

*Diocese of Hallam*

***INSPECTION OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION***  
*(Section 23 of the 1996 School Inspections Act)*

**St. Peter's Catholic Primary School**  
**Sandy Lane**  
**Doncaster**  
**DN4 5EP**

Inspection Date: 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> April 2003

Diocesan Inspector: Mrs G Foster

The inspection of the denominational character of St Peter's Catholic Primary School was carried out under the direction of the Governors of the school in fulfilment of their obligations under the requirements of Canon Law (ref.804,806), Section 23 of the 1996 Inspection Act, Section 13 of the Education (Schools) Act 1992 and Sections 241 and 259 of the Education Act, 1993. This inspection was conducted according to the Handbook for the Inspection of Religious Education in the Diocese of Hallam

The process of Inspection in the Diocese of Hallam has been developed to support and encourage each school community. It is hoped that this report will celebrate all that is positive and praiseworthy in St Peter's Catholic Primary School and help promote sound development for the future.

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A copy of this report may be obtained from the Governors of St Peter's Catholic Primary School, Sandy Lane, Doncaster, DN4 5EP or from the Diocese of Hallam Schools' Department, The Hallam Pastoral Centre, St Charles Street, Sheffield S9 3WU

## INTRODUCTION

### Basic information about the school

NAME OF SCHOOL	St Peter's Catholic Primary School
TYPE	Infant and Junior
STATUS	Voluntary Aided
NUMBER ON ROLL	255
AGE RANGE	4 - 11 years
GENDER OF PUPILS	Mixed
CHAIRMAN OF GOVERNORS	Mr Alex Prior
HEADTEACHER	Mrs Mary Barry
ADDRESS OF SCHOOL	Sandy Lane, Doncaster DN4 5EP
TELEPHONE NUMBER	01302 369143
DATE OF INSPECTION	1st, 2nd and 4th April 2003
DIOCESAN INSPECTOR	Mrs Gillian Foster

St Peter's Catholic Primary School was established in 1873 in central Doncaster. It transferred to the present building in 1970 and serves St Peter's parish and St Paul's parish Cantley, drawing its pupils from a wide area. 48% of the children travel to school by bus. The children come from a wide variety of social backgrounds and include 14 for whom English is a second language. Parents of children of other faith backgrounds are fully supportive of the Catholic ethos of the school.

Numbers on roll have fallen in recent years and this has provided the opportunity to develop rooms and spaces previously used as classrooms into useful additional working areas.

The Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher have been in post since September 2002. Their appointment followed a period of some instability for the school with the previous Deputy Headteacher retiring through ill health and the previous Headteacher resigning. An Associate Headteacher from the Diocese was appointed to lead the school for two terms until the appointment of the current Headteacher.

There are ten full-time teachers including the Headteacher and two part-time teachers who operate a job-share in Year Two. Ten of the twelve teaching staff are Catholic.

There are currently 255 pupils on roll organised into classes as follows:

Reception	28
Year 1	21
Year 1/Year 2	21

Year 2	21
Year 3	25
Year 3/Year 4	23
Year 4	25
Year 5	29
Year 5/Year 6	32
Year 6	30

78% of pupils are baptised Catholics.  
83% of the teaching staff are Catholics.

