

Our Lady of the Angels Catholic Primary School, Cwmbran.

URN: 401456

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Archbishop of Cardiff

13–14 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

Religious education (p.5)

The quality of curriculum religious education

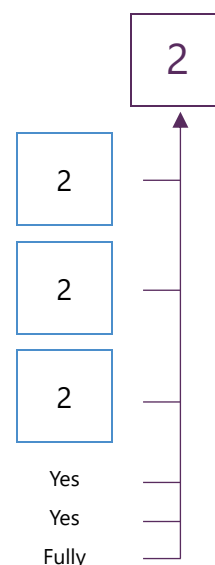
Collective worship (p.7)

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

- Our Lady of the Angels is a very strong and inclusive Catholic school community.
- Relationships are very strong, both within the school and between the school and the parish.
- Leaders and governors are fully committed to their vocation. The curriculum leader for religious education works with admirable zeal in her role and the work of the parish priest is very impressive and impactful.
- The behaviour of pupils is consistently very good, and they are eager to learn.

What the school needs to improve

- Work to address the variability evident in the quality of teaching and to ensure that assessment for learning practice has a positive impact in terms of raising standards.
- Develop monitoring, evaluating and reviewing practice to ensure that it has a positive impact on standards in all three key judgement areas.
- Develop the quality of prayer and liturgy across the school to ensure that a sense of awe and wonder is grown in a manner that allows pupils to have regular opportunities to encounter God, in a deep way, in their prayer lives.

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

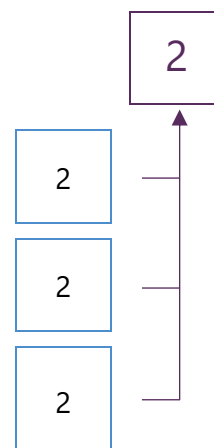
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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



The children at Our Lady of the Angels are proud to be pupils at the school. They realise that they are an important part of the very strong Catholic community that has been developed. This is a significant strength of the school. They are happy in school (parents confirmed this in their questionnaires; 88% of them reporting that their child was happy in school). Pupils take part appropriately in the Catholic life of the school. They are involved in charitable works aimed at supporting local homeless people, the town's foodbank and the parish's St Vincent de Paul Society. These works illustrate that there is an understanding in place of the demands of the social teaching of the Church at the domestic scale. Pupils also contribute to the school's sense of community by, for example, taking part enthusiastically in the 'Guardian Angels' system, in which Year 6 pupils support children in the early years. This can involve, for example, accompanying the younger children to Mass to support them and to help them learn about the expectations involved. The behaviour of nearly all pupils is very good. They show respect for one another, for staff and for visitors (whom they welcome warmly). Pupils value the chaplaincy work of the parish priest highly; this is a significant strength of the school.

The school's mission statement is a clear expression of its charism; the vision statement that accompanies it was being revised at the time of inspection by governors, staff and pupils. Staff work hard to put these statements into practice in the day-to-day life of the school. Consequently, relationships within the community are strong and a very welcoming and inclusive culture is in place. Staff provide positive role models for pupils. The care they show for them bears witness to the school's Catholic life and mission. The quality of pastoral care is high. Leaders have established a 'Den' area, which provides out-of-class support for vulnerable pupils who require provision beyond that possible in full mainstream classrooms. Good use has been made of staff specialisms in this area, which allows for all pupils' needs to be well catered for within the school. It is immediately clear when entering the building that this is a Catholic school; a wide range of appropriate Catholic images adorn entrance

hallways, corridors and the hall. The school's provision for relationships and sex education fully complies with diocesan expectations.

Leaders and governors are fully committed to their roles as the guardians of the Catholic life and mission of the school. They respond positively to the bishop's vision for the diocese. Leaders work well in partnership with the diocese and with partner Catholic schools. Recently, this has involved identifying the best way forward for the school to implement the new *Religious Education Directory*. The way leaders and governors work closely with the parish is very impressive; this is reflected in regular provision of the Sacraments through the celebration of Mass and Reconciliation, as well as in a range of social events. The parish priest is a very active, engaged and knowledgeable governor. His work is rightly acknowledged and highly valued by the school community. The chair of governors is also very active and visible in school life and overall governors know the school well. The head teacher and curriculum leader for religious education are very committed to the development of the school's Catholic life. However, a culture of regular monitoring, evaluating and reviewing in this area is not well developed. Improvements in this area would allow leaders to have a clear notion of how best to make further improvements. The school's self-evaluation in this field is rather descriptive in nature and its judgement about its quality is not entirely accurate.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

