



Saints Peter & Paul Catholic College

URN: 111457

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Archbishop of Liverpool

03–04 October 2024

Summary of key findings

Overall effectiveness

The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school

2

Catholic life and mission (p.3)

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

2

Religious education (p.5)

The quality of curriculum religious education

2

Collective worship (p.7)

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

2

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

Yes

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

Yes

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

Fully

Compliance statement

- The school is fully compliant with the general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishops' Conference.
- The school is fully compliant with any additional requirements laid down by the Archbishop of Liverpool.
- The school has responded fully to the areas for improvement from the previous Catholic School Inspection.

What the school does well

- There is a tangible sense of community at Saints Peter & Paul. This is experienced by students and staff who feel valued and cared for. All are afforded dignity regardless of their circumstances.
- Students interact with one another courteously and kindly, showing respect and openness in their exchanges.
- The appointment of the new subject leader for religious education has been transformational in implementing a clear vision for improving attainment.
- Knowledge recall is strongly embedded in all religious education lessons, and this supports students in building strong schemas of knowledge.
- There is a well-designed prayer and liturgy calendar which is chronologically and thematically accurate. This is a positive starting point supporting formation and personal development.

What the school needs to improve

- Student leadership opportunities are limited. The development of a strategy which increases engagement and participation is a priority.
- Ensure that religious education attainment and progress is at least in line with other core subjects in school.
- Inconsistent provision for chaplaincy as a result of personnel changes has meant that formation activity is underdeveloped. Leaders should review the allocation of resources and secure a model for chaplaincy so that there are benefits to students and staff.

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

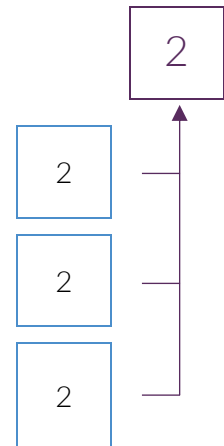
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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



Saints Peter & Paul has a proclaimed mission that *'Faith guides us to inspire every student to be the best they can be'*. This is underpinned by values of *'Compassion, Respect, and Aspiration'*. In spite of this, students' understanding of the school mission is not fully developed. Students feel secure in the school and believe their teachers' love for them, but not all are able to use scripture as a reference point to illustrate their own and others' worth. Most students recognise that their moral development is guided by Jesus' teachings, and they are exposed to examples of this in *'Formation Time'*. Increasingly in these sessions, they are developing an awareness of how this impacts on their choices and responsibilities, but they need further guidance in understanding the concept of *'Laudato Si'*. In lessons and recreational time, students' behaviour is very good. They treat one another with courtesy and kindness and are respectful and open-hearted in their interactions. Students and staff appreciate these quality relationships and are protective and proud in the school's focus on *'Respect'*. Some students engage with chaplaincy initiatives which the school has plans to expand. Nevertheless, most are unable to explain what chaplaincy involves because they have not been meaningfully engaged with it.

Since the last inspection, the school has renewed its mission statement. This is evident in display and in curriculum statements. The head teacher has shown a determination to refresh the impetus around mission using Salesian teachings. Staff have engaged with this using the strapline *'doing ordinary things, extraordinarily well'* and this has helped to bond colleagues with fortitude and faith. The sense of community among staff is strong. This is the result of the positive conditions provided by leaders, but also attributable to the trust apparent in the work of teams. Staff are positive witnesses, and the warmth of their welcome is highly commendable. Pastoral care systems are carefully designed, reflecting a genuine commitment to the students.

Signs and symbols allow students and visitors to easily identify Saints Peter & Paul as a Catholic school. The school has considered the location of the chapel and other prayer spaces to ensure that they are seen as the centre of the school's priorities. The lay chaplain, with current responsibilities as a teacher, is just beginning this important ministry. He is popular, providing great potential. Although statutory obligations are met in relationships, sex and health education, the cross-curricular delivery makes it harder to ensure students receive the same diet. The school has only just engaged in training with an approved external programme provider.