## **PART ONE**

### **ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL AS A CATHOLIC COMMUNITY**

#### **1. THE MISSION OF THE SCHOOL**

- 1.1 St Peter's Mission Statement is a strong affirmation of the school's witness to the Catholic Faith. It is an expression of the belief that all within the community are valued and respected as unique individuals created and loved by God and entitled to an environment and education which enables them to reach their full potential both spiritually and academically. The day to day life of the school bears witness to these aims. The school seeks to work closely with the parents and parishes to guide, support and nurture the children on their journey of faith.
- 1.2 The Vision and Mission Statements preface all documentation and these, together with the explicit aims of the school, inform school plans and policies. They are reviewed regularly by all members of the school community; this is good practice.
- 1.3 The school acknowledges that the parents are the first educators of their children and seeks to work in partnership with them to support them in this crucial role. The Home/School agreement which all parents are asked to sign, makes a clear statement of the school's belief in the effectiveness of this partnership.
- 1.4 Thirty-three questionnaires were returned by parents and nineteen parents attended the pre-inspection meeting. Almost all parents were appreciative of the caring Catholic ethos of the school and the support offered to their children and themselves. They all expressed great satisfaction with the standards their children achieve in Religious Education and the positive and enthusiastic attitude their children have towards Religious Education lessons and liturgical celebrations. Parents expressed particular pleasure in the spiritual and moral

education their children receive. Parents praise the respect children show to adults and each other which leads to good behaviour and creates a positive climate for learning.

- 1.5 A significant minority of parents do not regularly receive information about what their children are learning in Religious Education lessons. They would appreciate more information about this. Most parents receive invitations to attend assemblies and liturgies and when they are able to attend they enjoy them. Other parents who have not previously been invited would welcome the opportunity to attend such gatherings. Parents feel welcome and valued in school either to discuss concerns they may have about their children, or to help in class or with out-of-school activities.
- 1.6 There is an active 'Friends of St Peter's' group who meet to organise fund raising events and support the school in many ways. Their support is greatly appreciated and valued by the school.
- 1.7 Parents speak highly of the dedication and commitment of the Headteacher and staff and regard them as good role models for their children.
- 1.8 Relationships throughout the school are very good. There is a high quality of welcome received by all visitors to the school. There is a happy, caring, well ordered and purposeful atmosphere in school. This positive, affirming environment allows the children to feel secure and valued and gives them every opportunity to develop to their full potential as unique individuals loved by God. This is an aim of the Mission Statement translated into reality.
- 1.9 The School Prospectus is a good document produced to a very high standard and provides comprehensive and detailed information which parents find useful.
- 1.10 Governors are drawn from the two parishes served by the school, they maintain a keen interest in the life of the school and are actively involved in contributing to the School Improvement Plan and other plans and policies. The Governors have a very good over-view of the school and are effective monitors of its performance.
- 1.11 The Parish Priest of St Peter's parish, who was appointed in September 2002, is the governor with special responsibility for Religious Education. He is a frequent and most welcome visitor to school. He leads and takes part in liturgies and celebrations with the children and sometimes leads staff liturgies. His input and support is extending the already good opportunities the children are offered for spiritual development.
- 1.12 There are very strong links between the school and the two parishes which the school, the governors and the parishes are always seeking to strengthen further. Sacramental preparation is carried out by the parishes with strong support from

the school. The children are prepared for Reconciliation and First Holy Communion in an after-school club by a parish catechist who is also employed as a Classroom Assistant in school; she is assisted by staff. The parish priest of St Peter's holds meetings for the parents of all the children involved to inform, help and guide them to an understanding of the sacramental preparation of their children. The children are presented, enrolled and receive the sacraments in their own parish churches. After First Holy Communion, all the children in Years Three and Four spend a day of celebration at Roche Abbey. The day which begins with Mass which is thoroughly enjoyed by all. This is an excellent example of a worshipping community celebrating joyfully together.

1.13 The school is very welcoming to children with Special Educational Needs. It is adapted to offer access to those with physical disabilities. A dedicated Special Needs Co-ordinator works with committed teaching staff and support assistants to ensure that the individual needs of all children are met and that each has access to the curriculum at a level appropriate to them. All pupils with Special Educational Needs are valued and supported and fully included in every aspect of school life.

1.14 The school is planning to begin a 'Rainbows' group in September to offer support to pupils suffering loss or bereavement.

1.15 St Peter's School is highly committed to the needs of others and those less fortunate than themselves. The children give regularly and generously to charities including The Hallam Caring Services, Mission Together, CAFOD and other local charities.

