



DIOCESE OF PLYMOUTH

INSPECTION REPORT

St. Peter's RC Primary
Brentford Avenue, Whiteleigh, Plymouth, PL5 4HD
Telephone: 01752 217010
e-mail address: admin@st-petersrc.plymouth.sch.uk

DfE Number: 879 3766
URN: 140784

Headteacher: Mr T Moran
Chair of Governors: Mrs R Green

This report to the Bishop of the Diocese under Canon 806 of the Code of Canon Law is also the report to the governors of the school on religious education. For Catholic maintained schools, the report also fulfils the requirements of Section 48 of the Education Act 2005.

Date of inspection: 24th March 2023
Date of previous inspection: 25th/26th March 2015

Reporting Inspector: Mrs A Fowler
Additional Inspector: Miss N Slack

Description of school

The school is a smaller than average primary school which serves the parish of St Peters and takes some pupils from the northern part of the city which embodies the parishes of Crownhill and Southway. 42% of the pupils are considered to be disadvantaged, with 34% of the pupils baptised Catholics. Approximately 41% of pupils are eligible for free school meals. Since the last inspection there have been a number of staff and governor changes. The present Headteacher has been in post since September 2021

Overall effectiveness of this Catholic school (summary statement)

Grade 1

This is an outstanding school because:

- Catholic life and mission are a strength of the school and a priority area for leaders and governors.
- The principles of Catholic Social Teaching are understood and lived out by the school community
- The school is inclusive and actively supports and helps pupils to appreciate and value difference and to treat others with respect.
- The mission statement and vision of the school are embedded into school life and pupils are able to connect these virtues to the way they live.
- Prayer and worship are central to the life of the school and planned for in a systematic way in keeping with the liturgical life of the Church.
- Religious Education is a core subject within the school and given a high priority by leaders and governors who have high expectations for the subject.
- Staff receive a programme of continuing professional development to help and support them in both delivering Religious Education and understanding the Catholic life of the school.
- Pupils and parents speak positively about the school and the pastoral care provided.

The capacity of the school community to improve and develop is outstanding because:

- All issues since the last inspection have been addressed.
- The school's self-evaluation is accurate.
- Leaders and governors have high expectations and a clear vision of how to improve the school.
- The school works in partnership with the parish, diocese and other organisations to develop the mission of the school.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that pupils are developing the necessary skills to be able to self-evaluate their own progress in Religious Education.
- Review the Religious Education curriculum to explore more creative approaches to greater depth.
- Review the Religious Education curriculum to ensure there is a consistent focus on depth of knowledge.
- Extend the chaplaincy provision so that all pupils have the opportunity to become leaders of prayer.

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

- Pupils are given opportunities to take on leadership roles within the school community. Pupils representing each class take part in the School Council which can make representations about aspects of school life. Volunteers become school and class chaplains. Older pupils support younger pupils in the playground. There is a 'worry bench' where younger pupils can come to and receive help from older pupils. Various clubs and activities help develop their sense of responsibility including an Eco Club and a Fair-Trade Club
- Pupils actively put the principles of Catholic Social Teaching into practice through their work for others. For example, pupils supported 'Sleep on the floor' campaign raising awareness of homelessness in Plymouth and took part in the CAFOD Lent 'Walk for Hunger'
- Pupils appreciate work that enables them to learn about other cultures and faiths. They show respect for others, value difference and behave well within the school.
- The school's mission statement is well known as are the virtues the school promotes. They value the fact that they receive awards based on these virtues which encourages them to model these values in school. Some of the virtues however are difficult for younger pupils to understand and the school needs to explore how to make these concepts simpler to increase understanding.

b) The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school

- The school's mission statement is visible throughout the school as are the virtues the school has adopted. Consequently, they are well known by all pupils. The mission statement was a cooperative effort by parents, pupils and staff produced during lockdown, because of this all stakeholders feel they have some ownership of the mission.
- The Catholic identity of the school is visible throughout the building with appropriate displays relating to themes being studied or the liturgical year. The work the school undertakes in putting in the principles of Catholic Social teaching is exemplary and as consequence pupils are aware of how faith finds expression in life. All pupils during the inspection were aware of the Pope's encyclicals 'Laudato Si' and 'Fratelli Tutti' and were able to explain these and talk about the need to, 'care for our world' and 'care for each other'.
- The pastoral care of staff, pupils and parents is given a high priority by the school. The school has also received the 'Oscar Romero Award' at participatory level which as well as ensuring the school promotes social justice also ensures the school promotes

human dignity in its policies and practices. The school also works with various organisations like the St Vincent De Paul Society and Plymouth City Council to actively support those in need.

- The relationship programme adopted by the school is inline with diocesan recommendations. This has been consulted on with parents and adapted to suit the specific needs of the school. In particular the school has given consideration as to how the course may be adapted for pupils with special educational needs. Staff were provided with training to ensure they understand the principles.

c) How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school

- Leaders and governors see the Catholic life of the school as a key priority and have taken effective steps to monitor and evaluate this. They regularly carry out staff, parent and student surveys. There are regular monitoring visits by governors who then feedback to the governing body. As a consequence, they are knowledgeable and can plan effectively for future improvement. The Catholic Life of the school is a standing item at Governor meetings.
- Leaders and governors ensure that Catholic life and mission is part of the performance management agenda and have a clear plan for further development.
- The curriculum for the topic webs for each term incorporates both a specific virtue and an aspect of Catholic Social Teaching which is then linked through to planning.
- The school takes seriously its commitment to diocesan initiatives. School chaplains are looking at how they respond to the Synod and have visited other schools to share ideas. Pupil chaplains also went to Plymouth Cathedral to represent the school at the diocesan Mass for the environment. Staff attend training provided by the diocese and have growing links with the parish.

