



DIOCESE OF BRENTWOOD

Denominational (S48) Inspection Report

Name of School: St Peter's Catholic Primary School
Local Authority: London Borough of Barking and Dagenham
Inspection Date: 15th March 2019
Reporting Inspector: Mr Stephen Beck

This Inspection was carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005 and 2011.

Type of School:	Primary	School Address:	
School Category:	Voluntary Aided	Goresbrook Road	
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11	Dagenham	
Gender of pupils:	Mixed	Essex	
Number on roll:	412	RM9 6UU	
Appropriate Authority:	The Governing Body	Tel. No.	020 8270 6524
Date of previous inspection:	March 2014	Headteacher:	Mrs Clare Scott
		Co-Chairs of Governors:	Mr George Lopez Mr John Mudad

Information about the school

St Peter's Catholic Primary is a two form entry school with a nursery. It is a voluntary aided school in the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham and is part of the Diocese of Brentwood. It serves the parish of St Peter's Dagenham where just over 70% of pupils and their families attend with a small number of pupils coming from farther afield. There are currently 412 pupils aged 3-11 on roll, of which 83% are Catholic. The school moved from 1.5 to 2 forms of entry following its previous inspection and this transition has been managed seamlessly. The number of pupils from minority ethnic groups is high at 95%, with Black African pupils forming the highest ethnic minority group in the school at 72%. White British is low at 5%. The school has a wide range of ethnicities with relatively small proportions in each. Pupil attainment on entry to the Nursery is below average, especially in speech and language. 13% of pupils are identified with needs on the SEND register. 18% of pupils are supported through Pupil Premium funding, which is below the national average. Although the proportion of pupils claiming Pupil Premium is low, there are a number of families who are in circumstances of extreme poverty but cannot claim any benefits due to having no recourse to public funds. The school is proud to have a 12 place Additionally Resourced Provision (ARP) that the school has named The Nazareth Rooms. The ARP is a specialist provision for pupils with moderate learning difficulties.

Key grades for inspection

1: Outstanding 2: Good 3: Requires improvement 4: Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of this Catholic school

Grade 1

St Peter's is a welcoming school from the point of first contact with the Catholic ethos being explicit on entry to the building and throughout the school. It was described at the time of the last inspection as a good school with several outstanding features. It is to the great credit of the Headteacher and her decisive, but strongly focussed collegiate style of leadership, that the skilled and driven staff team she has built around her are collectively motivated and aspirational for the whole school and its community. This has secured strong, home, school parish links, and a supportive governing body that also challenges. As a result St Peter's is an outstanding school that provides a happy thriving environment in which pupils have a self-confidence and belief that they can achieve. This sees them at least attaining and frequently exceeding expectations. They live out the school's Mission Statement in a culture that places equal value on spiritual, academic and moral development in forming the whole child, whilst recognising the individuality of a person's faith journey. There is a real 'learning buzz' throughout the school which has a philosophy that sees itself constantly reassess and look for 'What could we do better?' There is a clear capacity to successfully sustain and build on its current numerous strengths.

What the school should do to improve further:

With no significant areas requiring improvement, the school should ensure that the areas highlighted in its Section 48 Self Evaluation Form continue to be addressed and consider giving priority to:

- Maintaining current strong assessment strategies through the embedding of the new assessment process with age related expectations, whilst incorporating regular cross schools moderation. This could be linked to opportunities to facilitate further enhancement of the extended curriculum and the provision of more opportunities for pupil initiated learning and research tasks as appropriate.
- Extending the role of the impressive Pupil Chaplains to provide them with more opportunities to lead on the planning and delivery of class and whole school Collective Worship to further enhance this aspect of the Catholic Life of the school.

All groups of pupils are very proud to belong to this outstanding Catholic school. They aspire to follow in the footsteps of their patron, St Peter by doing 'what Jesus wants us to do' and this is reflected in the happy, purposeful and caring climate evident throughout the school. There is a strong sense of a community firmly rooted in Gospel Values and the teachings of the Catholic Church. Adherence to the Mission Statement, *'We the family of St Peter's united in faith by God strive to learn and grow together to be the best we possibly can every day'*, develops in all pupils a strong sense of social justice and responsibility for themselves and the wider community. Pupils' manners, behaviour and attitudes in and out of the classroom are exemplary. The calm, yet joyful atmosphere belies the relatively large size of the school.

The Headteacher is an excellent role model and is well supported by the governing body and leadership team. She has worked tirelessly to improve the school and make it a centre of excellence in Catholic education. As a result of her efforts and commitment, the progress made since the last inspection in 2014 is highly commendable. She has developed and strengthened the school leadership team, securing a strong capacity to maintain and further develop the school's many strengths.

