

**SALFORD DIOCESE  
INSPECTION REPORT**



**ST PETER AND ST PAUL  
ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**Bolton**

Inspection date December 2005

Reporting Inspector Mrs J Schofield

Inspection carried out in accordance with Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

Type of School Catholic Primary  
 Age range of pupils 3-11  
 Number on roll 222  
 Appropriate authority The governing body  
 Chair of Governors Mr N Speakes  
 Headteacher Mrs P Tarkowski  
 Religious Education Co-ordinator Mrs C Gorst-Smith  
 Date of previous inspection December 2000

<b>The Inspection judgements are:</b>	<b>Grade</b>	
Overall effectiveness of the school	2	Explanation of the Grades  1 = Outstanding 2 = Good 3 = Satisfactory 4 = Inadequate
Leadership and management of the Catholic life of the school	2	
The quality of Collective Worship	1	
Achievement and standards in Religious Education	2	
The quality of teaching and learning in Religious Education	1	
The quality of the Religious Education curriculum	2	
Leadership and management of curriculum Religious Education	1	

*The following pages provide reasons to support these judgements*

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

St Peter and Paul's is a Voluntary Aided Roman Catholic Primary School serving the home parish and the parishes of St Edmund and St Patrick, Bolton. The school is situated in close proximity to the church. Pupils come from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds. Two pupils are currently in the care of the local authority. The age range of pupils is from three to eleven years. It is a single form entry school with an admission number of 30. There are currently 222 pupils on roll 10% of whom are not of the Catholic faith. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is 29% which is above the national average. The school has identified 27% of pupils on the Special Needs Register 4 whom have a have a statutory statement of special educational needs. In the lower classes more than half of the pupils come from minority ethnic heritages. There is 10% mobility of pupils. All of the full time teaching staff are of the Catholic faith.

## **OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL**

St Peter and St Paul's is a good Catholic school with some outstanding features. The inclusive caring ethos within its community creates a happy environment in which all members of the community are valued. All aspects of the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The Religious Education curriculum is well planned and monitored. Assemblies and classroom worship of outstanding quality support the curriculum. The teaching observed during the inspection was outstanding. Pupils were well motivated and behaviour was very good. From Foundation Stage to the end of Key Stage 2 pupils make good progress. The headteacher has accurately assessed the Catholic life of the school and the Religious Education Curriculum to be good.

### **Improvement since the last inspection**

There were no key issues arising from the last Section 23 inspection in December 1999. The headteacher and the Religious Education co-ordinator however did identify some areas for development. Funding enabled the purchase of extra resources to support the curriculum and prayer and worship. The adoption of the diocesan scheme "World Faiths" has ensured a systematic development of the awareness of other faiths and cultures. The continued development of the coordinator's role enabled her to play a major role in the diocesan work on assessment of pupils' knowledge and learning. Monitored assessment is now fully in place in the school.

### **Capacity to improve**

The school's self-evaluation is accurate and comprehensive. The appointment of two assistant heads with clearly defined roles demonstrates the school's commitment to the whole child. Priorities for further improvements are closely linked to the School Development Plan. The school has good capacity for further improvement.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Continue to support and encourage the new Religious Education co-ordinator in the development of her role.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL**

The leadership and management of the Catholic Life of the school are good. The governing body has an organised committee structure with well-defined roles. The parish priest is highly committed and fully involved in the religious life of the school. A shared vision for the ongoing development of the school as a Catholic community is reflected in governor appointments to the staff of committed Catholic teachers. These appointments contribute directly to the quality of the Religious Education curriculum at St Peter and Paul's. Leadership at all levels endeavours to promote both staff and children's spiritual growth. There is an emphasis on Religious Education as a core subject and this is given priority in the School Development Plan. The school maintains good links with the diocesan advisors and the Religious Education coordinator attends all relevant training, feeding back to staff when appropriate.

## **THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

Provision for collective worship in the school is outstanding. Prayer and worship throughout the school are carefully planned, organised, celebrated and recorded. This ensures that a range of rich and meaningful opportunities is a regular and integral part of the pupils' prayer life. During inspection the whole school assembly, attended by many parents, was presented by Year 1 pupils on the theme of celebrating our gifts and talents. All were fully involved through readings, drama, music, art and personal and reflective prayer. In class worship the oldest pupils pray with reverence and respect showing a growing awareness of the importance of prayer in their everyday lives. A class Mass in the Nursery was also well attended by parents and members of the parish community. Pupils from Reception and Nursery prepared simple sorry and bidding prayers and participated in joyful singing. The use of quiet meditation as part of classroom worship is well developed and has been used effectively in Holy Week to consider the Stations of the Cross. The school plays a leading role in the parish Sacramental Programme.

