



INSPECTION REPORT

SS Peter and Paul Catholic Primary School

Telephone: 0117 9030070
e-mail address: st.peter.paul.p@bristol-schools.uk

DfE Number: 801/3402
URN: 109245

Headteacher: Mrs C Burns
Chair of Governors: Mr A Farrell

**Canonical Inspection under Canon 806 on behalf of the Diocese of Clifton
and inspection of Denominational Education under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005**

Date of inspection: 2-3rd July 2015
Date of previous inspection: 5-6th June 2009

Reporting Inspector: Mrs A Barrett
Additional Inspector: Mrs S Wembridge

Description of School

SS Peter and Paul is a small primary school with 207 pupils on roll, of whom 80% are baptised Catholic. The school serves a diverse population with 43% of pupils coming from ethnic minority groups and 23% having English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium (which provides additional funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children in local authority care) is below average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is in line with the national average. Prior attainment on entry is above average. The school serves two parishes, Clifton Cathedral and St Mary on the Quay in Bristol. The current head teacher was appointed in September 2014 following the retirement of the previous head.

Overall effectiveness of this Catholic school

Grade 1

This is an outstanding Catholic school because:

- The school is an inclusive and welcoming community where every individual is valued, cared for and nourished spiritually.
- The governing body is highly effective in promoting the Catholic life of the school and RE.
- The head teacher provides clear, focused leadership, with an unequivocal commitment to the pursuit of excellence in promoting its Catholic mission and high academic standards.
- The RE subject leader provides ongoing support to governors and teachers.
- Parents are hugely supportive of the school's work and the inclusive, caring Catholic ethos it provides for all.
- Teachers are strongly committed, enthusiastic and skilled in teaching RE. The consistently high quality of teaching across the board results in outstanding progress in learning.
- Pupils are exceptionally well behaved and extremely proud of belonging to this strong Catholic family.

The capacity of the school community to improve and develop

- The head teacher and governors are unreserved in their commitment to maintain and strive for improvement in its Catholic life and RE.
- The school has made excellent progress in addressing all the issues highlighted in the previous inspection.
- Parents, staff and pupils are highly supportive of the school.
- The governing body is highly effective and works closely with the headteacher and subject leader to ensure that the catholicity of the school is at the heart of all aspects of its work.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide INSET and support for teachers, in collaboration with the diocese, to ensure that they are confident in supporting the development of pupils' spirituality.
- Develop and monitor teachers' use of assessment to ensure that appropriate support is given to pupils to further develop their ability to reflect and contemplate as part of their spiritual growth and development.

How good are outcomes for pupils, taking account of variations between different groups?

Grade 1

Pupils are hugely proud of their school and enthusiastically embrace the wide range of opportunities it offers to enable them to grow in their faith. The outcomes of pupil voice affirm a real sense of pride in their backgrounds and beliefs. They are articulate and confident in expressing their own views and beliefs and refer with a ready ease to scripture and Catholic teaching. They are fully engaged in developing the school's Catholic life through regularly organising and leading class worship, whole school assemblies and Masses for the wider community. Chaplaincy is a strength within the school with members of the team, who were commissioned by Bishop Declan in October 2014, meeting regularly with the subject leader for RE in order to prepare and lead assemblies and Mass and formally reflect on how these could be improved in order to engage pupils more. In addition, the chaplaincy team are fully involved in evaluating RE displays and prayer corners, and teachers value and implement their suggestions. Behaviour is outstanding due to the school's high and clear expectations which create an exceptionally positive climate for learning. Pupils know and understand their rights and responsibilities and are respectful and alert to the needs of others. This is evident through their involvement in fundraising for a wide range of charities, with each class having a charity to support. There is a strong sense of belonging to a wider community, with strong links with their neighbour St Joseph's Care Home for the Elderly and St James Priory, which provide residential support for vulnerable people. There are strong links with the Cathedral parish whose priest is a regular visitor to the school and plans are in hand to forge closer links with the parish of St Mary on the Quay which is some distance away. Alongside an engaging RE curriculum and worship programme, pupils are supported in developing spiritually and morally. They indeed value 'all people with their diversity of gifts, cultures and faiths and develop a consideration for others, learning to work together with a sense of social responsibility and compassion'. Overall, pupils' progress at the end of Key Stage 2 is outstanding. Teachers successfully build on pupils' strong levels of religious literacy on entry, with any variations between year groups being successfully addressed. The school's rigorous moderation has ensured high standards in meeting pupil targets and developing understanding of pupils' faith and development of ideas, particularly in AT2. Pupils speak enthusiastically about how much they enjoy their learning in RE and impressed inspectors with their high levels of religious literacy, depth of knowledge and understanding of scripture and their ability to make empathic connections between faith and life. They display an infectious love of learning and thirst for knowledge and understanding, eagerly embracing and respecting different viewpoints, enabling them to critically reflect on their own faith story. The school makes very effective use of data to track and monitor the progress of all groups and puts in place appropriate strategies to rectify any gaps in knowledge, should they occur.

