



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 141471

**St Peter's Catholic Primary School
West Ridge
Sittingbourne
Kent ME10 1UU**

Inspection date: 10th November 2015

Chair of Governors: Mrs C Bassett
Headteacher: Mrs C Owen
Inspectors: Dr J Croggon
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EDUCATION COMMISSION

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SECTION 48

Description of the school

St Peter's Catholic Primary School is an academy within the Kent Catholic Schools Partnership. It is located in the Chatham Deanery of the Archdiocese of Southwark. The principal parish, which the school serves, is the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Sittingbourne. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholics is 76% with 19% of pupils from other Christian denominations. The average weekly proportion of time given to Religious Education is 10% in both Key Stages 1 and 2. All issues raised at the previous Section 48 inspection were addressed and the school has continued to provide outstanding Catholic Education.

The school takes pupils from 4 to 11 years and the number currently on roll is 214. The attainment of pupils on entering the school is the national average. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average and those who are pupil premium are 7.5% of the school population.

Around 17% of pupils receive extra support in class. Mobility is high in some year groups. The majority of pupils are from White British and Eastern European backgrounds. There is a rising number of Black African families moving into the school's catchment area. The proportion of pupils from homes where English is spoken as an additional language is 22%, which is above the national average of 19.5%. Pupils' attendance is outstanding.

St Peter's School prides itself in its many awards such as the Quality Mark, Investors in People Gold and acting as lead school in the INSPIRED Ways to Rio Project.

Date of previous inspection:

16th November 2010

Overall Grade:

1

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
1**

St Peter's is a vibrant Catholic primary school in which all pupils learn of Jesus' individual love for them and in turn reach out to others as their brothers and sisters in Christ. The school's holistic approach to children's development enables them to form the pupils to be articulate Catholic leaders and responsible citizens. Gospel values are interwoven with life skills enabling each [student/pupil](#) to grow in their faith and personal confidence. The school's motto "Unlocking Love for Life Long Learning, for God for Ourselves and for Others" underpins all activities. One parent commented 'I am delighted with the way the school approaches its Religious Education. The children say prayers every day and there are whole school activities for example the "How to follow in Jesus' footsteps" (programme).' [Student/Pupil](#) behaviour is excellent. The 'Golden Behaviour Tree' is a stunning visual reminder that every person is capable of being a witness of good within the school community.

The Headteacher and senior leaders provide excellent vision and guidance for all St. Peter's pupils, staff and parents. The school's mission statement is at the heart of all school policies and the curriculum. It is reviewed annually. The School Self Evaluation is accurate and the Development Plan is effective in applying direction for further improvements. Governors participate fully in the life of the school and are well known by the staff, [students/pupils](#) and parents. They are robust in their monitoring of school standards and pupil achievement. Minutes of their meetings, visits and governor led assemblies all attest to the governing body's strong commitment to the Catholic ethos of the school. The parish priest supports the school through weekly visits to the classrooms and celebrating class Masses at the Sacred Heart of Jesus Church. In addition, the parish priest celebrates Mass within school during the liturgical year. The sacramental preparation classes take place within the parish. The Headteacher leads the parish programme involving the pupils of other local primary schools. This outreach in the community bears witness to the school's commitment to spreading the Gospel message. Staff members are rooted in Catholic values and are good role models as they live out the school's mission statement every day.

Parental support is excellent as viewed in the high percentage of responses received to the Section 48 questionnaire. 90% of parents and carers returned the document expressing their positive views concerning the Catholic life of the school and their children's personal development and progress in Religious Education. A parent comments 'Parents participate in building the school community through attendance at Masses, assemblies and fundraising events. Each year has a class prayer book that is circulated within the group.' The provision for pastoral care at St Peter's is outstanding especially in regard to the most vulnerable pupils.

What steps need to be taken to improve further?

