



# Archdiocese of Birmingham

## INSPECTION REPORT

### ST PETER'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL BARTLEY GREEN, BIRMINGHAM

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Inspection dates 20<sup>th</sup> - 21<sup>st</sup> February 2012  
Reporting Inspector Rev Michael Dolman

Inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

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Type of School	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 – 11 years
Number on roll	202
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governors	Pamela Williams
School address	Adams Hill Bartley Green Birmingham B32 3QD
Telephone number	0121 464 6921
E-mail address	enquiry@stpeterc.bham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	July 2009
DFE School number	330 3385
Unique Reference Number	103469

**Headteacher** Alison Pickin

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DIOCESAN EDUCATION SERVICE



## Evidence

The inspection was carried out by 1 Diocesan Inspector. The focus of the inspection was on the effectiveness and use of the school's self evaluation of religious education (RE) and Catholic life. To validate the effectiveness of the school's self evaluation of teaching and learning, the inspector observed 6 part RE lessons with the headteacher. In addition the inspector completed a work scrutiny and held a discussion with pupils to evaluate the impact of teaching on their learning over time. He held meetings with the chair of governors, staff, and parish priest. He observed a prayer service and undertook a learning walk to look at aspects of learning and teaching in RE, the presentation of the Catholic life of the school, and pupils' behaviour. He looked at a range of evidence related to the school's self evaluation such as RAISEonline, the development plan, teachers' planning, and learning journals. Alongside the validation of school self evaluation, the inspector gathered evidence about collective worship, evidence which will be shared with other diocesan schools.

## Information about the school

St Peter's is a smaller than average Catholic primary school serving the parish of St Peter in Bartley Green. Bartley Green is an area of some social deprivation. The number of Catholic pupils is currently 65%. The proportion of ethnic minority pupils is 33%. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average as is the proportion with special needs and/or disabilities. Attainment on entry is below the national average.

## Main Finding

In its self evaluation St Peter's judges itself to be a good Catholic school with a clear vision and shared commitment to improving further the faith journey of all those involved in the life of the school. The school considers its provision in RE to be good and its pupils are actively engaged in and contribute to the school's Catholic character. In relation to the school's Catholic life, the school's judgements are reliable although provision in RE is good at times but otherwise satisfactory. There is certainly evidence to support these judgements although there is a need for greater consolidation in the provision of RE. The headteacher and the senior leadership team are effective in developing the RE and Catholic life of the school through established processes of monitoring and evaluation. The parish priest makes a significant hands-on contribution to the Catholic life of the school and its evaluation and improvement. The governing body are involved in the life of the school and are appropriately informed to offer support.

## School self-evaluation

The school has an effective process of self-evaluation that enables it to develop its provision in the areas of Catholic life and RE. While there is not a formal audit of Catholic life, there are discussions held at meetings of the governing body, senior leadership team and teaching staff that reflect upon current practice and its impact, in order to identify areas for development. These include the school's Catholic mission and school prayer, the behaviour policy and sacramental preparation. The school has gained some early anecdotal evidence for the impact of its new Catholic mission and behaviour policy and there are plans to formally review this at a later stage. In recording its self evaluation the school has tended to conflate collective worship, RE and aspects of Catholic life such as sacramental preparation which need to be identified with greater clarity within the school's documentation. The school improvement plan is clearly derived from its self evaluation but requires targets for improvement to be more focused with clear timings given.

Monitoring and evaluation of RE are carried out each year through lesson observations. The school's judgments are generally supported by the lessons observed during the inspection. Findings are shared with staff collectively and individually. The monitoring of books and planning each half term ensures that there is coverage of the strategy but lack of written work in some books suggests that feedback does not always have significant impact. As a consequence of this, the senior leadership team has had occasion to deliver hard messages about weaknesses in teaching and learning which have subsequently led to some improvement. There is a good system of assessment in RE which is well established. Analysis includes a focus on particular groupings such as gender, cultural background and those with special educational needs. Findings from this analysis have contributed to targets in the school improvement plan and have included a change in approach to learning for boys in upper Key Stage 2.

One of the strengths of evaluation in the school's Catholic life is the implementation of a policy to improve pupils' behaviour. Successive meetings with staff led to a system based upon school rights and school responsibilities. The subsequent discussions with staff and pupils resulted in the current framework which clearly articulates examples of good behaviour and misbehaviour at three levels: everyday expectations, good (more than expected) and outstanding. School evaluation shows that children are familiar with the rewards and sanctions associated with each level of behaviour and that they feel secure with the school community's clear expectations. The framework has become formative for children who remark upon the difference it has made to the class and playground environment. The senior leadership team is able to monitor centrally the type of rewards and sanctions that are given in any particular class and so evaluate the behaviour throughout the school day. They are also able to analyse the way staff are dealing with children's behaviour.

