



Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection report for St Peter's RC Primary School, Newchurch

URN:119664
Carried out on behalf of the **Right Rev. John Arnold, Bishop of Salford** on:

Date:6th-7th July 2023

Overall effectiveness The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school.....	1
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Religious education (p.5) The quality of curriculum religious education.....	1
Collective worship (p.7) The quality and range of liturgy and prayer provided by the school.....	1
The school is fully compliant with the curriculum requirements laid down by the Bishops' Conference	✓
The school is fully compliant with all requirements of the diocesan bishop	✓
The school has responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection	Fully

Summary of key findings

What the school does well

- Staff and governors, led by an inspirational head teacher, have high expectations in all areas of Catholic life, religious education and collective worship, so that pupils at St Peter's receive the very best in Catholic education.
- All staff embrace the mission statement, enabling the Catholic life and mission to become the beating heart of the school and the driver for all decisions and interactions.
- Pupils' work demonstrates religious literacy and leads to them being able to synthesize learning in creative way.
- Pupils have a clearly developed articulation and understanding of how their role as missionary disciples impacts upon the common good and service to those in need.

- The school places the highest priority on inspirational liturgical formation and the planning of prayer and liturgy. This is central to the life of the school and led by the head teacher and a highly skilled adult leader of chaplaincy.

What the school needs to improve:

- To further deepen learning in religious education through developing pupil confidence in asking incisive questions of adults and peers.
- To guide pupils to evaluate the quality of prayer and liturgy they have planned in order to identify future improvements.
- Work towards synchronising the present curriculum with the new *Religious Education Directory*.

Catholic life and mission

How faithfully the school responds to the call to live as a Catholic community at the service of the Church’s educational mission.

Catholic life and mission key judgement grade:.....

1

Pupil outcomes

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

1

Provision

The quality of provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school

1

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school

1



The St Peter’s mission, to unlock potential with the keys of love, respect and friendship, is apparent in all aspects of the school’s life. Pupils are able to articulate how this is lived day to day through their relationships with others and the wider community. Pupils grow in understanding of their God-given, unique role in society and see themselves as missionary disciples. They have a strong commitment to Catholic Social Teaching and service to others, shown through chaplaincy challenges, class charity focuses and other projects. The school supports a range of charities including the Diocesan Caritas charity and others supporting areas such as mental health and hospice care. A Year 6 child collects crisp packets to transform into blankets for the homeless. Pupils talk about how they continue St Peter’s work and about how their service is rooted in Gospel and Pope Francis’ teachings. As a result, they show deep respect for one another and all in society. Behaviour is excellent and children relish the opportunity to take on leadership roles. The chaplaincy provision is well led by both adults and pupils, supported by the parish and families through challenges, for example, a recent Laudato Si’ inspired litter pick encouraged the community into action. Active participation also involved chaplains and prayer leaders in delivering ‘random acts of kindness’ to members of the school community. The chaplaincy award is valued by all including those that nominate others and those who receive it.

The school’s mission statement is regularly reviewed by a range of stakeholders and is known by all. It is rooted in the ten Christian values, central to the life of the school and used as the foundation for all interactions. One parent commented that the school’s values act as a compass to direct their child’s journey through life. Staff tangibly support the mission through activities such as Sacramental programme, Masses, outreach work, fundraising and the prayer life of the school. There is a strong culture of joy and welcome recognised by pupils, their families, staff and wider

community. Visitors are overwhelmed by the quality of welcome and children new to the school are supported exceptionally well. Staff talk about seeing all in the school community as ‘family’, and this means they go the extra mile to ensure all, including the most vulnerable, experience excellent pastoral care. One staff member responded, ‘the love and warmth enveloped me’. A parent commented, “St Peter’s is simply amazing”. The school’s chaplaincy provision is witness to the flourishing of all with high quality, sequential and progressive experiences throughout the school. The weekly ‘stay and pray’ opportunities are valued by families, a significant number of whom join in with pupil led liturgical prayer. Through the ‘*Life to the Full*’ relationships, sex and health education programme, statutory and diocesan recommendations are fulfilled. Education in personal development is rooted in the teaching of the Church. Pupils are able to confidently articulate and make links between what is taught and their own experiences. In a Year 1 class, pupils learning about emotions were able to clearly and confidently articulate their own response to a range of scenarios.

