadership team never to give up on a young person was seen through "The Project" an on-site education provided by St Peter's for disaffected pupils, to enable them to complete their education in a school environment rather than a PRU. There is a comprehensive and holistic Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) programme which respects the dignity of the person made in the image and likeness of God. The SRE curriculum prioritises the need to develop emotional intelligence at all key stages and is regularly reviewed to meet the fast changing needs of pupils today. Behaviours for learning and safeguarding procedures are clearly known and tightly monitored. Parents were strong in their praise for the ways in which, *"The school really lives its mission. Behaviour here has been turned around by love and care"*. The school engages a range of appropriate outside agencies to assist in the delivery of relationship education, self-esteem and personal safety. Pupil and parent voice is encouraged and both pupils and parents spoke of their high levels of satisfaction that they are heard and taken seriously. Pupils spoke of the particular support they received from Fr Thomas when things were troubling them. *"He just listens and calms you down till you can go back out again"*. The personal welfare of staff is given a high priority and the individual needs of staff are well supported. CPD has been significantly increased to raise staff competency and confidence in the wide range of complex needs of many pupils.

### **THE QUALITY OF WORSHIP IS OUTSTANDING**

The governors and leadership team have invested considerably in the development of prayer, worship and liturgy and this is now rightly recognised as a strength of the whole school. Worship for individual, small and large groups is led by Fr Thomas and lay School Chaplains, Pupil Chaplains and Caritas Ambassadors. Their passion and commitment to developing the prayer life of the school was found to be inspirational. The celebration of Mass, Sacrament of Reconciliation, Spiritual Accompaniment, Eucharistic Adoration and Meditation are part of the daily life of the school. Attendance at school voluntary Mass and Morning Prayer has significantly improved. Through worship, all are led to reflect, meditate and pray in a way that nurtures the faith life of the whole community. The creative and innovative para liturgies, prayer and worship opportunities reflect the cultural diversity of the community, whilst at the same time ensuring the centrality of Word of God proclaimed for all. Systematic in service to support staff in leading prayer and worship is provided by the Chaplaincy team for form tutors and all staff and is further enhanced by extensive comprehensive, contemporary and age appropriate resources. Pupil leadership of prayer and worship is frequent and confident. Pupils clearly enjoy their involvement in developing worship and prayer and are keen to be involved as much as possible.

### **THE QUALITY OF WITNESS IS OUTSTANDING**

St Peter's proclamation that Christ is the model in striving for excellence and explicit identification of key core gospel values of reconciliation, compassion, justice, liberation, service and stewardship serve to provide the cornerstone for the whole life of the school. The significant investment in developing the RE Centre, Chapel, Chaplaincy team to include a priest, lay adult Chaplains and pupil Chaplains, all gives testimony to the importance of witnessing to Christ and placing prayer at the heart of the school community. Pupils were found to be keen to share their faith and stand up for

their beliefs. Witnessing to belief in God was clearly normal and natural in St Peter's. The introduction of new ways of sharing faith can be found in examples such as the Friday reflection time. School prefects enjoy acting as peer buddies for each year group. The school offers and engages pupils in a wide variety of experiences to enhance their understanding of Christian stewardship through the Sowing Success scheme a therapeutic horticulture provided for vulnerable pupils. The school has bought in the services of an environmental education consultant to raise adult understanding of stewardship. Local Litter picking with Reclaim (Gorton disaffected youth group). Pupils Carbon Footprint (Crest Science Award). The Pupil Chaplains have visited Manchester University to showcase a Low Carbon sustainability game. The high level of care, décor and displays throughout the school buildings and outside areas reflect the importance of Christ at the centre of the life of the school.

**AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT:**

- In order to move Word from good to outstanding, further develop a more consistent approach to marking, differentiated learning objectives, higher order questioning skills and success criteria in order to raise teacher and pupil expectations.
- Continue to develop the good progress being made in SMSC education to further raise pupil's critical thinking skills across all key stages.
- Incorporate into the structured CPD programme additional opportunities to support all aspects of the Catholic life of the school.

19<sup>th</sup> March 2015

Dear Pupils

Thank you so much for the wonderful welcome you gave us when we came to visit you. Together with your teachers, support staff and helpers you are a good Catholic school with many outstanding features. This is because you are really striving to live up to your challenging mission statement and recognise that you are all one diverse family.

Your work is of a good standard and in some classes it is outstanding. We could clearly see that you take your learning very seriously and are proud of your achievements. Your RE teachers are clearly helping you to feel confident in your learning and ability to discuss complex religious and moral issues. We were particularly impressed by the ways in which you were able to discuss matters of belief and values in your different subjects.

Your governors and Mr McNerney want to continue to take your knowledge and understanding of scripture further and see how the school can enable all pupils to achieve the highest possible standards in RE. In order to help you achieve this your teachers are going help you clarify your next steps for learning and build on your already good understanding and use of scripture.

We were very impressed by many aspects of your school; the wall displays in classrooms and on the corridors and especially your beautiful RE Centre and Chapel and the way you care for the school buildings. However, we were most impressed by how you care for each other as a community who seek to follow Christ in all that you do.

God bless you all.

Yours sincerely

Sr Judith Russi

(Section 48 Inspector)

### **Summary Report to Parents**

On the 17<sup>th</sup> March 2015 the school was inspected in accordance with Section 48 of the Education Act 2005. The full report has been made available to the school and can also be accessed via both the school website and the Education section on the website of the Diocese of Salford.

### **OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL IS GOOD**

St Peter's is a good school with many outstanding features. The governors and senior leadership team have made significant progress and are fully committed to meeting the many challenging circumstances of educating within an inner city context. Governors are proactive and rigorous in their governance and hold the Head teacher and his team to account. Significant progress has been made in building up a good Catholic learning community with many outstanding and innovative features. The school is now well placed to consolidate its improvement to move from good to outstanding in the area of Word and is outstanding in all other areas. The recently reviewed Mission Statement "*Jesus said, 'Follow me.' Stay with us, Lord, on our journey*" is a focus for the whole school as they strive to be the best they can be. The leadership team's passion for learning, personal development and the well-being of all members of the school community ensures that all pupils receive an integrated Gospel based formation and education.

### **KEY STRENGTHS OF THE SCHOOL INCLUDE:**

- The vision and commitment of the Governors, Head teacher and his leadership team in creating the climate for a truly inclusive and global expression of Catholic education is inspirational.
- The relationships, behaviours for learning and warmth of welcome of the school is outstanding.
- The witness to the centrality of Christ and the vitality of worship are outstanding.

### **AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT:**

- In order to move Word from good to outstanding, further develop a more consistent approach to marking, differentiated learning objectives, higher order questioning skills and success criteria in order to raise teacher and pupil expectations.
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- Incorporate into the structured CPD programme additional opportunities to support all aspects of the Catholic life of the school.

