



St Francis' Catholic Primary School

URN: 148962

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Clifton

22–23 February 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

Religious education (p.5)

The quality of curriculum religious education

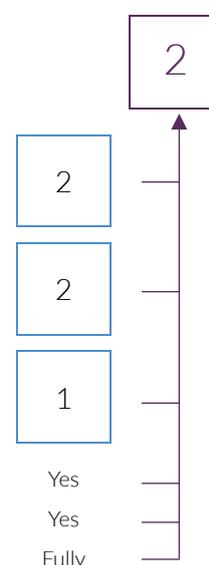
Collective worship (p.7)

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

The school is fully compliant with the curriculum requirements laid down by the Bishops' Conference

The school is fully compliant with all requirements of the diocesan bishop

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



What the school does well

- Pupils relish the opportunities they are given to plan, lead and evaluate prayer and worship in the school. They highly value the autonomy they have been given and have made it their own.
- Relationships are a real strength of this school. The staff are highly committed and care deeply about all their families and in particular those for whom life can be challenging.
- Pupils show great respect towards staff and each other in religious education lessons and as a result, behaviour and attitudes to learning are good.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of their duty to look after those in need and enthusiastically support many charities from those nearby, for example, the local foodbank, to those further afield, for example, the water project in Uganda.
- This is a school that has been on a journey of rapid progress over the last two years. Staff recognise that the clear vision and cohesion that the Executive Principal and Head of School have brought to the school have had the biggest impact on school improvement. Joining the

Cardinal Newman Catholic Educational Trust has ensured that there is capacity to maintain this progress.

What the school needs to improve

- Embed Catholic social teaching throughout the wider curriculum subjects.
- Provide effective questioning to enable pupils to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of religious education.
- Tasks in religious education need to provide enough challenge to enable pupils to achieve the learning objectives, including at greater depth.

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

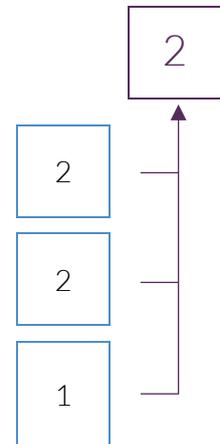
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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 show a good understanding of the mission of the school. They can articulate the school's values clearly and are able to confidently say how they put these into action. They readily and enthusiastically embrace the demands of Catholic social teaching, making links between life and the teachings of Jesus and their own behaviour. They know and understand the messages of Laudato Si and Fratelli Tutti and enthusiastically support charities that help those less fortunate than themselves locally, nationally and globally. Pupil achievements both in and outside of school are celebrated weekly. They show immense pride in being able to celebrate this with the whole school. Pupils are proud of their school and are able to say how being a pupil at St Francis impacts on their lives. They enjoy actively participating in promoting the Catholic life of the school, for example, in showing care for the environment, each other and those in need. Pupils are constantly reminded of the school values through classroom displays, worship and in lessons which makes them a part of their daily life. There is a chaplaincy team in place who are involved in fundraising, caring for prayer spaces and sorting out the school prayer garden. Pupil voices are heard in the monitoring and evaluation of the Catholic life and mission of the school, and they clearly feel a part of future developments.

Staff show they are committed to the Catholic life of the school by embracing the school values and seeking to promote them at every opportunity. There is a strong sense of community where all look after each other and value the support they receive. Staff are good role models. Relationships are a strength of the school resulting in staff and pupils having a strong sense of belonging. This leads to a culture of welcome across the school, where all are valued. Providing food for families in need and reaching out to refugee families arriving in the area are examples of how the school goes the extra mile to support the most vulnerable locally. The school is a wonderfully stimulating Catholic environment with high quality displays including pupils' work, for example, on pupil achievements, Catholic social teaching and school values. Relationships, Sex and Health Education fully meets diocesan requirements.

Leaders show a clear commitment to the Catholic life and mission of the school and have ensured that the self-evaluation that is now in place is well-planned, rigorous and leads to astute and accurate priorities that enable progress. Governors are kept up to date through detailed headteacher's reports, which enables them to provide challenge and support where needed. The school supports the bishop's vision for the diocese through their involvement in the Cardinal Newman Educational Trust and welcome the support of the diocesan office. Parish links are strong with the priests from both churches taking opportunities to visit the school regularly and supporting the staff, and the parish children, youth and family worker visits the school to support the chaplaincy team. The school seeks to engage the parents, and most are supportive of the Catholic life and mission of the school, however, there is a small number who do not. Staff feel well-supported by the leadership team and the Trust. The leadership team feel well-supported by the governors and the Trust. Catholic social teaching is seen in abundance and school is now making plans to include this in the wider curriculum. Pupils and governors are involved in the evaluation of Catholic life through a rigorous monitoring schedule leading to detailed plans for improvement. Training opportunities for staff provided in-house, from the diocese and from the Trust are directly linked to the Strategic Plan. Staff have found the induction of new staff to be effective and helpful with support from the diocese and the leaders in school.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

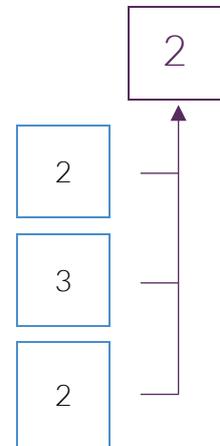
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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



Behaviour is good across the school, and, as a result, pupils are able to work independently and concentrate well. They show great respect for each other and listen carefully to staff and others. Pupils are engaged and show clear enjoyment in most lessons. They are enthusiastic and value religious education. They are able to use religious vocabulary independently and accurately. Links to previous learning show that, over time, pupils are making progress in their books. In making links to prior learning through verbal responses, pupils show a good understanding and knowledge of scripture, Laudato Si and Fratelli Tutti. Some SEND pupils are making accelerated progress due to the support they receive. Peer and self-assessment is being developed in the school, however, this is not always precise enough for pupils to know what they need to do to improve their work. Some pupils are producing work in their books which compare in technical ability to the work in their English books, however this is inconsistent and shows expectations vary across the school. Attainment in religious education is in line with other core subjects in the school.

