



St Peter's Catholic Primary School

URN: 148908

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of Bishop Stephen Wright, Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle

19–20 September 2024

Summary of key findings

Overall effectiveness

The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school

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

1

Religious education (p.5)

The quality of curriculum religious education

1

Collective worship (p.7)

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

1

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

1

Compliance statement

- All pupils receive a religious education that constitutes 10% of the taught week.
- The programme of religious education complies with the requirements of the diocesan bishop.
- The school has ensured that the area for improvement from their previous inspection, relating to consistent moderation and assessment, has been successfully addressed.

What the school does well

- The mission statement of the school, 'As children of God we are loved, called and inspired', underpins every interaction, and relationships throughout the school are based upon the highest level of care.
- The commitment and pride shown by all pupils in belonging to St Peter's Catholic Primary School is a strength; their behaviour is exemplary, and the respect shown for all is outstanding.
- Pupils have extensive opportunities, both in and out of school, to live out the mission of St Peter's.
- Standards in religious education are strong and pupils achieve well. Pupils have a thorough understanding of the scripture which is at the heart of this learning.
- Pupils plan and lead prayer and liturgy with confidence and enthusiasm and understand the importance of the mission that they are sharing.

What the school needs to improve

- Ensure that opportunities to involve a wider range of pupils in religious education lessons is consistent across the age ranges, ensuring that all pupils' thinking is deepened.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in evaluating prayer and liturgy, enabling them to identify how further improvements can be made.

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

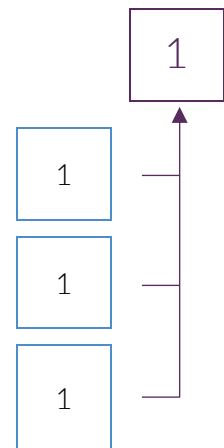
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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



This school truly understands and lives out its Catholic mission. Pupils are clear about how they welcome everyone and ensure that they feel they belong, for example, photos of all pupils are displayed on a cross in the classroom, while pastoral groups bring together siblings on a weekly basis. Pupils constantly refer to the mission statement, which is fully understood by all. There are a considerable number of opportunities for pupils to be involved in contributing to the Catholic life of the school, such as Cafod Club, school council and mindfulness ambassadors. Children know they are valued; they know their voices are heard and their active participation enhances the Catholic life and mission of St Peter's. Children feel motivated to work for the good of others; this is demonstrated by collecting food for Joe's Place and the special World Porridge Day for Mary's Meals. Pupils are unfailingly polite and recognise that they are ambassadors for the school. Their exemplary behaviour around the school shows respect to adults and pupils alike, with love and care shown between pupils on the playground. There is a clear feeling of love given by all; the display, 'When we welcome the child, we welcome the family,' demonstrates this.

The mission statement is visible around the school and understood and articulated clearly by adults and staff throughout the day. Staff feel well-supported by the leaders of the school and each other, and relationships are strong. Staff are excellent role models, putting the pupils' needs first at all times, 'Catholic life is embedded in every aspect of the school and staff try relentlessly to live out the gospel when working with one another and, most importantly, the children.' All staff lead specific faith groups that support the Catholic mission of the school, such as Faith in Action and Mini Vinnies. Parents are unwavering in their support of the Catholic life of the school. They recognise the many opportunities presented to their children such as the Stewards of Creation, and welcome how their children share this learning at home. One parent described how their child now picks up litter in the community on a regular basis. The school

environment has a clear Catholic identity. The provision for Relationships, Sex, and Health Education is well met, firmly rooted in the teaching of the Church and in line with statutory and Diocesan requirements.

Leaders understand and are fully committed to the Catholic life and mission of the school. The headteacher's dedication is recognised by the whole school community as she goes above and beyond to ensure the mission of the school is at the core of all they do. Leaders ensure that there are many opportunities to live out the mission statement; 'As children of God we are loved, called and inspired,' is obviously at the heart of everything at St Peter's, and this comes from the focus and dedication of the school leadership. Inexperienced staff are fully supported, and training is tailored so that the Catholic life and mission of the school is consistently strong. Parents understand and value the school's mission and have opportunities to support their child which is shown in their dedication to school careers events and faith week. In return, leaders value parents as the first educators of their child and communicate support and guidance with this through newsletters and the website. Governors make a significant contribution and are actively involved in the Catholic life of the school, offering challenge and support. Governors state that they are warmly welcomed, and it is, 'a pleasure to come into school.'

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

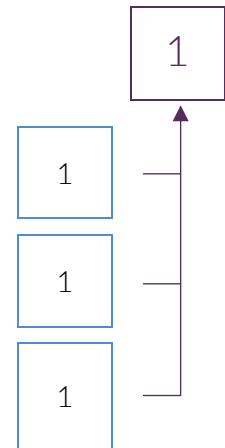
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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



Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are making excellent progress across the school because of being given plenty of opportunities in lessons to show their knowledge, understanding and skills. Learning in most books shows a high standard of presentation and expectation. Following the agreed marking system, pupils understand how well they are achieving and how they can improve. One child stated that it was, 'easy to see what I have succeeded in, but the pink lines show I need to understand more.' Most pupils show they are engaged and enthusiastic about their religious education lessons and can articulate their understanding of key concepts and subject specific vocabulary. During some lessons, there were opportunities missed to ensure that all pupils were fully involved. The use of appropriate scripture is used consistently to develop pupils' religious education knowledge. Even at an early stage of their learning, children have an understanding of God and his relationship with us. Behaviour in lessons is outstanding, and pupils can remain focused for extended periods. Parents feel that the school expects ambitious standards in religious education and have the opportunity to view this during the year.

