



DIOCESE OF BRENTWOOD



Section 48 Inspection Report

Name of School: St Peter's Catholic Primary School,

Inspection Date: 28th March 2014

Reporting Inspector: Mrs Pamela Brannigan

URN 101237

This inspection was carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of School: Primary
School Category: Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils: 4 - 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 452
Appropriate Authority: Barking & Dagenham
Date of previous inspection: -

School Address: Goresbrook Road
Dagenham Essex RM9 6UU

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Headteacher: Mr Daniel Craft

Information about the school

St Peter's Catholic Primary School with nursery is a voluntary aided school in the London borough of Barking and Dagenham and is part of the diocese of Brentwood. It serves the parish of St Peter's Dagenham with a small number coming from farther afield. There are currently 452 pupils aged 4-11 on roll. The school is over subscribed and is currently moving from 1.5 to 2 form entry. The proportion of Catholic pupils is almost 100%. There is a much higher than average number of pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is above the national average and the number of pupils who receive the pupil premium is average.

Key grades for inspection

1: Outstanding 2: Good 3: Satisfactory 4: Unsatisfactory

Overall effectiveness of this Catholic school

Grade 2

St Peter's is a good school with several outstanding areas. The Catholic ethos is strong and permeates all areas. The school is well led, with a clear sense of purpose and direction and has outstanding provision for prayer and collective worship. Outcomes for pupils are good and improving and the capacity for sustained improvement is very good. Opportunities for spiritual and moral development are interwoven through religious education, prayer and an understanding of what it means to be part of a Catholic community. Senior leaders are excellent role models and have put in place initiatives linked to the Catholic life of the school as well as teaching, learning, assessment and monitoring. Pastoral care is very good and shared by all members of the school community. Relationships are good and pupils feel well cared for and appreciate opportunities given to be involved in all aspects of school life. Parents welcome the Catholicity of the school; appreciate the good communication with staff and the very wide range of extra-curricular activities available for pupils. Pupils' standards of attainment are in line with diocesan expectations.

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

Grade 1

The school has an outstanding capacity for sustained improvement. The last inspection in 2009 identified areas for development linked to marking and assessment. Since then the implementation of the agreed understanding of levels of attainment in religious education have informed lesson planning and assessment. Staff inset to assist the introduction of the new religious education programme 'Come and See' has also ensured sustained improvement. Marking is positive and enables older pupils to identify next steps in their learning. The subject leader has a good understanding of her role and is well placed to support colleagues. The school gives a high profile to religious education and has effective strategies to share good practice.

The senior leadership team have a clear vision for the Catholicity of the school and the central place of prayer, worship and religious education. Senior leaders are very good role models and all staff are given opportunities to extend their knowledge and improve their skills through meetings and attendance at diocesan led training. Governors are currently putting in place strategies to enable all members to more completely fulfil their role in relation to the school's Catholic foundation.

The current leadership has an excellent capacity to maintain effectiveness. The headteacher shows outstanding leadership of a Catholic community. He has a clear focus on prayer and worship in which he is well supported by all staff. Systems are in place to develop and strengthen initiatives which lead to good outcomes for all pupils. The religious education subject leader is experienced and is well placed to support colleagues. She has attended diocesan training linked to the 'Come and See' religious education scheme and supports colleagues as they implement the new agreed levels of understanding.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop in-school and deanery moderation of levels of attainment to increase staff confidence in identifying next steps in learning.
- Support the development of the governing body to enable all members to fulfil their mission in relation to the Catholic life of the school

Outcomes for pupils

Grade 2

Pupils make a good contribution to the Catholic life of the school. They respond very well to opportunities to understand the needs of others in school and the wider community. They are keen to take on responsibilities including membership of the School Council. Several local, national and international charities are supported throughout the year including Catholic Children's Society, Children in Need and Cafod. Pupils show respect for adults and each other. Behaviour is very good and pupils value the sense of community and belonging created within the school.

Prayer and worship are central to school life. Pupils respond very positively to opportunities to develop their faith journey. They are eager to take part in assemblies and lead class acts of worship. They have an age appropriate understanding of the liturgical year, its seasons and celebrations. Pupils are developing the ability to pray in different ways and at different times. They use scripture, the traditional prayers of the church, meditation and their own prayers, examples of which were seen during the inspection. Older pupils are able to apply aspects of Jesus' life and teaching to their own lives and understand that a sense of service is part of being a member of a Catholic community.

