

INSPECTION REPORT

ST. PETER'S ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL
St. Peter's Road Newchurch-in-Rossendale Lancashire BB4 9EZ

Inspection date May 2010
 Reporting Inspector Joan Duffin
 Inspection carried out in accordance with Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

Type of School Catholic Primary
 URN 119664
 Age range of pupils 4-11
 Number on roll 111
 Appropriate authority The governing body
 Chair of Governors Mrs. Ann Goy
 Headteacher Mr. Peter Stec
 Religious Education Co-ordinator Mr. Peter Stec
 Date of previous inspection January 2007

The Inspection judgements are:	Grade	Explanation of the Grades 1 = Outstanding 2 = Good 3 = Satisfactory 4 = Inadequate
Overall effectiveness of the school	2	
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	2	
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 voluntary aided Roman Catholic primary school. It is one of two primary schools serving the parish of St. Joseph and St. Peter in Newchurch. It is situated in the Rossendale valley in an area of mixed socio-economic backgrounds. The age range of learners is 4 to 11. The indicative admission number is 17 and there are currently 111 pupils on roll. 55 of the pupils are Catholic. Almost all of the learners are of White British heritage. 12.6 % of pupils are eligible for free school meals. 17 learners have been identified as having special educational needs and 3 of these have a statement of special educational need. 3 of the 5 teachers (60%) are Catholic.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL

St Peter's is a good Catholic school with some outstanding features. It has strong Catholic values which establish a very good climate for work. The leadership and management of the Catholic life of the school are outstanding. The provision for collective worship is outstanding. The parish priest is a welcome visitor to the school. The governing body offers challenge and support to the headteacher. The headteacher has a clear vision for the direction of the school and of its strengths and areas for development. The standards attained in Religious Education are good. Less able pupils are well supported and achieve well but more able pupils are not always challenged to achieve their potential. Teaching and learning are good. Systems of assessment and monitoring are in place. These now need to be used more effectively to raise standards still further. The curriculum is well planned. Pupils' behaviour is very good. They show respect for themselves and others. There is excellent provision for pupils' spiritual and moral development. Opportunities are taken to foster pupils' awareness and respect for other faiths and cultures and to promote community cohesion. All members of staff fully support the Catholic ethos of the school. Very good relationships exist between the school, parents, parish and the wider community.

Improvement since the last inspection

Following the last Section 48 inspection in January 2007 the school was asked to develop a common format for lesson planning, develop a portfolio of pupils' work for moderation and to increase the provision of artefacts to support the study of world faiths. The school has worked hard and addressed all these issues successfully.

Capacity to improve

The school's self-evaluation is accurate. Priorities for Religious Education and the Catholic life of the school have an appropriate place in the School Improvement Plan and in its action plans. The headteacher has a clear understanding of the strengths of the school and its areas for development. The headteacher, staff and governors are committed to improvement. There is, therefore, good capacity for further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise the standards in curriculum Religious Education further, especially for the most able pupils, by making more effective use of the information obtained from assessment and monitoring of curriculum 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 Mission Statement lies at the heart of the school's aims, policies and expectations. The children are encouraged to live according to the Gospel and develop love and forgiveness with compassion and respect for others. The governing body fulfils its role well in relation to its Catholic foundation. It has knowledge of the Catholic life of the school through headteacher reports and the close involvement of the chair of governors and Religious Education link governor. The parish priest is a frequent and welcome visitor to the school. The headteacher has a clear vision of the nature of the Catholic school and, together with the deputy headteacher, promotes the Catholic life of the school very effectively. All members of staff promote learners' spiritual and moral development in all they do. There is a strong Catholic ethos in the school. Community cohesion is promoted and learners gain an understanding of other faiths and cultures through, for example, the links with Uganda where the support of St. Peter's, and its neighbouring school St Joseph's, enabled 4 students to clear their debts. The parish based Sacramental Preparation Programme is well planned and run very effectively with support from the school. Children are given many opportunities to care for those less fortunate than themselves by supporting such charities as St. Joseph's Penny, CAFOD and those suffering from Alexander's Syndrome. The school performs its Christmas play for the local nursery school and the senior citizens of the parish.

THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Provision for collective worship in the school is outstanding in relation to the range and quality of opportunity available. The liturgical life of the school is well planned, recorded and monitored. Whole school Masses are held each term and the school organizes a Valley Mass for all the Catholic schools in Rossendale Valley. The parish priest tailors the readings at Mass so that the children can understand them better. Whole school, class and praise assemblies are held regularly. They are well planned and reflect liturgical and curricular themes. In the whole school assembly observed puppets were used to help the pupils understand that selfishness separates us from each other and God but that we can build bridges by love and kindness. The lovely singing, including a descant and guitar and drum accompaniment, greatly enhanced the celebration. Learners are involved in the assemblies by reading, choosing hymns and composing their own prayers. Their response is prayerful and reflective. The liturgical year is acknowledged by Harvest, Advent and Lenten services. The Last Supper was re-enacted during Holy Week using music and drama. Pupils are given opportunities to receive the sacrament of Reconciliation during Lent. The prayer corners in each classroom and the wonderful displays around the school provide further opportunities for personal prayer and reflection. Collective worship makes an excellent contribution to pupils' spiritual and moral development.

