

# St Patrick's Catholic Primary School

URN: 122045

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Northampton

21–22 March 2024

## Summary of key findings

### Overall effectiveness

The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school

2

#### 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

2

#### 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

## What the school does well

- The school's mission statement: 'Christ be with me, and Christ be within me', is lived out in practice by the whole community, thereby having a profound impact on the children who understand the importance of following the teaching and example of Jesus.
- This is a welcoming and inclusive school where staff are excellent role models and value the unique nature of each child, made in the image of God.
- The quality of relationships in the school is very strong, resulting in excellent behaviour and high levels of engagement and enjoyment.
- The religious education lead is highly regarded for her expertise, passion for religious education and readiness to support staff.

- Leaders have highly successful strategies for engaging with parents/carers, supporting them as the first educators of their children, to the benefit of their pupils.

### What the school needs to improve

- Self-evaluation activities in religious education should be made more effective by a more rigorous approach to data analysis and giving monitoring feedback that challenges staff to improve their practice.
- Teachers need to personalise lesson planning to incorporate more creative teaching strategies, improve questioning and challenge the more able.
- Leaders should take a strategic view to the further development of Prayer and Liturgy, considering the creative and artistic skills required to enhance experiences for pupils and use of dedicated prayer spaces.

## 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

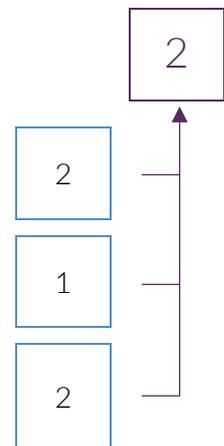
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

#### 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 Patrick's Primary live and breathe the mission of their school. The mission statement: 'Christ be with me, and Christ be within me', which is integrated into vibrant displays all around the building, has a profound impact on the children. They clearly understand the importance of following the teaching and example of Jesus and demonstrate this in the quality of their relationships and the way they treat others. Pupils with special educational needs frequently do not need to use the supportive resources provided, such as ear defenders, because of the secure environments created by well behaved pupils in their classrooms. Regardless of age, ability, and background, all are extremely proud of their school's distinctive ethos and are inspired to play an active role in activities that enhance the Catholic life of their community. They are particularly keen to take on responsibilities such as becoming a Faith Friend, School Councillor or Eco Warrior so that they can support their local community but as yet they are unable to articulate how these roles are linked to Catholic Social Teaching and what they are taught in Religious Education.

This is an inclusive school where staff value the unique nature of each child, made in the image of God, and provide the highest possible level of pastoral care. Actions, such as providing free uniform and First Holy Communion dresses for those struggling financially, ensure vulnerable children do not experience obvious signs of disadvantage. Staff are excellent role models and consistently bear witness to their mission in educating the whole person. They go the extra mile in exhibiting a culture of welcome and support. Charitable activities are an integral part of school life and projects such as the Food Bank and Christmas Project, ensure families in need are supported and sustained. One pupil reported that teachers recognise when they are upset or angry and help them: '... everyday is nice. I'm surrounded by nice people and teachers who support me'. This results in pupils feeling happy and secure and knowing that they are loved. All staff engage pupils regularly in activities that enhance spiritual and moral development but the lack of a larger chaplaincy team where more staff take on this vocation formally, hampers the development of a more extensive and creative programme of activities. Relationship and health

education meets diocesan and statutory requirements and pupils' books indicate that they can articulate what they have learned.

Leaders and governors embrace the values of the Gospel and the Church's role in education. It drives all decisions on curriculum, resourcing, and the inclusive nature of the school. The whole community expresses extremely high levels of satisfaction with leadership. All staff report that leaders treat them with respect and that they enjoy working in the school. There is very successful engagement with parents using Class Dojo to inform them about key liturgical celebrations, charitable activities, and the achievements of their children. All parents have signed up to this and report feeling happy that they are fully informed about events in school. Parents say that the school is a joyful community where their children are happy, and they are supported as first educators of their children: 'Our kids absolutely love being part of St Patrick's'. Governors are strongly motivated to support and strengthen the mission of the school but regular monitoring visits and involvement in self evaluation are hampered by low numbers. Pupils' views are sought regularly to evaluate their experiences but overall, the school's self evaluation lacks the precision required to bring about well targeted actions such as professional development.

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

### Religious education key judgement grade

**Pupil outcomes**

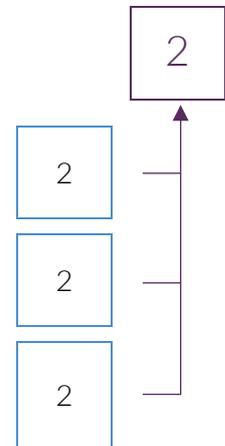
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

**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



St Patrick's follow the 'Come and See' scheme of work in all year groups except for the Early Years Foundation Stage where children are enjoying resources for the new *Religious Education Directory*. All learning is appropriately sequenced and ensures pupils gain secure knowledge, understanding and skills. Pupils, including nursery age children, demonstrate a good ability to recall key knowledge from previous lessons but are less sure about topics taught in the previous term or year groups. Pupils are very eager to learn and make good progress in developing religious literacy, helped by the display of key words in all lessons. This helps them to ask questions, express opinions articulately and think ethically and morally. Pupils are proud of their work in books which is well presented and demonstrates that they can write at length and work well independently when given the opportunity to do so. However, this is inconsistent. In some classes there is over reliance on structured work sheets for all, limiting the ability of the more able to develop their own ideas and understanding. Children with special educational needs are very well supported by additional adults who are well deployed and are a major strength of the school but challenge for more able pupils is less effective. Pupils enjoy religious education lessons and behaviour is excellent, but they say they would enjoy lessons more if there were more active and creative teaching strategies employed.