1.16 There is very good provision for cultural development through residential and non-residential visits. The school offers a very broad curriculum and cross-curricular work is planned for at all levels, which enhances cultural development. Music and Art are very strong in the school. Extra-curricular activities, currently restricted to Key Stage Two, range from sporting activities to choir. The school is seeking to develop more out of school activities and intends to make some available to Key Stage One pupils.

## **2. THE SCHOOL AS A WORSHIPPING COMMUNITY**

2.1 The Collective Worship meets statutory requirements and is celebrated daily in the classroom, in whole school assemblies in the hall or in Key Stage assemblies or liturgies.

2.2 There is an excellent Collective Worship Policy which states a clear rationale and practical details to ensure its implementation. From the evidence gathered by the Inspector, the aims of the policy are being fulfilled.

- 2.3 One whole school assembly led by the Headteacher and one Key Stage Two assembly led by the Religious Education Co-ordinator were observed during the inspection. In both cases they were appropriate to the ages of the children. Atmospheres of reverence were created where the children had the opportunity to reflect on the mystery of God and reflect on spiritual and moral issues in the context of their own situations and develop a sense of community spirit in a prayerful way. There could have been more opportunity for children to participate in one of the assemblies; this could be an area for future consideration.
- 2.4 The Inspector witnessed a celebration of ‘The Way of the Cross’ This was a very powerful dramatisation of the events of Good Friday acted by the children. Children led the prayers which helped all present to understand the significance of the events for their own lives. The whole school were present and were joined by parents, grandparents and parishioners. Throughout there was an atmosphere of attentive reverence and all children joined in the responses and singing with enthusiasm. This was an excellent example of the whole school community participating in an act of worship together.
- 2.5 The Inspector observed several class prayer sessions where the children were given the opportunity to reflect and meditate by the skilful guidance of teachers. Both formal prayers were said and children read out prayers they had written. An encouragement to children to offer their own spontaneous prayer would have provided the children with even more opportunity for spiritual development.
- 2.6 Once each term there is a whole school Mass celebrated in the parish churches or in school. All members of the school community are invited to these Masses and respond in large numbers.
- 2.7 Each Friday an assembly is held to praise and reward good work carried out by children during the week. The children value this formal recognition of good behaviour or work.

### **3. SPIRITUAL AND MORAL DEVELOPMENT**

#### **3.1 Spiritual Development**

- 3.1a The spiritual development of the children at St Peter’s is a strength of the school and clearly contributes to the happy, caring environment in which the Mission Statement is a lived reality.
- 3.1b There is a recently written policy for Spiritual Development which clearly states the school’s philosophy, its aims and the practical ways these aims can be implemented. This policy seeks to emphasise that the school works in close partnership with parents and the parish communities to guide and support each

individual on their personal journey of faith.

- 3.1c There is a schedule of formal prayers to be learnt by each year group. These prayers are said regularly with care and thought. Children are generally very confident in speaking aloud and expressing their views, this could be built upon to encourage and give more opportunity for spontaneous prayer.
- 3.1d Spirituality is an integral part of the life of the school, not only during religious education lessons but extending throughout the day and into other lessons. The children are given time to reflect and think, and appreciate art and music during quiet thought and in discussions during circle time.
- 3.1e All classes have a focal area for prayer. These are of a high standard and feature Scripture together with examples of children's work in the 'Here I Am' topic. These areas together with other displays of religious education work around the school, contribute to a stimulating environment which emphasises the high priority the school places on religious education. Care must be taken however, to ensure that these displays are in keeping with the liturgical seasons of the church.
- 3.1f The school is fortunate to have an 'Upper Room' where children are able to go for private prayer or reflection. Evidence of prayers placed here by children indicates that they use and value this resource. Whole classes sometimes celebrate liturgies here, and the staff meet on a voluntary basis in the 'Upper Room' for morning prayers and on other special occasions.
- 3.1g There is much evidence throughout the school of prayers written by the children themselves. Consideration could be given to collecting these prayers into class prayer books or developing personal prayer journals.

