

INSPECTION REPORT

St Peter’s RC Primary School, St Peter’s Road, Newchurch-in-Rossendale, BB4 4EZ.

Inspection date Wednesday 1st July 2015

Reporting Inspector Mr Andrew Sowerby
 Mr Des Burns

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

Type of School Primary
 URN 119664
 Age range of pupils 4-11 years
 Number on roll 131
 Appropriate authority The Governing Body
 Chair of Governors Mrs Ann Goy
 Headteacher Mrs Helen Sullivan
 Religious Education Subject Leader Mrs Helen Sullivan
 Date of previous inspection May 2010

The Inspection judgements are:	Grade	Explanation of the Grades 1 = Outstanding 2 = Good 3=Requires Improvement 4 = Inadequate
Overall effectiveness of the school	1	
The quality of Catholic Leadership	1	
The quality of the Word of God community	1	
The quality of the Welcome community	1	
The quality of Welfare	1	
The quality of Worship	1	
The quality of Witness	1	
The following pages provide reasons to support these judgements		

CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT OF THE SCHOOL

St Peter's RC Primary School is smaller than the average sized school, although the number on roll of 131 has increased by 46% since 2007. Children come from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds. The majority are of white British heritage. The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium is below average, although it has recently grown and is now more in line with national average. The proportion of children who have learning difficulties and or disabilities has declined in recent years and is slightly below the national average. Attendance has improved in recent years and is now above average currently 97.5%. There are 7 teachers of which 4 are Catholic, and 3 have the Catholic Teachers Certificate or are in the process of acquiring it.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL

St Peter's is an Outstanding Catholic School. Upon entry to the school one is struck by the wonderfully warm and friendly welcome given to all. Children are provided with a Catholic education in a caring and supportive environment. Children take a great pride in the school, which is fully inclusive. The Word of God is central to the life of the school. This ensures the pastoral and spiritual needs of all families and children are very well met. The dedicated headteacher, highly supportive deputy headteacher and leadership team have high expectations of adults and children. Together with the hard working staff they have created an ethos where everyone recognises the need to work together as a 'family', showing love and concern for all its members. This work is further enhanced by the support of a very effective governing body.

THE KEY STRENGTHS OF THE SCHOOL ARE:

- The quality of leadership at all levels.
- The quality of teaching and learning, which ensures that the word of God is given high priority.
- The Catholic Life of the school, which results in the outstanding welfare provision for all.
- The exceptional welcome provided to all connected with the school.
- The opportunities provided for the children to take an active part in the faith life of the school.

THE QUALITY OF CATHOLIC LEADERSHIP is OUTSTANDING

The quality of Catholic leadership is outstanding. There is very strong leadership at all levels of the school community, which contributes significantly to the outstanding provision for Catholic education that the school currently provides. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and leadership team provide an extremely clear vision for the school. They provide outstanding role models for the whole school community and as a result the development of the Catholic life of the school is at the forefront of its work. They are supported by a knowledgeable and well informed governing body. The school has a clear plan for developing RE across the school and this is reflected in the priority it is given. Evidence for this can be found in the school's clear self-evaluation plan, which is based on the 5Ws model. The school is aware of its next steps and has clear plans for implementing them. As a result, the inspectors can verify that the evaluation is both accurate and reflective. The effective governing body share the headteacher's vision for the school and it is implementing a strategic plan to enlarge the school building to further enhance the learning environment. This is necessary due to the expansion of numbers in recent years.