Staff have good subject knowledge and a strong commitment to the importance of religious education underpinning the whole curriculum. Good quality resources are used in most lessons to enhance learning but planning and questioning lacks the personalisation needed to meet the needs of all pupils. Lessons start with a lengthy recap session which is usually a voluntary, question-answer session, and allows some pupils to remain passive. It also limits time for new learning and the 'Dive Deeper' challenge becomes an extension activity which even the most able pupils struggle to give quality time to. Staff do not routinely test or quiz pupils restricting

their ability to gain feedback on individual progress and the children's ability to strengthen recall of previous years' learning. In some lessons, staff use questioning well to identify understanding, and follow up with greater challenge or to re-frame explanations when necessary but this is inconsistent. The celebration of pupils' efforts in learning is successful in securing good levels of enthusiasm and motivation but feedback only includes correction of misconceptions, grammar, and acknowledgement of meeting the learning objective or not. It does not challenge pupils to do better or outline next steps in learning.

Religious education is valued as a core subject with leaders giving clear priority to its resourcing and prominence in the curriculum. The subject lead is highly regarded for her expertise, passion for religious education and readiness to support staff. In recent years, access to diocesan support, theological professional development and external moderation has been restricted. Staff are committed to teaching religious education to the best of their ability and ask the lead for support to secure the subject knowledge required but more collaboration outside of the school itself is desirable. The curriculum is monitored regularly by leaders including governors, through activities such as book scrutiny, learning walks and pupil voice. However, follow-up actions identified are few and lack the rigor and challenge to move staff practice on to the next level. Self-evaluation activities and outcomes are shared with governors and link clearly to priorities for action in the School Improvement Plan, but a more precise use of data analysis is needed to confirm accuracy and consistency.

## 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 respond reverently and enthusiastically in all experiences of prayer and liturgy. They have a good understanding of the different ways in which they can pray, and most pupils can describe how the liturgical year influences the cycle of prayers. Pupils say that they are proud of their school and their faith and how it binds them together as a community. One Year 3 pupil was happy and confident to tell his peers that he loved religious education and had never missed Sunday Mass in his life. This commitment, knowledge and understanding has been established by an embedded routine of prayer and liturgy including Gospel assemblies, Masses for feast days, celebration assemblies and 'Sing and Rejoice'. Pupils are keen to take on the role of a Faith Friend, leading liturgies and helping with planning and preparation for occasions such as Harvest Festival. There are some missed opportunities however in religious education lessons and prayers to develop pupils' ability to reflect in silence and to articulate how their faith and prayers can link to positive actions that improve their local and global community.

Staff and parents talk enthusiastically about prayer and liturgy and its positive impact on the pupils' spiritual and moral development. They are particularly proud of the work of the school in sacramental preparation. One parent wrote: '... We are all proud to be part of such a phenomenal school. My son is very much looking forward to receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation and has been supported in this journey by the school and close links with the parish. I could not wish for a better school for my child and am sure he will take all the lessons learned on to his future education and life'. Prayer spaces across the school are well cared for and pupils treat them with due respect. Collective worship in classrooms benefits from quality resources and planning provided by the Ten:Ten programme. Pupils are supported by relevant passages of scripture, use of reflective music and religious artefacts. However, staff would benefit from training on how to establish an appropriate atmosphere in their classroom so that prayer tables are not lost amid busy classroom displays or resources and pupils are not hurried through prayers with moments of reflection brought to an abrupt ending.

The headteacher and chaplaincy lead are proactive members of their parishes and wish to further strengthen links between school and parish. There is a strong link between the school and the St Vincent de Paul Society, and the Parish Priest is keen to support staff in further developing chaplaincy provision, faith formation and enhancing the role of Faith Friends. Leaders are skilled at communicating the importance of prayer and liturgy and successful in generating enthusiasm in the community they serve. Governors ensure there is a planned calendar outlining key events in the liturgical year and dates for celebration. The allocation of resources to prayer and liturgy is a clear priority but development of a dedicated prayer room in school has been overlooked despite the space to do so. This would enhance the prayer life of pupils and staff. Governors monitor the impact of prayer and liturgy on the school community. Staff report that they receive induction training that includes support for their ability to participate in and contribute to the prayer life provision in their school, and that there is ongoing support from leaders. Many pupils are inspired to take on active roles in various liturgies and have daily opportunities to lead these occasions.

## Information about the school

Full name of school	St Patrick's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	122045
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	9403406
Full postal address of the school	St Patrick's Catholic Primary School, Patrick Road, Corby, NN18 9NT
School phone number	01536744447
Headteacher	Louise Blair
Chair of Governors	Chris Atkin
School Website	<a href="http://www.stpatricksprimaryschool.com">http://www.stpatricksprimaryschool.com</a>
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	November 2017
Previous denominational inspection grade	2

## The inspection team

Jane Crow

Sinead Killian

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