Pupils value one another and understand at an age appropriate level, how to live out Gospel values. They play a genuine role in developing the Catholic Life of the school. St Peter's has a School Chaplain who over the past three years has established a Pupil Chaplaincy team made up of a group of twelve pupils from Year 6. The Pupil Chaplaincy Team carry out a range of functions including, supporting the weekly Gospel Reading, altar preparation and ushers for assemblies and Masses. They also organise a number of prayer groups open to all KS2 pupils at lunchtime, promote the prayer box in the prayer room, which is for personal and Justice and Peace prayers and organise and run Bible Study in Advent and Lent for Year 2. Two Chaplains are assigned to each class and they visit on a Wednesday afternoon to lead Collective Worship for the pupils. Once a month, the Pupil Chaplains visit the Nazareth Rooms. They use the theme from the Liturgical Calendar or a Bible Story to share with the pupils. Chaplains contribute to the monthly Chaplaincy Newsletter. There is planned Relationships and Sex Education provision for pupils utilising the 'Journey in Love' scheme. The pupils and their families give generously to charities, evidence of which can be seen in the weekly newsletters, twitter feeds and displays. It was notable that Ofsted inspectors commented, *'The school is at the centre of the community and a thriving hub for parents and carers as well as pupils.'* Respect for one's own and other's cultural, social and religious background underpins all relationships and behaviour through living out the Mission Statement. The Gospel Values are known to all in the school community and are meticulously followed being at the heart of all the school does. Staff and pupils who practise other faiths are given time to celebrate their own religious festivals with staff of other faiths being provided, as required, with a quiet space to pray. Pupils visit other places of worship including a Year 5 visit to a Synagogue and a Year 6 visit to a Hindu Temple. Year 2, 3 and 4 pupils also had a Hindu workshop as part of their topic studying the Hindu faith. These experiences deepen pupils' understanding of different faiths and promote an understanding of tolerance and diversity.

Leaders are energetic promoters of the school's vision and provide excellent role models for everyone within the school community. The provision for the Catholic Life of the school is given high priority by leaders in the school's self-evaluation cycle. All leaders take the development and nurturing of an authentic Catholic ethos seriously. Through the school's impressive and informative website, the school promotes, celebrates and shares the ethos and Catholic Life of the school. Governors are strategic partners in the development of the school. They are fully aware of the school's key priorities for improvement. Leaders conduct a range of monitoring activities relating to the provision and outcomes for the Catholic Life of the school. The school's excellent self-evaluation is a coherent reflection of rigorous monitoring, searching analysis and self-challenge and is clearly and explicitly focussed on the Catholic Life of the school. Governors seek the views of parents at parent consultations. There is an annual parent survey and a Religious Education parent survey. Pupils' views are regularly sought through discussions, the school council and various questionnaires throughout the year. Staff views are sought through their own self-reflection and their appraisal reviews. Account is taken of all these views throughout the year and when the school updates its School Development Plan.

Religious Education at St Peter's is good and borders on outstanding. Pupils get an excellent start to their school career in Early Years and this is successfully built on as pupils move through the school. This will improve further as the school implements its plans to secure greater consistency of approach across the school, in particular in regard to marking and through the embedding of the new assessment procedures along with synchronising this with assessment across other curriculum areas. This will ensure pupils are more secure in respect of their next steps and that opportunities, as appropriate, are provided to enhance the curriculum through additional cross curricular links and pupil initiated learning and research.

Governors and school leaders place great importance on Religious Education and much work has been done to monitor and evaluate aspects of teaching and learning in order to continue to improve. The school's monitoring and self-evaluation form (SEF) indicate that teaching is consistently good or better and this has been validated in the course of this inspection. Leadership of Religious Education models excellent practice and is a strength of the school. The Religious Education leader is knowledgeable, supportive of colleagues and is seen as a person to go to for support. She is well organised and her leader's documentation is of a very high order. Through careful tracking, pupils requiring additional support are identified and targeted and the progress of particular groups of pupils is highlighted. Tracking shows that the progress of all groups, including those with special educational needs, in receipt of Pupil Premium and pupils with English as an additional language, is very good.

Teachers' strong subject knowledge is well used and contributes to pupils making very good progress as learners. The Religious Education curriculum fully meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference. 'Come and See' is the main scheme used in the school and leaders are effectively supplementing this with a range of other teaching and learning activities to add breadth and balance as well as to engage pupils. Leaders are aware of strengths and areas for further development.

Lessons observed during the inspection were never less than good and exhibited a number of outstanding elements. They provide opportunities for pupils to ask questions and to develop their understanding. Excellent questioning skills were used by teachers to challenge and engage pupils and deepen their understanding of some quite difficult concepts about the season of Lent. Pupils are very attentive, responsive and demonstrate excellent behaviour for learning with pupils rarely off task ensuring lessons proceed without interruption. Pupils report that they know what they need to do to improve further but some were less able to explain this during discussion. Every opportunity is taken to ensure that no child misses out on any of the activities provided by the school. Good use of resources is made to maximise learning opportunities including the use of visits and visitors. Pupils say that teachers make an effort to provide them with interesting lessons. In an outstanding lesson observed, the pace maintained by the teacher created a sense of dynamic learning, energy and eagerness. Transitions ensured that learning remained fresh throughout the lesson. The balance between teacher provided input and pupil response was generally well balanced. Pupils demonstrate very good religious literacy, appropriate for their age and development and are happy to contribute orally and to answer questions with them demonstrating stronger oral than written skills. They are reassured in this by their understanding that "there are no wrong answers." Relationships between pupils and teachers are excellent. The Religious Education curriculum provides outstanding opportunities for pupils' spiritual and moral development. Additional adults are effectively deployed to support pupils' progress and clearly enjoy working with them.

