

St Patricks Catholic Primary School

URN: 104918

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Archbishop of Liverpool

05–06 March 2025

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

Religious education (p.5)

The quality of curriculum religious education

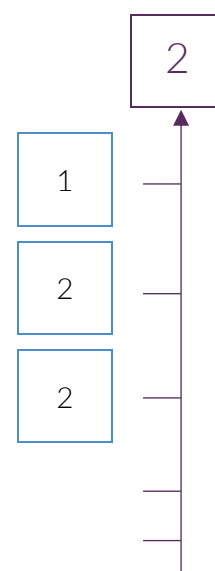
Collective worship (p.7)

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

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 of the diocesan bishop

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



Compliance statement

- The school is fully compliant with the requirements for religious education laid down by the Bishops' Conference.
- Fulfilment of the above also meets the requirements of the Archdiocese of Liverpool.
- The school has responded fully to the areas for improvement identified in the last inspection.

What the school does well

- There is a dynamic, living and inspiring unity between the parish and school with a shared spiritual enrichment.
- All children are welcomed and celebrated for their uniqueness. This is seen in high levels of inclusion in class and around the school.
- Catholic social teaching is at the heart of the taught curriculum and meaningfully linked across all subjects.
- Leaders at all levels are passionate about Catholic education and take seriously their role as 'guardians of the mission.'
- Pupils are happy, friendly and proud of their school. They know that they are loved.

What the school needs to improve

- In religious education provide a wider range of teaching and questioning and strategies that offer pupils increased depths of challenge and so deepen their knowledge and understanding.
- Enrich the process for celebrations of the word to ensure that the best practice in school is celebrated and built upon.
- Give pupils a clear understanding of the seasons of the liturgical year and how these impact upon their life of prayer.

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 know and understand the mission statement and apply it to their everyday lives. Pupils expressed understanding of their school mission as a call 'to live our life like Jesus and to listen to Him.' This understanding has developed constantly from the annual Mission Day at the beginning of the year and is reinforced regularly in assemblies, lessons and other activities. Catholic social teaching is linked into all subject areas and this means pupils know these principles well and can relate them to different areas of life. This has led to pupils being able to talk about their faith and how it impacts on their actions. For example, the Eco Council proudly shared their work with a member of the local parish in growing vegetables for the local soup kitchen. They were able to explain how this was important in relation to the dignity of each person and the common good. Pupils have a deep respect for all members of their community. This is particularly clear in the welcome and acceptance offered by pupils to their peers with additional needs. A pupil when asked what was special about St Patrick's, proudly answered, 'We are Catholic, and we are all friends.'

The mission statement is continually revisited within learning and celebrations of the word, and because of this, pupils describe the impact this has on themselves and school life. Values chosen by the pupils with support from their teachers are explored throughout the year, to deepen this rate of impact. Staff are highly committed, and one member of staff commented, 'We have a strong sense of community, and a strong faith in everything we do, to live out the mission statement.' There is a tangible sense of being at the heart of a loving and caring community where every person is valued for their uniqueness. This is extended to all, especially the most vulnerable who are well supported by caring and knowledgeable staff. This is seen in the commitment of the mental health lead who involves outside agencies, staff, parents and pupils

in ensuring that all have the support they need. The environment of the school reflects its Catholic identity. Many areas of the school building include beautiful displays celebrating key aspects of Catholic Life, teaching and scripture. For example; the display dedicated to Our Lady and gospel passages which include her. Relationships, sex and health education is well planned and mapped using the approved programme and linked to themes from religious education.

Leaders and governors are clear about the importance of their role as guardians of the mission as demonstrated by the headteacher who shared her vision that 'every child knows Christ and that they feel the love of Jesus.' Parish links are exceptionally strong. There is a flourishing partnership between the two and in fact many staff spoke about there being no sense of separation. They are one family. One such example of this was the school council raising funds for the parish St Vincent de Paul society. The parish priest is a much-loved member of the school community and commented that this school was a 'magnificent example of what a Catholic school should be.' School staff know that they are important to leaders and appreciate the care which is given to their well-being. They spoke of a closeness between all members and how they can approach leaders at any time for help, support and advice. Much thought has been given to how the whole of the curriculum reflects the richness of Catholic social teaching which has been successfully embedded within each curriculum area. A member of staff shared, 'Leaders have shown commitment and dedication towards raising the potential of what Catholic life is like in school and this shines through in their drive to improve practice.'

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

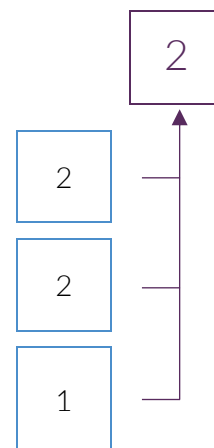
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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



Pupils enjoy their religious education lessons. They are engaged and want to learn because teachers plan lessons which use a range of strategies and build upon prior learning. Relationships are strong and behaviour is good because expectations are clear and teachers know their pupils well. Progress is good in all areas of religious education. Careful thought has been given as to how pupils with additional needs, including some with more complex needs are included. Teaching and learning has been skilfully adapted to enable them to make meaningful progress from their various starting points. For example, one pupil has learning recorded through annotations and photographs in a useful way so that his progress can be recognised and celebrated alongside his peers. In some observed examples questioning was used well to deepen learning but this was not consistent and there were missed opportunities to address misconceptions and deepen understanding. Pupils work with concentration and independence and produce a good standard of work. They take care with their religious education books which are well presented. Over time attainment in religious education has been consistently in line with standards reached in other core subjects.

