

St Teresa's Catholic Primary School

URN: 104807

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Archbishop of Liverpool

19–20 June 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

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 curriculum requirements laid down by the Bishops' Conference

Yes

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

Yes

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

Fully

2

What the school does well

- St Teresa's mission statement, 'A welcoming family of God, growing and achieving together, with Jesus at our side,' is lived authentically with love and care for all.
- The successful partnership between the school and parish leads to outstanding social justice projects in the local community and a strong sense of social responsibility from pupils.
- The head teacher and senior team are inspirational leaders of Catholic education. There is a culture of supportive relationships at every level, together with effective pastoral support for the staff and young people.
- The school has successfully implemented the new *Religious Education Directory* (RED) in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).
- Pupils say they greatly enjoy religious education and their behaviour in lessons is exemplary.

What the school needs to improve

- Utilise both Archdiocesan training and in-house expertise to deepen the understanding and skills of staff in providing meaningful and spiritual experiences in prayer and liturgy.
- Increase opportunities for all pupils to become more actively involved in each part of religious education lessons.
- Provide challenge for the more able pupils in religious education so that they can achieve the best outcomes in line with their abilities.

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

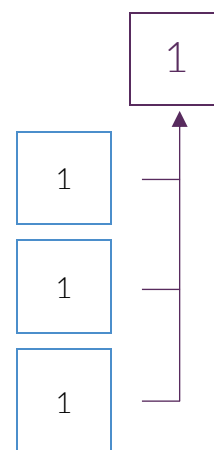
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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 embrace and are proud of the distinctive Catholic identity and mission of their school. The mission statement is the golden thread running through the work of the school community. All pupils are valued and cared for as unique persons, made in the image and likeness of God. Pupils respond very well to the demands of Catholic social teaching and can articulate aspects of the theology underpinning the associated actions very well. One pupil said, "We like to follow Jesus' example. He did the right thing, so now we do the right thing." Pupils value the school's chaplaincy provision, willingly taking leadership roles within it. Year 6 pupils act as buddies for the younger pupils; kindness cups are left around school to be found by others and recycled uniform and food items are available for collection. Pupils take these roles seriously. They say, "When Jesus was on the cross, everyone was against him, but his followers still believed in him. They spread the Good News and we still do this today." Pupils know that they have a strong voice and can make changes together. They are very well supported by adults to achieve this. One pupil said, "The teachers care for us a lot."

The mission statement has a significant impact on the life of St Teresa's, which excels at being a community based on Catholic tradition and practice. Christ is at the heart of the school, where actions are deeply rooted in the Word of God. There is a lived sense of community in the school and wider parish. This is evident in the quality of relationships and the strong culture of welcome for all, including pupils from various cultures and belief traditions. The parish priest is a regular visitor and alongside the head teacher, provides the pupils with a strong sense of belonging to a welcoming and vibrant parish community. The beautiful school environment effectively communicates and celebrates its Catholic character. The level of care and attention given to the spaces reflects the dignity of each person and contributes positively to their formation. The provision for relationships, sex, and health education meets statutory and Archdiocesan requirements.

Leaders and governors work hard to ensure that Christ is always at the heart of the work of St Teresa's and are highly committed to this core leadership responsibility. They are energised, joyful and dedicated to the fulfilment of the Church's mission in education. The head teacher is a source of inspiration for the community. Her work with parish groups and the parish priest is central to the Catholic life and mission of the school. The parish priest describes the school and parish as, 'A family of God' and reports that the joint work of the parish and school is stronger than ever. The school has supported the Archdiocesan request to apply for the *Live Simply Award*. Parents and carers are highly supportive of the work of the school and the head teacher engages well with families from other belief traditions. Leaders and governors have implemented policies and practices that safeguard the wellbeing of the staff. This demonstrates the high levels of pastoral care that exist at the school. Governors state, "The staff are happy, and this translates to happy pupils." The staff participate in the drafting of the school's Catholic self-evaluation document with senior leaders. Together they have a key role in the continuing monitoring and evaluation of 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

2

Provision

The quality of teaching, learning, and assessment in religious education

2

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for religious education

2

2

Pupils are developing secure knowledge, skills and understanding in religious education that reflect the learning required by the Religious Education Directory. Pupil attainment is in line with that of other core subjects. Pupils, relative to their age and capacity, are engaged young people and embrace the demands of religious commitment in everyday life. In one lesson, pupils could relate the scripture story of the sermon on the mount and the beatitudes to their freedom to make choices and to accept the responsibility that follows. In another, the pupils responded to the stories of Zacchaeus and Levi and related these to experiences of being sorry and to the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Pupils can speak confidently about what they have learned in religious education, showing an awareness of key concepts and using some subject specific vocabulary. However, in pupils written work their deepening knowledge and understanding is not yet fully expressed. Pupils work independently, concentrating and responding well to the tasks and activities provided for them in lessons. They enjoy their learning in religious education. Year 6 pupils consider religious education to be their favourite lesson because, "We get to understand God better and what He has done for us." Pupils' work is creatively displayed and celebrated in corridor spaces as a source of inspiration for others. Quotes, prayers, parents' comments, and photographs are very positive indicators of the work of the school in religious education.