## **3.2 Moral Development**

- 3.2a St Peter's has an excellent behaviour and anti-bullying policy which states very clearly and in detail what is expected of the children and what constitutes acceptable behaviour. The policy is based on the Mission Statement of promoting Gospel Values and providing a learning environment in which all pupils feel valued, safe and secure.
- 3.2b The school does not currently have a policy for moral development. This has been identified as a priority for development in the Diocesan Self-Evaluation document and there are plans to implement a policy during this year.
- 3.2c In speaking to the children, it is obvious that they have a good understanding of

what is right and wrong and a strong sense of fairness. They treat each other and adults with respect, relating their understanding of how Christ wants them to behave, to their own situation.

- 3.2d Behaviour is very good throughout the school, inside and outside the classroom. The ancillary staff treat the children with care and respect and the children respond in like manner.
- 3.2e Since September 2002, there has been a 'Buddy' scheme in place. Each year six pupil is paired with a Reception class child. The older children look after the little ones in the playground and escort them to and sit with them in whole school assemblies. They relate to each other in many other ways. This system helps the younger children to settle more easily into school and become confident in their new environment. It gives the older children an excellent way to develop responsibility and build up self-esteem by knowing that they have an important part to play in the smooth running of the school and in promoting the ethos that the school is committed to. All the children speak about it most enthusiastically and some real bonds and friendships have been created between the older and younger children. Parents also speak highly of this initiative. This is excellent practice and again demonstrates the strong sense of community which is so important to all at St Peter's.
- 3.2f Children are praised for good behaviour, they have a clear understanding of what is not acceptable and acknowledge sanctions used to address this kind of behaviour. There is an evident culture of forgiveness in the school.

## **PART TWO**

### **CURRICULUM RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

#### **4. STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

##### **4.1 Attainment and progress**

- 4.1a All classes in school allocate ten percent of teaching time to religious education, as required by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.
- 4.1b All children make satisfactory progress in knowledge and understanding. In a high percentage of cases, children make good or very good progress. Where progress is very good, the children show good listening skills and respond well and confidently with appropriate answers and comments. They are presented with appropriate activities and challenged by skilful teachers and as a result develop skills of reflection, self-awareness and analysis appropriate to their age.
- 4.1c Throughout the school children are encouraged and given opportunities to talk about their views. This approach helps them to develop very good speaking and listening skills.

- 4.1d Children show good recall of work previously done and are enthusiastic about sharing their knowledge with classmates. In the best lessons seen, teachers build upon this previous knowledge to ensure steady progression in knowledge and understanding.
- 4.1e The quality and quantity of written work is in all classes satisfactory and in many classes good or very good. The written work indicates the religious education curriculum is covered in breadth and detail. Expectations in religious education are as high as in other areas of the curriculum and pupils' achievements are commensurate with their abilities as judged by comparison with written work in other curriculum areas. The written work scrutinised indicated that children are given the opportunity and encouraged to express themselves creatively; this was a Key Issue for development in the last Inspection and has been satisfactorily addressed.
- 4.1f Sharing some of the very good work seen through staff moderation and Co-ordinator work sampling could contribute to improving the already good standards of recorded work. This could be an area for further development.
- 4.1g The marking of children's work is inconsistent. In examples of good practice, teachers affirm the good work done by pupils and indicate to them ways of improving further. This good practice needs to be shared and implemented by all staff. This responsibility could be included in a wider role for the religious education co-ordinator.
- 4.1h Discussions with children indicate that most show an understanding of what has been taught in their lessons and that they enjoy religious education lessons.

