

Our Lady & St Philomena's Catholic Primary School

URN: 131837

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Archbishop of Liverpool

07–08 November 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

1

Religious education (p.5)

The quality of curriculum religious education

1

Collective worship (p.7)

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

1

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

1

Compliance statement

- The school is fully compliant with the requirements for religious education laid down by the Bishops Conference.
- Compliance with the above also meets the requirements of the Archdiocese of Liverpool.
- The school has fully addressed areas identified for improvement in the previous Section 48 inspection.

What the school does well

- The commitment of staff and governors to the Catholic life and mission of the school is exemplary.
- Relationships between all members of the school community are extremely positive with a Christ-centred atmosphere throughout.
- The pastoral care offered to the school community is outstanding, ensuring the highest level of commitment to the most vulnerable.
- Skilful questioning by teachers during lessons maximises learning for all pupils including the disadvantaged and pupils with special educational needs and disabilities.
- Daily acts of prayer and liturgy are embedded within the school day and some pupils use the prayer spaces provided in school for personal moments of prayer and reflection.

What the school needs to improve

- Enable all members of the community to contribute to a review and celebration of the school's Catholic life and mission.
- Provide staff with more opportunities to take part in external moderation of religious education.
- Strengthen leadership in prayer and liturgy by ensuring that the voice of pupils is developed further within the school's evaluation process.

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



Pupils love their school; they are happy and know that they are safe and cared for. All members of the community have a strong sense of identity and as a result, relationships are strongly rooted in the school mission 'The Love of Christ Shines Here'. Pupils show a deep respect for themselves and each other and they actively seek out opportunities to participate in the Catholic life and mission of the school. A pupil in Year 5 who bought easter eggs and raffled them off in school to raise funds for Cafod said that he did this as he wanted to help others; 'I wanted to show everyone that they are loved by God'. The wider actions of pupils in support of the Catholic life and mission of the school are recognised in the weekly school celebration assembly, with mission certificates awarded in recognition of their commitment. One pupil received a certificate for welcoming a new pupil to the school with a 'wealth of smiles and sharing the love of Christ'. The behaviour of pupils is exemplary, and they are welcoming to all, including those of other faiths.

The staff of Our Lady and St Philomena's are deeply committed to the school's mission and providing the highest quality care for all. The passion and dedication demonstrated by the learning mentor, leaders and staff, ensures that the most vulnerable members of the community are supported and know that they are valued and cared for. This is intrinsically linked to the Word of God with the learning mentor describing herself as being guided by scripture; 'I am the like the Good Samaritan, parents and carers know that just like Jesus, I will always be there to help them'. As a result of the drive and desire of all staff, led with passion and dedication by the executive headteacher, the school ensures that pupils experience the best that it can offer. Whilst the school mission is very securely embedded within the school community, its impact would be enhanced by leaders carrying out a review and celebration of the mission which

involves all members of the community. Relationships, sex and health education meets statutory and diocesan requirements and pupils articulate their learning by accepting that we are all different and everyone belongs to God's family.

Leaders and governors have ensured that policies and practices are in place which provide the highest levels of pastoral care. There is an explicit and concrete commitment to the most vulnerable. The *Philly Way* has been designed to support members of the school community to live out the school mission in their daily actions. Through this, leaders have described their high expectations for staff and pupils in all areas of school life. An example is the link that has been made between pupils tidying up their learning environment at the end of a lesson and the responsibility they have as global citizens to care for and appreciate God's world. The *Philly Way* is referred to frequently by leaders and staff and as a result, they have ensured that Christ is at the heart of school life. The link governor for religious education is part of a dedicated governing body that works hard to ensure that leaders and staff are focused on ensuring that the school is a recognised place of comfort and support for pupils and their families. By visiting the school at least weekly and therefore being a familiar face for pupils and staff, the link governor for religious education ensures that she works closely with senior leaders and has a very thorough understanding of the school.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

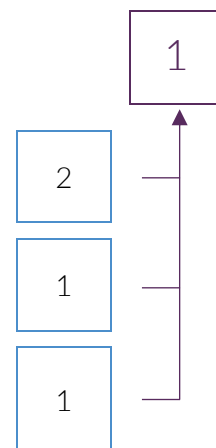
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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



There is high quality teaching throughout the school. This starts with strength in the nursery and Early Years and Foundation Stage provision and is built upon in successive years. As a result of this and the use of resources such as the *Golden Box*, there is an atmosphere of awe and wonder which helps to generate pupil passion and a desire to learn new things. This is evident most in the classes that are using the *Religious Education Directory* to plan and teach the school religious education curriculum. All pupil groups are knowing more and remembering more, and they demonstrate this through retelling scriptures that they have held on to. A pupil in Year 1 described the Easter story saying "Jesus went into the tomb after he died but he wasn't dead, he was alive, and he had left the tomb'. A pupil in Year 2 also recalled prior learning retelling the story of the road to Emmaus in detail. Pupils demonstrate very good behaviour for learning; they are focussed and eager to learn. Presentation in books is of good quality and demonstrate parity with other core subjects. Pupils' achievement is in line or better than attainment in other core subjects. However, the security of their knowledge would be further enhanced if teachers encouraged pupils to ask questions of each other to enable them to seek answers to things they are curious about.