a) How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education

- Most pupils made good progress in each key stage and special educational needs pupils are making progress comparable to other groups.
- Pupils are well behaved in lessons and most enjoy Religious Education. They are curious and inquiring and enjoy the opportunity to pose questions of their own. They value the opportunities to learn about other faiths which they see as helping them understand the world they live in.
- The integrated approach to Catholic Social Teaching has meant that all pupils were able to talk knowledgeably about the impact of faith on life especially in areas relating to the care for the earth and our responsibilities to each other.
- Some pupils would like to see a more creative approach in lessons.
- Pupils want to improve their work but are largely dependant on teachers to know what they need to do to improve their work as a result they don't yet have a sufficient grasp of how well they are doing

b) The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education

- Teachers have high expectations for pupils and relationships within the classroom are good, and achievement celebrated. Consequently, most pupils respond well and seek to improve their work.
- Teachers use questioning to deepen pupils' knowledge and model answers to help develop understanding. Pupils are offered opportunities to work collaboratively and in partnership with other pupils.
- The school provides regular input for teachers on the topics being taught in Religious Education, consequently most teachers feel confident in their subject knowledge however there are some areas of the curriculum which lack depth as a result pupils understanding of particular areas needs improving.
- Assessment is ongoing and more set assessment tasks take place six times a year in accordance with diocesan policy. These pieces are moderated with other schools so teachers can be confident in using the data. The data is then used to identify pupils who may need further support.
- Other adults are deployed effectively in the classroom, for example one child whose first language was not English was being supported in translating the tasks. In some lessons they also help record pupil comments to evidence the learning taking place.
- In most lessons pupils are given the opportunity to respond to feedback however this is not consistent across the school. Teachers need to provide more opportunities and guidance, so some pupils are more skilled at self-assessment.

c) How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education

- The Religious Education curriculum is fully compliant with Bishops' Conference requirements and the assessment procedures are compliant with the requirements of CAST.
- Assessment procedures are fully in place and used effectively to track the progress of pupils and provide information to support progress.
- Senior leaders and governors monitor and evaluate provision on a regular basis. This includes, pupil conferencing, looking at pupil work and lesson observations. As a result of these activities a Religious Education action plan has been drawn up to further improve the subject. The curriculum leader has a clear vision for improvement.

a) How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship

- Pupils show with respect and reverence when taking part in prayer and worship. They sing with enthusiasm and speak of valuing the opportunities for silence and reflection.
- Pupils participate in prayer through writing and reading prayers. Class chaplains are beginning to lead prayer within their own classrooms, they take responsibility by keeping the prayer area tidy, helping to change the colour of the liturgical season on the prayer area, choosing music for prayer time or the focus for class prayer. School chaplains have planned and led worship, for example, by delivering a virtue worship on King Charles and an assembly on the diocesan synod. These opportunities need to be further developed
- Pupils are encouraged through the Virtues assemblies to think ethically and spiritually. In the celebration assembly pupils are chosen as role-models for the specific virtue being followed; because clear reasons are given for why pupils have been chosen this further develops their understanding.

b) The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school

- Prayer is central to the life of the school. Praying together is part of the daily experience of pupils and staff. Within the classroom prayers are displayed to be used at specific times during the day. All classrooms have a focal area devoted to prayer which correctly represents the liturgical season and there is a dedicated prayer room at the heart of the school which pupils regularly use. There is also an outdoor prayer space for pupils to use.
- The liturgical pattern of the Church's Year is emphasised through displays around the school and in classrooms. Mass is celebrated in school on a termly basis and on Holy Days. The local clergy are regular visitors to the school.
- The themes chosen for prayer are a reflection of the liturgical year with Monday's assembly reflecting the Sunday Gospel. Connections are made to Catholic Social Teaching and how these impact on life. As a result of this pupils are encouraged to think ethically and spiritually.
- Parents are invited to attend prayer and worship and pupils have spoken in parish Masses to invite parishioners to the school to celebrate Mass.

c) How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the prayer life of the school.

- The prayer life of the school is seen as a priority and regularly monitored and evaluated by leaders and governors. This includes observations of class and whole school prayer, conversations and surveys with pupils and formal governor evaluation visits. Leaders and governors have therefore an accurate idea of actions needed to further improve this area and take account of the experiences of pupils.
- Senior leaders model prayer and are highly visible as leaders of prayer. They have an excellent knowledge of the Church's liturgical year and incorporate this into planning.
- Professional development for staff to develop their skills in understanding prayer and helping pupils become leaders is provided on a regular basis, for example on the Mass, and on working with pupil chaplains.

Summary of Parental Questionnaires

There were 39 parental questionnaires returned all of which were extremely positive about the school. Parents comments included.

"We want Jesus to be central in the lives of our children and St Peters enables this"

"It has encouraged my children to develop morally and empathetically. I believe this has been encouraged through their discussions during their religious studies lessons"

Other parents spoke of the school as a family.

"A friendly school with strong values and a friendly, welcoming atmosphere".

Parents also commented on support from staff for example, "Staff are very caring"

There is "personal attention to students and families"

"The help they give us not only with school but everyday life in general"