## **ACHIEVEMENT AND STANDARDS IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

Achievement and Standards in Religious Education are good. On entry to the Nursery attainment of pupils is often below average. In Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 pupils make good progress. By the end of Key Stage 2 progress is very good. At the end of both Key Stages standards are in line with those expected in the diocesan programme of work. In observations pupils built on prior knowledge and attainment. They enjoyed lively discussions and activities set appropriate to their age and ability. Half-termly assessment tasks and positive marking of pupils' work enable staff to monitor carefully pupil progress. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils are beginning to write pieces of independent work. As they move through Key Stage 2 their independent writing is good and well presented. They are encouraged to record their work in a variety of forms including prose, poems, prayers and letters. In both key stages the opportunities for learners to debate, question, reflect on issues and appreciate wonder and love encourage an awareness of God's presence in their lives and of His love and forgiveness

Across the whole school community there is a feeling of self-worth and self esteem. Pupils are increasingly aware of the needs of others and give generously to a number of local and world wide charities.

## **THE QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

The overall quality of teaching and learning observed in both key stages was outstanding. All staff have a sound knowledge of the Salford Guidelines and the teachers' planning is monitored by the Religious Education co-ordinator. Lessons are well planned with clear objectives and activities to develop each topic. Evaluation of lessons is evident and assessments are completed and recorded. Each classroom is a stimulating learning environment as teachers use a range of techniques to encourage and support learning. Quality resources utilising interactive white boards and lap top computers are used effectively to create interest and enjoyment in the classroom. A very good example occurred in a Year 6 lesson. Using a flash video of the Annunciation the teacher drew out the readings from Isaiah, making links with previous work on the prophets. Pupils discussed reasons why Mary may have been afraid. The group moved to places for a meditation. During this period of the lesson the children were asked to place themselves close to Mary, hear Gabriel's words and observe Mary's reaction and response. In discussion following the meditation the class showed great empathy with Mary and a clear understanding of why Mary said yes to God. They wrote a simple thought to be used for the next lesson and a diary entry from Mary recounting the events of that day was given for homework. In all lessons observed pupils were well behaved and their attitude to learning was good. They listen attentively, respond to questions and use appropriate religious vocabulary in their own questions. They are interested in their work and settle quickly to given tasks.

## **THE QUALITY OF THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CURRICULUM**

The curriculum for Religious Education is good. The school follows the Salford guidelines *REvision 2000*. Time allocated to religious lessons is in line with national and diocesan requirements. Teachers plan and evaluate their lessons well. Lessons observations take place and feedback given to ensure good quality in teaching and learning. Half termly assessments are recorded in the pupils' workbooks. Masses, assemblies and many liturgical celebrations have a positive impact in supporting and extending the Religious Education curriculum at the school. The school plays a leading role in the preparation of pupils for the Sacramental Programme.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF CURRICULUM RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

The school has assessed the leadership and management of curriculum Religious Education as good. Inspection evidence gathered indicates this area to be of outstanding quality. The parish priest is a regular and welcome visitor in the school. Headteacher's reports to the governors ensure they are well informed of religious matters. There is regular governor attendance at the end of week assembly. The experienced co-ordinator for Religious Education has a comprehensive job description which recognises the importance of Religious Education as a core subject affecting the life of this Catholic school. She has overseen the introduction into the school of many initiatives and supported staff development through regular meetings and in-service training. Improvements in the delivery of prayer and worship are directly linked to her support through demonstrations, observations and planning with staff for further developments. Her involvement with the diocesan working party for assessment ensures the school is now well equipped to make thorough and accurate judgements on the pupils' knowledge and attainment in curriculum Religious Education.

The period from September 2005 to Easter 2006 is one of transition as another member of the staff is currently shadowing the current Religious Education co-ordinator before taking up the role. It will be important for the school to provide effective support and encouragement for the new co-ordinator in the future development of her role.