



St Peter's RC Middle School

Northumbrian Road, Cramlington, Northumberland, NE23 6DB

School Unique Reference Number: **122368**

Inspection dates:	10– 11 March 2014
Lead inspector:	Elaine White
Team inspector:	Mark Henderson

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Catholic Life:		Outstanding	1
Collective Worship:		Good	2
Religious Education:		Good	2

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

St Peter's RC Middle School is a good Catholic school because:

- The Catholic Life of the school is outstanding. Governors, senior leaders and staff have high expectations and a shared vision with regard to the Catholic mission and ethos of the school. Pupils take full advantage of the opportunities the school provides for their personal support and development and as a result are confident and secure in their own stage of spiritual and emotional growth.
- The quality of Religious Education is good. The areas for improvement from the last inspection have all been addressed and the school is continuing to ensure that all pupils make good progress because of good teaching.
- The quality of pupils' response to and participation in Collective Worship is good. They listen well, act reverently and are happy to take part in a variety of forms of worship.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- The quality of teaching of Religious Education is inconsistent across the school. Some lessons are not sufficiently planned and differentiated to meet the needs and interest of all children.
- In Collective Worship there are limited opportunities for pupils to plan and prepare worship independently.
- Marking across the school is inconsistent and does not always provide enough guidance for pupils to help them improve their work in Religious Education.

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- St Peter's is a smaller than average middle school. The school is federated with St Paul's First School and St Benet Biscop High School and serves the parishes of St Paul's, Cramlington and St John the Baptist, Annitsford. The first school and St Peter's operate with one headteacher and governing body but legally are two separate schools.
- Pupils in years five and six are educated on the St Peter's site in Cramlington and share this site with some of St Paul's First School. The year seven and eight pupils are educated six miles away at the St Benet Biscop High School in Bedlington.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational need is above average.
- The majority of pupils come from a white British background.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by:
 - ensuring that marking consistently provides information to pupils about how to improve their work.
 - consistently and frequently allowing pupils the opportunity to respond to feedback given.
 - ensuring that all teachers use assessment information to plan challenging, differentiated activities which consistently build on and extend pupils' learning, especially the more able, to achieve the higher levels.
 - ensuring that leaders at all levels are consistent in the monitoring and moderation of Religious Education across both sites using robust systems which will lead to more rapid progress.
- Improving the quality of Collective Worship by:
 - providing opportunities for children to be more involved in the leading, planning and preparation of Collective Worship for both whole school and class based contexts.

CATHOLIC LIFE

THE QUALITY OF THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

1

- 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 leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school.

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The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.

- Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the Catholic Life of the school and gain much benefit from it. They are at the centre of shaping the school's mission and are able to express their own beliefs with confidence, having a good understanding of how their faith impacts on their own lives and others.
- Relationships within the school are very positive and pupils value the opportunities that they are given. They are actively involved throughout the school taking on all responsibilities, conscientiously and enthusiastically, such as Mini Vinnies and key stage three Student Voice representatives. Pupils say they feel valued and are proud of their school.
- Pupils are very conscious of the needs of those beyond school and have a strong sense of justice and concern for others. They can articulate their views with confidence, explaining the purpose of fundraising for charities such as CAFOD, St Cuthbert's Care and Mission Together. Most pupils have a deepening awareness of the need for high moral standards and justice which helps them to understand their place in the world and the influence they can have to make the world a better place.
- Pupils work well together demonstrating very positive and enthusiastic attitudes to all aspects of school life. Behaviour is very good and often exemplary: pupils are extremely polite and considerate of others demonstrating good emotional awareness. Pupils throughout the school demonstrate a very good understanding of the importance of key celebrations throughout the liturgical year. They understand that religious belief and spiritual values are important for many people.

The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.