The governing body has a mix of longer serving and new governors. They are very effective and know their school well. They are rapidly developing their skills set through training with an ambition to serve the school as effectively as possible. There are regular meetings with the Religious Education link governor who has a shared understanding of the school's priorities for this subject area. He has observed lessons, looked at books, met with pupils and attended whole school and class worship. There are strong links with the Parish Priest and parishioners of St Peter's. These includes pupils attending weekly Mass (two classes), liturgies, feast days and extending an invitation to school social events and concerts. Parents speak very highly of the school and are very supportive of the Headteacher and the staff. Almost 50% of parental questionnaires were returned with 98% expressing total satisfaction.

Collective Worship is outstanding and a strength of the school. It is greatly enhanced by the work of the recently appointed School Chaplain who has a long association with the school. She is a member of the school's linked parish, works as a HLTA and is a foundation governor. She is an exemplar of Lay Chaplaincy in a primary school and her work could usefully be disseminated to other schools. Pupils are keen to take the initiative in leading worship, displaying confidence and enthusiasm and the school plans to develop this through the Pupil Chaplains. In a Rosary Group attended, the Pupil Chaplains impressively led the session independently of adults. They led a discussion on the sorrowful mysteries, prayer and reflection. In another equally impressive session they led a story session in the Nazareth Rooms reflecting on the 'Parable of Jonah'. Pupils act with reverence and are keen to participate in all aspects of worship. They are able to answer questions confidently and demonstrate good religious vocabulary. Almost all pupils have an excellent understanding of the Church's liturgical year. There is a deep sense of respect for other faiths and this is reflected in the inclusive manner in which pupils prepare the liturgy.

The experience of being part of a praying community has a strong and visible effect on the development of all pupils, irrespective of ability or faith background. Classroom prayer tables and displays are imaginative and well looked after. Pupils understand the importance of prayer in their daily lives. St. Peter's offers opportunities for all forms of prayer including spontaneous prayer and traditional prayer. The quality of provision for Collective Worship is outstanding. Staff and pupils regularly pray together and this is part of almost all school celebrations.

Collective Worship is given the highest possible priority in terms of planning and resourcing. There is a clear purpose, message and direction to all forms of worship in the school. Experiences of Collective Worship are of such high quality that all members of the school community cherish their participation in them. The Headteacher led an excellent achievement assembly on the day of the inspection, at which pupils clearly enjoyed celebrating the achievements of their peers. It was skilfully linked to scripture, prayer and reflection providing extra meaning to the celebration, with the school's use of the 'Wednesday Word' also being utilised. Parents commented on how helpful they found the 'Wednesday Word' and noted their appreciation of how pupils are encouraged to create their own prayers, which they often use at home. The themes chosen for Collective Worship reflect a deep understanding of the Church's mission. As a parent wrote, *'We really appreciate the efforts and guidance from the school regarding religious education. St Peter's has fostered our child's faith development.'*

The Parish Priest is a regular visitor to the school. His visits are very much appreciated and further strengthen the parish links with the school. He was highly complimentary of how well pupils are prepared for liturgical celebrations and the parish based sacramental programme. The school in turn values his support in developing Collective Worship at the school. Leaders see liturgical and spiritual development as a priority in the professional development of school leaders and quality time is devoted to it. Leaders ensure that all staff in the school receive formation in the development of spiritual and liturgical understanding as a staff training priority. Due to the culture of receptivity that the Headteacher has created, response to this training is wholehearted and enthusiastic. The Headteacher leads on Collective Worship and the senior leadership team plan a Collective Worship overview each term.

The Religious Education Link Governor regularly observes acts of Collective Worship and evaluates these with the Headteacher. Parents also concurred that Collective Worship at St. Peter's is very strong. The school has improved pupil's knowledge of the responses in the Mass with the help of the parish priest and through pupil's preparation and planning of Masses. The school's prayer room and outdoor reflection areas are available for quiet reflection and prayer for both staff and pupils and are well used along with the prayer focuses in all classrooms and around the school. The Headteacher introduced School Core Values which form a focal point for Collective Worship across the school. It is planned to introduce 'Core Value Ambassadors' who will be nominated for Friday celebration assemblies.

St Peter's distinguishes itself as a place of learning that prides itself on being open, inclusive and welcoming and this is reflected by all members of the school community who collectively serve the pupils and each other so well.