The quality of the school's self evaluation and the related developments that are currently being implemented means that capacity for sustained improvement in Catholic life and RE is good. There is good leadership which is effectively distributed, with good practice shared and support given when required. Governors are well informed about the strengths, weaknesses and areas for development in RE but require clearer identification of those elements that constitute the Catholic life of the school.

### **Overall effectiveness of the school<sup>1</sup>**

Outcomes for pupils in RE are good although the school identifies some under-achievement for boys in Years 5 and 6. Attainment is generally good although this is variable in classes where there are significant numbers of pupils with SEN. The good support that is given by the school throughout the school day, including expertise from outside agencies, means that all pupils are able to make good progress. Children's behaviour is very good and they are attentive and engaged in the tasks that they are set. However, attainment in Key Stage 2 is sometimes limited by the nature of work set, which is not always attentive to the expectations described by national assessment levels.

Pupils are actively involved in contributing to the Catholic life of the school. They are diligent in undertaking a range of responsibilities according to their age and ability. They are able to relate the teachings of Jesus to their own lives at school and at home. Older pupils appreciate the opportunities that they have to share their suggestions and ideas. The new school prayer has underlined for them the fact that we are all equally loved by God and so are of equal value.

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<sup>1</sup> As the quality of the school self evaluation has been affirmed, the judgements in this section of the report conform to those of the school.

The school makes good provision for collective worship. Pupils are reverent, prayerful and confident to take a leading role in times of prayer when opportunity allows. The school acknowledges that this is an area for further development.

Provision overall is good, however, the quality of teaching and learning in religious education is not yet consistent. While teachers relate learning well to pupils' life of faith, lessons do not always allow children to access levels of knowledge and understanding described by the national attainment levels in RE.

The curriculum is clearly based upon the diocesan *Curriculum Strategy for Religious Education* and is adapted well to engage children with learning difficulties through the provision of suitable tasks. However, planning is variable in quality and so it does not always account for different ability groups, particularly the more able. There is some good marking which includes encouraging comments and questions for further consideration. This constitutes the beginnings of assessment for learning and the sharing of good practice among all staff will lead to consolidation. The study of world religions has increased pupils' awareness of some beliefs, feasts and practices of people we live alongside in society; older pupils have been interested to note some of the similarities and differences that exist between different religions.

### **Recommendations**

Develop planning in religious education in line with diocesan recommendations.

Ensure that the Catholic character of the school, collective worship, religious education, and sacramental preparation are clearly distinguished in the school's monitoring and evaluation.

Ensure that national levels of assessment in RE inform planning so as to improve the challenge of learning activities.



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March 2012

Dear Parents and Carers

### **Section 48 (Diocesan) Inspection of St Peter's Catholic Primary School, February 2012**

I am writing this letter to share with you the findings of the diocesan inspection of your children's school. Diocesan inspection now explores in detail the school's own view of itself as expressed in its self-evaluation. For this reason, much of the report is more technical than used to be the case. You are still entitled to have a copy of the full report should you want one and it will be available on the school website or by request from the school office.

The school judged itself to be good in its Catholic life and RE. The inspection found that this judgement is secure because

- Pupils' behaviour is very good and they respond well to the high expectations set by the school.
- Pupils are encouraged to share their ideas and opinions about different aspects of the school's Catholic life and they are diligent in undertaking various responsibilities within the school.
- Pupils make good progress in RE because teaching is generally good and there is good support given to pupils who have special educational needs.
- The headteacher and school leadership team have effective systems of monitoring and evaluating RE and the Catholic life of the school so as to make necessary improvements.
- Children appreciate the importance of prayer in the life of the school and are reverent during times of collective worship, taking ownership for times of prayer when opportunity allows.

I have recommended that the school develops planning in RE to ensure that all children are given work that they find challenging and that helps them to deepen their understanding of the subject. I would like the school to distinguish clearly between RE and Catholic life when it monitors and evaluates its life and work and also when it reports to the governing body each term. Finally, I have asked the school to use the national levels of attainment in RE as a guide to improve the standard of work set for children in lessons.

Your children make a good contribution to the school's life and work and during the inspection they were consistently friendly, polite and helpful. In their meetings with me they were honest in providing an account of their experience at St Peter's. Thank you for the part you play in supporting the school in its mission.

Yours sincerely,

Fr Michael Dolman  
Diocesan Inspector