- The school's provision for the Catholic Life of the school is given a very high priority which permeates throughout. Pupils contribute to the development of the mission statement by searching for the face of Christ in each other (value), taking each other's needs into account (giving), and trying to be the best they can be (achieve), all within the context of daily forgiveness and reconciliation.
- The school is a happy and prayerful community and its Catholic character is reflected through attractive displays and the use of artefacts providing a stimulating learning environment.
- All staff and leaders have high expectations and a shared vision with regard to the school's ethos and to the church's mission in education. They are involved in living out the school's mission statement and are fully committed to provide quality opportunities to enable all pupils

to know that Christ is at the centre of everything they do.

- The 'Statements for Living' programme is well used throughout key stage three, linking very effectively with the liturgical year. Pupils are clear about how these are used each week and how they help them to live by Gospel values.

How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.

- The welcoming and inclusive nature of the school is evidence of the priority that school leadership gives to the Catholic mission, which is understood by all staff and pupils, ensuring quality moral and spiritual development based on gospel values of love.
- The headteacher and senior leadership team have a deep commitment to the Church's mission in education; personal development and high quality care are paramount. They are outstanding role models providing very clear direction for improvement and ensure that opportunities for pupils' spiritual and moral development are frequent and have significant impact.
- Governors involve themselves wholeheartedly, as appropriate, in the life of the school and are fully committed to promoting the religious and spiritual life. Together with the headteacher they have a clear vision and high aspirations for future developments.
- The school's mission statement, 'Growing together in the Peace of Christ', is a living document which underpins all policies throughout the school and has a high profile.
- Parents speak very highly of the school and have a clear understanding of the school's mission.
- Governors discharge their statutory and canonical duties well. Through attendance at the regular meetings and their many visits to school, they work very effectively with the staff and headteacher, committed to upholding the strong caring ethos that exists throughout.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

2

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

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1

How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship is good.

- St Peter's is a prayerful community. There is a calm and peaceful ethos which pervades the school and is reflected in the pupils' very good behaviour and consideration for others. Pupils act reverently and show respect when participating in all acts of worship. They listen well and are happy to take part in Collective Worship, liturgies, Masses and assemblies.
- Pupils are keen to participate and are at ease when praying. They respond positively to spontaneous prayer and are developing a good understanding of the religious seasons, liturgical colours and feasts.
- Pupils prepare and lead worship with increasing confidence and enthusiasm although they are not given sufficient opportunities to plan and lead independently in a variety of contexts.
- Adults provide good role models for the children and contribute significantly to the spiritual and moral development of the pupils. Pupils show respect for different faiths and are aware that religious beliefs are important.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship is good.

- Acts of Collective Worship are central to the life of the school and make a significant contribution to the moral and spiritual needs of the pupils. There is a clear policy for Collective Worship with opportunities for staff and pupils to pray together in a variety of forms of worship. Staff have a very good understanding of the Church's liturgical heritage, its rites and seasons and are passionate about ensuring that pupils have access to high quality experiences of the Church's liturgical life. However, pupils have limited opportunities to plan and prepare worship independently.
- Collective Worship is carefully planned and resourced to reflect the liturgical year, linked to the Sunday Gospel, whilst also embracing current issues through the 'Statements for Living'. Praying together is a daily experience with opportunities for quiet prayer in 'God's Room' developing throughout the school. Pupils appreciate the opportunity to 'enjoy the silence'.
- Parents, parishioners and governors are invited to share in various acts of Collective Worship, when appropriate. Encouraging further family participation in school and parish events is an important part of the school's life such as the weekly 'Reflective Friday Liturgy', Advent and Lenten booklets and 'Stations of the Cross Walk'.

How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship is outstanding.

- The headteacher and senior leadership team are enthusiastic and display expert knowledge of how to plan and deliver high quality experiences of Collective Worship. They have a very clear understanding of the Church's liturgical year and use this to very good effect to lead the school in its knowledge and understanding of Catholic rites and symbols. Together they have a very good understanding of the strengths and areas for further development in Collective Worship through both formal and informal monitoring.
- Leaders model excellent practice in Collective Worship and staff work together to echo the strong vision and values placed upon all aspects of Collective Worship. Leaders offer staff regular opportunities to enhance their own spiritual and liturgical understanding. Liturgical and spiritual development is seen as a priority in ongoing professional development and staff access training opportunities wholeheartedly.
- Planning the school's prayer and liturgical life is given high priority each year by school leaders as it is the heart of the school's ethos and character.
- The views of pupils, staff and parents are valued and acted upon to ensure good quality Collective Worship continues to evolve throughout the school and parish community.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

2

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

2

2

2

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education is good.