THE QUALITY OF THE WORD OF GOD IS OUTSTANDING

The school's mission statement is clearly displayed throughout the school. It is known, lived and witnessed to and is evident at every level. Consequently, it has developed in the children a great sense of pride and belonging to the Catholic family of St Peter's. This was evidenced in the confident manner in which the children could explain how the mission statement had been improved in order to make it more child friendly. The staffing and resources devoted to RE are of the highest standard, reflecting its significance and importance in the school. Teaching is outstanding across the school, with many examples of excellent practice. Pupils are challenged to engage with the 'Big Questions' of the

purpose and meaning of life across the curriculum. This could be seen particularly in those lessons where children were challenged to implement the gospel message in their own lives. Examples of this were seen in Upper Key Stage 2 where the children were challenged to make comparisons between their Catholic beliefs and those of other faiths. In Key Stage 1, the children were provided with clear opportunities on how to live out the gospel message in their own life. Scripture is clearly known, understood and made relevant throughout the school. This could be seen both in the classrooms, on the high quality displays around the school, as well as from discussions with the children. Overall, the standards of attainment, progress and hence achievement, are outstanding. As the curriculum is based on the school's mission, it is challenging, interesting and fulfilling. The children are developing age appropriate knowledge and skills. The school has incorporated "The Way, The Truth and the Life" scheme, which is well supplemented by other RE resources resulting in learning that is outstanding. Work in RE is clearly as excellent as work in other subjects due to the high priority given to it in school. This was seen by inspectors during the scrutiny of both the RE and English books, where marking was consistently good in RE. In all classrooms there is clear evidence of the centrality of prayer and worship in the children's lives and how this is linked to the RE curriculum. Pupils demonstrate their understanding of Christian service by leading, organising and responding to the needs of the community. This can be seen in the number of charities that the school supports. These are not just the Catholic charities such as CAFOD and St Joseph's Penny but also the support the school gives to other local charities such as Derian House and Cancer Research.

THE QUALITY OF WELCOME IS OUTSTANDING

St Peter's is a school where everyone feels welcome. The school's mission statement and new vision motto at the entrance to the school highlight the importance the school places on making sure that all members of the school community are part of God's family. Parents were keen to express their views by saying "It is a close knit community, a real family" and that the welcome you get at the school is "truly outstanding". The importance of the dignity of the individual is clearly evident at all levels. This could be seen in the way that pupils and staff treated children with special educational needs. The inspectors noticed the warmth of welcome given to both parents and children at both the start and the end of the school day. All members of the school community demonstrate a very high level of belonging and ownership of the school. Pupils are given a high level of responsibility in creating and sustaining the school's sense of welcome. The school chaplaincy team, and school council, along with the head boy and head girl, are examples of initiatives which have enabled the children to feel very proud of their school and its achievements. Parents are welcome into school and are encouraged to engage in their child's learning. This could clearly be seen in the way that staff from the EYFS and Key Stage 1 classes met parents at the start of the school day and discussed with them any concerns that they had. Parents are kept informed and up to date about the curriculum and events in school through the use of the detailed school newsletter and school website. The school also ensures that the voice of the children is heard and respected. The children were keen to express their opinion about the changes they have brought about in school, such as the provision of improved play facilities and the development of the outdoor area. School relationships are of the highest quality. Older children care for the younger ones and support staff work hard to ensure playtimes are fun and peaceful. The 'Guardian Angels' project is an outstanding example of where the school ensures that children do not feel excluded or isolated during break times. Consequently the children's behaviour is outstanding.

THE QUALITY OF WELFARE IS OUTSTANDING

The staff and pupils demonstrate a very high level of respect, care and service to others. This was witnessed in all classes where children feel confident and secure enough to tend to their personal needs without interrupting the learning of others. Staff take particular care to ensure that children's personal safety is well catered for. Structures and procedures ensure that all pupils and staff feel safe and are treated with respect and dignity. This was evidenced in the way that members of staff cared for children who were hurt or unwell. The Christ-centred ethos is loving, creative, highly positive and fosters understanding, empathy and forgiveness. All pupils and staff feel safe and free to express their opinions and know that these will be valued. The budget, staffing and resourcing decisions demonstrate a consistent commitment to Catholic stewardship throughout the school. The school is fully inclusive and lives out its mission to support all children by ensuring that children who require it receive additional support in order to fully access the curriculum. Calm support is offered by sensitive adults when children have difficulty remaining on task. Such role models ensure learning and good relationships develop. This could be seen in the way that children with special educational needs

were managed within the classroom so that a purposeful learning environment was encountered. As one child put it "I love St. Peter's because everyone is kind, loving and sharing whilst learning is fun". Staff have high expectations of the children and in this atmosphere the children thrive.

