

**ARCHDIOCESE OF SOUTHWARK
COMMISSION FOR SCHOOLS & COLLEGES**



SECTION 48 INSPECTION REPORT

Canonical Inspection under Canon 806 on behalf of the
Archbishop of Southwark and inspection of
Denominational Education under Section 48
Of the Education Act 2005
URN 101665

St Peter and St Paul Catholic Primary School
St Paul's Wood Hill
Orpington
Kent
BR5 2SR

Chair of Governors
Headteacher
Inspectors

Mr Philip Dowling
Mrs Joanna Seymour
Mr Stephen Beck
Mr Jared Brading

Inspection dates 28th March 2012

**ARCHDIOCESE OF SOUTHWARK
COMMISSION FOR SCHOOLS & COLLEGES
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Introduction

Description of the school

St Peter and St Paul Catholic Primary School is voluntary aided. It is situated in the Bromley Deanery of the Archdiocese of Southwark. It is maintained by Bromley Local Authority. The principal parish which the school serves is Our Lady of the Crays, Cray Valley. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholics is 44%. The average weekly proportion of curriculum time given to religious education is 10% in all Key Stages.

The school takes pupils from 4 to 11 years. The number of pupils currently on roll is 216. The attainment of pupils on entering the school is broadly average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is average. Around 22% of the pupils receive extra support in class. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups, at more than a third, is higher than average with the largest group being of Black African heritage. The proportion of pupils from homes where English is an additional language is below average although this figure is rising.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding	Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 2	Good	Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness as a Catholic school

The inspectors recognise that St Peter and St Paul Catholic Primary School is moving forward, under the stewardship of the relatively new headteacher, following a period of significant transition. It is commendable how the school's own self evaluation demonstrates the headteacher's clear awareness of the school's strengths and areas for development, which the inspectors have been able to validate. The headteacher has quickly established a very positive atmosphere in the school that will support maintenance of its Catholic character and at the same time raise standards. This is well linked to the school's own improvement plan. Relationships in the school are good and leaders, staff and pupils live out their stated mission to; "Learn about Jesus and how to love and forgive", which is explicit in all they do. As a parent wrote, *"The school promotes a loving and caring environment, whilst ensuring the children are well instructed in the teachings of the Catholic faith."*

The very child centred mission statement gives a strong context to the school's child centred approach to education where every endeavour is beginning to be made to give all pupils the opportunity to excel and achieve to their best potential.

The school meets the needs of a majority of its pupils all of whom receive effective pastoral care, guidance and support. Care and support given to families was noted as a strength in the school's last inspection report and this continues to be so. The community has a shared vision for the school which is becoming increasingly embedded placing it in a good position to move forward. The school has addressed the two issues identified in the last inspection which has seen more rigorous methods of assessment established along with moderation throughout the year. A portfolio of pupils' work is maintained by the religious education leader and the school's management information system is used to provide tracking data. Pupils are happy at school and provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is firmly rooted in Gospel values.

Good work has been undertaken in the area of assessment and this is ongoing. This is well supported through attendance at Diocesan subject leader meetings, the annual Religious Education conference and Deanery cluster meetings by the headteacher and assistant headteacher who lead this subject. This distributed leadership is highly effective and will provide well for future succession planning in this curriculum area.

The previous Parish Priest was a regular visitor to the school. His support in the planning of liturgies and the chaplaincy role he provided to staff, pupils and their families was greatly appreciated by all. Following the induction of a new Parish Priest these links are planned to be continued and built on.

This commitment from the new Parish Priest has been greatly welcomed by the school community. The Governors are providing increasingly effective leadership to the Catholic life of the school and the maintenance of its ethos.

Grade 2

What steps need to be taken to improve further?

- Continue to develop the assessment and tracking of individual pupil's progress through the building of staff confidence in levelling and moderation of pupils work, so that assessment has an even greater impact on attainment
- Continue to support staff in their planning of lessons in order to ensure lessons have differentiated activities matched to the abilities of all pupils and provide for increased opportunities for independent learning
- Consider an appropriate time to review the school's approach to sex education as a part of the school's scheme for Education for Personal Relationships (EPR). This should be in consultation with governors, staff and parents, with a view to establishing a whole school cross curricular policy, with reference to the Diocesan Policy for Education in Human Love.

The Catholic life of the school

Leadership and management

Grade 2

On appointment at the start of 2011 the headteacher gave high priority to the development of the religious education curriculum, immediately drawing up an improvement plan for this area and as a result significant strides have been made with the subject having an appropriate core subject profile.