Prayer is at the heart of everything which the school does. Within assemblies and class worship they take part by singing, joining in the prayers and responding enthusiastically to questions. They are confident in using traditional prayers from Foundation Stage onwards and are able to use a variety of prayer styles as they move through the school. They are respectful and at ease when praying, believing it to be an important part of their daily life. By the end of Key Stage 2 they demonstrate a secure understanding of the connections between the prayer life of the school and Church, confidently citing examples to support this. They take full part in assemblies by singing, joining in the prayers and responding enthusiastically to questions. Pupils are introduced to the liturgy from Foundation Stage and gain confidence in using the responses for Mass through regular use of these in different worship contexts. The engaging use of music, dance and drama enables them to gain a secure understanding of the liturgical life of the Church appropriate to their age. Pupils in Key Stage 2 are involved in organising and leading class collective worship twice a week, with each class having their own collective worship box of religious artefacts. The year 6 chaplaincy team plays an active part in helping different classes with worship activities, including whole school assemblies and Masses. All pupils, regardless of faith are included in prayer and acts of worship as aptly summarised by one year 6: 'Although I am not Catholic, I feel really happy and welcome in the school and feel really involved when I am in assembly and Mass'.

The use of prayer bags, which are taken home for use throughout the year for liturgical events, new babies, sickness, death, Saint's days and friendship are valued by both parents and pupils and strengthen prayer within the family and school. Plans are in hand to develop this further by re-establishing the parent prayer group and by starting with a year 6 prayer buddy. Plans are in hand to ensure that all pupils are aware of the Leaders in Faith and how this can contribute to developing their faith.

How effective are leaders and governors in developing the Catholic Life of the school?

Grade 1

Governors and leaders effectively promote the work of the school and meet all statutory and canonical responsibilities. They are committed to the pursuit of excellence and work together to ensure that the promotion of the school's Catholic life is at the centre of its strategic direction. This is expressed in the mission statement, 'As we follow in Christ's footsteps, let us grow in love, knowledge and understanding, so that our light may shine for all'. The headteacher has built on the school's strong Catholic tradition and has created a culture of building on and improving the school's Catholic life and RE and has also established effective systems for monitoring this. She provides clear, focused leadership, with an unequivocal commitment to the pursuit of excellence in promoting both the Catholic mission of the school and high academic standards overall. The school is highly regarded by parents. Annual surveys ensure that the views of students and parents inform future planning. Links with parents are strong and their views are regularly sought, as are those of pupils. Regular meetings and INSET enable staff to develop an informed understanding of the Church's mission and RE. It is intended that links with governors should be further strengthened by inviting them to attend these meetings in order to gain a deeper understanding of RE in particular.

