



# St John's Catholic Primary School

URN: 119586

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Archbishop of Liverpool

24–25 April 2024

## Summary of key findings

### Overall effectiveness

The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school

1

#### 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 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

## What the school does well

- Leaders and governors have developed a strong and harmonious team.
- Behaviour of pupils is exemplary.
- Pastoral support is highly effective.
- Spirituality is prioritised from an early age.

## What the school needs to improve

- Use creativity to enable the school's learning environment to physically reflect and celebrate the successes of the current school community.
- Further enrich the religious education curriculum through independent opportunities for creativity.
- In prayer and liturgy provide opportunities for spontaneous 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**

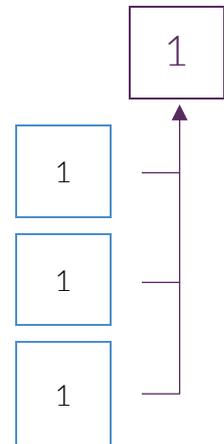
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

**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 at St John's are immensely proud to be part of this vibrant and welcoming Catholic community and this is evident as soon as you enter the school. The mission of the school to 'Live in love', is known, lived and embraced by the pupils and fully endorsed by governors, staff and parents. Pupils take great pride in the active role they play in bringing this mission to fruition. They articulate clearly that they are special, unique and loved by God and this in turn leads to them feeling happy, safe and secure. Pupils at St John's wholeheartedly take part in everything the school has to offer, valuing greatly its Catholic identity. They speak confidently about their role and make a significant contribution. When seeking to lead initiatives which serve the common good, locally, nationally and globally, pupils understand clearly that they are following the teachings of Jesus and are proud of the impact they have had. Relationships at St John's are respectful and loving and this has supported pupils in developing a clear understanding of their dignity and that of others. The behaviour of St John's pupils is exemplary.

The revised mission statement is owned, witnessed, and lived out gladly by the whole school community. The child selected values have had a significant impact on the life and mission of the school. Staff can identify what makes their school special and are proud to serve in all aspects of school life. The community of St John's prides itself in its welcome and consistently goes the extra mile to include all, particularly those from other cultures and traditions. Staff are inspirational role models, providing high levels of bespoke pastoral care to ensure pupils feel listened to, loved and safe. The school's vibrant environment effectively promotes the teachings of the Church and is of high quality. Care and attention are given to every area of the school to ensure it serves the pupils well. The religious education team are committed witnesses who lead by example and support whenever needed. The carefully planned relationships, sex, and health

education curriculum has been embraced with care and enthusiasm to ensure pupils develop a holistic and compassionate vision of the human person who can uniquely discern their vocation.

Leaders and governors enthusiastically articulate the Church's mission and are committed to the whole school community growing in faith. They recognise the paramount importance of this central mission, which enables the school to support the work of the parish and to value working in partnership. They work very successfully with parents and welcome them into school regularly to pray. Their 'Stay and Pray' sessions are greatly valued by the wider school community and are evaluated by all who lead and participate. A parent spoken to during the inspection stated, "St John's is like a family, my child has chosen her own faith and believes in God because of this school." Leaders are inspirational witnesses ensuring all members of the community are empowered to play their part in improving the lives of others and taking good care of our common home. Staff, including new members are supported with care and as a result work extremely well together. They are a joyful and harmonious team. The whole of the taught curriculum is well established, and the full breadth of curriculum provides rich opportunities for pupils to develop. There is a high level of expertise on the governing body and as a result, governors make a highly significant contribution to mission and accurate evaluation of the school. Pupil contribution is integral and woven through all aspects of school improvement.

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

### Religious education key judgement grade

#### Pupil outcomes

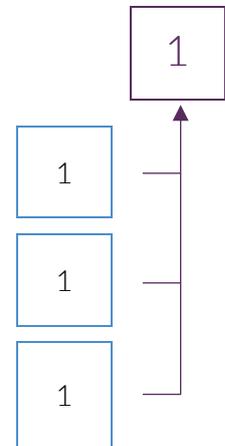
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

#### 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 at St John's have an excellent subject knowledge in religious education and achieve the best possible outcomes. They make consistently good progress in all year groups and phases, including disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and disabilities. There is a strong emphasis on the acquisition of key vocabulary across the school and as a result pupils speak confidently with high levels of religious literacy. Pupils are engaged and enjoy their lessons, recalling prior knowledge confidently, and using subject specific vocabulary. Work is of a consistently high quality and presented beautifully. Pupils reported that they take pride in their work, enjoyed their religious education and appreciate the efforts of staff to make lessons interesting. Pupils have a clear understanding of how they are progressing and can fully articulate this. Time is built in routinely for purposeful reflection and this is evident in the children's books. Pupils are highly motivated, know when they are doing well and are committed to improvement. The upward trend of attainment in line with other core subjects has been sustained over time.