ACHIEVEMENT AND STANDARDS IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Achievement and Standards in Religious Education are good. Pupils' attainment on entry to school is broadly average. They make good progress and by Year 6 their attainment is good. Learners with special educational needs are well supported by teachers and support assistants and achieve well. Learners of above average ability are not always challenged to achieve their potential. Systems of standardisation and assessment have been established and are developing well. Scrutiny of pupils' work is undertaken each term by the whole staff. Lesson observations and scrutiny of teachers' planning take place. The results of these initiatives now need to be used more effectively to raise standards particularly for the more able. Pupils are confident in discussion and respond to teachers' questioning with knowledge and understanding. Learners are familiar with stories from the Old Testament and have a good knowledge of the life and teachings of Jesus. They can apply these teachings to their own lives. Pupils' written work is mostly good but varies in quality between classes. Cross-curricular links enable pupils to apply their literary skills to their written work. The school provides very well for pupils' spiritual and moral development. The children have a clear idea of right and wrong and their behaviour during the inspection was very good. Pupils are given opportunities to develop independence and responsibility through their involvement in the School Council and Playground Pals initiatives.

THE QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The quality of teaching and learning in Religious Education is good. Lessons are well prepared and mostly conducted at a pace to maintain interest and enjoyment. Questioning is good with good use of open ended questions. The use of technology is developing well. A good lesson observed in Foundation Stage used the interactive whiteboard to prompt discussion about the similarities and differences in people. The children responded well showing interest and understanding. In another good lesson in Key Stage 1 the teacher used birthday cards to demonstrate that we are different things to different people. She then used this analogy to talk about the three persons of the Trinity. The children took a gift card from the Holy Spirit Gift Box and were asked to say how they would share that gift that day. A good lesson in lower Key Stage 2 explored when and where we can pray and the reasons why we pray. Quiet music helped to create a calm atmosphere for reflection and some children shared their spontaneous prayers with the class. The Upper Key Stage 2 lesson observed dealt with sin. The pupils were asked to write on a stone something which they knew they should not do. The stones were then collected in a bag and children lifted them to see the weight of their sins. They then wrote a letter to God to say sorry for what they had done and how they were going to try to be better. Teachers ensure the purpose of the lesson is shared with pupils. Marking is good with most teachers taking the opportunity to advise learners of ways in which they can improve their work.

THE QUALITY OF THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CURRICULUM

The Religious Education curriculum is good with some outstanding features. It complies with local and national expectations in respect of time allocated. It is made accessible to all pupils by adapting it for mixed age classes. The link governor for Religious Education is given regular updates on the Religious Education curriculum from the headteacher. The school follows the diocesan scheme *REvision 2000* with added resources from *The Way, The Truth and the Life*. Teachers' planning and pupils' work are scrutinised and effective feedback given. Systems of assessment and standardisation ensure that effective teaching and learning are taking place. The very good resources are used to good effect. Curriculum provision is enhanced by the excellent art work created by the children with support of a visiting artist in clay. The Last Supper frieze is outstanding. Drama and music also feature strongly. Curriculum provision is enhanced by prayer and worship. The study of world religions and the links with Uganda provide opportunities for pupils to develop an awareness and understanding of other faiths and cultures and promote community cohesion. Good links with the associated high school provide a smooth transition for pupils. Parents are pleased with the school and pupils are happy to attend. The caring relationships between all members of the school community create a happy atmosphere. The clean, bright, attractive rooms and excellent displays contribute to a good working environment.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF CURRICULUM RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The school has assessed the leadership and management of curriculum Religious Education as outstanding and the inspector would agree with this judgement. The parish priest has an excellent relationship with the children and uses the Sacramental Preparation Programme to further support their Religious Education. Governors are kept informed of developments through headteacher reports and involvement in the school. They provide challenge and support to the headteacher. The headteacher, who is also the Religious Education coordinator, sets a clear direction for the teaching of Religious Education and has a clear idea of its strengths and areas for development. The school's self-evaluation is accurate. The diocesan guidelines for assessment and standardisation are in place. The non-Catholic teachers work hard to research their role and they receive help and support from the headteacher and other staff members. The three teachers who do not yet have the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies are studying for it. Religious Education and the Catholic life of the school are appropriately represented in the School Improvement Plan and its action plans. Resources are good and are used effectively. Equality of opportunity for all is promoted and the very good behaviour of pupils contributes to this. All members of staff uphold the Catholic ethos of the school and help to create an atmosphere of happiness and belonging. The school is committed to providing an effective learning environment with Jesus Christ at its centre.