Governors fervently articulate the school's Catholic mission although sometimes, this is not evident in the development of policy. The presence of a visiting priest chaplain in school is a positive sign that links with parish life are valued. Parental opinions are overwhelmingly positive, and communication is sustained around Catholic life and mission. There is a commitment to the development of Catholic social teaching, but these principles are not yet fully instilled into curriculum plans. The *'Half-Term Hero'* initiative highlights leaders' commitment to appreciating the staff. The culture of support is well-established. Curriculum documents exemplify a striving for excellence and highlight features linked to mission. Governors are convincing in their advocacy and support of the school. There are secure systems for monitoring the work of leaders. Sometimes, however, actions could be taken more swiftly to ensure that students get the best deal. Whilst thorough, some self-evaluation was too positive and out of alignment. Students are provided with opportunities to contribute to school via the use of surveys. Bespoke training, focused on Catholic life, has been helpful in lifting expectations and weekly chaplaincy video presentations models delivery to form teachers. Induction processes are secure, appropriately focusing on aspects of Catholic life and mission.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

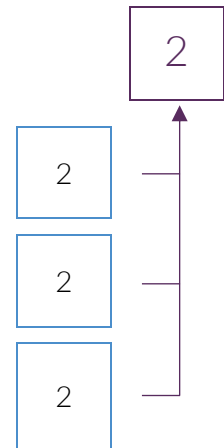
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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



Recall is a strength of the religious education department. Students begin each lesson by recalling previous learning and are able to make clear connections between prior and new knowledge. The use of coloured pens to illustrate aspects of learning is well-embedded. Historically, progress has not been as strong as in other core subjects and this has meant that students, including disadvantaged students and those with special educational needs, do not achieve as well as they should at Key Stage 4. Attainment data is also significantly below that of other core subjects, although there are more positive signs for the current Year 11 cohort. Improving attainment has been identified as a priority and robust plans are in place to support this. Planning documentation, including the departmental handbook, demonstrates that there is an expectation for students to reflect on their progress after assessment points. However, at this early stage in the academic year, they have not yet had the opportunity to do this. Because of this, students struggle to identify what they are doing well and what they need to do to improve. Students enjoy their learning, asking good questions about the topics they are studying. There is a calm and productive atmosphere in all classrooms.

Lesson observations demonstrate a secure level of subject knowledge among staff, including non-specialists. Teachers have high expectations for the quality of religious education and feel obligated to delivering the best possible experience for students. Team members have enthusiastically welcomed the recent changes brought in by the new subject leader to improve attainment and are committed to implementing change. Lessons are carefully planned to ensure that they build on students' prior knowledge. There is evidence of skilful questioning. On several occasions, teachers encouraged students to 'go deeper' in their learning by asking follow-up questions. 'Cold calling' is used effectively. Student effort is regularly celebrated, and each teacher awards a 'student of the week' which is shared with the whole school and the wider community.

Although there is some opportunity for spiritual and moral development, such as in the way Year 9 has considered the concept of Imago Dei, there is scope to develop this further. There is some evidence of students presenting their learning in a variety of ways, but at this point, opportunities to demonstrate that evidence have been limited.

Although only recently appointed, the department leader has re-invigorated religious education with a transformational and inspiring vision for outstanding teaching and learning. A robust review of current practices in the department was undertaken prior to implementing change to promote student progress. The subject leader has ensured that this vision is shared by department colleagues, ensuring that all understand the responsibility to deliver high-quality experiences for the students. This has included a full introduction for all Key Stage 3 classes this academic year. The curriculum is carefully planned to ensure it meets the requirements of the new *Religious Education Directory*. This is supported by training sessions for staff prior to teaching each new branch of the curriculum. For example, before beginning the *Creation and Covenant* units, staff received training on the concept of 'story'. There is provision for students with a range of abilities. Interventions are in place at GCSE to support students to achieve target grades. In a Year 7 lower ability class, the teacher dressed as a scientist and used an '*experiment*' to help explain the concept of creation and to explore whether science and religion are compatible. The new subject lead has used the thorough evaluation of religious education to identify and implement improvements. These have been shared with governors who recognise the importance of the drive to improve.

