



## 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 101461

St Peter Chanel Catholic Primary School  
Baugh Road  
Sidcup  
DA14 5ED

Inspection date: 24 September 2015

Chair of Governors:	Mrs Mary Townsend
Headteacher:	Mrs Samantha Gower
Inspectors:	Mr Damian Fox Mrs Deirdre Wright

### EDUCATION COMMISSION

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# SECTION 48

# Introduction

## Description of the school

St Peter Chanel is a voluntary aided school for boys and girls. It is situated in the Bexley Deanery of the Archdiocese of Southwark. It is maintained by Bexley Local Authority.

The principal parish it serves is St Lawrence of Canterbury, Sidcup from which the majority of pupils come. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholics is 52%. The average weekly proportion of curriculum time given to Religious Education is 10% in Key Stages 1 and 2, and 20% in EYFS.

The school takes pupils from 4 – 11 years. The number of pupils currently on roll is 194. The attainment of pupils on entering the school is broadly average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is 8% above the national average. 17.6% of pupils are on the school's special education needs register, 2.5% of whom have a statement of need or an educational health care plan. 21% of pupils are eligible for pupil premium and 13.4% use English as an additional language.

64.4% of pupils come from white British backgrounds. The next largest ethnic group is black African, 9.7%.

Date of previous inspection:

19/10/2010

Overall Grade:

2

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding	Grade 3	Requires improvement
Grade 2	Good	Grade 4	Inadequate

# Overall effectiveness of the school in providing Catholic Education

GRADE  
2

St Peter Chanel is a good school with many outstanding features. The vision and plans for further improvement of progress in Religious Education and the Catholic life of the school show that leaders, governors and managers have a deep and sincere commitment to the Church's mission in education. The new Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher are particularly clear in their desire to ensure that the school continues to be a place of faith and learning.

It is a warm, welcoming and happy school, dedicated to the development of the spiritual, moral, academic and pastoral needs of all pupils. The physical environment inside the school and in the open spaces, has been thoughtfully refurbished and is full of religious images. They are justifiably proud of themselves and each other at the progress being made with the new school leaders.

Prayer and worship are at the heart of the daily life of the school and there is a comprehensive well-planned programme of worship linked to the liturgical year.

There are good links with the parish. Over half of Catholic pupils now attend the local parish. Nine of the Foundation Governors are also members of the parish, most of whom act as readers and parish committee members.

49% of the parents' questionnaires were returned, all of them strongly agreeing/agreeing that the school was a Catholic, caring and happy school. For example, one parent said that her children had, "received an exceptional Catholic education." Pupils said that they were safe and that they enjoyed the school and that bullying was not an issue.

The pupils displayed a pride in their school and in themselves and they are honest in acknowledging their enjoyment and their keenness to learn. Pupils at St Peter Chanel are excellent ambassadors for Catholic education.

Most of the recommendations from the last report have been successfully addressed.

## What steps need to be taken to improve further?

Governors, Headteacher and staff should:

- Continue to strengthen their partnership to enable the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher to develop as leaders of the academic and spiritual life of the school.
- Ensure that the new curriculum, 'The Way, The Truth and The Life', is effectively established and to support teachers in their use of assessment.
- Continue to put Religious Education at the centre of the curriculum by mapping it across all curriculum areas.

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

Pupils are increasingly leading and taking responsibility for contributing to and benefitting from the Catholic life of the school. They said that changes in school leadership have made them more confident and enthusiastic in sharing their faith and their views. Pupils are able to articulate an awareness and appreciation of prayer and worship. They value the regular presence of the Priest who contributes to their faith formation through his participation in assemblies and Mass. 57% of the pupils who joined the school this year are from his parish of St Lawrence.

The pride they have in the school and themselves is evident in the excellent relationships with staff and with each other. Pupils were very involved in writing a new Mission Statement. The key words, 'Inspire, Empower and Challenge', are displayed throughout the school and were referred to several times in the assembly and in the lessons inspectors observed. Pupils also contributed to redesigning the buddy system and behaviour system and analysis of data shows that the number of incidents of poor behaviour has reduced considerably. In discussions, Year 6 pupils confirmed that there was a much happier atmosphere in the school. They treat each other with high levels of respect both in class and in their recreation time.