- The quality of learning and progress in Religious Education is good. Most pupils enjoy their learning in Religious Education, have positive attitudes and work well in lessons, applying themselves to the tasks and working at a good pace. They enjoy talking about their work in Religious Education and take pride in their work.
- Pupils start St Peter's School with knowledge and skills expected for their age. They make good progress across school as their personal needs are well met. However in some lessons the work was not always matched to all pupils' abilities thus slowing down the progress of the more able pupils. By the time pupils leave year eight, the majority of pupils have achieved expectations with some exceeding these standards. They take pride in their work and show interest and enthusiasm in their learning. Pupils are becoming more religiously literate and reflective in their oral responses as their confidence in Religious Education increases.
- Most pupils said they enjoyed Religious Education and were keen to talk about the topics they had explored such as; 'Does God answer prayers' and 'Death and New Life'.
- Those pupils identified as having a special educational need make good progress. The school is effective at meeting their needs by ensuring that work is closely matched to their ability. Their attainment and progress are similar to that of other pupils.
- Due to the state of transition in level expectations across all diocesan schools, the current averages for attainment and progress are not reliable benchmarks. Therefore no judgement will be made in this report against diocesan averages for either attainment or progress.

The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education is good.

- Teaching and assessment is mainly good with most pupils achieving well over time. In lessons where teaching is good, teachers plan effective, fun activities which stimulate learning and capture pupils' interest and enthusiasm. Their subject knowledge is good, expectations are high and they use assessment of prior learning to move the children on in their learning. Questioning is used effectively to assess understanding, monitor progress, and build on previous learning and to reinforce the learning objectives. Consequently, pupils demonstrate good levels of engagement and positive attitudes to their learning.
- In some lessons the activities do not challenge pupils sufficiently to ensure good progress is made as there is a lack of differentiated activities. Marking is generally positive and supportive however guidance, feedback and marking to move learning on are not used consistently. Systems to allow pupils to respond to feedback are not effective in all classes. Marking does not consistently provide sufficient guidance to help the pupils know how to improve their

work in Religious Education.

- The school has an accurate picture of pupils' achievement in Religious Education and has a tracking system which effectively informs planning.

How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education is outstanding.

- A systematic range of activities is in place for the monitoring and evaluation of Religious Education however this is not sufficiently developed to ensure reliable transition between years six and seven.
- The headteacher and Religious Education coordinator have a clear vision and sense of direction of what is needed to bring about further improvement. They are enthusiastic and effective in promoting among staff the high profile of this subject.
- Staff and governors are kept well informed of the priorities which are identified through the strategies undertaken to evaluate the provision and outcomes for pupils. They are well informed and knowledgeable about the school's strengths and further areas for development. Governors are regular visitors to the school and are committed to the development of the school providing appropriate support and challenge to the headteacher and senior leadership team.
- The Religious Education curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference and is given a high profile throughout the school, contributing very effectively to the pupils' spiritual and moral development.

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

HOW EFFECTIVE THE SCHOOL IS IN PROVIDING CATHOLIC EDUCATION:	2
CATHOLIC LIFE:	1
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 managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school.	1
COLLECTIVE WORSHIP:	2
How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship.	2
The quality of provision for Collective Worship.	2
How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship.	1
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:	2
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.	2
The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education.	2
How well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education	2

SCHOOL DETAILS

School name	St Peter's RC Middle School
Unique reference number	122368
Local authority	Northumberland
This Inspection Report is produced for the Rt. Reverend Séamus Cunningham the Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle Diocese, (c.f. Code Canon Law, 804, 806), and for the Governing Body of the school (Education Act 2005, Section 48). The inspection schedule follows criteria set by the National Board of Advisers and Inspectors.	
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