

St Peter's Catholic Primary School

URN: 148669

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Northampton

27 November 2024

Summary of key findings

Overall effectiveness

The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school

2

Catholic life and mission (p.3)

How faithfully the school responds to the call to live as a Catholic community at the service of the Church's educational mission

2

Religious education (p.5)

The quality of curriculum religious education

2

Collective worship (p.7)

The quality and range of liturgy and prayer provided by the school

2

The school is fully compliant with the general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishops' Conference

Yes

The school is fully compliant with any additional requirements of the diocesan bishop

Yes

The school has responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection

Fully

Compliance statement

- The school is fully compliant with the general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishops' Conference.
- The school is fully compliant with the additional requirements of the diocesan bishop.
- All areas for improvement outlined in the previous diocesan inspection report have been addressed in full.

What the school does well

- St Peter's is a welcoming, caring, nurturing and inclusive family, which enables all pupils to feel safe and loved.
- St Peter's has excellent Parish links ensuring a flourishing partnership between school and the local community.
- Children are proud of their school and speak with confidence about their mission.
- Pupils confidently undertake liturgical ministries because staff prepare them well.
- Pupils enjoy religious education lessons and are actively engaged in lessons.

What the school needs to improve

- Develop pupils' ability to apply Catholic social teaching, so they can articulate the impact it has on their actions and decisions they make.
- Provide greater challenge in RE lessons to ensure increased progress is made for all groups of pupils and is linked to pupils' current assessment.
- To ensure pupils are more actively involved in preparing and evaluating experiences of prayer and liturgy.

Catholic life and mission

How faithfully the school responds to the call to live as a Catholic community at the service of the Church's educational mission.

Catholic life and mission key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

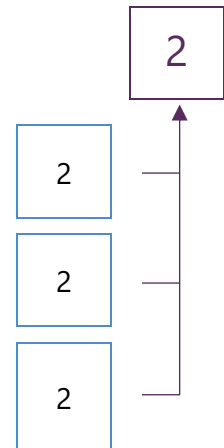
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

Provision

The quality of provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school



St Peter's has an inclusive and welcoming Catholic culture, driven by its mission statement, 'Live and learn, as friends of Jesus.' This mission is known and celebrated by all pupils and staff and lived out by the whole community. Pupils feel loved and cared for and say that school is a very happy place. Pupils are proud to be part of their school family, and they participate fully in the opportunities given to them to celebrate their faith. They value the various leadership roles they can undertake especially the Mission Team. Pupils support others locally, nationally, and globally and benefit from the ongoing link with the nearby residential home, visiting weekly. Children participate in the annual SVP Bluebell run, they sing carols in Riley Park and at the Dementia Cafe, and support Marlow late night shopping. Whilst pupils understand that they should help those who need support, most cannot yet articulate that this is because they are Christ's disciples. Therefore, whilst they are actively involved in responding to the demands of Catholic social teaching, pupils cannot confidently articulate the theology underpinning their social actions. Pupils understand they are unique individuals created by God, and they deeply respect the individuality of others. Their behaviour is of a high standard throughout the school; they are kind, welcoming, and polite. Parents are overwhelmingly positive of the school some commenting, 'St Peter's is a loving, nurturing school.' The school makes everyone part of their family whether they are Catholic or not.' 'I feel they leave with a good moral compass and understanding of the needs of others.'

Staff at St Peter's proactively embrace the school's mission statement, reflected in how they interact with pupils, families, and each other. The commitment and passion of governors, leaders, and staff creates a strong sense of community. A clear and shared understanding of the type of Catholic education St Peter's strives to offer, unites staff in their work. Subsequently, staff are strong role models for pupils and are committed to implementing the school's mission statement, striving to ensure that the school is Christ-centred through interactions. The parish priest is a welcome visitor to

the school and works closely with the leadership team. The school environment, particularly the entrance area and hall reflect its mission and identity through explicit signs of the school's Catholic character including a virtue display board. However, around the school, prayer focal areas are less prominent and impactful. The school follows a diocesan-approved relationship and health education (RHE) scheme promoting Church teaching.