## **4.2 Attitudes to learning**

- 4.2a Childrens' attitude to learning is very good. They are attentive and interested in the teaching sessions and respond well to questions and discussions. Teachers value the childrens' views and opinions and this promotes a climate of confidence and self-esteem where children are not afraid to give a 'wrong' answer.
- 4.2b In all lessons observed, children worked well together in group activities; they are prepared to contribute ideas and listen to the views of others.
- 4.2c Children are keen to participate in liturgies and assemblies, they speak clearly and confidently and obviously enjoy taking part. This enthusiasm could be utilised to include more pupil participation in some assemblies.

## **5. QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROVIDED**

## **5.1 Teaching**

- 5.1a The quality of teaching seen during the Inspection ranges from satisfactory to excellent with the majority of lessons being judged to be good or very good.
- 5.1b All lessons were well structured with clear learning objectives which were shared with the children and generally re-visited at the end of the lesson.
- 5.1c In the best lessons seen, there were well differentiated, inclusive activities which presented appropriate levels of challenge for all abilities. The children were always on task and motivated by the good pace of the lesson and the interesting and challenging tasks presented to them.
- 5.1d The recently revised 'Here I Am' religious education programme is used by all teachers; this ensures effective coverage of the religious education curriculum. The good and appropriate use of Scripture by all staff is a strength.
- 5.1e Teachers include in their planning, very good cross-curricular links which enhance both the religious education curriculum and promote cultural development.
- 5.1f All teachers use the long and medium term planning sheets provided to support delivery of the 'Here I Am' programme. Teachers evaluate the impact of the planning and the lessons and use this to inform future planning. This is good practice.
- 5.1g All teachers display very effective questioning skills which help to lead children to higher levels of understanding. Teachers allow children time to formulate their answers and express their views which often reflect a deep understanding of issues by the children.
- 5.1h Effective classroom management by all teachers ensures a good environment for teaching and learning. Resources needed for lessons are prepared and on hand and children move sensibly around the classroom when necessary.
- 5.1i Additional classroom support assistants are used effectively to support children in their religious education lessons; they have a good knowledge of the work planned and clear expectations of outcomes.
- 5.1j Displays of children's work based on topics and themes in classrooms and around the school is of a consistently good standard. Work from children of all abilities is displayed. The prominence given to displaying religious education work affirms the priority given to religious education in the school.
- 5.1k Multi-faith education is explored through the 'Here I Am' programme. The school has built up a good resource of books and artefacts to enhance the

delivery of this area of the curriculum. This was noted as a Key Issue for development in the last Inspection and has been addressed satisfactorily.

## **5.2 Religious Education Curriculum and Assessment**

- 5.2a Religious education is central to the life of the school and all documentation is led by the Mission Statement; the Mission Statement is also displayed throughout the school.
- 5.2b There is a very good religious education policy which clearly states the school's philosophy in this area and states the aims and practical ways of implementation. The roles, responsibilities and expectations of everyone concerned are clearly stated. It is clear from the policy and observation of it in practice, that the religious education curriculum is treated with the rigour afforded to other areas of the curriculum.
- 5.2c The section on pupils with Special Education Needs in the policy emphasises the commitment to all children, whatever their needs or abilities, to receive a full religious education curriculum appropriate to them and acknowledges that to achieve this, some alteration or differentiation may be needed. The Inspector found this to be the case in practice.
- 5.2d Good clear documentation on equal opportunities, health and safety, pastoral care and supporting children with medical needs, was provided for the Inspector. There is currently no policy for Personal, Health and Social Education. This has been identified as a priority in the Diocesan Self-Evaluation Document and will be written this year. Currently elements of the Citizenship Curriculum are being delivered in a cross-curricular way.
- 5.2e The last Religious Education Inspection in 1997 identified as a Key Issue for development the introduction of a manageable monitoring and assessment system. An assessment system is now in place but is not used consistently throughout the school. The complete implementation of the system is an area for further development.
- 5.2f Currently the reports parents receive about their children's progress at the end of the year is confined to what the children have covered with no evaluative statement about their child's progress or attainment. A rigorous assessment policy should provide teachers with the information to improve the quality of annual reports to parents and also to receiving classes.
- 5.2g Since the appointment of the new headteacher, the school community has completed the Diocesan Self-Evaluation Document. This has enabled the school to identify priorities for development. Many of these have already been referred to in this report and actions to address the issues have already been taken by the school.

