

Our Lady's Catholic Primary School

URN: 150540

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Shrewsbury

02–03 September 2024

Summary of key findings

Overall effectiveness

The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school

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

2

Compliance statement

- The school is fully compliant and has introduced the Vine and Branches in Years 1 to 4. Reception, Year 5 and Year 6 continue to use The Way, The Truth and The Life.
- The school is using the Life to the Full resources to teach RSE and all teaching of RSE and PSHE is done through a Catholic lens.
- The school community has effectively reviewed the Mission Statement, which is having a positive impact on staff and pupils, and leaders have updated the website to ensure the Catholic life and mission of the school is more prominent. In addition, the outdoor area for prayer has been developed since the last inspection.

What the school does well

- The newly established leadership team have a clear vision for Our Lady's Catholic Primary School and the subject leader is passionate about leading this.
- Relationships throughout the school community ensure children feel safe, happy and cared for.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They respond well to expectations set in religious education lessons, and they are happy and confident learners.
- Staff are enthusiastic about providing reflective experiences for pupils at Our Lady's.
- Pupils are aware of those who need help in the local and wider community, and they are enthusiastic about making a positive difference.

What the school needs to improve

- Implement rigorous and robust monitoring and evaluation procedures that give an accurate picture of Catholic life and mission, religious education, and prayer and liturgy.
- Review and update assessment and moderation processes to secure accurate judgements in religious education.
- Provide professional development opportunities that enable staff to provide age-appropriate times of prayer and liturgical celebrations.

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

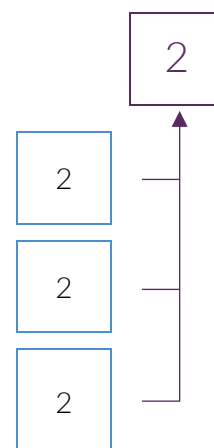
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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



The pupils at Our Lady's Catholic Primary School are happy, confident, and respectful. This means relationships throughout the school are outstanding. Pupils know that their mission statement calls them to learn with love, joy, and hope, and their three simple school rules 'Be ready. Show kindness. Aim high' are a practical daily support to them. Pupils feel safe knowing their teachers are 'not too strict and listen'. They speak confidently about how the older pupils and 'buddies' look out for younger pupils. They are proud of their school knowing it 'is a religious and quite sporty school and we've got lots of different religions here'. Through their activities such as Care for Creation Festival, Cafod assemblies, and support for projects in Liberia and Sierra Leone pupils know we all have responsibility to look after the world. However, they are not able to articulate the connection to Catholic social teaching. The newly appointed Mini Vinnies are enthusiastic about undertaking their roles. The Faith in Action Award was achieved by Year 6 pupils last year and is now part of the variety of activities that pupils benefit from at Our Lady's. Nevertheless, opportunities to take leadership roles are limited.

Staff believe the recent review of the mission statement has more clearly highlighted how they and the pupils can live out gospel values in their daily life. Staff are exemplary role models for pupils and their commitment is a strength of the school. This brings about supportive relationships, which mean pupils learn in a caring and nurturing environment. Staff say that 'school values inspired by gospel values, enable us to be the best we can be'. The local community recognises that Our Lady's is a place of inclusion where all are welcome. Families moving into the area say their children settle quickly, are happy and feel safe. Staff continue to support the senior leaders with enthusiasm, and this has resulted in a smooth transition into the Holy Family Multi Academy Trust. Pastoral care is a strength and pupils value informal opportunities to 'walk

and talk' as well as more formally planned interventions with staff who are trained to support pupils' emotional health and wellbeing. Although there are prayer tables in each classroom, they are not prominent or used effectively to reflect the importance of prayer in the wider Catholic life and mission of the school.

Leaders and governors are fully committed to ensuring that the Catholic identity of the school underpins their policies and procedures. They support all diocesan initiatives and ensure relevant staff attend training, so they are up to date with the guidance provided. There is an effective induction programme for staff joining the school, and those new to the school are appreciative of this programme, which helps them understand the demands of teaching in a Catholic school. The parish priest supports the school community, and together with the recently appointed head of school, is working to increase parents' engagement in the Catholic life of the school. Leaders have made a start on making connections across the curriculum to their mission. For example, illustrating parables in art lessons, linking geography topics to Catholic social teaching and joyfully linking the music curriculum to key feasts throughout the year. Self-evaluation by leaders, governors and pupils is limited. This needs to be planned more effectively to ensure that governors and leaders have a clear understanding of how to develop and enhance the mission of the school further. Pupils contributed to the review of the mission statement in September, however they are not regularly involved in evaluating the Catholic life and mission of the school.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

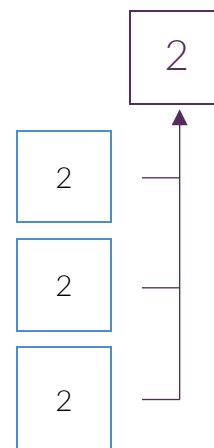
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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



In their lessons, and in their written work, pupils demonstrate that they are developing a sound knowledge and understanding of the themes in the *Religious Education Directory*. They can give thoughtful answers to questions posed in their lessons and in some classes, pupils are sufficiently confident to ask questions, so that teachers can help them deepen their understanding. Lessons are at least good in all classes, with outstanding teaching evident as well. Carefully planned activities enable pupils from Reception to Year 6 to explore their topics using appropriate religious vocabulary. Pupils in all classes listen attentively when responses are given during whole class question and answer sessions. They also have opportunities to discuss their own ideas with partners and use appropriate vocabulary to express their own views. For example, when learning about God's covenant with Abraham pupils in lower Key Stage 2 discuss their opinions confidently because they understand the meaning of sacrifice and solidarity. Written work in religious education books show a variety of independent tasks. In upper Key Stage 2 individual letters written to Pope Francis explain how they will look after the planet. Personal reflections on the parable of the mustard seed record how 'we can do small things that make a significant difference' and 'by serving we can grow God's kingdom'. However, pupils are not given enough opportunity to reflect on their learning. Pupils' behaviour in lessons is exemplary. They engage with all activities and as a result they improve their knowledge and understanding in religious education lessons.