Governors maintain careful oversight of religious education with the link governor, a regular visitor to the school fully involved in a range of monitoring activities in collaboration with the subject leader. These include learning walks, book scrutinies and observation of assemblies. The clear direction set by the headteacher, on self-evaluation and challenge, has led to effective action planning. RE data on performance is analysed thoroughly and responded to where underperformance is identified, with support put in place as appropriate. Consequently, outcomes in RE accurately match pupils' ability. Teachers consider that they are well supported by governors and leaders and they value the opportunities provided to take part in lesson observations.

How effective is the provision for Catholic Education?

Grade 1

Teaching over time is outstanding and never less than consistently good. As a result, almost all pupils are making sustained progress that leads to outstanding achievement. Inspectors were impressed by the high levels of challenge provided by teachers, especially in the upper years. Teachers' planning is linked to current assessment so that pupils are given the next steps to move their learning on. This, combined with excellent subject knowledge which is applied consistently to challenge and inspire, has enabled pupils to develop high levels of literacy in RE and gain increasing confidence in articulating their own beliefs and those of others. Consequently, pupils are acquiring knowledge, understanding and skills appropriate to their age enabling them to think spiritually, ethically and theologically and also to be aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life. Pupils readily shared their infectious enthusiasm for the subject and the relevance it held for them in their lives.

Lessons were characterised by excellent teacher planning, effective and well-paced questioning, and imaginative use of resources within a supportive learning environment. Marking is effectively used to address misconceptions, with pupils clear about what they need to do in order to improve their work, and consistently supported by their teachers in doing this. Teachers recognise the significant part that

reflection and contemplation play in the spiritual development of pupils and the importance of providing opportunities to express this through writing, music and drama. Given that it is both inappropriate and impossible to assess spiritual development, the school is keen that consideration should be given to developing and monitoring teachers' use of assessment to ensure that support is given to pupils to further develop their ability to reflect and contemplate as part of their spiritual growth and development. This should be supported by INSET for all teachers.

The RE curriculum meets all *Bishops' Conference* requirements, is based on the *God Matters* programme, and is an ongoing focus for development. It is highly effective in helping pupils to critically reflect on their faith, providing rich opportunities for their moral, spiritual and vocational development. Learning is extended by planning engaging activities throughout the liturgical year such as Advent and Lenten trails as well as drama productions. The study of other world faiths is an important element of the curriculum and is effective in promoting tolerance and understanding of other faith traditions. Provision for relationship and sex education is in place and approved by governors.

Prayer is central to the life of the school and is an important part of every school celebration. This includes daily acts of worship and prayers at key points of the day, with a strong focus on pupils leading and organising these. Pupils benefit from having access to a wide range of resources to support them in this. The Church's seasons are focal points in the school's life, with prayer bags being provided for pupils to take home and share with their family, and also for important family events. One parent explained how using these prayer bags had encouraged her family to 'take time out to pray' and share some special time together. Pupils with different religious beliefs feel valued and supported in this highly inclusive school, and discussions with parents at the end of assembly affirm this. The school's prayer life is consistently and regularly monitored by senior leaders in order to develop more opportunities for spontaneous prayers and pupil leadership. Displays in and around the school are vibrant and supportive of the school's Catholic life and are child centred. Plans are in hand to ensure participation in annual retreats from September 2015.

Summary of Parental Questionnaires

There were 60 parental questionnaires received. All were extremely positive about the school. A small number of parents requested that more information be provided on RE and relationship education and being kept informed about their child's progress in RE.

Some typical responses to the questions included:

'Warm, inclusive school. Enthusiasm of head and staff. Strong sense of faith link to our parish'

'Small size, family orientated, community spirit'

'High moral values and respect for all. Strong religious teaching which is very important'

'A small, homely school which has a lovely family feel about it. Every child is unique and treated with love and respect'.

'Good leadership, clear values and beliefs'

'Its Catholic values are evident in all aspects. Not just for RE education but general education as well'