## 6 THE MANAGEMENT OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

### 6.1 Leadership and management

- 6.1a The school is very well led by an able and committed headteacher. In the relatively short time she has been in post, she has developed a clear vision for the school which is shared by staff and governors. She has carried out a thorough audit and has identified areas for further development. Where the headteacher considers issues to be high priority, she has begun to address them effectively.
- 6.1b Last year there was no in-service day dedicated to religious education issues. This has been identified as a priority by the headteacher and such a day has been planned for this school year. This will provide the opportunity for staff formation and for staff and governors to reflect together on the development of religious education in school.
- 6.1c The headteacher is ably supported by a very good deputy headteacher.
- 6.1d The religious education co-ordinator is hard working, dedicated and committed. His own personal strong faith underpins all his work and is evident to all. Currently he monitors planning and gives personal feedback to staff. He also offers support in delivering the religious education curriculum to members of staff seeking assistance. He has not previously been given the opportunity to observe lessons and monitor the effectiveness of teaching and learning. His role now needs to be developed and extended to include such monitoring and the scrutiny of pupils' work in order to spread the very good practice already taking place in school, ensure a consistency of understanding of attainment by all staff and develop portfolios of moderated pupils' work. His new responsibilities should also include the management of the religious education budget. These additional responsibilities need to be stated in a specific job-description for the religious education co-ordinator.
- 6.1e The recently appointed parish priest of St Peter's is very supportive of the school. He visits school regularly and leads or takes part in liturgies and celebrations with the children and sometimes he leads staff prayers. Due to ill health, the parish priest of St Paul's resigned from the Governing Body, however, good links are maintained between St Paul's parish and school by a parish catechist.
- 6.1f The school governors play a valuable part in the life of the school. They contribute to plans and policies and are effective monitors of the school's performance. They maintain good relationships with the school and the parishes.
- 6.1g Most parents value the information they receive regarding what their children

are taught in religious education lessons; although a significant minority of parents do not yet receive this information. This needs to be addressed. Parents appreciate the weekly newsletters they now receive and the meetings arranged to discuss their childrens' progress with the teachers.

## **6.2 Staffing, Accommodation and Resources**

- 6.2a The staff are hard working, caring and dedicated; they are co-operative and very supportive of each other. They are open and receptive to new ideas. Parents praise the staff for the commitment they show to the children and themselves.
- 6.2b Non-teaching staff are used effectively to support pupils and help to raise their levels of attainment and their feelings of self-respect and self-esteem.
- 6.2c Non-teaching staff - administrative, ancillary, midday supervisors, caretaker and cleaning staff are all hard working, loyal and cheerful. They feel valued and respected and are proud to work at the school.
- 6.2d The school building is well maintained and decorated to a good standard. The overcrowding commented upon in the previous Inspection report is no longer an issue since numbers have declined. Good use is made of additional space to provide extra facilities such as a computer suite and learning areas.
- 6.2e Displays throughout the school are of a high standard and both enhance the learning environment of the children and help to promote spiritual development.
- 6.2f The school is adequately resourced to deliver the religious education curriculum. The religious education co-ordinator has plans to increase the number of Christian artefacts to enhance delivery of the curriculum.

## **MAIN FINDINGS**

- 7.1 St Peter's is a very good Catholic school which lives out its Mission Statement in every aspect of school life. The school has created an atmosphere and ethos where each person is valued, respected as an individual and encouraged to reach their full potential spiritually and academically through a deepening relationship with God.
- 7.2 The school is very well led by an able and committed headteacher. In the relatively short time she has been in post, she has developed a clear vision for the school which is shared by all staff. She is ably supported by a very good deputy headteacher.