All teachers are deeply committed to religious education and recognise its place as central to the curriculum. Teachers are confident in their subject knowledge and understand how pupils learn. However, in some lesson visits, misconceptions were not always addressed, and this could lead to confusion later. Pupils make good progress because teachers know them well and plan lessons that build upon prior knowledge. Driver words (skill words) are used consistently in lesson objectives, marking comments and in lessons. This ensures that teachers and pupils understand the expectations and how to make progress in their learning, although it was felt by inspectors that expectations for some groups of pupils could have been higher to enable swifter progress. Teachers encourage pupils to deepen their spiritual and moral development through

the provision of Catholic social teaching and its application to their everyday lives. All adults work together to effectively lead lessons so that all pupils are well supported in their learning. For example, Year 2 pupils were challenged to describe a story from the Bible and two worked alongside a skilled member of staff who helped them to complete this task enthusiastically through using figures and other objects. There has been investment in quality resources to teach religious education and this is most easily seen in the utilisation of bibles in each class and the introduction of the 'Golden Box' within Early years and Key Stage One. Careful thought has been given to enrichment opportunities which provide many links with outside agencies, charities and parish groups.

The religious education leaders, supported by other senior leaders and governors, are committed to their role and have a clear vision for continual improvement. They take all opportunities to work with schools within their local cluster, local authority and core cluster. Moderation of standards is secure because leaders ensure that this takes place with colleagues within their own school and externally with other schools. The school has begun to teach from the new Religious Education Directory in some classes and this has been thoughtfully planned so that training can be as supportive as possible. This thoughtful approach has meant that the classes which have begun to use this new programme feel well equipped. Senior leaders ensure that religious education has equal parity with other core subjects. Leaders were clear that the curriculum flowed from religious education as its starting point. There is a full programme of monitoring across the years which includes all members of the community. Outcomes are used to ensure strategic impact.

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 enjoy their times of prayer in school and readily participate in them. They reflect in silence, join with communal prayers and sing with confidence. There is a clear plan for the liturgical year with themes set out which include saints and seasons. However, pupils have a limited understanding of the roll-out and significance of the Church Year which requires some development. Pupils willingly, with support from their teachers, plan aspects of celebrations of the word, taking part in an age-appropriate way. In a Year 1 class pupils invited their peers to join the worship by gently tapping them on the shoulder and in an example from Year 2, pupils created a focus for the worship. Pupils spoke about their love of the Mass and going to church and this stood out as having great importance to them. In one example that was shared, pupils led a symbolic dance within the Mass which contributed to a deeply spiritual experience for the community. During the inspection, all pupils visited church to take part in a reflection about Ash Wednesday. They were respectful, listened carefully, joined in with saying the 'Our Father' and with singing. In fact, one pupil shared that, 'I can't wait to go to church', while another said, 'If I feel sad, I go to church and the feeling disappears. It's my second home.'

Prayer is central to school life and many staff spoke about how meetings and gatherings always begin with prayer. Pupils say daily prayers throughout the school day. In one observed example, this was added to by the class teacher who included a prayer intention from a member of the class. Scripture is central to all celebrations and is shared reverently. Where pupils are planning their own celebrations, they are supported in their choice of scripture passage. Staff are committed to ensuring that daily acts of worship take place as evidenced by timetables, photographs and pupil voice. Planning and observed acts of prayer and worship demonstrated that celebrations of the word follow the recommended structure but staff should be careful to ensure that timing is appropriate. Spaces for prayer are evident in classrooms and these are well

cared for and equipped. They are central to the room and are used in class worship. The physical and relational closeness between the school and parish means that the church is often used for celebrations. Music was used to good effect in observed examples of worship to maintain a prayerful atmosphere. Parents are invited to class Masses and there are plans to invite parents to all class celebrations soon.

Leaders and governors are committed to daily prayer and liturgy. Monitoring is regular and feedback is having a positive impact in bringing about continued enrichment. An example was shared of staff training led by one of the subject leaders. The content communicated the findings of recent monitoring, including the identification of good practice to share and next steps. There was also a progress report on the implementation of the new Prayer and Liturgy Directory. The information was clear, concise and useful. There is a good policy which gives some guidance in skills development across the school and expectations for practice. The recommended structure for celebrations of the word is made clear. There is a plan for the year which ensures access to sacraments including Reconciliation. This plan is well linked to the seasons in the liturgical year. Themes are carefully chosen to link with saints, religious education topics and school values. Staff spoke positively about celebrations of the word led by the headteacher and how they felt that her weekly gatherings for prayer and worship, based on school values, are examples of good practice.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Patrick's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	104918
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	3433339
Full postal address of the school	St Patrick's Catholic Primary School, Radnor Drive, Churchtown, Southport, PR9 9RR
School phone number	01704 225906
Headteacher	Rachel Halsall
Chair of governors	Tom O'Malley
School Website	http://www.stpatrickschurchtown.com
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	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	1 st May 2018
Previous denominational inspection grade	2

The inspection team

Louise Byrne
Liam Richardson

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