Teachers are very confident in their subject knowledge and use questioning skilfully to support and enhance pupils' knowledge and understanding. In turn, they use these skills to challenge and deepen pupil knowledge through addressing pupil misconceptions immediately. This means that pupils' learning is being maximised and most know what they need to do to make progress. Leaders have purchased high quality resources which are well used by staff to expand and deepen pupil knowledge as well as to enhance the school environment. All teachers including early careers teachers, are strongly committed to religious education. This level of commitment means that they are consistently working hard to ensure that pupils achieve good outcomes.

The *Oasis Room* which is an educational safe place for vulnerable pupils is used to great effect to ensure that those in most need receive support. All staff value the support of the experienced and highly effective subject leader and each other, to develop their skills further. The open-door policy of leaders and teachers enables them to share ideas and best practice across the school.

The religious education subject leader who has been in post for six years shares a depth of knowledge and understanding to enhance teaching and learning across the school. She has a clear vision and, alongside the executive headteacher, link governor for religious education and assistant headteacher, she works hard to ensure that outcomes for the pupils remain at the forefront of the decision-making process. The staff team know that they can approach her for advice and support at any time. They highly value her expertise and knowledge, seeking out opportunities to observe her teaching religious education or to invite her to observe them. Leaders and governors ensure that religious education is comparable with other core subjects in terms of resourcing, timetabling, assessment and staffing. Displays in classrooms and around the school, portfolios and books celebrate learning in religious education. The impact of actions taken by leaders would be further strengthened through staff being given more opportunities to take part in external moderation sessions with other schools within the archdiocese.

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

1

Leadership

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

1

1

A daily pattern of prayer is embedded into the school routine. Pupils engage and participate with reverence, and they enjoy the opportunities the school gives them to undertake liturgical ministries. Pupils describe taking time to pray with their friends or alone, during lunchtimes or on the playground for a wide variety of reasons such as their experience of bereavement or to pray for someone they know who is ill. Frequent opportunities to lead prayer and liturgy means that pupils develop their skills in a progressive way. The gather, listen, respond and go forth structure is well embedded, and pupils sing a range of hymns with joy and passion. Pupils make good use of artefacts which leads to an enrichment of their prayer and liturgy experience. One pupil talked about how they had used rosary beads to pray for calm when they were worried about something and that this made them feel that God was nearby. Although leaders ensure that pupils are involved in the evaluation of the quality of the prayer and liturgy they have planned, this is adult led so more work needs to be done to ensure that pupils can further develop the skills needed to identify how they could make improvements.

The school offers a wide range of liturgical celebrations throughout the year and these experiences reflect the prayer life of the Church. Leaders have ensured that pupils experience Mass through regular attendance at church alongside parishioners, and both groups speak warmly about this experience. In every classroom and at chosen places around the school, spaces have been set aside for spontaneous prayer and these areas are well used by pupils and enhanced by the inclusion of well-chosen scripture. Along one corridor, the stations of the cross have been displayed and pupils 'walk the path that Jesus took' whilst also reflecting on what this must have been like and making links with their own experiences of struggle. The strong relationship between school staff and parish catechists has enhanced the school provision for

prayer and liturgy. An example of this occurred when a prayer trail was set up at the church, which children were invited to join. One pupil stopped at a statue of Mary to pray for her mum who was unwell; the catechist told her that she would ensure that the congregation at church would include her mum in their prayers and they did. Prayer is central to the daily life of pupils and staff set an excellent example both as leaders and participants.

The monitoring and evaluation procedures for the review of prayer and liturgy is strong. Leaders, staff and governors take an active role in this. Provision for prayer and liturgy is prioritised when allocating school budget and resources, so that high quality experiences for the pupils lead to a sense of awe and wonder. There is a beautiful skyline of Liverpool in the form of a mosaic which depicts Jesus at the centre of school life, with pupils and the parish church at His side. Leaders use this as an area for prayer and reflection, as well as a place to encourage pupil aspiration and interest in the wider community. Here they are prompted to ask questions about or visit the places they can see. The gradual introduction and use of traditional prayers throughout the school means that there is an identifiable progression of prayer and liturgical knowledge. This in turn allows for a seamless growth in confidence of pupils when planning or leading any acts of worship. The policy for prayer and liturgy is known and accessed by staff. Resources related to prayer and liturgy have been carefully formed and are regularly used.

Information about the school

Full name of school	Our Lady & St Philomena's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	131837
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	3413960
Full postal address of the school	Our Lady & St Philomena's Catholic Primary School, Sparrow Hall Road, Liverpool, L9 6BU
School phone number	001515258552
Executive Headteacher	Anne Radford
Chair of governors	Frances Sibert
School Website	http://www.olasp.co.uk
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	N/A
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Voluntary Aided School
Admissions policy	Non-selective
Age-range of pupils	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	6 th February 2018
Previous denominational inspection grade	2

The inspection team

Melanie Lockley
Sharon Orwin

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