Leaders and governors demonstrate faith-driven leadership they recognise their duty as guardians of the Catholic life and mission of the school and are firmly committed to its development. Leaders and governors embrace their relationship with the parish resulting in a flourishing partnership, with parish and school working seamlessly together. During the inspection, the inspectors saw the weekly 'Welly Wednesday' visits in action, where the parish deacon helps alongside staff with gardening and outdoor activities. Leaders and governors are witnesses to the Gospel and Catholic Social Teaching in how they run the school. The most vulnerable are prioritised, and there is a culture of charitable outreach with activities such as pupils visiting the local elderly residence to sing and chat together. Staff serve as positive role models for pupils. They treat all pupils with respect and provide them with the dignity they deserve. Leaders monitor and evaluate the provision and drive forward improvement; this work now needs to be organised more systematically to ensure a sustained impact. Governors ensure that the Catholic life and mission of the school is a school improvement priority and hold leaders to account effectively and supportively.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

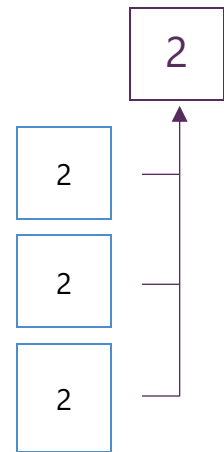
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

Provision

The quality of teaching, learning, and assessment in religious education

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for religious education



Religious education lessons effectively support pupils to know and remember more; pupils demonstrate this particularly well through their oral contributions. Pupils can talk confidently about what they have learned in religious education lessons and are developing their religious literacy. They enjoy religious education, often citing it as a favourite subject and excellent behaviour for learning, shows that they approach their learning with enthusiasm. However, written tasks do not yet fully capture pupils' religious knowledge and understanding. The children get off to a strong start, due to Early Years' high-quality provision. They were observed interpreting the feelings of the shepherds when visited by an angel, through drama and freeze framing. This creative approach inspired thought provoking responses, including a child prompted discussion about where God is. One child responded, 'He is in my heart.' In all classes, teachers effectively use questioning in lessons to check on pupils' learning. Though, they do not always provide opportunities or time for pupils to ask questions, limiting their opportunity to explore their curiosity. Pupils' effort is celebrated, and the feedback they receive helps them to improve their knowledge and understanding. Attainment in religious education is generally strong, with most pupils meeting age-related expectations at the end of each key stage.

All teachers are committed to the value of religious education and communicate this effectively and enthusiastically within lessons. Teachers make particularly effective use of questioning within lessons to stimulate responses and check for understanding. However, religious education books show an over reliance on writing frames, activity sheets and other printed documents, which does not always allow for pupils' own individuality and creativity. This can limit their responses and hinder the progress of the higher ability pupils. All staff create a positive climate for learning, with pupils being encouraged to support and help each other. Teachers celebrate pupils' achievement, which leads to good motivation levels; consequently, pupils are keen to learn more and do their best. Recall of previous

learning is used effectively with the use of questioning at the start of lessons. This process is consistent across the school. Pupils are well supported by adults in lessons, and adaptations to activities ensure pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) achieve well in lessons. A range of resources are available to enhance lessons, and pupils are taught to use them well. For example, pupils are confident in independently using the Bible to look up references and locate specific scripture, which was observed in the Year 3 and 4 class when they were exploring the prophecy of Isaiah. There is a focus on vocabulary development, with key words linked to the current unit of study referred to within knowledge organisers. Pupils use these well to aid and reinforce their religious literacy. However, planning is not always linked to pupils' current assessment; which results in a lack of challenge at times.

The school is going through a period of change; the new headteacher is also the appointed religious education subject leader. He has a vision for the subject and competently demonstrates the skills needed to achieve it, though he has not yet been in school long enough to implement it fully. Leaders and governors ensure that religious education has parity with other core subjects regarding timetabling and staffing. The timetables show that religious education is receiving 10% of the available curriculum time. Governors take a keen interest in the quality of religious education, which is regularly discussed at their meetings. Leaders ensure the diocesan curriculum is fully delivered and plans are in place to roll out implementation of the new curriculum resources in line with the *Religious Education Directory*, resulting in provision that meet the requirements of the diocesan bishop. Governors are involved in monitoring and self-evaluation. They visit the school regularly, ensuring they have a good knowledge of the subject's strengths and areas for improvement. More systematic monitoring and evaluation are needed to ensure all this valuable work continues to positively and sustainably impact the quality of provision.