Governors, Headteacher and staff should:

- Revisit and update the school's mission statement including pupil voice as part of the process
- Continue to develop the school's pupils initiatives: Chaplaincy Team, Creative Assembly leaders and pupil conferencing in Religious Education.

Outcomes for pupils

Grade 1

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

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school is outstanding. They actively participate in the Catholic life of the school by assuming responsibilities. From their entrance to the school, they are nurtured and guided to live a moral life. They celebrate the seasons of the Church's year and learn what is right and wrong.

The pupils of St Peter's are reflective and offer to lead prayers. They begin their day and Religious Education classes with prayer often expressed in song or sharing from their class prayer book. Pupils voted on the values that they believe best represent St. Peter's school community. They demonstrate a good understanding of the Catholic faith and the Church's liturgical year. Pupils were eager to explain how a visitor would know the school was Catholic. Various examples were given from the House patrons (St. Theresa and St. Francis) displayed in the school hall to the formal prayers they say each day. Learning about the Pope, the Church and helping others was also part of the Catholic ethos expressed by the [students/pupils](#). The pupils participate in retreats at Aylesford Priory and in preparation for their First Holy Communion.

There are excellent opportunities for pupil participation through School Council, class charters, and appointment to Job Centre responsibilities. Pupil leadership is evidenced through the Year 6 pupils' organisation of the School Fete in the summer of 2015. The pupils were actively involved in the selection of school values displayed on St. Peter's website. British Values are regularly reviewed and displayed. The high achieving pupils capably explained the different sets of values by which they live. Keeping with St. Peter's emphasis on the development of pupils' leadership skills through the school's Job Centre and other roles of responsibility, the children display exceptional pride in their work and a desire for it to be understood by visitors. An appreciation of and respect for world cultures is taught through events such as the celebration of Black History Month in October. Pupils select the charities such as Cafod that are supported throughout the year. St. Peter's is the recipient of the 'Go Givers Citizenship Award.' Traditionally, Year 6 pupils and families choose and donate high quality Catholic religious icons and artefacts to the school.

The school is located in a purpose built 1960's building with various additions. There is a large playing field adjacent to the school's playgrounds. The reception area is distinctly Catholic and welcoming. Great care is given to each and every display so as to challenge the students-pupils' thinking (Where is God?) while motivating them to reach out to others.

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education

In all year groups, St Peter's pupils demonstrate a keen interest and enjoyment of their learning in Religious Education. They enjoy their lessons. Excellent monitoring by the class teachers and the Religious Education Coordinator ensures that all pupils, including the most vulnerable make good progress with many achieving outstanding progress. In the school year of 2014/15, 50% of Year 6 pupils gained Level 5 in the summer term. Pupils with specific learning needs make good progress working with teaching assistants. In a Year 6 class observed, the excellent use of higher order questioning aided pupils in their exploration of personal motivations for ordination to the priesthood. In Year 2, the pupils moved seamlessly between activities with the teacher consistently checking their understanding and progress. All lessons were well planned, engaging and as a result pupils were motivated to achieve. After triangulating the lesson observations, pupils' feedback and a review of the tracking data, little variation was found between groups of learners. Emphasis is placed on higher level learners in both key stages and data reveals a marked upward trend. Standards are consistently raised through the use of 'learning ladders' and monitoring enabling pupils to undertake challenging activities.

Pupils benefit from the moderation of their work within the school, at deanery level and within the Kent Catholic Schools Partnership. Excellent examples of pupils work were examined during the inspection. Pupils' writing is good and demonstrates development over the key stage. Dialogue marking challenges each pupil. The school's record of assessing standards of attainment, accuracy and quality is verified through deanery meetings and Religious Education Coordinators' workshops.

The pupils of St. Peter's express their ideas with exceptional confidence. They understand gospel and moral teachings and use religious vocabulary to express their beliefs both in speaking and writing. The study of world faiths is an integral part of the Religious Education curriculum. Activities include inviting the Sikh governor to present to the classes. The 'behaviour board' rewards good questioning, responding and success.