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

3

Provision

The quality of collective worship provided by the school

2

Leadership

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

2

2

Most students enjoy and respond well to the experiences of prayer and liturgy provided by the school. The school prayer is known and understood by all. The behaviour of students during 'Sacred Space' time is good. They are engaged and respectful. Students understand and show engagement with different ways of praying, including the use of traditional Catholic prayers. This includes reading and responding. However, daily prayer and liturgy does not yet involve regular use of liturgical music or opportunities for students to engage in joyful singing. Students appreciate the ebb and flow of the liturgical year but would benefit from resources adapted to each key stage. Similarly, since students' preparation and evaluation of prayer and liturgy is limited, they miss out on a key aspect of formation which teachers and the school chaplain could support. Students know the school values and, through assembly and form time, the principles of Catholic social teaching. However, they struggle to articulate the connection between prayer and liturgy, the religious education curriculum, and its impact on their daily life. Students recognise the importance of helping others but find it difficult to articulate how their experiences of prayer and liturgy lead to action.

A comprehensive prayer and liturgy calendar ensures that the liturgical year is well planned including for the celebration of Mass at key feasts. Daily prayer and liturgy, based on scripture, takes place across the school and each weekly programme has themes based on school values and Catholic social teaching. However, these are largely instructional, and teacher led, and lack opportunities for students to participate in activities such as for silent prayer, spontaneous prayer or reading their own prayers. Staff show willingness in the leadership of prayer and liturgy, and this is supported by members of the 'Mission Team'. The arrangement of Friday staff prayer is valued by those who attend. The lay chaplain is best placed to provide the additional support and training dedicated to the leadership of prayer. This would greatly enrich prayer and

liturgy and the opportunities for students to take a more active role. This is why leaders and governors should address chaplaincy time allocations speedily. Parents and friends of the school are kept up to date with the school's Catholic mission through newsletters, the website, and social media. This is the medium to promote further the participation of parents and carers in the prayer life of the school.

Governors recognise that although recently presented to them, the prayer and liturgy policy does not meet with model expectations. Planned adjustments will give a more solid starting point to support provision and outcomes. Whilst the development of resources for prayer and liturgy show consistency, and incorporate a range of ideas and links, staff are expected to adapt materials based on their own interpretations of students' ability. Leaders and governors recognise the importance of prayer and liturgy for the faith development of the community. The newly appointed school lay chaplain is enthusiastic and ambitious for the development of the faith life of students and staff. He understands his role and has good knowledge and skills. He needs time and resources to develop confidence among staff and students who will enhance their formation by preparing and leading. The school is aware that improvements in students' experience of prayer and liturgy will develop at an even faster pace when the lay chaplain is able to devote more time to preparation and delivery. Decisions by leaders to allocate financial resources intended to enrich experiences for the students are well-founded but could focus more precisely on meeting formation needs. Procedures for the reviewing of prayer and liturgy provision and practice are sound, and '*student voice*' contributes to this.

Information about the school

Full name of school	Ss Peter & Paul Catholic College
School unique reference number (URN)	111457
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8764625
Full postal address of the school	Ss Peter & Paul Catholic College, Highfield Road, Widnes, WA8 7DW
School phone number	0151 424 2139
Headteacher	Danielle Scott
Choose an item.	Jim Wilson
School Website	http://www.saintspeterandpaul.halton.sch.uk/
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	N/A
Phase	Secondary
Type of school	Voluntary Aided School
Admissions policy	Non-selective
Age-range of pupils	11-16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	24 th January 2018
Previous denominational inspection grade	2

The inspection team

Phillip Mooney	Lead
Fiona Robinson	Team
Jennifer Rowlands	Team
Anita Stead	Team

Key to grade judgements

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