



DIOCESE OF  
**SHREWSBURY**

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DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION REPORT:

**THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL  
AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

School: St Peter's Catholic Primary School  
Address: Hough Hill Road  
Stalybridge  
Cheshire  
SK15 2HB

Tel No: 0161 338 3303

URN: 106241

Headteacher: Mrs E Summersgill

Chair of Governors: Mr P Murphy

Date of Inspection: 24 June 2019

Inspectors: Mrs J Johnson  
Mrs J Ward

## MISSION STATEMENT

*St. Peter's Catholic Primary School is at the heart of a Christ-centred community where every person's uniqueness is celebrated with joy, and is truly valued.*

*We foster caring, supportive relationships based on mutual respect and love.*

*We embrace the different communities to which we all belong - home, school and parish, as well as our local, national and global families.*

*When we welcome the child, we welcome the family.*

*We strive for excellence in all we do, to be the very best that we can be.*

**SCHOOL: ST PETER'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL, STALYBRIDGE**

**DATE OF LAST INSPECTION: 1<sup>st</sup> JULY 2014**

**JUDGEMENT FROM PREVIOUS INSPECTION: OUTSTANDING**

**AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT FROM PREVIOUS INSPECTION**

None listed.

**PROGRESS MADE WITH AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT FROM THE PREVIOUS INSPECTION**

Although there were no areas listed at the last Inspection, the school has not been complacent, and has worked on:

**Collective Worship** - involving pupils in the planning and setting out the prayer focus; parents are now invited to termly Prayer Shares, and contribute to the completion of the Class Collective Worship book which is brought home; new resources have been purchased.

**Creativity in Religious Education** - lessons are brought to life through art, music and drama; recording is done in creative ways as well as in writing; training has been accessed by staff.

**English skills in Religious Education** - high standards of English are evident in Religious Education books; work in Religious Education matches the quality of that seen in English books; pupils say that they enjoy Religious Education lessons.

**OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS:** how effective is the school in providing Catholic Education.

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**This is an outstanding Catholic school**

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*The above judgement on overall effectiveness is based on all the available evidence following the evaluation of:*

**CATHOLIC LIFE**

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**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

1

**COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

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**Summary of key findings:**

- St Peter's is an outstanding Catholic school, where the quality of welcome and sense of community are exceptional.
- All staff and Governors are deeply committed to the school's Catholic Mission and ethos, which are fully embedded in all aspects of the school's life and work.
- The school has recently undertaken a careful review of its Mission Statement with all stakeholders, and even the youngest members of the school can understand how it shapes the life of the school through the school's Mission Song.
- The Headteacher, together with the Religious Education Coordinator, provide outstanding and inspirational leadership.
- Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school, and are very grateful for the opportunities on offer for their children to grow in faith and love. They recognise that the school's Catholic ethos permeates every aspect of school life.
- There is a true sense of teamwork amongst staff, and they are quick to support each other, sharing a deep desire to offer the best to the pupils in their care. Staff provide exemplary role models for the pupils.
- Pupils are a delight to be with, and they show high levels of religious literacy and are developing a rich religious vocabulary. They are able to reflect on deep questions and show great maturity and sensitivity in dealing with religious issues. Their behaviour is outstanding at all times. They show great respect for each other.
- Although there were no issues raised by the last S48 Inspection, the school has not stood still, and has moved forward with commitment and passion.
- There are strong links between the school, parish and home.

## What the school needs to do to improve further

- Formalise the Governors' evaluation of the Catholic Life of the School, Religious Education and Collective Worship by developing a consistent approach to providing school staff with written feedback from their monitoring activities.
- Ensure that teachers provide pupils with feedback which challenges their learning and deepens their thinking even further.
- Develop the moderation of pupils' work and outcomes by working closely with the other schools in the local Catholic cluster of schools.

## Information about the Inspection

The Inspection of St Peter's Catholic Primary School was carried out under the requirements of the Education Act 2005, and in accordance with the Shrewsbury Diocesan Framework and Schedule for Denominational Inspections approved by the Bishop of Shrewsbury. The inspection reviews and evaluates how effective the school is in providing Catholic education. This process begins with the school's own self-evaluation and the inspection schedule follows the criteria set by the National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers (NBRIA 2017).

The inspector reviewed in detail the following aspects:

- The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school
- The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school
- How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education
- How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship
- The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school
- How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education, Collective Worship and the Catholic Life of the school

The inspection was carried out by two inspectors over one day:

- The Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all 8 classes.
- Whole school Collective Worship led by the Headteacher was observed, as well as Pupil Led Collective Worship in Y6.
- Discussions were held with the Headteacher, the Religious Education Coordinator, four Governors (including the Chair of Governors and the Religious Education Link Governor), pupils, parents and five members of staff. A telephone interview was carried out with the Parish Priest who is also a Governor. An interview was also carried out with a volunteer who runs the school's 'Shining Lights' Group.