The school participates in the 'Achievement for All' programme to boost the progress of the vulnerable and SEND pupils. The success of this programme is evident through their excellent progress in Religious Education.

In interviews and in the Section 48 questionnaire, parents and carers expressed a high level of satisfaction with Religious Education at St Peter's. One parent wrote "The school works really well within "Catholic life" and guiding children towards good morals" while

another praised the sense of community and respect for others that children learn through Religious Education.

How well pupils respond to and participate in Collective Worship

St Peter's is a very reflective and spiritual school in which pupils pray throughout the day. Pupils were keen to participate in a wide range of prayerful activities from reciting well loved formal prayers to interpreting the words of a hymn for Christians today. In the whole school assembly observed, the pupils willingly held a respectful, prayerful silence and shared how the gospel reading applied to their lives. Each year group created a wreath and prayer as a remembrance memorial. One pupil recited a poem by memory while others offered petitions. The school places great emphasis on musical education such as instrumental lessons and participation in The Young Voices Choir. The results were evident as the pupils sang with great joy and enthusiasm in assembly and at every opportunity throughout the day. Music, art and drama enhance daily worship at the school.

Teachers train pupils to lead and participate in all types of prayer. They instil reverence for the Word of God, the need for personal reflection and the benefit of praying as a community. Pupils read at Masses and confidently share their prayers with others. They say traditional prayers such as the grace before and after meals and are encouraged to participate in liturgical prayer groups during Advent and Lent. Each year group decorates a class candle that serves as a prayerful focal point in their room and at the whole school assembly. The school's Chaplaincy Team ensures that pupils bring their creativity and joy to worship while learning to lead others in prayer.

The children of St Peter's are nurtured in an atmosphere of prayer and praise. The school's peace garden and prayer corner in the library, remind the pupils that God is with them everywhere. Each year group has a class prayer book that circulates through all the families within the school year. It is displayed in the class prayer corner along with other religious icons. The pupils voice an enthusiastic support of the prayer book project noting especially that it must be completed as a family. The school also links prayer and learning within the home through other age appropriate extension activities. These include The Redemptorist Homework Diaries (Years 5 and 6), The Wednesday Word (3 and 4) and Look Sheets (R, 1 and 2) all of which create opportunities for family discussion and prayer.

The school participates in the Kent Catholic Schools Partnership's Praise and Picnic celebration, Missio's Good Shepherd Liturgy and celebrates the International Day of Peace. The pupils of St Peter's school joyously praise God daily and in the wider community when the opportunity arises.

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 and managers are outstanding in promoting and evaluating the provision for the Catholic life of the school and in the way they plan and implement improvements to the outcomes of pupils. The Chair of Governors provides strong leadership and serves as a critical friend of the Headteacher and senior leaders of the school. Together they demonstrate their strong commitment to the Church's mission in education by monitoring the school's mission statement and evaluating its impact on pupils' moral development. Governors' minutes reveal a consistent drive for academic excellence based on gospel values.

Leaders and managers are outstanding in their tracking and evaluation of the progress of pupils in Religious Education. The Headteacher and Religious Education Coordinator regularly conduct monitoring activities such as learning walks, lesson observations and meetings and inset with class teachers. The Religious Education governor is actively

involved in the development of the subject throughout the school. The Religious Education Plan clearly sets out clear goals and monitors their success through the gathering of evidence. The Religious Education governor and senior leaders monitor the plan's impact on [student/pupil](#) progress. The Section 48 Self Evaluation Form is accurate.

Senior leaders and governors accurately diagnose the strengths of the school and areas for development. There is a yearly Religious Education and Catholic Ethos audit. The Headteacher assesses the training needs of the staff and governors. The leadership of the school collaborates with various groups to moderate pupil work and share ideas on the development of the Catholic ethos. The introduction of 'Perspective' enables senior managers to support staff and set ambitious targets for their development and [student/pupil](#) learning.