Pastoral care is very good and given a high priority by staff and governors who work closely together to promote the spiritual development of pupils and the Catholic life of the community. Pupils feel safe, well cared for and know where to go when they need support. Pupils value being in a friendly environment where they are listened to and encouraged to help each other. Parents value the care given to their children, the quality of education and the approachability of staff.

Attainment and progress in religious education are good. Lessons observed during the inspection were good or better and pupils worked with interest and commitment. Pupils spoken to said they enjoy their religious education lessons and appreciate the wide range of tasks involved. They are eager to participate in activities and work well together whether in groups or pairs. They have a good knowledge of the Catholic faith appropriate to their age and are able integrate religious ideas into their own lives. Workbooks are well presented, show coverage of the curriculum and indicate good progress made by all groups. Standards of attainment are in line with diocesan expectations.

Leaders and managers

Grade 1

The headteacher supported by senior staff demonstrates excellent leadership of the school through the way he promotes the provision for the Catholic life of the school. He has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development which he shares with the whole school community. Governors support him in this and are committed to providing the best possible environment for the pupils. The development of Catholic life is seen as central to all that happens and gospel values underpin all decision making. There is a strong commitment both to improve in all aspects of education and to provide high quality care for pupils and support for parents. Together the headteacher and subject leader have a very good knowledge of areas for development in religious education and are well placed to support colleagues.

Senior leaders monitor religious education by means of lesson observations, work scrutiny and joint planning which is followed by feedback to individual teachers. There is currently a very strong focus on planning and assessment as the school consolidates the implementation of the 'Come and See' religious education programme and the updated Curriculum Directory. The school has put in place

strategies to give further challenge to the ablest children. Much emphasis is placed on staff development which includes teaching assistants who play a key role in the school. Teachers have good subject knowledge and nine of them have the CCRS qualification.

Governors work closely with senior leadership and have a good understanding of strengths and areas for development. They are well informed about the life of the school through the headteacher's report, meetings with subject leaders and visits. There are currently plans to develop their role to enable all governors to be more closely involved in the religious life of the school.

Leaders ensure that the school is a welcoming community where everyone is respected and valued. Diversity is celebrated and pupils are taught to respect other faiths which are well taught. Pupils are given exceptionally good opportunities to develop a sense of service and show compassion for others through charitable fund raising and involvement in the local community. Opportunities for spiritual development ensure that pupils are able to reflect on their own lives and experiences. Parents are invited to many school events and are kept well informed about their children's welfare and progress. They appreciate the good level of contact with the school.

Provision

Grade 2

Provision for prayer and worship at St Peter's is excellent. Assemblies and liturgies are very well planned and contribute greatly to pupils' spiritual development. They often include visual presentations, bible readings drama, singing and music. During the inspection a celebration assembly led by the headteacher and older pupils affirmed a wide range of achievement and was attended by a large group of parents. Pupils are involved in collective worship in their classrooms and are given opportunities for personal reflection. Each classroom has a prayer focus with religious artefacts and display boards which include children's work. Masses and age appropriate liturgies are celebrated in school throughout the year. There is a prayer area available for pupils and classes. Parents, families and parishioners are invited to many celebrations. The priest from St Peter's parish supports the school through masses, liturgies and acts as chaplain on an informal basis. Pupils visit the church for masses and to develop their knowledge of Catholic traditions. Parish links are very good with many pupils acting as altar servers.

The quality of teaching and learning in religious education is good. During the inspection lessons observed were good or better. They are planned with clear learning intentions and an interesting range of activities. The school has made a major investment in resources and pupils benefit from the wide range of activities involved in religious education lessons. In the classes observed pupils worked well and made good progress. Teachers respond well to pupils' comments and take opportunities to develop understanding. Higher order questioning was a feature of many lessons observed. Good support by teaching assistants is a feature of lessons especially in Early Years. Marking is positive, interactive and often includes suggestions of ways to improve. Good assessment, planning and tracking supports the learning and progress of all groups of pupils.

The quality of the religious education curriculum is good. At least 10% of curriculum time is devoted to religious education. The new religious education programme 'Come and See' has been in place for a year and is currently being embedded. The headteacher gives religious education a central place in the life of the school and this is demonstrated by the budget devoted to it and the current level of resources. Religious education displays around the school emphasise the centrality of faith to the work of the community. The curriculum enables pupils to become aware of their responsibility for each other and their environment. It contributes very well to their spiritual and moral development. The support given to families through a wide range of extra curricular activities gives a strong sense of community to the school. There is every indication that current high standards are likely to be maintained or improved.

The inspector would like to express her thanks and appreciation to all members of the school community for their welcome and openness during the inspection.