Teachers recognise the impact religious education has on the academic and spiritual development of the child and give these lessons high importance. Teachers' subject knowledge is strong as a result of the support offered by the senior leadership team, which they greatly value. The front cover sheets used at the beginning of each unit of work enables teachers to plan for pupils' needs, while pupils are able to use these to support their individual learning. Lessons are resourced to provoke interest and help pupils to remember more, and a range of teaching and learning opportunities are provided; pupils in Year 1 were encouraged to create a bird's nest based on previous learning, using the outside environment to enhance their learning. Teachers use questioning in lessons, but opportunities were missed to involve a wider range of pupils, ensuring that all pupils' thinking is deepened. Additional adults support pupils effectively so that they remain motivated and engaged. Parents and governors recognise the commitment of staff

to religious education and feel their children's books are of a high quality. There is a culture of staff working together, with support from senior leaders to ensure that teaching is never less than good.

Leaders and governors place religious education at the heart of the curriculum. They constantly referred to it as, 'the core of the core.' Considerable time and effort have been dedicated to developing the new enquiry-based, sequential approach to the curriculum, which builds on prior learning. This process has included bespoke training opportunities, along with monitoring and evaluating the impact of the new approach. Leaders have ensured that religious education has parity with other core subjects in terms of timetabling, budgeting and resourcing. The religious education subject leader has a clear vision and monitors teaching and learning regularly and effectively, putting support in place where needed, to ensure that all pupils' needs are met. Individualised staff support, including assistance for an early career teacher, ensures consistency in delivering the curriculum. The headteacher and religious education subject leader are highly valued in the support and guidance that they provide for the staff and governors. One member of staff stated that, 'I feel that I have been encouraged to develop spiritually and am supported to be the best practitioner possible.' Staff are actively encouraged to study for the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies to further support their deeper thinking and teaching in religious education.

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

1

Provision

The quality of collective worship provided by the school

1

Leadership

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

1

1

Pupils of all ages show profound respect and reverence in whole school worship, and participate well, with most pupils being prayerful and reflective. Pupils show an understanding of a wide variety of ways of praying including the rosary, silent reflection and their own prayers. All pupils enthusiastically participate in singing, signing and liturgical dance, with Year 5 pupils confidently sharing celebrations of the word with their families. As pupils progress through the school, they become increasingly more competent and confident in planning and leading collective worship. However, there are few opportunities for all pupils to fully evaluate and improve their own celebrations of the word. Collective worship consistently follows the expected format, both adult and pupil led. Pupils recognise that worship is based on the liturgical year and are able to articulate their understanding of this. One child in Year 3 spoke confidently about the differences between the liturgical year and the school year, and the opportunities presented to celebrate both in and out of school. Muslim pupils were observed getting ready for their daily prayers in a separate room, and their parents commented on how this was fully appreciated. Pupils speak confidently about the personal impact of prayer life in school and welcome the opportunities to share their faith with others in the parish.

Prayer and liturgy are clearly central to school life, with daily prayers said across the school day. There are many opportunities during the week for pupils to share their faith. There is an embedded pattern of daily prayer, with further opportunities across the week for all year groups and ages, such as the Wednesday Word prayer group led by student chaplains before school starts. Scripture is at the heart of all worship in the school and pupils read confidently, fluently and with understanding. Staff are committed to being good role models in leading prayer and liturgy. They are able to support pupils to lead celebrations of the word in the classroom and every classroom has a prayer space which reflects the liturgical season. Leaders, and particularly the headteacher, endeavour to ensure that pupils are able to experience prayer and liturgy across the liturgical year with the support of Deacon Malcolm. Families are invited into whole

school opportunities on a weekly basis. These are extremely well attended by both parents and grandparents and this recent change is very much appreciated.

There is a prayer and liturgy policy in place which is a useful guide for staff, and this places prayer and worship at the heart of the school, ensuring pupils are enriched in their spiritual development. Leaders ensure that clear plans are in place to prioritise prayer and worship at key times of the liturgical year, and ensure pupils have the opportunity to worship in church. Their patron saint day is prioritised in the school calendar, and pupils are able to talk about the importance of St Peter and their participation in the feast day. Professional development has been provided to all staff, so they are equipped to create times of prayer that are meaningful and engaging, while opportunities are given to newer members of staff to observe worship led by more experienced colleagues. Leaders work hard to ensure that the school is rooted in prayer and have close links to the parish community. They also ensure that prayer and liturgy are prioritised when allocating budget and resources. Leaders, including governors, regularly evaluate the impact of collective worship to ensure that meaningful prayer underpins the faith development of the whole community.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Peter's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	148908
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	3903319
Full postal address of the school	St Peter's Catholic Primary School, Dryden Road, Low Fell, St Peters Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School, Gateshead, NE9 5TU
School phone number	0191 4878233
Headteacher	Paula McArthur
Chair of governors	Lucy Fleming
School Website	stpeterslowfell.bwcet.com
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education 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	May 2017
Previous denominational inspection grade	1

The inspection team

Paul Craig
Nicola Noble

Lead Inspector
Team Inspector

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