The School Development Plan sets clear priorities and targets for all departments including Religious Education. The school engages parents through parent conferences and classroom visits, newsletters and the class prayer book that circulate throughout a year group. Parents are invited to assemblies and class Masses. An innovation in parental contact is a SIP (School Improvement Plan) evening called by the Headteacher. This meeting gathers parents' and carers' views on the successes of the past school year and the areas of development that need addressing.

Pastoral care is outstanding and is monitored by the leadership of the school. Parents commented on how their children feel safe and secure and are able to thrive at St Peter's. Throughout the inspection, the special, dedicated care and challenge being awarded to the Looked After Children and those with greater educational needs was observed. St Peter's school community seeks to further the mission of the Church by embracing the inclusivity of the family of God.

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

The Headteacher and the Religious Education Coordinator facilitate strong leadership of the subject. The RE Coordinator has outstanding vision for the development of staff and strategies to enhance the teaching of the subject and the enjoyment and progress of pupils. Religious Education's assessment and monitoring tools build on the school's established systems. Higher achievers are identified and challenged through extension activities and responsibilities.

The Religious Education Action Plan is active and reviewed by the Headteacher and governors. The plan for 2015/16 set specific attainment targets for each year. The progress of all pupils is strictly monitored within each key stage. Staff and governors' minutes reveal a consistent approach to evaluation and monitoring. Governors use learning walks, shared observations and Religious Education assessments. Data is scrutinised to target and support pupils.

The senior leaders monitor the professional and inspirational delivery of Religious Education. Training and information from the Archdiocese are accessed regularly and staff are encouraged to develop their skills. The Religious Education Coordinator works with KCSP cluster schools and the Isle of Sheppey Collaboration. The use of coaching and mentoring triads aids teachers to be inspired by colleagues and attempt new strategies.

The School Development Plan includes specific targets for Religious Education and governors' minutes record the progress made on each strategy. The senior leadership monitors worship using the Collective Worship monitoring forms. This is to ensure that the collective worships they lead are creative and pupils develop a positive attitude. Importantly, the leadership monitors that there is a balance of resources for race and gender.

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

The quality of teaching observed and how purposeful learning is in Religious Education is outstanding. Lessons included strong classroom management, positive learning strategies and engaging starters. They were well planned and built on the pupils' previous knowledge. The lessons were differentiated employing teaching assistants actively in the pupils' learning. The pupils enjoy their Religious Education lessons and are motivated to ask questions and delve more deeply into the topics studied. During an inspection learning walk, pupils from Key Stage 2 spoke enthusiastically of their lesson on the Sacrament of Marriage. Their religious vocabulary and ability to recall the detail of the class discussion of the gospel reading and key points that were raised by other [students/pupils](#) was impressive.

Individual support is given to those [students/pupils](#) with the greatest educational needs. Through targeted intervention, they achieve their very best and no gap exists between them and other pupils. Through termly assessments and discussion with pupils and parents the pupils know how to improve their work and achieve. All pupils move freely and orderly throughout the school and this discipline is evident when they work in teams or pairs. They enjoy the discovery of new learning tools as witnessed in the Year 6 class developing ordination interviews. A review of exercise books revealed consistent feedback to pupils on how to improve their work. Pupils take pride in their written work and strive to have it displayed on the 'Perfect Presentation Display' in the entrance of the school.

Continual professional development ensures that all teachers have good subject knowledge. The Religious Education Coordinator participates in Diocesan training for subject leaders. While 64% of the teaching staff is Catholic, all members of staff work to ensure that there is a consistent, challenging and faith filled message in every year group. Regular inset provides the forum for the sharing of good practice, the presentation of inspirational themes and exploring how to live the Catholic faith today.