Leadership and management of the Catholic life of the school is accordingly developing well. The headteacher is committed and has a clear vision of Catholic education. As a role model she leads staff and pupils to live out Gospel values. Since taking up her appointment she has successfully implemented a range of initiatives which have had a positive impact on staff and pupil performance. There is a tangible sense of teamwork within the school's management team and it is promoting high expectations and a continual quest for improvement.

Governors have become increasingly active participants in the life of the school especially through involvement in its liturgical life. They are being kept well informed of progress being made in this curriculum area through reports from the headteacher and a foundation governor.

Through strong subject leadership by the headteacher and support from the school's leadership team and governors, a clear direction for religious education has been established that is seeing increasing levels of pupil understanding of their faith and this remains a core goal.

The parental questionnaires produced a fairly low level of response at 19.8%. The vast majority were, however, supportive of the school overall. There was a common thread in comments made requesting increased levels of communication between the school and parents. The school is aware of the need to develop this area and as a result is reviewing current written communications and the use of its newly developed website.

There has been significant developments in the area of home school parish links which has been greatly enhanced by the regular visible presence of the Parish Priest in school. There is shared use of each other's newsletters to advertise events including invitations to parishioners to attend school liturgies.

A culture has been established in the school that is seeing the ongoing monitoring of the impact of developments in order to enhance the whole learning environment. The school has an obvious 'open door' approach that parents find very helpful. They are supportive and appreciate of the increasing opportunities they are being afforded to be actively involved in the school.

Quality of provision for personal and collective worship

Grade 2

Prayer and worship are increasingly important aspects of school life. The school continues to work to provide a range of opportunities for pupils to develop their prayer life. A growing range of liturgical experiences are being provided for pupils and the school has recently updated its Collective Worship Policy to reflect these developments.

Prayer includes the traditional prayers of the Church, pupils' own prayers, meditation and sung and signed prayers which pupils are allowed to select as witnessed in a year six class.

All classes have focal areas that are well linked to topics on display boards. Lenten promises were very well incorporated into these displays. There is a broad range of displays which are of a high standard providing an excellent vehicle for the celebration of the work of pupils.

A range of liturgies and assemblies take place based around the liturgical year, the Life of Christ and the school's religious education scheme. Many of these celebrations are open to parents. In the liturgy attended, led by reception pupils, high levels of pupil participation were achieved. Their participation in prayer was notable and was further enhanced by genuinely enthusiastic singing and sung responses. A reverent atmosphere was created by all present through participation being encouraged by the giving and waving of palms drawn by pupils.

It was particularly impressive to see such young pupils able to retell the story independently and with great clarity. A passion play previously staged for parents was of a high standard and the pupils' presentation very strong. This also benefitted from the musical input from pupils which proved to be a strength reflecting the school's choral tradition which enhanced the production.

Community Cohesion

Grade 3

St Peter and St Paul School is an inclusive community that continues to welcome its pupils and their families, valuing them equally, whether from the Catholic faith, other faiths or none. A warm, friendly and welcoming atmosphere pervades the school. As a parent commented, *"This school offers good personal, cultural and social opportunities across the year groups"*. It is actively promoting community cohesion through its PHSE policy which supports pupils to grow in security and confidence, to become healthy, independent and responsible members of society giving respect to themselves and others. Pupils have an awareness of their own identity, differences and the importance of valuing the gifts and talents of each other.

Pupils enjoy taking responsibility and act as hosts at school events. They are given opportunities to take on other responsibilities such as membership of the school council, house captains and peer mentoring in the playground.

School council members felt they were able to influence decision making and gave examples of the formation of a new football team and choosing the Guide Dogs for the Blind charity to support. They were very positive about their teachers who they said, *"can be strict if they need to be"*. They were also positive about opportunities to celebrate Mass as a whole school. The school council has plans to support a child in Malawi and this will provide an opportunity to build a more global perspective to the school's approach in the area of community cohesion. There is also evidence that the school is beginning to offer increasing opportunities for pupils to participate in a growing range of community activities. Other faiths are taught through the religious education curriculum and parents indicated that they felt this aspect of the curriculum benefitted their children considerably in today's world.. ?? Pupils are very accepting and caring of peers with a range of additional needs .

The relatively new Parish Priest, whose background is in education, has confirmed his commitment to building on the school's current good parish links and this bodes well for the future.

The school makes good use of an extensive site and already planned developments will serve to enhance this provision further which it is hoped will also benefit from the school being able to make use of the vacated and now empty on-site caretakers house.