The staff are a strong, enthusiastic team and their commitment to develop themselves is clear. Teachers use a wide range of resources, and good use is made of learning support assistants, for example, supporting those with needs, recording pupil responses and taking groups. Where this takes place, learning support assistants show effective questioning skills and give clear explanations of tasks. There is some strong teaching, and the best lessons allow pupils to show their knowledge and understanding through effective and well-planned questioning, which leads to a greater depth of thinking. However, this is inconsistent across the school. Tasks set do not always match planning and do not always allow pupils to achieve the learning objective. Pupil books show that there are some inaccuracies in some staff knowledge and leaders are developing this through shared planning sessions before each unit. Support for those with specific needs in the classroom is in place, however, there is not enough challenge in some classes to ensure those most able can achieve greater depth learning. Pupils are given time to reflect in lessons which leads to their spiritual and moral development. Feedback is not always precise enough to enable pupils to make good progress.

Leaders ensure that religious education is given parity with other core subjects and follows the *Religious Education Directory*. There is regular training for religious education in place, which is supportive and, on occasion, bespoke to individuals' needs. This is highly valued by the staff. The school takes full advantage of support and training offered by the Trust and the diocese. School leaders have a clear vision for religious education. There is now a process for regular monitoring of teaching and learning, however, this has not been in place long enough to see the impact. Leaders recognise that staff need support to ensure their lessons are planned to enable pupils to build on prior learning so that they can make good progress and the needs of all groups are being met. Self-evaluation is now robust and well-informed and has led to identifying precise and accurate priorities.

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

1

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

Pupils show a prayerful and respectful response to all forms of prayer in the school including staff-led, child-led and whole school assemblies. Their deep engagement is evident through responses, singing and attentiveness. Pupils of all ages have the knowledge and understanding of the liturgical year. Child-led prayer is based on scripture which reflects the current liturgical season. Planning and delivery of worship is of a high quality. Leaders encourage others to reflect on and respond to the gospel, leading to pupils making links with the gospel and own lives. There is a strong knowledge of variety of prayer in Catholic tradition, including scripture, meditation and reflection. There are also opportunities for spontaneous prayer. Pupils are able to reflect on how they listen to Jesus and the impact this has on their actions, for example, bringing food for the local food bank, raising money for their Uganda water project, and living out their Lenten promises such as caring for others and the school prayer garden. Pupils are involved in evaluating the prayer life of the school and this is well-embedded. Child-led class liturgies are recorded in books which show engagement and enjoyment, and pupils taking ownership of the prayer life of the class. Faith in action is promoted and celebrated across the school. Pupils are sent out at the start of the week with a mission following whole school assembly and this is then celebrated at the end of the week with awards given to those who have lived the mission. Pupils expect this challenge and readily accept it. They are able to talk about it with confidence and conviction using the language of Catholic social teaching.

Prayer is central to school life and the daily pattern of prayer reflects the rhythm of the church. Following in-house training, staff are confident and well-skilled to lead high-quality class worship and are therefore good role models for the pupils. They are also confident in supporting pupils to plan and lead worship. Creativity is always encouraged and music, dance, drama, signing, and singing are a regular feature of child-led and whole school worship. The school makes imaginative use of prayer spaces both within public areas of the school and classrooms, and pupils are involved in developing and maintaining these. There are strong links with the local parishes and the school is well supported by the parish priests. The school facilitates pupil participation in the life of the parishes.

There is an effective policy in place that is regularly reviewed and guides staff. Pupils are able to plan and lead prayer at all ages due to the staged approach, with age-appropriate expectations, the school has put in place. Prayer and worship is greatly enhanced across the school through the dedication and inspiration of the prayer and liturgy lead. Worship is planned throughout the year and includes masses and services both in school and in the church, including holy days of obligation, reconciliation services, and a blessing of pets on the school's patron's day. Staff fully value the training opportunities they have been given which has had a huge impact on their confidence and abilities to consistently plan and lead high-quality worship. Resourcing for the prayer life of the school had been enriched by the support of the local parish with donations for books and prayer cloths for the classes. The school's self-evaluation is strong, and the voice of pupils is central to the development of worship and as a result they display a strong commitment to the prayer life of the school.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Francis' Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	148962
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8022015
Full postal address of the school	St Francis' Catholic Primary School, Station Road, Nailsea, BS48 4PD
School phone number	01275 855373
Headteacher	Samantha Land and Janet Ellams
Chair of Local Governing Body	Cath Hanley
School Website	https://st-francis.n-somerset.sch.uk/
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	The Cardinal Newman Catholic Educational Trust
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Academy
Admissions policy	N/A
Age-range of pupils	4 -11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	March 2020
Previous denominational inspection grade	Requires Improvement

The inspection team

Dawn Summers Breeze
Daniel Lieblich

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