Collective worship

The quality and range of liturgy and prayer provided by the school

Collective worship key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

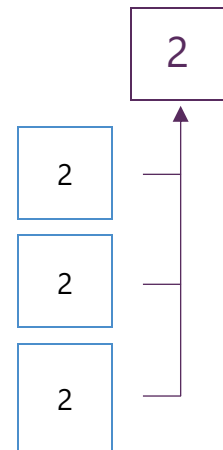
How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

Provision

The quality of collective worship provided by the school

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for collective worship



Pupils respond enthusiastically to the opportunities they have to participate in prayer provided by the school. They participate in various ways and demonstrate competence in silent reflection, formal prayers, praying intercessions and singing. Pupils use various resources to enhance their prayers, including liturgical music and artwork stimuli. During Mass at the parish church, years 5 and 6 were actively engaged in the Mass sharing examples of how God is with them at times of challenge. They reflected silently and participated with confidence. Reverence and respect towards scripture are evident in all prayer and liturgy across the school. Pupils from the youngest age have a good knowledge of the structure of prayer and liturgy. Most pupils' knowledge of the Church's liturgical year and how this affects prayer routines is secure. The Mission Team support leading worship at various times under the guidance of staff. However, their participation is limited, and the Mission Team are keen to be involved more; sharing inspiring ideas of how they would like to develop their role further involving creating a prayer space and leading their own prayer sessions.

Regular prayer and liturgy are at the heart of St Peter's. This has a positive impact on the sense of community at the school. Scripture is central to liturgy, with pupils greeting the spoken scripture with respect and reverence. There is a clear, well-planned schedule for prayer and liturgy across the school, supported by leaders and the parish priest. This includes a weekly gospel liturgy and regular school Mass in the parish. Also, on the first Sunday of the month, pupils lead the readings at Mass in the Parish. During weekly celebration assemblies, 'Good Disciple' awards are presented to those living out the mission of the school and are highly valued by pupils. Staff are committed to being role models of good practice - they use gestures accurately and join in with responses confidently. Relevant staff are well skilled in supporting prayer; these skills need to be rolled out to all staff, so everyone is confident in meeting the school's expectations surrounding prayer. This will address some inconsistency in the way staff facilitate it within class, that impacts on its capacity to be a spiritual

encounter with Christ. The physical space is not always used well to facilitate prayer; each classroom has a dedicated prayer area, but they are not all well developed.

Leaders and governors are ambitious for the school. The new headteacher is a driving force behind many new initiatives. Leaders have developed a long-term plan to ensure that significant liturgical events and significant days are celebrated, with regular opportunities for the school community to attend Mass. The school calendar is planned to include key stage assemblies, Class prayer and whole school Masses which celebrate key feasts. Routine monitoring influences the school's self-evaluation; however, leaders recognise the need for rigour in their monitoring and evaluation of prayer, ensuring that it directly influences the quality and impact of it throughout the school. Training is a priority for the staff, who value more opportunity to hone their skills. Support from the trust to provide quality training is planned into the improvement schedule. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and they value highly the contribution it makes to the spiritual formation of their children.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Peter's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	148669
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8253361
Full postal address of the school	St Peter's Catholic Primary School, Prospect Road, Marlow, SL7 2PJ
School phone number	001628472116
Headteacher	Al Nicol
Chair of local governing body	Susan Hayes
School Website	www.stpetersschoolmarlow.org.uk
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	St Thomas Catholic Academies Trust
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Academy
Admissions policy	Non-selective
Age-range of pupils	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	June 2018
Previous denominational inspection grade	Good

The inspection team

Kirstie Yuen	Lead
Sinead Killian	Team

Key to grade judgements

Grade	England	Wales
1	Outstanding	Excellent
2	Good	Good
3	Requires improvement	Adequate and requires improvement
4	Inadequate	Unsatisfactory and in need of urgent improvement