Awareness of the needs of others in the local and wider community is evident in the many activities which are a central feature of the school. The 'Pupil Parliament' members are responsible for choosing a number of charities that they support throughout the year, such as the Manna Centre and CAFOD. This year the pupils are involved in the Global Learning Project with the Global Learning Leader and in November 2015 Year 6 pupils will participate in the Global Awareness workshop in Erith to help them understand their wider moral responsibility.

Pupils told inspectors that they are proud of their school and that they are very happy.

## **How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education**

Although the majority of children across the school are achieving at the expected level, with an increasing number exceeding, the school acknowledges that, "there are pockets where results are not so positive" and that the percentage of children making expected progress is, "lower than it should be in certain year groups."

The school's response and plans for improvement are detailed and pupils acknowledge that their lessons are now more varied and interesting. They said that they are challenged and supported and consequently, pupils are rarely off task. They have an enthusiasm in lessons regardless of the nature of the task. In the Reception class, in a lesson about the beauty of God's creation, inspectors were impressed by the reverence pupils showed when a stone was passed around. They knew it was full of their ideas about what God has created and that it was going to be placed in the Treasure Chest. In the Year 6 class, pupils were learning about how we can show we are a good Catholic. Some pupils were effectively supported by the Teaching Assistant, while higher ability pupils were able to explain how they demonstrate it and why it was important to do so. They tackled an

extended open-ended question with intelligence and enthusiasm. In all lessons, behaviour was exemplary.

### **How well pupils respond to and participate in Collective Worship**

Acts of worship engage all pupils' interests and inspire them to respond with enjoyment. In an assembly, inspectors were impressed by the lively singing with actions which all pupils from Year 6 to Reception clearly enjoyed. Pupils across all ages were keen to answer questions about how they could make somebody's life a little better. Several answers showed a depth of understanding which impressed inspectors. The new school choir sang beautifully which created a prayerful atmosphere. Pupils listened intently and reverently.

Pupils said that they are involved in preparing for worship, especially class assemblies. Every day begins with shared prayer. For example, in one class pupils started the day by lighting a candle and reflecting on a child's intention which was picked out of a box. Lighting the candle and saying a prayer opens a ritual which has a special place in lessons and Collective Worship throughout the school and is understood and respected by pupils. Reception pupils said they, "talk to God."

Pupils are clearly at ease when praying and act with integrity with others who have different beliefs. No one is expected to act in a manner contrary to their beliefs.

### **How well leaders, governors and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life of the school and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils**

Leaders, governors and managers are deeply committed to the Church's mission in education. They are inspired by their sense of vocation to promote the Catholic life of the school and to serve the families and pupils.

The Governors have responded to recent challenges with wisdom and an awareness of the need to put the Catholic faith at the centre of the school. They have strengthened parish links, with nine governors now from the local parish. The number of Catholic teachers has increased to almost 60% of staff. The school has invested in creating an environment rich in statues, pictures, prayers and display. There is an effective link governor who reports to the Governing Body and several governors attended the inset on the first day to share in the discussions regarding the Mission Statement.

Since September 2014, the Governors have appointed a new Headteacher, a Deputy Headteacher who subsequently became the Religion Leader, a Worship Leader and a Global Awareness Leader. There is an excellent partnership with the Senior Leadership Team. There have been several strategic changes to staff personnel. They have already shown their vision and determination to provide outstanding Catholic education for their pupils.

The Headteacher has had, and continues to have, a major impact on the spiritual life of the school and its caring ethos. Her own spiritual strength and personal faith are manifest in her vision for Catholic education and in her relationships with staff and pupils. She said that, "we have not fed the pupils, they have fed us." In her view, any new staff must, "enhance learning and the Christian ethos." She is honest and realistic about her role and is an active member in the Corpus Christi partnership. She has sought advice from the Diocesan adviser.

The Deputy Headteacher was appointed in January 2015 and Religion leader in September 2015. She works effectively with the Headteacher and Governors to promote the mission of the school. She liaises with the Worship Leader to ensure that prayer and worship are effectively embedded into the life of the school.