THE QUALITY OF THE WORSHIP IS OUTSTANDING

The school provides a variety of high quality worship opportunities for all pupils including whole school, small and large group gatherings which are appropriate to their backgrounds and faith experiences. Children are encouraged to participate in voluntary acts of worship, for example saying together the rosary during the month of October. Both adults and children work collaboratively in the planning and delivery of the acts of worship. This could be seen very clearly during the morning assembly when the children were asked to reflect upon the message of St Teresa of Avila and how to apply it in their own lives. Further examples of this were seen in the engaging worship witnessed within the classroom. The school chaplaincy team have begun to make a significant impact upon the development of the prayer life of the school and are confident in leading and delivering unique, well thought out and planned acts of worship. Pupils are comfortable with their feelings and have a good and knowledgeable vocabulary. Each class has a special area of focus. The children know many school prayers and compose powerful prayers for themselves. In many classes, there were examples of displays of the children's own prayers. There are good links between the parish and the school particular with regard to the preparation of the children for the Sacraments of Initiation. Attractive displays are used to show and stimulate prayer opportunities. Hymns, music and singing enhanced the quality and enjoyment of prayer in school.

THE QUALITY OF WITNESS IS OUTSTANDING

All staff act as excellent role models for the children and help them in recognising that God is with them in every aspect of school life. Adults and pupils witness to the mission statement of the school, which informs everything and is explicit in policies and the lived experience of the whole community. Examples of this were seen in all classrooms, where the gospel message is highlighted and children are provided with clear opportunities to reflect upon how they can implement this in their lives. Therefore the staff and pupils feel confident and secure in their witness to Christ, the Gospel and the teachings of the Church. Pupils are actively encouraged and supported in being pro-active citizens, who participate in the decision-making processes at a local and national level. This is seen in the way the school supports various charities so as to promote support for the Common Good. Examples of this work include support for CARITAS, CAFOD, Cornerstones and many of the local community based ones.

AGREED AREA FOR DEVELOPMENT:

- To ensure the adult chaplain has an effective impact on the development of the faith life of the school.

Wednesday 1st July 2015

Dear Pupils,

Thank you for making our visit to St Peter's so enjoyable when we came to inspect your school for the Bishop. We really enjoyed being with you. Thank you for looking after us so well and helping us to feel very welcome. St Peter's is an outstanding Catholic school.

We enjoyed being part of your lessons and were sorry not to see everyone. Thank you for showing us so much of your work and activities. We could see that you are very proud of your school and all that you have achieved together. We were particularly impressed that you considered the most important part of your learning and life together was that you *'felt connected to one another as all part of God's family'*. We know the Bishop will be delighted to hear this.

Your teachers are really helping you to learn very well and we were very impressed by your relationships and behaviour. It was good to see so much of your new mission statement coming through everything you are learning; your relationships and the special way you make everyone feel valued. It is wonderful to see a school made up of pupils and adults who get on so well together, so that everyone is cared for as a member of God's family. This is a true reflection of being part of a Catholic community where everyone is welcome.

Your teachers have found many interesting and creative ways to enhance the Religious Education they teach you. St Peter's is a very creative school and we were most impressed by the way you work together co-operatively in lessons. The prayer services we saw were very good and uplifting experiences. We have asked your teachers to continue to develop the School Chaplaincy Team so as to help you all understand more about your faith and relationship with God.

God bless you all and have a really happy summer holiday.

Yours sincerely,

Mr A.J Sowerby
Mr D Burns
(Section 48 Inspectors)

On 1th July 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.

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