Staff subject knowledge of religious education is strong. They display high levels of confidence when delivering the 'Come and See' programme. Consistently across the school, prior learning was referenced as new topics were introduced. Skilful questioning was used well to ascertain pupils' understanding. Assessment processes both internally and in the local cluster are well established and supportive. Consequently, staff are confident in the robustness of their assessments and the next steps needed to develop understanding. Staff at St John's are committed to the spiritual and moral development of each individual pupil and they expertly weave examples of how their pupils can impact upon the lives of others. Staff constantly refer to projects in which the pupils have been involved. This helps pupils to reflect upon how they have supported other people and communities. All staff are deeply committed to delivering an

outstanding curriculum and communicate this clearly to pupils. Planning reflects precise knowledge of individual pupils and lessons consolidate and extend knowledge. As a result of pupils learn effectively and use what they have learned in other contexts. The support of additional adults is targeted appropriately to ensure all pupils including those with differing needs access high quality adapted learning.

The religious education team and experienced governing body ensure the curriculum is a creative and faithful expression of the Religious Education Directory. It has full parity with other core subjects. This parity is evident in timetabling, marking, staffing and resourcing. Governors monitor the delivery and impact of religious education carefully and effectively. They provide the correct level of support and challenge to continually improve the school and ensure staff receive the training they need. The combination of governor visits to speak with the children, their engagement in book scrutiny and their review of reports to governors all ensure that monitoring is highly effective. Leaders and governors are deeply committed to enriching the lives of their pupils and have a clear pathway for improvement. The subject leads for religious education are models of outstanding practice and willingly share this expertise for the good of the school and the cluster. Monitoring and evaluation systems are robust, securing a well-designed curriculum that enriches the spiritual lives of the pupils. They accurately evaluate the school's provision. Challenge and regular review are embedded within the school year.

## 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

Prayer and liturgy at St John's is carefully planned and inclusive. It is age appropriate across the school, giving pupils a wide variety of opportunities to grow in faith and to reflect upon how they can live out Jesus' mission. Pupils are invited to listen to carefully selected passages of scripture, to reflect upon it and to respond in a variety of ways including traditional prayers which are taught over time. The school's values are a regular source of inspiration for prayer. This leads to pupils in upper key stage two being able to regularly draw upon a wealth of traditional and modern prayers when creating, leading and evaluating worship. There is a well-established rhythm and pattern of prayer and worship that the school community anticipates and appreciates. Pupils enthusiastically participate, they pray reverently and sing joyfully. Scripture is chosen well and proclaimed with passion. Pupils articulate ways in which experiences of prayer have shaped them as Christians. The staff who support pupils across the school are highly skilled in bringing the best out in their worship leaders. Engagement in prayer and liturgy observed during the inspection demonstrated careful thought, active listening, prayerful silence and respect for others.

Prayer and liturgy is central to the life of the school and is given the highest priority. Staff are highly skilled in modelling and demonstrating with expertise how to carefully construct sessions which both support and encourage all those who take part. The liturgical year is mapped out and reflects the prayer life of the Church. Pupil input is encouraged and supported. Scripture has been selected to reflect the season, school values and natural interests of the pupils. Live music is used well, and attention has been given to ensuring that over time pupils build up a growing number of hymns they can refer to and treasure in later life. All staff, including senior leaders are inspiring witnesses. Prayer and worship is enhanced by the nurturing relationships of the

staff. The school has created a dedicated prayer space and has supported the pupils in creating their own. Focus for worship tables in classrooms are owned by the pupils and cherished. Staff have systematically planned opportunities to pray with families and this is greatly appreciated by parents and carers. Parish links are sustained and sincere.

The prayer and liturgy policy is accessible, useful and regularly reviewed by staff and pupils. It provides worship leaders at all levels with a clear scaffold from which to plan and deliver reverent acts of worship. Leaders have a clear vision on how to extend the skill of pupils further and are ambitious in upskilling pupils from a younger age. The success of this strategy is evidenced by the increasing ease and confidence with which pupils participate in prayer experiences as they move through the school. The school's calendar clearly identifies the liturgical year, holy days of obligation and feast days. It provides opportunities for the sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist to be celebrated by the pupils and their families. Leaders fully understand the wide range of ways in which to pray and they use this knowledge to shape creative experiences for the whole school community. Resources for prayer and liturgy are of a high quality. The strategic provision in the school budget is generous and reflects the commitment leaders and governors have in sustaining high quality prayer experiences for their school community. Leaders and governors at St John's ensure prayer and liturgy self-evaluation is embedded across the school.

## Information about the school

Full name of school	St John's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	119586
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8883610
Full postal address of the school	St John's Catholic Primary School, Flamstead, Birch Green, Skelmersdale, WN8 6PF
School phone number	01695721323
Headteacher	Angela Aspinwall-Livesey
Chair of Governors	Peter O'Dowd
School Website	<a href="http://www.st-johnsrc.com">www.st-johnsrc.com</a>
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	2-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	22 <sup>nd</sup> November 2017
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

## The inspection team

Julia Ashton  
Matt White

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