### **How well leaders, governors and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan and implement for improvement to outcomes for pupils**

Leaders, governors and managers have a deep understanding of the value of Religious Education. Their self-evaluation is an honest and accurate appraisal of the areas for development and the challenges they face in establishing the new curriculum, which was introduced in September 2015, and in raising standards in learning.

The school development plan is explicit in the school's plans for improvement in pupil progress. Leaders and Governors know what is required and how to achieve their goals. Governors, particularly, monitor and evaluate school leadership effectively and give support

to the new school leaders.

They have ensured that Religious Education is central to the curriculum but they acknowledge that it will take more time to ensure that their leadership is effective. It is suggested that the school might map Religious Education across all subject areas to raise its value across the whole school.

The Religious Education handbook shows that the Religion Leader monitors teaching and learning rigorously. There is greater emphasis on challenging higher ability pupils and on addressing the gender gap in progress. She is developing assessment through the new curriculum, a recommendation from the last report, and analyses progress data every half term in order to identify pupils who need either more support or further challenge.

There is capacity for leadership of the school to be outstanding very quickly. They have begun the journey to being an outstanding school in all areas.

### **The quality of teaching and how purposeful learning is in Religious Education**

Nearly all the teaching is highly effective in enthusing pupils and ensuring that they learn and progress according to their ability. Where lessons were at least good, they were well planned with differentiated tasks, a lively pace and appropriate challenge for pupils of all abilities. Consequently, pupils are highly motivated and enjoy their learning. All pupils whom inspectors met confirmed that their lessons were fun and that they felt challenged and well taught. The support provided by other adults was generally very good. In some instances there was a lack of pace and planning. The school confirmed their awareness of this and action towards addressing these issues.

The Religion Leader models high quality teaching to the three New Qualified Teachers (NQTs) every week and has a programme to help them develop their own expertise.

Relationships between teachers and pupils are outstanding and the behaviour of pupils is exemplary. They were engaged in and enthusiastic about their learning and were able to work both independently and in partnership with others. For example, the Year 6 pupils, were comfortable reading each other's work and commenting on further improvements.

Marking of pupils' work is regular and meaningful although there is always room for improving consistency across all year groups. The comments are affirmative and pupils respond to the questions and suggestions from teachers.

### **The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum promotes pupils' learning**

All classes receive at least the full allocation of the 10% of curriculum time for Religious Education.

The school introduced 'The Way, The Truth and The Life' scheme this term following discussions with governors, staff and pupils. It was introduced to meet the needs and interests of all pupils and to help develop further a meaningful assessment system which was a recommendation from the last report. Staff and pupils are already responding positively to the programme as seen in lessons, in the quality of the work pupils produce and their enthusiasm in learning. Inspectors felt that the school should continue to embed the new curriculum and assessment.

The impact of the curriculum in its wider sense is excellent. Throughout the school the many displays reflect the deep commitment of the school to its Catholic identity and pupils' learning. There were prayer tables in corridors, the school prayer book which contained pupils' prayers and a prayer intention book for staff and pupils. There was evidence of cross-curricular display with 'Britain through the ages' complemented by the prayer, 'Thank God for making me'. Of special note was the Prayer Garden set up by the Worship Leader. This was widely used by pupils.

In conversation, pupils said that pupils of all faiths felt welcome and part of a caring, happy community and that they studied other world religions.

## **The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school**

Collective Worship is central to the life of the school and a key part of daily life. Every day begins with prayer and there are regular assemblies and Masses. All Religious Education lessons begin with lighting the candle and praying. Pupils said that there are many opportunities to pray as a school and a class and that often their own prayers and intentions were used. There is a planned reflection time throughout the day.

The way pupils respond and engage reflects how the quality of worship inspires them and offers them a calm and prayerful atmosphere in which to be with God. The quality of Collective Worship is greatly enhanced by the Worship Leader, the personal faith of the Headteacher and regular input from the Priest.

The liturgical calendar is used effectively to involve pupils in themed assemblies which use the Sunday readings to help the pupils understand how they might live by the message of Jesus. The school assembly that inspectors saw was both a joyous and reverent occasion. The choir sang beautifully and all pupils were inspired to sing in an active but prayerful way.