Teachers are confident in their subject knowledge and have a good understanding of how pupils learn, relative to the phase in which they are teaching. Pupils value religious education, because their teachers prioritise it as the core subject, and communicate this effectively. Through careful questioning, staff enable pupils to review their existing knowledge and understanding. However, in some lessons observed, there were pupils whose prior learning was not explored to the full extent. Pupils remember scripture stories, and reflect on their own lived experiences, making links appropriately. Pupil effort is celebrated during lessons with praise and encouragement, leading to good levels of motivation. Teachers ask searching questions and provide space for reflection. They revisit ideas covered throughout religious topics to enable pupils to

systematically review and build their knowledge, committing it to long term memory. Religious education has a significant impact on pupils' moral and spiritual development evident through careful questioning. One pupil wrote in a prayer about reconciliation and rules, 'God please love me even if I am naughty.' In another lesson about building bridges, a pupil observed, "If someone usually makes the wrong choices, but makes a good choice just once, it's right that they should receive the star of the week award." In the early years' foundation stage, pupils have been introduced very successfully to the new Religious Education Directory. In the lesson observed, the use of the golden box to present a story from scripture, led to pupils having a sense of wonder and excitement. They demonstrated a developing religious vocabulary and could recognise Jesus and His friends, using the word *Disciples*. The continuous provision activities that followed were relevant and fun for the pupils.

Leaders and governors ensure that the school curriculum is a faithful expression of the *Religious Education Directory*. Religious education is given full parity with other core curriculum areas, which results in good outcomes for pupils. The subject leaders have a clear vision, and their monitoring has successfully identified where good practice and expertise can be shared. However, deeper analysis and self-challenge would result in more focused strategic actions to achieve consistently high-quality teaching and learning across the school. Leaders have developed effective questioning styles with staff, resulting in the careful scaffolding of the steps in learning for pupils. Governors are informed about religious education through their meetings, the religious education action plan, the self-evaluation document, and from the head teacher's reports. Governors carry out work scrutiny alongside leaders and have been involved with the moderation of pupils' work, the development of the tracking system, and the gathering of pupil voice. Governors comment that, 'Leadership in religious education is very strong.'

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 participate well in the experiences of prayer and liturgy provided by St Teresa's. They sing readily and joyfully, reflect in silence and join in community prayer. Under the guidance of teachers, pupils undertake ministries such as lighting the candle to signify the presence of Jesus. They read scripture and prayer passages and participate in signing the sign of peace. Older pupils are enjoying developing their skills in planning and leading prayer and liturgy for younger pupils. As a result, they recognise the ways in which scripture can help us to make sense of current events and situations. Prayer and liturgy in one class was used to welcome a new family, giving those present a sense of responsibility to care for others as Jesus taught us in the scriptures. Pupils are very proud of their school prayer, which is shared during prayer and liturgy. They have a good understanding of a variety of ways of praying that are part of the Catholic tradition. In some prayer and liturgy sessions, leaders joined with pupils in proclaiming the alleluia to announce the Gospel. Because of this, pupils understand that the Gospels are a sacred part of worship, and as such, are treated with reverence.

Prayer and liturgy are central to the life of St Teresa's and form part of routine gatherings of staff and pupils. There is a clear structure. Pupils, including the youngest children, are familiar with the routines and know what is expected of them at each stage. There is a daily pattern of prayer and a weekly list of prayer intentions in each class, so that pupils can devote their prayers for a specific person or cause. Seasonally appropriate scripture passages, based on the Sunday Gospel, are used in whole school and key stage worship, led by the head teacher. This serves as a model of good practice for staff and pupils. Therefore, pupils mirror the example of staff, showing reverence and respect as they pray and respond with sensitivity. Class teachers select scripture for class worship that is

relevant to context and need. Consequently, pupils make connections between scripture and their own lives and can articulate ways in which these experiences have led to action. Whilst there is evidence of outstanding provision of the above, in some of the classes the spiritual experiences of the pupils require further development. The school makes imaginative and creative use of spaces around school and has a permanently dedicated chapel that is cherished and regularly used by staff and pupils. St Teresa's works hard to secure a flourishing partnership with the parish and parish groups to help pupils participate more fully in the liturgy. One parent wrote, 'It is a delight to see the foundations of the faith so well established amongst pupils.'

St Teresa's policy for prayer and liturgy is well formulated and fit for purpose. Leaders and governors have planned the school calendar to provide opportunities to celebrate the Eucharist at key times in the liturgical year and at significant moments in the life of the school, for example, the Mass for year six leavers. Two classes of pupils attend Mass each week and readily take part in the liturgy. Leaders assist others to plan experiences of prayer and liturgy in response to the needs of the pupils. Alongside governors, they review the quality of and impact of prayer and liturgy as part of the school's cycle of self-evaluation. Senior leaders have identified that they need to further develop skills of pupils in leading prayer and liturgy, and are working to this end. Leaders know where the best practice exists within the school. They possess the skills to work with colleagues to secure the highest outcomes for all classes, so deepening the spiritual experiences of pupils. Leaders recognise the importance of allocating a specific budget for the development of prayer and liturgy. Consequently, they have invested in quality devotional areas around school and in resources for class worship.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Teresa's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	104807
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	3423420
Full postal address of the school	St Teresa's Catholic Primary School, Devon Street, St Helens, WA10 4HX
School phone number	01744678667
Headteacher	Rachael Brookes
Chair of Governors/Trustees	Mr P Atherton
School Website	www.st-teresa.st-helens.sch.uk
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	N/A
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Voluntary Aided School
Admissions policy	N/A
Age-range of pupils	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	16 January 2018
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

The inspection team

Fiona Brownsey
Christine Mason

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