Lesson observations revealed a range of teaching styles that included innovative activities to capture pupils' interest. Teachers have high expectation of pupils, the use of higher order questioning and classroom routines that encouraged learning and exploring. Lesson planning included differentiation for the needs of the SEN and EAL pupils. Teaching assistants were well used within the lessons and should continue to develop challenges for the brightest pupils.

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

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

outstanding. St Peter's staff creatively enhance the 'Come and See' programme with activities and celebrations throughout the liturgical year. Visual, auditory and kinaesthetic resources are used to interest and motivate the pupils and aid learning. Age appropriate and relevant teaching meets all pupils' needs while contributing to their spiritual and moral development. Pupils spoke confidently about their learning and how it is preparing them for life. In particular, they believe the Job Centre and other school responsibilities make them stronger for later life. Senior leaders and staff collaborate with the cluster KCSP schools and the Isle of Sheppey collaboration. Cross curricular links are strong within the school's music and art initiatives. An example of this was the dramatization of the Stations of the Cross during Lent.

The curriculum is enriched through the study of REToday lessons. The school also draws on the local community to enhance lessons. Pastors from other Christian churches are invited to share the story of their faith community. World Faith Days introduce pupils to the religious beliefs of others. St. Peter's community governor is welcomed to share his beliefs as a Sikh. Year 6 pupils visit the Gurdwara in Gravesend. In the lessons observed, all pupils had access to the curriculum through differentiation. The Headteacher is responsible for the Love and Relationship Education throughout the school.

Religious Education underpins learning at St. Peter's by forming pupils who are religiously literate, confident in their expressions of faith and open to the religious beliefs of others. Pupils demonstrate a high level of tolerance and acceptance to those who are different. The school's collaboration with the diocese, deanery and KCSP challenges the staff to re-evaluate the curriculum to meet the pupils' changing needs and the social context in which they live. Pupils respect the traditions of the Catholic Church as observed in their devotion to Mary, the Mother of Jesus and the patron saints of their 'houses' within the school. The celebration of achievement and effort are integral to the life of the school. From moving themselves up on the 'Zone Board' for achievement and good behaviour in class to the awarding of excellence certificates at assembly, the pupils are rewarded for their best efforts. The Golden Behaviour Tree is a visible reminder of the need for pupils to 'care, share and learn. One parent shared the impact of excellent Religious Education on her child "An excellent school with a strong religious ethos. My son will be attending a Religious Secondary School due to this positive experience."

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school

St Peter's Collective Worship is rich and diversified and underpins the daily life of the school. Each teacher models good practice of prayer and worship encouraging pupils to lead collective prayers. Whole school assemblies celebrate the liturgical year with themes linked to the moral development of children. The school values as well as the school's mission statement encourage the pupils to bring God's love to all those who they meet especially those in most need. Pupils are skilled at planning and leading their class worship using both formal and informal prayers. These reflections develop the current Religious Education topic of study.

The Religious Education Coordinator and her team regularly review, evaluate and plan

improvements to the school's provision for collective worship. These reviews are recorded and shared with the governor for Religious Education. The themes chosen are consistent with the Catholic character of the school. Those of other faiths are invited to share and explain their beliefs and how and why they celebrate their festivals. Collective worship at St Peter's is well supported by parents, carers and friends. They are frequently invited to worship assemblies and class Masses at the parish church. The school invites other local faith communities to speak with the pupils and to lead assemblies and workshops to build good relationships.

In the acts of worship observed, the pupils prayed with reverence and respect while the staff modelled prayerful behaviour. Their responses were fervent and heartfelt as they said 'Jesus, I think of you. Jesus, I speak of you. Jesus, I love you.' In their classrooms, each year group's prayer service was age appropriate and children volunteered petitions and reflections. The pupils of St. Peter's appreciate the spiritual dimension of life and understand how it might be expressed in prayer, music, art and dance. The Catholic ethos of the school is prominent throughout the school supported by high quality religious icons and displays which capture pupils' interest.

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