Teachers use resources effectively to support learning in religious education lessons. They have a secure knowledge of how pupils learn, and they apply excellent teaching techniques to ensure pupils know and remember more in their lessons. Teachers clearly value religious education, and value the support and professional training offered by senior leaders. Developing pupils' communication skills is a high priority at Our Lady's, therefore activities are planned to help

pupils develop the ability to articulate their learning with clarity and confidence. Teachers are highly skilled at asking questions to deepen pupils' understanding and support staff work effectively with those who need extra help. Pupils make progress across the key stages, however assessment of pupils' work is not carried out consistently to ensure all pupils are challenged appropriately. Teachers have high expectations, therefore work in books is always well presented. Feedback is given verbally or, if appropriate, teachers may write a question for pupils to respond to in books.

Senior leaders and governors ensure that religious education is considered a core subject and therefore all school policies, resources and reporting to parents are prioritised as such. Senior leaders have successfully introduced The Vine and the Branches into Years 1, 2, 3 and 4, and Reception, Y5 and Y6 continue to use the Way the Truth and the Life until the end of the academic year. Because of the recent introduction of the new *Religious Education Directory* leaders have highlighted professional development as a priority in their action plans. The subject leader has a clear vision of how to improve teaching and learning in religious education and there is a plan in place for professional development led by senior leaders, as well as ensuring staff attend relevant courses offered by the diocese. There is also an effective programme to mentor and model religious education lessons for those teachers who are new to the school. However, leaders and governors have not embedded robust self-evaluation and monitoring procedures to enable them to analyse the impact of this professional development and plan incisive strategic plans to further improve teaching and learning.

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

2

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

Pupils respond well when they pray in class or together with the whole school. These quiet times allow pupils to 'think more about the good things that happen to us' and to 'have a calm time'. In the whole school celebrations of the word, and in class prayer times, children are engaged, reflect in silence, and pray in word and song. Pupils learn about the liturgical year and during continuous provision children in Reception enjoy gathering appropriate artefacts that they use for celebrations of the word. Older pupils can name some seasons of the Church's year, but they are not confident about the sequence or how it links to the prayer life of the school. Pupils recognise that prayer times allow them to reflect on how they can make the world a kinder place. The subject leader is aware that pupils have had limited opportunities to plan and lead prayer times. Although this has happened in the past, it has not been consistent, and pupils need to build their confidence and skills in this area. The subject leader and staff recognise that this is an area for development and staff are keen to improve their own understanding of how to help pupils deepen their experiences of prayer.

The parish priest is keen to collaborate with senior leaders to enrich the quality of prayer and liturgy for the school community. There is now a half termly plan in place so pupils, and their parents are offered the opportunity to pray together in a variety of ways. Pupils routinely take part in prayer at the start of the day, lunchtime, and end of the day. Gathering for celebrations of the word, as a school or in class, is part of the pupils' regular weekly experience and appropriate scripture passages are chosen to reflect the Church's year. The subject leader routinely models how to lead celebrations of the word, and this is an effective way to build staff confidence. Staff are eager to develop their own skills so they can consistently provide quality times of prayer for pupils. They embrace all learning opportunities to develop their own understanding of how to develop prayer so that these times become more meaningful and

appropriately planned for each age group. Each class has a prayer table; however, they are not interactive or places where pupils can go to reflect on their own.

There is a new policy for prayer and liturgy, which includes a progression for formal prayers, however it lacks clarity and sufficient detail for staff who are inexperienced at leading prayer. Whole school celebrations take place on significant feast days and at other special times during the year. These include devotions to Our Lady in May, celebrating harvest festival, praying the rosary, and celebrating the Feast of Christ, the King. Parents join the school community to celebrate Mass for the Y6 leavers in July. Senior leaders clearly understand Catholic ways of praying and ensure that pupils share in these rich traditions. The prayer area around the pond is used occasionally by older pupils. The subject leader is working with the parish priest to ensure more opportunities are provided to invite parents to join their children at times of prayer and liturgical celebrations. School staff prepare children for the sacraments of Reconciliation and First Holy Communion and the parish priest invites parents to church to join the preparations. In Advent and Lent pupils who have received these sacraments attend services of Reconciliation. Professional development continues to be a high priority for leaders and governors, however opportunities to evaluate the quality of prayer and liturgy are limited.

Information about the school

Full name of school	Our Lady's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	150540
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8773400
Full postal address of the school	Our Lady's Catholic Primary School, Wash Lane, Latchford, Warrington, WA4 1JD
School phone number	001925633270
Head of school	Mr David Gilby
Executive headteacher	Mr Steve Jevons
Chair of governors	Sacha Humphries
School Website	www.ourladys-primary.co.uk
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Holy Family Catholic Multi Academy Trust
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Academy
Admissions policy	Selective
Age-range of pupils	5-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	13 July 2017
Previous denominational inspection grade	1

The inspection team

Susan Lyonette

Susan Ralph

Lead

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