Religious education

Achievement and standards in religious education

Grade 3

The school ethos of looking after each other permeates all the school does and is equally reflected in pupils desire to help and support each other. This was reflected in a parent's comment on the questionnaire received which stated, *"My children feel very safe and happy in school. They know who to turn to if they feel there has been an injustice and the Catholic backbone of the school has helped them to understand what is right and wrong. I feel the faith aspect of the school has helped them become the kind, thoughtful children that they are"*.

Attainment on entry to the school is generally average. Increasingly effective teaching and monitoring is ensuring the pace of progress is growing.

Pupils' work is generally good and pupils clearly value their religious education books which are well set out and presented showing good subject coverage. Developmental marking was evident in pupils books but is at an early stage of development. Pupils commented positively about being given these opportunities to respond to their teachers' comments. This good practice could now be shared and developed further.

Learning objectives are clearly articulated and referred back to in lessons. Pupils make steady progress throughout the key stages and reach age related expectations. The development of religious education vocabulary is particularly well embedded and will serve to support work to extend pupils understanding and learning. Standards achieved are in line with other core subjects and are progressing. Pupils' verbal understanding of the religious education curriculum signposts the potential for standards to be further improved through linking current assessment with planning to provide more differentiated activities and opportunities for independent learning.

Teaching and learning in religious education

Grade 3

The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to good. There were clear examples of developing good practice in lessons observed. Pupils show a strong ability to work flexibly. This provides opportunities whereby the ethos of cooperation could usefully be tapped into, to develop lessons that are less teacher led or dependent upon the religious education scheme of work.

In a Year 6 lesson the topic of sacrifice was well linked to the feelings of Jesus. This lesson built well on previous learning and pupils demonstrated confidence in the use of Bibles. In a Year 3 lesson good use was made of images on the interactive whiteboard relating to Holy Week and pupils engaged in the topic, providing eloquent responses to the images relating to the demeanour of Jesus during his arrest and the act of kissing by Judas.

In lessons seen teachers set high expectations of behaviour and the pupils rise to this. Pupil behaviour is exemplary both in class and round the school and is marked by good manners and courtesy to all. These elements produce an ideal working environment. Teachers have a good rapport with pupils that sees them willingly making contributions to lessons. Classroom management is of a high order and is commendable for the highly appropriate utilisation of support staff in pupil learning. Learning objectives are prominent and appropriately shared. Pupils demonstrate an ability to relate their learning to their own lives. In the best lessons seen pupils were given opportunities to illustrate their learning in a variety of ways e.g. through role play, drama and paired discussions. ICT is consistently used to provide art and music stimuli to lessons and this could usefully be extended to provide more interactive opportunities. In all lessons seen teacher questioning was of a good standard and helped draw out pupil understanding through a consistent open ended approach, however, the lack of differentiation other than by outcome restricted more extended opportunities for learning. Pupils would also benefit from clearer and more explicit success criteria against which to measure their progress.

The religious education curriculum

Grade 2

The importance St Peter and St Paul Catholic Primary School is giving to religious education is highly commendable. The school follows the Diocesan recommended religious education scheme Here I Am. It meets the 10% allocation of teaching time to religious education as recommended.

Religious education lessons make a positive impact on the raising of pupils' self esteem through opportunities for discussion, reflection, art and drama. Increasing cross curricular links with these areas is serving to significantly enhance the religious education curriculum and the breadth of opportunities it provides for pupils to further their learning.

Pupils of all faiths are well served by the school and its religious education curriculum. They are enthusiastic about the teaching they receive. A group of year four pupils nominated religious education as their favourite subject because of the opportunities it provided to discuss themes and feelings. As a result pupils have a strong moral compass.

The school's newly established website allows older pupils use of it for homework purposes, thus offering an opportunity to improve parental understanding of taught religious education. The school is appropriately reviewing how it communicates this information to parents.

Whilst the curriculum is enriched by the school's PHSE programme there is a lack of clarity in regard to a whole school approach to Education for Personal Relationships. It may be an appropriate time to review the school's policy for this area in order to establish a whole school cross curricular policy.

Leadership and management of religious education

Grade 2

The headteacher and leadership team share a common vision of the importance of religious education and with the support of the governors have established direction of the subject through appropriate policies. There has been a collegiate approach to this work that has served subject development well. Resource provision for this area is being developed as funds permit.

The headteacher as religious education coordinator is dedicated and hardworking. She keeps religious education under review and is committed to raising standards. She has strong subject knowledge and this translates into effective subject leadership. She has established very positive staff relationships that sees her advice sought and welcomed as appropriate. She is an active participant in Diocesan religious education support. It is appropriate that the headteacher and leadership team begin to share this curriculum responsibility more widely with a view to succession planning for this area.