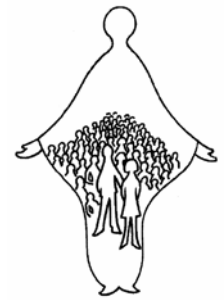


**SALFORD DIOCESE
INSPECTION REPORT**



ST. PETER'S ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL
Watson Street Mill Hill Blackburn BB2 2RH

Inspection date May 2008.

Reporting Inspector Mrs. Mary McGrail

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

Type of School	Catholic Primary
URN	119514
Age range of pupils	3-11
Number on roll	450
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of Governors	Rev. Fr. S. J. Doyle
Headteacher	Mr. Michael Duxbury
Religious Education Co-ordinators	Ms. Barbara Phelan & Ms. Helen Hopwood
Date of previous inspection	January 2005

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

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Peter's is a Roman Catholic voluntary aided primary school in the Diocese of Salford. It serves the Blackburn parishes of St. Peter in Chains, Mill Hill and St. John Vianney, Livesey. The school is situated on the outskirts of the town centre. The majority of learners live in the two parishes and come from a wide and diverse range of socio-economic backgrounds. Many experience economic difficulties. Others come from professional families. They live in a wide variety of accommodation. The area includes a high percentage of 19th and 20th century terraced housing with a large council estate nearby. There are "new build estates" on the outskirts of the area. The age range of the learners is 3 to 11 years. The indicative admission number is 60 and there are currently 450 learners on roll of whom 441 are baptised Catholics. 2.5% have English as an additional language. 10.1% are eligible for free school meals. 122 learners have been identified as having special educational needs and 9 have a statutory statement of special educational need. 17 of the 20 teachers (85%) are Catholics.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL

St. Peter's is an outstanding Catholic school. It offers its learners a traditional Catholic education in a caring, rich and supportive environment where everyone is valued and relationships are positive. Strong spiritual values are promoted to ensure that the school fully realises the aims of its Mission Statement. The school is firmly at the heart of the parishes it serves. Home, school and parish links are strong and are fostered and developed through the successful Sacramental Programmes of both parishes. The school and parish clergy give excellent support to the learners and their families on their faith journey. Throughout the year learners, parents and parishioners are given many opportunities through prayerful celebrations and liturgies to strengthen their relationship with God. The learners enjoy coming to school and work hard to achieve the high expectations of the staff. They are friendly and polite and always very well behaved. The school is very successful in promoting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the learners. The knowledgeable governing body takes a full and active role within the school. The dedicated and experienced headteacher gives outstanding leadership to his hardworking staff. With the governing body they share a clear vision for the future development of this successful school.

Improvement since the last inspection

Following the last Section 23 inspection in January 2005, when no issues were identified for development, the school has continued to evaluate the provision and further improve it. The deputy head has recently been promoted to a headship and an acting deputy is in post. A teacher left the school and was replaced with a newly qualified teacher. In June 2008 the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 learners will transfer to a newly built school on an adjacent site. Key Stage 2 learners will transfer to the new school in September 2008.

Capacity to improve

The school's self-evaluation is very detailed, accurate and honest. The experienced and dedicated headteacher, fully supported by staff and governors, has a clear and realistic vision for the future development of this successful school. With the commitment of the whole school community to realising this vision, in the exciting environment of the new school, the capacity to improve is outstanding.

What the school should do to improve further

Once again there are no issues to address. The school should continue to fully implement the objectives identified in its School Development Plan for Religious Education.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

The leadership and management of the Catholic life of the school are outstanding. The school has recently reviewed its concise Mission Statement involving staff, governors and learners. It permeates all aspects of the life of the school and is on prominent display throughout the school. Themed spiritual values linked to the aims of the school ensure that the Mission Statement is “lived out” in its daily life. The parish priest, in his role as chair of governors, gives clear direction. The clergy of both parishes are fully supportive of the religious life of the school through their regular visits and in their input into collective worship. The headteacher’s comprehensive reports together with the reports from the Religious Education co-ordinators and the monitoring “walks” by designated governors ensure that the governing body is well informed of the overall provision. The school gives very good support to the Sacramental Programmes of both parishes. All staff have a performance management objective related to the spiritual life of the school. Staff and governors attend joint in-service training sessions on religious topics. The school and governing body are fully supportive of the 6 teachers who are studying to achieve the qualification of Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies. 5 other teachers already have this qualification. The headteacher is currently studying for an MA in Catholic School Leadership. The school takes every opportunity to promote links within the local community and with other schools through music, sport and the learning network.

THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Provision for collective worship is outstanding. The school has a policy statement for collective worship and prayer. Throughout the school year learners, staff and parents are given many rich and meaningful opportunities to develop their relationship with God. The Eucharist is central to the life of the school. The school’s close proximity to the church enables whole school and class Masses to be celebrated on a regular basis. Whole school Masses are held on feast days and at the beginning of the school year. The one attended to honour Our Lady in her special month, during the inspection, was an excellent example of worshipping community members being fully involved as readers, servers, prayer leaders and musicians. Parents and parishioners were present. Class and year group Masses are also celebrated. Well planned assemblies are led by the classes each week. These reflect the Religious Education curriculum or the liturgical year. Prayer has a high profile at St. Peters. Individual, collective and reflective prayer is encouraged. Learners are familiar with the traditional prayers of the church and are happy to share their spontaneous prayers with others. The voluntary prayer group held for Years 5 and 6 at lunchtime is well attended. The one attended during the inspection was an excellent example of a genuine spiritual experience for all involved. The involvement and commitment of the curate in these sessions is appreciated by staff and learners. At all prayerful opportunities learners are very respectful and reverent. Reconciliation services are held in Advent and Lent for Key Stage 2 learners. The school is not complacent and continues to develop its provision. No learner is withdrawn from this inclusive provision.

ACHIEVEMENT AND STANDARDS IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Achievement and standards in Religious Education are good. From the moment learners enter the Foundation Stage they make good, steady progress within and between all key stages. Detailed Religious Education portfolios are kept for every year group indicating the work covered with photographic evidence of examples of assemblies, displays and visits throughout the year. The younger pupils are able to write their own simple prayers and their version of bible stories which they have heard. By the end of Key Stage 1 these are recorded in well constructed sentences. In discussions they use good religious vocabulary. This progress is consistently maintained in Key Stage 2. The learners have a good factual knowledge of their faith. They discuss moral issues sensibly and by the end of the key stage produce good quality, extended pieces of writing in their Religious books. They have a good understanding of other faiths and cultures and are proud of their responsibilities as members of the school council. They explained well their ideas for healthy eating with the establishment of “Fruity Friday” and are currently in the process of deciding the contents of the Time Capsule for burial in their new school. They give generous support to local, national and international charities.

THE QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The inspector agrees with the school that the quality of teaching and learning in Religious Education is good. All lessons are carefully planned and learning objectives are explained to the learners. Lessons have a clear focus and a range of teaching strategies is used which reflect the content of the lesson and the age of the learners. Teachers demonstrate good questioning techniques and make good use of technology to stimulate the learners to respond. Lessons have pace and resources are well used to enhance the learning process. Learners who need extra help are very well supported. All books are very well marked by the teachers. Good work and extra effort is praised and ideas given for how work could be improved. The assessment model produced by the diocese has been adapted and implemented. The learners have assessment record books. It is planned to level their work and moderate the results which is a necessary next step in a large school like St. Peter's. The learners have good attitudes to their learning. They listen attentively to the teacher, are keen to be involved in discussions and keep on task until work has been completed. There are many examples of very good recording of skills in the learners' workbooks. They work sensibly and co-operatively in pairs and small groups. They show a genuine enthusiasm and interest in their learning and are always well behaved.

THE QUALITY OF THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CURRICULUM

The Religious Education curriculum is outstanding. The school has a clear policy for curriculum Religious Education. All lessons are planned using the *REvision 2000* scheme. The new version is being used in the Foundation Stage and the teachers are preparing to use the new Key Stage 1 version. The scheme is supplemented with *The Way, The Truth and The Life* and a range of good quality resources. The diocesan World Faiths programme is very well used in Key Stage 2. A wide range of visitors is invited into school to speak to the learners about their personal faith. This helps to ensure that the learners are made fully aware of the cultural diversity in their community. The time allocated to curriculum Religious Education meets both national and diocesan requirements. The school is in the process of linking the objectives in the *REvision 2000* to the aims of Every Child Matters. The input of the parish clergy in the daily life of the school and the quality of the collective worship all impact positively on curriculum Religious Education. The Sacramental Programmes of both parishes contribute significantly to the overall provision. No learner is withdrawn from curriculum Religious Education. The "value of the month" structure and curriculum Religious Education provision contribute significantly to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the learners.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF CURRICULUM RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The school has evaluated the leadership and management of curriculum Religious Education as outstanding. The inspector agrees. The headteacher ensures that the two hardworking and dedicated Religious Education co-ordinators have his full support. They all provide good clear leadership and support for colleagues. The designated governor for Religious Education and the governing body are fully aware of the provision through their regular monitoring. The parish clergy are regular visitors to the school ensuring all members of the school community are fully supported on their faith journey through their input into collective worship. The structure for the monitoring and evaluation of the provision is well planned and is used effectively to determine the objectives for further development. The co-ordinators work closely together but take individual responsibility for different key stages. The Key Stage 2 co-ordinator gives excellent support to the Sacramental Programmes of both parishes. The co-ordinators attend diocesan courses to continue their professional development and in-service training sessions on religious topics are a feature of school development planning. The headteacher and senior management team give priority to the Catholic status of the school by ensuring good quality resources are available. All classes have a focal area for prayer and good quality displays throughout the school clearly reflect its faith life.