- 7.3 The school is well supported by an active governing body who maintain a very good overview of the school and contribute to plans and policies. They work to maintain and strengthen links with the parishes.
- 7.4 The parish priest of St Peter's is the governor with special responsibility for Religious Education. He is a frequent and welcome visitor to school and makes a significant contribution to the spiritual development of the children.
- 7.5 There are very strong links between the school and the parishes and this is a strength of the school.
- 7.6 Sacramental preparation is carried out by the parishes with strong support from the school. This effective partnership is excellent practice.
- 7.6 Almost all parents express great satisfaction with the standards of religious education achieved by their children and the very good spiritual and moral education their children receive. They all speak warmly of the caring, Catholic ethos of the school. Some parents would appreciate more information on what their children are taught in religious education lessons.
- 7.7 Parents speak highly of the commitment and dedication of the Headteacher and staff and regard them as good role models for their children.
- 7.8 Provision for children with Special Educational Needs is very good.
- 7.9 Relationships throughout the school are very good which leads to a caring, warm and supportive atmosphere. This is a strength of the school.
- 7.10 Collective worship is good and offers the children a variety of opportunities for praise, celebration and reflection. Giving the children more opportunity for spontaneous prayer is an area that could be developed further.
- 7.11 The spiritual development of the children is very good and this is a strength of the school.
- 7.12 The moral development of the children is very good and this is also a strength of the school.
- 7.13 Behaviour is very good throughout the school. An excellent Behaviour Policy written in the spirit of the Mission Statement, clearly establishes expectations for acceptable behaviour. Good behaviour is praised and rewarded. This promotes a good climate for learning and is a strength of the school.
- 7.14 Provision for cultural development is very good.
- 7.15 Of the ten lessons observed during inspection, the quality of teaching was found to be satisfactory in one lesson, excellent in another and good or very good in the other lessons.

- 7.16 All teachers use the 'Here I Am' religious education programme and associated planning sheets. Planning is thorough and ensures coverage of all elements of the topics. There is a strong emphasis on the use of Scripture by all staff and this is most commendable. Most activities are differentiated to match pupils' abilities and there is generally a good element of challenge. Consistency throughout the school in these elements could be ensured by the RE Co-ordinator monitoring planning, observing lessons and sampling pupils work.
- 7.17 Children's attitude to learning is very good.
- 7.18 Children make satisfactory to very good progress in knowledge and understanding in religious education.
- 7.19 Standards of written work vary from satisfactory to very good and are commensurate with pupils' abilities. Expectations of attainment are as high in religious education as they are in other curriculum areas. This is a strength of the school.
- 7.20 Procedures for assessment are in place but are not implemented consistently throughout the school. The information given to parents in end of year reports is confined to what the children have covered with no evaluative statement about their child's progress or achievement. This is an area for further development.
- 7.21 The RE Co-ordinator is hard working, dedicated and committed. His own strong personal faith underpins all his work and is evident to all. Currently he monitors planning and gives staff personal feedback but he has not previously been given the opportunity to observe lessons and monitor the effectiveness of teaching and learning. This is planned for in the future and is an area for development.
- 7.22 Display throughout the school is good and the high quality prayer areas featured in every classroom enhance the learning environment and promote opportunities for spiritual development. This also emphasises the high priority the school places on religious education.
- 7.23 The school is adequately resourced to deliver the RE curriculum but plans to increase the number of artefacts to help to enrich delivery of the curriculum.
- 7.23 All Key Issues in the last religious education inspection have been addressed although assessment procedures now need to be implemented consistently throughout the school.