- A sample of pupils' Religious Education books was scrutinised from every class, along with the Religious Education coordinator's file and files for Catholic Life of the School, Religious Education and Collective Worship.
- A range of documents was made available and scrutinised including the Diocesan Self Evaluation Form (DSEF), the School Development Plan (including the Religious Education Action Plan), attainment and progress data, school policies, class timetables, newsletters, minutes of governing body meetings, and the Headteacher's Report to Governors.
- Tracking data was scrutinised and discussed with the Religious Education Coordinator.
- Displays around the school and in classrooms were also noted.

### **Information about this school**

- St Peter's is a one form entry Voluntary Aided Catholic primary, catering for 3-11 year olds. The school has an annual admission number of 30, and there are currently 235 pupils on roll, 94% of whom are baptised Catholics.
- The school serves the parish of St Peter and St Raphael's, Stalybridge. The Parish Priest has been appointed since the last Inspection.
- The Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher were both in post at the time of the last Inspection. The Religious Education Coordinator, who was teaching in the school at the time of the last Inspection, has taken on this role since the last Inspection.
- Staffing includes a full time equivalent of ten teachers and ten support staff. Almost all staff are Catholic. Three teachers hold the Catholic Certificate of Religious Studies (CCRS).
- The school is organised into eight single-age classes, including the Nursery.

## Full report – inspection judgments

### CATHOLIC LIFE

**The Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.**

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The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school	1
The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school	1
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision of the Catholic Life of the school	1

- All pupils spoken to during the Inspection appreciate and participate fully in the Catholic Life of the school. They recognise that their Catholic faith shapes the way that they behave and influences the values that they hold. They are rightly very proud of their school, and display a strong sense of community.
- Pupils value the school’s Catholic ethos deeply, and can describe ways in which the school’s Mission is lived out in their lives.
- There are many opportunities for pupils to participate in activities which promote the school’s Catholic ethos with the school and in the wider community, and this is valued by parents and pupils alike.
- Pupils have a keen sense of social justice and responsibility, and understand how Jesus’ example influences their relationships with others. As one pupil said, ‘Jesus taught us not to judge other people.’ They are alert to the needs of others, and their work for a range of charities is particularly impressive. The Mini Vinnies Group in particular plays a key role in seeking justice beyond the school community.
- The behaviour of pupils is exemplary at all times, and pupils are keen to celebrate the achievements of others.
- The school’s two ‘Shining Lights’ groups (one for Key Stage 1 and one for Key Stage 2), which are led by a volunteer, enhance the school’s chaplaincy provision. The pupils involved, who are nominated by their teachers to be part of these groups, thoroughly appreciate the opportunity to talk about their faith, pray together, serve God and spread the Good News.
- Relationships at all levels are a real strength of the school, and there is a calm atmosphere in the school at all times. The school is a supportive and joyful community, and, as one Governor put it, ‘a great blessing’.
- The Catholic Life of the school is celebrated by beautiful works of art that are on display in communal areas of the school, which is evidence of the high priority the school places on the learning environment in a Catholic school.
- Leaders and Governors are deeply committed to the Church’s mission in education, and are passionate about ensuring the school ‘aims for excellence in all we do.’ They are fully aware that the development of the Catholic Life of the school is one of their core responsibilities. One Governor commented that the school’s ethos is ‘wonderful to rejoice in’, and Inspectors agree with this comment.
- Self-evaluation of the Catholic Life is accurate and has been effective in identifying strengths and areas for development. Regular opportunities are given to other

stakeholders, for example, parents, to contribute to the school's work, and the school made great efforts to include parent voice in the recent review of the Mission Statement.

- Governors are kept well informed by the Headteacher and the Religious Education Coordinator. They know the school very well, and make regular visits to the school to take part in Learning Walks and other monitoring activities. Currently though, there is no formal method of providing a written record of their findings and implications for the school following these visits.
- Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. One parent commented, 'The school is exceptional in the opportunities it provides for young children to recognise the importance of faith in every aspect of their life; teaching them the knowledge of and identity of the Catholic Church, but more importantly how this needs to be lived/recognised throughout their daily lives and their interactions with each other and wider community'.
- There has been a very good level of continuing professional development offered to staff, provided through outside providers, in-house sessions, and training opportunities offered by the Diocese.
- The school engages well with the Diocese, and follows all Diocesan guidelines and initiatives.
- Staff morale is very high, and staff are clearly very supportive of each other. Most staff are Catholic, and all are fully committed to the school's Mission and ethos. Staff are very confident in their personal faith, and are keen to share this with the pupils. There is a genuine desire to improve, and to learn from each other. Staff are exemplary role models of mutual respect.
- All stakeholders recognise the partnership between home, school and parish as being particularly strong, and this benefits all. The school and parish work together to ensure that the First Sacraments Programme is 'a remarkable experience for the children' as one Governor stated.
- The school has implemented the scheme 'In the beginning' for its Relationship and Sex Education Programme, but will review its provision in due course, taking into account the emerging national picture, as well as the up to date guidance from the Catholic Education Service.



## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

**Religious Education is outstanding.**

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How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education	1
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education	1
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education	1

- When pupils were asked, they told Inspectors that they love Religious Education lessons, as the teachers make the lessons a 'fun way to learn'. They appreciate that they are allowed to find things out for themselves, rather than just being told things by adults.
- Pupils make very good progress from their different starting points and outcomes at the end of both KS1 and KS2 are very high, and have been so for a number of years.
- All pupils were fully engaged in the 8 lessons observed during the Inspection, and their enthusiasm for, and interest in, Religious Education were clear to see. Behaviour for learning is outstanding, and so lessons can move at a quick pace, with learning opportunities being maximised. Pupils can explain how they know they have done well in Religious Education, and as they are very capable, teachers could give further challenge by asking pupils to reflect more deeply when they give their feedback to them.
- Religious Education is given full parity with the other core subjects of English and Mathematics, particularly in relation to assessment. The Religious Education Coordinator knows the classes very well, and holds teachers to account for the progress of pupils in their class. She analyses performance data in Religious Education very well, including that of groups of pupils, and uses this to bring about improvements. She has ensured that there is consistency across the whole school, from the Nursery upwards - for instance, in developing religious vocabulary, and in the use of the 'I can' statements. She engenders respect from all members of the school community.
- Assessment and moderation meetings take place regularly throughout the year, both in school and at Religious Education Hub meetings, but this would be enhanced further by the moderation of examples of work in Religious Education with the other schools in the local Catholic Cluster.
- Leaders and Governors ensure that the Religious Education curriculum fully meets the Bishops' Conference requirements, and that 10% of teaching time is given to Religious Education in all three key Stages.
- Teachers plan and deliver highly effective and often very creative lessons, and all lessons observed during the Inspection were at least good, with the majority being outstanding. Teaching Assistants provide very good support in lessons, and it is evident that teachers value the support that they give. There is a culture of high expectations in the school.

- Teachers are very confident in their subject knowledge, and have a passion for teaching Religious Education. This is infectious, and as a result, pupils' responses show a high level of engagement in learning.
- In lessons observed, teachers used prior learning to make links with new learning, and learning partners were used very effectively.
- In the best lessons observed, excellent use was made of a 'Gather' activity to start the lesson, thus setting the tone for the lesson, and allowing the pupils to think deeply and give a heartfelt response.
- High quality resources help to maximise learning for all pupils, and the impact of the Continuous Professional Development on Creativity in Religious Education and in the recent 'Opening Doors' is clearly evident.

## COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

### Collective Worship is outstanding

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How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship	1
The quality of provision for Collective Worship	1
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship	1

- There is a real enthusiasm for Collective Worship in the school, which is reflected in the quality of the communal singing, the heartfelt response given by pupils, the prayerful silence which is not contrived, and the deep reverence shown by pupils. Collective Worship is firmly placed at the heart of school life.
- There is also a true sense of welcome in whole school Collective Worship, with all staff, including support and site staff, regularly being present.
- Pupils show great reverence and respect during Collective Worship, and are keen and enthusiastic participants.
- Pupils, even those from the youngest class, can take the initiative in preparing and leading Collective Worship, at an age appropriate level. They can describe and give examples of the main elements of Collective Worship, and are able to link these to each other. Older pupils are confident to think of their own 'Gather' and 'Mission' activities.
- The pupils' understanding of the Church's liturgical year is outstanding, and they can talk with confidence about Ordinary Time, the Church's seasons and its feasts.
- Pupils have a deep respect for those of other faiths. They understand that being part of a faith community helps them to learn about the faith of others.
- Staff have had a wide range of Continuous Professional Development opportunities in order to enhance their own spiritual life, as well as that of the pupils. They talk about how praying together is part of their regular experience, and how they support each other in preparing for staff prayer.
- Parents are often invited to share in Collective Worship with their children, and this is much appreciated by them. One parent commented that the school makes it 'such a treasured opportunity to share thoughts and prayer'.
- The Headteacher and Religious Education Coordinator have a monitoring plan for Collective Worship, and Governors are often involved in the monitoring activities. Consequently, although Governors now can evaluate the quality of provision for Collective Worship in the school, they do not currently have a mechanism for providing a written record of their feedback and subsequent implications for the school.