Leaders, including governors, are highly ambitious and take seriously their duty as guardians of the mission and are relentless in ensuring that the school is well resourced, focused on ensuring all pupils receive equality of opportunity and that staff are well supported. The school places itself at the service of the parish and diocese in a variety of ways. In June 2023, the school was awarded ‘Supportive School of the Year’ at the Pride of Rossendale awards. The faith governor regularly attends school collaborative events, ensuring first-hand experience of the Catholic life of the school. Governors have explicit and concrete commitment to the mental and physical wellbeing of staff, shown through spending decisions, staffing appointments and strategic decision making which also ensures the preferential option for the poor is prioritized. Bespoke adult intervention, throughout the school, is of a high quality and positively impacts on pupil progress.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade:.....

1

Pupil outcomes

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education.....

1

Provision

The quality of teaching, learning, and assessment in religious education.....

1

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor, and evaluate the provision for religious education.....

1



Pupils at St Peter’s, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make consistently good progress and, as a result, achieve the best possible outcomes. Pupils are religiously literate and able to think ethically and theologically. For example, when Key Stage 2 pupils were considering the big question, ‘How did the world begin?’, they were able to creatively explore various theories; one child said, ‘God made the world so we can thrive in it’. They all concluded that God is a master designer. Work is of a consistently high quality, and pupils are proud of what they achieve and are then able to apply this to daily life contexts. One child spoke about how, in an explore challenge activity, they chose to write about how King Charles III is an example of witness to environmental stewardship, and the Holy Spirit is at work through this. Pupils are reflective and engaged learners who approach lessons with great interest, passion and enthusiasm. They are able to articulate how they have made progress in their religious education. Strong and consistent learning enables pupils to reflect spiritually and think morally about their lives. They know what it means to behave in a religious way and this shapes their words and actions. Pupils speak articulately, using religious vocabulary to describe what they have learned. They are inquisitive and curious. For example, Reception pupils articulately discussed learning about the calming of the storm through story, role play and written activities.

Teachers have high expectations of their pupils. Lessons are well planned and engaging. As a result, children learn extremely well. Throughout lessons seen, teachers and support staff questioned skillfully and adapted teaching to maximise learning. Children are highly motivated and clear of next steps because of relevant and specific feedback given by their teachers. Time is provided in lessons for purposeful reflection, either silent, or with talk partners, to deepen understanding and lead into written activity. In the Upper Key Stage 2 class, reflecting on Pope Francis’ words, children were all able to articulate verbally and in writing why nature would not forgive human destruction of their

common home. Due to this, their moral and spiritual development and ability to apply learning to a real world context is significantly advanced. A wide use of resources, including additional adults, are used in lessons to stimulate pupils and extend their learning. Pupils feel proud of their books and are keen to share them. A parent said their child loves religious education lessons and often re-creates learning at home.

The school confidently and effectively delivers the *'Come and See'* programme, which is used creatively and supplemented with personal and imaginative activities. Governors ensure religious education has full parity with other core curriculum areas. The thematic curriculum reinforces key religious education learning across the curriculum. For example, themes of *Laudato Si'* and pollution influenced the school's dance entry into a Rossendale-wide competition. High quality professional development accessed by the school has led to significant confidence in teaching religious education. One teacher commented, 'with the head teacher's guidance, we are keen to do better, always!'. Teachers have a high level of confidence shown through their subject knowledge, high expectations and deep commitment to the teaching of religious education. Skilled teaching assistants are used very effectively to optimise learning for all pupils, especially those with additional needs. The head teacher, who takes responsibility for religious education has an inspiring vision. She has high expectations for excellence in religious education. The link governor for religious education, who is the chair of governors, is a frequent visitor to the school and prepares evaluative reports of visit that are shared with the governing board. Leaders' and governors' have been fully involved in the formulation of the Catholic self-evaluation document. They have a clear path for improvement and accurately evaluate the school's provision.

