



EAST ANGLIA DIOCESAN SCHOOLS' SERVICE

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Interim Monitoring Visit

St Thomas More Catholic Primary School, Peterborough

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Since the last section 48 inspection, which was in February 2014, the catchment area of the school has changed considerably with the number of children speaking English as an additional language increasing to 80%. The school currently has 419 pupils, of which 56% are Catholic. 40% of the staff are Catholic. Since the last inspection a new deputy has been appointed. The school provides a breakfast and after school club. Progress in Religious Education (RE) is consistently monitored for all pupils and the majority achieve the expected attainment with many pupils achieving higher particularly at the end of key stage 2. The budget for Religious Education is in line with that allocated to other core subjects.

The interim monitoring visit included meetings with the headteacher and the deputy to discuss improvements since the last Diocesan Inspection in the Catholic Life of the school, teaching and learning, monitoring and moderation of RE; with a learning walk throughout the school to observe RE in the majority of classes; a meeting with a group of year 6 pupils; scrutiny of pupils' RE books and RE data; and a short feedback meeting with the senior leadership team. The visit lasted four hours.

Since the last inspection the school has maintained its strong Catholic identity which permeates its daily life. It has not remained complacent but strives effectively for continuous improvement especially with the promotion of community links. For example the new school app provides instant and comprehensive information to parents and carers. Since the last inspection, the school has developed a strong professional culture for improvement. This motivates and empowers staff to improve their performance which, in turn, impacts on the quality and standard of pupils' outcomes. The committed and enthusiastic leadership of the senior staff ensures that pupils are aware of the Catholic faith and have an understanding of how to live this out in their lives. The school values are taught explicitly each month and linked to Gospel values impact on the school's community cohesion as well as on each pupil as he/she strives to achieve them in all their actions. Pupils' personal and spiritual development is reflected in their very good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning. Pupils are proud of their school and one said "Everyone is caring and tolerant of everyone else at this school". They praised the staff who listen to them, encourage their learning and develop in them pride in being Catholic. Pupils' RE books maintain the high standard of presentation and demonstrate a huge variety of different creative learning activities. The school's many attractive RE displays evidence the importance of the school's religious character. Prayer, worship, sacramental celebration and Religious Education all continue to have a very high profile in the school's life.

(The areas to improve from the last inspection are in italics).

Develop systematic moderation of RE assessment judgements to ensure consistency across the school.

This development point has been fully implemented and sustained. Moderation of outcomes are made regularly within school, across schools and with diocesan staff to ensure robust and secure assessment judgements. This has increased teachers' expectations of outcomes.

Embed the RE tracking system across the school to ensure pupils' good progress is sustained in all areas.

This area of development has been fully implemented. A new RE assessment tracking system is being used which allows teachers to identify gaps in learning and adapt their plans accordingly.

Continue to build pupils' skills and extend their ability to independently organise and plan whole school worship.

Progress with this development area is ongoing. Pupils have an increased involvement in the prayer life of the school and give their planning ideas when a variety of worship experiences are being devised. The school plans to form a pupil chaplaincy team which will further develop these opportunities.

Ensure that the reporting systems following the monitoring of the school's Catholic life are formalised so that leaders and governors can be effective in evaluating and implementing improvement.

In this development area, progress is ongoing. The school plans to devise a formal system to monitor its Catholic life. The leadership by the headteacher, deputy, RE leader and governors has continued to robustly maintain the very strong Catholic identity and their evaluations use solid evidence to confirm this. This monitoring is feedback to the whole governing body. Pupils are able to identify the school's values in their own and other's actions and observed behaviours demonstrating the current value, are praised and celebrated. Parent and pupil questionnaires are given regularly with very positive outcomes which are analysed and followed up by appropriate actions.

The school plans to invite an RE consultant to lead training on the specific assessment of their RE programme of "Come and See", so ensuring staff's increased understanding and confidence with RE assessments. Following this, an exemplar portfolio of outstanding practice will be created and used by present and future staff, to ensure high standards and consistency of RE assessments, are maintained. ***The diocesan inspector agrees with these two future development action.***

The school has completed the new diocesan self-evaluation form. This is comprehensive and includes where evidence for impact of the school's actions can be found.

I would like to thank everyone at St Thomas More School for such a warm welcome during the visit. Feedback regarding the interim monitoring visit was that it had been supportive, and confirmed for the senior staff the achievements of the recent past and the future direction already planned.

Marion Betts, Diocesan S48 Inspector