## **AREAS FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT**

The Governors and staff of St Peter's should now:

1. Celebrate and consolidate the very good work being done in religious education, the spiritual and moral development of the children and the very good partnership that exists between school, the parents and the parishes.
2. Develop further opportunities for spontaneous prayer in the classroom and in Collective Worship.
3. Further develop the role of the religious education co-ordinator to include classroom observations, scrutiny of pupils work and effective implementation of the marking policy and the management of an RE budget. Define these new responsibilities in a specific job-description.
4. Build upon the assessment procedures already in place to ensure consistency of implementation and a shared understanding of the policy by all the staff.
5. Improve the quantity and quality of information to parents in terms of what their children are being taught in RE and provide an informative assessment of their children's attainment in the end of the year report.

### **Conclusion:**

The Diocesan Inspector would like to place on record her thanks for the kindness and co-operation shown to her by governors, headteacher, all staff, parents and children during the inspection.

## **APPENDIX: EVIDENCE BASE**

The programme of inspection included two pre-inspection visits to the school, two full days of inspection and one visit to observe a 'Way of the Cross' celebration.

Ten religious education lessons were observed and two circle time sessions. A Key Stage Two assembly led by the religious education co-ordinator and one whole school assembly led by the headteacher were observed. The Inspector also observed the Lenten celebration.

Interviews were held with the headteacher, religious education co-ordinator, the parish priest, the Chairman of Governors and a parish catechist.

Discussions were held with the children, parents, grandparents, teaching and ancillary staff, classroom assistants and the dinner ladies.

Parents were consulted through the pre-inspection parents meeting at which nineteen parents attended; and the distribution of the parents questionnaire. Thirty three responses were received by the inspector.

A comprehensive range of documentation was provided by the headteacher and religious education co-ordinator including: the Vision and Mission Statement and Aims, Religious Education, Collective Worship, Spiritual Development, Admissions, Behaviour, Special Educational Needs, Teaching and Learning, Presentation and Marking, Equal opportunities, Racial Equality and Performance Management policies. A recently completed Diocesan Self-Evaluation Document was also submitted. Other documentation requested by the Diocese was available.

The religious education co-ordinator provided a record of liturgies and celebrations that had already taken place and a list of planned events. a schedule of prayers taught to each year group, assessment books and reports and a comprehensive list of religious education resources.

## **SUMMARY REPORT**

### **The major strengths in religious education, collective worship and the spiritual and moral development of the children in school.**

- Standards of work in religious education range from satisfactory to very good and are at least as good as standards achieved in other curriculum areas.
- Children make progress in religious education commensurate with their abilities.
- The quality of worship and celebration in school is good.
- The spiritual and moral development of the children is very good.
- Children's attitude to learning is very good.
- Teaching is generally good or very good.
- Relationships throughout the school are very good which helps to promote and nurture a supportive, learning ethos.

### **How the school has improved since the last inspection**

All Key Issues identified in the last inspection have been addressed although assessment procedures need to be implemented consistently throughout the school.

### **How parents view the religious education, collective worship and spiritual and moral development of their children.**

- Parents are very satisfied with the religious education their children receive.
- Parents are very satisfied with the spiritual and moral development of their children.
- Parents praise the caring Catholic ethos of the school and the good behaviour of the children.
- Parents appreciate the support the staff give their children and themselves and regard the staff as good role models for their children.
- Parents value the partnership fostered by the school between themselves and the parishes.
- Parents are very well satisfied with the arrangements made for sacramental preparation.

### **Areas for further development following the inspection**

- Celebrate and consolidate the very good work being done in religious education, the spiritual and moral development of the children and the very good partnership that exists between school, the parents and the parishes.
- Develop further opportunities for spontaneous prayer.
- Further develop the role of the religious education co-ordinator to include classroom observations, scrutiny of pupils work and the management of an RE budget. Define these new responsibilities in a specific job-description.
- Build upon assessment procedures already in place to ensure consistency of implementation and a shared understanding of the policy by all staff.
- Improve the quantity and quality of information to parents in terms of what is taught in RE and provide an informative assessment of their children's attainment and progress in the end of year report.