Collective worship

The quality and range of liturgy and prayer provided by the school.

Collective worship key judgement grade:.....

1

Pupil outcomes

How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

1

Provision

The quality of collective worship provided by the school

1

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for collective worship

1

Pupils demonstrate a deep and conscious participation in prayer and liturgy. Music and singing are integral to prayer and liturgy at St Peter’s. A clearly planned progression of levels of pupil leadership in prayer and worship has led to them being confident and passionate leaders. They have a clear sense of ownership of the prayerful experiences they are part of. For example, in a lunchtime worship workshop in the holy hut, pupil chaplains, together with the skilled adult leader of chaplaincy, enthusiastically led a thoughtful and creative series of experiences for many pupils. Due to the school’s provision of liturgical formation, pupils are able to undertake a range of liturgical ministries with confidence, for example children led actions to hymns, including the specially written school song. In stay and pray experiences, children prepare focus tables using artefacts, Bibles and liturgical colours. Older pupils select scripture appropriate for the theme, leading to a growing familiarity with a range of scripture passages.

Gatherings for liturgy and routines of prayer are central to the daily life of St Peter’s. The use of a gathering song signifies the start of all routine acts of worship in the school. The mission motto is recited at the end of all prayer. Children know their mission. Staff, including senior leaders, engage fully in prayer and liturgy and are inspiring models of exemplary practice to others. The adult leader of chaplaincy is highly skilled in helping pupils to confidently plan and lead prayer appropriate to the liturgical norms of the church. Established and inspiring mindfulness experiences, following a Lectio Divina approach benefit the pupils’ spiritual development. Well-chosen scripture passages, informed by the liturgical season, thread through prayer and liturgy and ensure that all children can fully and actively participate. Space, both inside and outside, is used imaginatively for large scale and more intimate prayer experiences. For example, Upper Key Stage 2 pupils led liturgical prayer in the woodland area – and were joined by the school dog, Fable. Families are invited to engage in the prayer life of the school by attending stay and pray and other assemblies. One parent said, ‘It is

truly heartwarming listening to the children's responses and discussions. This sets me up for the day.' There are strong links between the school and the parish which enable a fuller participation in liturgy. The parish priest is a regular visitor to the school and the children value his pastoral support at lunchtimes.

The annual reviewing of the school's prayer and worship policy ensures it remains relevant, current and fully reflective of the lived worshipping experiences of the school community. From the very beginning of their school journey, it is clear that children have opportunities to participate in, lead, contribute to and shape their own prayer and worship experiences at an age-appropriate level. Governors are a key part of the worshipping community, which allows for first-hand knowledge and experience of the school's policy in action. Masses and services for holy days and other special occasions, including St Peter's day, are included in a yearly plan. School leaders work alongside the parish to ensure a highly effective programme for sacramental preparation. Parents and children engage fully and complete a reflection journal in partnership with school and parish. This excellent practice is shared locally within cluster networks. Training and professional development is given high priority, as is the monitoring and evaluation of prayer and liturgy. Staff receive regular feedback to support the continued enrichment of their practice. There is an expectation from everyone that prayer is at the heart of the school. As a result, there is a real pride in the quality of provision which enables all participants to become closer to God.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Peter's RC Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	119664
Full postal address of the school	St Peter's Road, Rossendale, Lancashire, BB4 9EZ
School phone number	01706 229972
Name of head teacher or principal	Mrs. Helen Sullivan
Chair of governing board	Mrs. Ann Goy
School Website	https://www.stpetersrc.com/
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	N/A
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age-range of pupils	4-11
Trustees	Diocese of Salford
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	1 st July 2015
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

The inspection team

Mr. Martin Johnson	Lead inspector
Mrs. Marie Kwiatkowski	Team inspector
Name of inspector	Lead/team
Name of inspector	Lead/team

Key to grade judgements

Grade	England	Wales
1	Outstanding	Excellent
2	Good	Good
3	Requires improvement	Adequate and requires improvement

4	Inadequate	Unsatisfactory and in need of urgent improvement
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