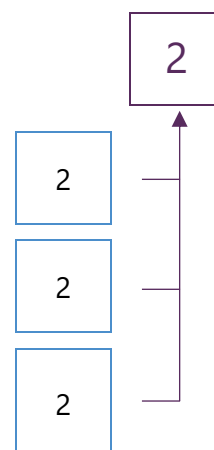
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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



Overall, pupils make appropriate progress in religious education as they move through the school. Learners are given reasonable opportunities to reflect during their work and to think ethically. Many are beginning to develop an age-appropriate understanding of Catholic social teaching; pupils in Year 3, for example, have studied the issue of dignity for all workers effectively. Many pupils are able to speak about their learning well. Children, for example, spoke to inspectors about their recent visit to a local mosque, recalling the main points of the visit appropriately. In general, pupils concentrate well during their lessons. They work well independently in the sense that they do not require constant attention, but opportunities to produce independent, individual outcomes are limited. Academic standards are generally good, and learning is well presented, however, some variability is evident. Some impressive extended writing is in place by the time pupils reach Year 6. They have written well to describe the events of Pentecost, for example. However, to raise standards further, the skills of explanation and discussion need to be developed. A good deal of prayer writing is done well. Pupils in Year 1, for example, produced very good Lenten prayers independently. Children report that they enjoy their lessons, but most do not have a clear idea of what they need to work on next in order to improve their learning.

There is some variability evident in the quality of teaching across the school. This ranges from examples of teaching with elements of excellence in it to others that are not better than adequate, with some clear areas for development. Overall, though, teaching is good. In the best teaching observed, teachers' subject knowledge was impressive, skilled reference was made to prior learning, teacher-pupil relationships were particularly strong, and lessons progressed at a good pace. In lessons with significant weaknesses, the main area for improvement is in relation to the level of challenge and ambition in evidence. In general, teachers' questioning skills are adequate. However, they tend to lack probing in order to identify the depth of pupils' understanding. At times, this prevents teachers from

being able to adapt planned learning experiences as lessons progress. The planning of learning is good and appropriate. Some good assessment for learning practice is in place across the school. This contributes well to allowing pupils and teachers to realise the quality of their current learning. However, it does not consistently result in pupils knowing how to improve their learning. Religious education lessons are clearly valued by staff and attainment is at least on a par with that in English lessons.

Leaders are currently working well to implement the new directory across the school. To achieve this, they are working in partnership with the diocese and with partner cluster schools. Leaders take advantage of professional development opportunities provided by the diocese. The subject leader for religious education is very committed to her role and she exhibits strong determination to work for the improvement of pupils. She has a good level of expertise and has the potential to be able to lead colleagues in order to deal with the variability in teaching standards referred to above. Leaders ensure that short-term planning of the curriculum is in place. This broadly meets the needs of learners; however, levels of challenge and ambition are not consistently high. Monitoring, evaluating and reviewing (MER) work results in leaders being able to inform governors about standards well, and some governors take an active role in this process. This work is good: governors show a determination to help in a practical way with this work and the contributions made by the parish priest and the chair of governors are impressive. However, assessment data is not used effectively enough to accurately identify rates of pupil progress from year to year. Leaders do not make enough use of their diligent work to gather this data, which could support future improvement by effectively triangulating the outcomes of MER to result in action planning and professional development. Leaders' self-evaluation work in this area is generally accurate but it tends to be descriptive in nature; it lacks thorough analysis that could lead to ambitious targets for growth being identified.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

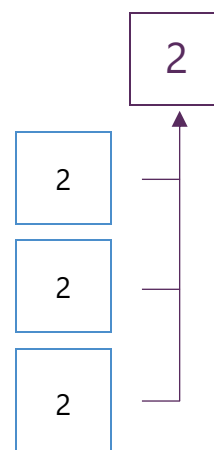
How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

Provision

The quality of collective worship provided by the school

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for collective worship



Collective worship at Our Lady of the Angels is an integral part of school life. It underpins a sense of family, community and belonging. Pupils' participation in and response to the school's provision of collective worship is good. During these times in the inspection, pupils gathered with reverence, listened intently and offered heartfelt responses. This was especially illustrated in the whole school worship with the theme 'Where God Grows'. In addition to whole school worship, classes have the opportunity to plan collective worship. This was well illustrated by the Year 3 class-led worship, planned by pupils, which had a clear purpose, message, and direction, reflecting on where they see God in their everyday lives. Pupils are clearly proud to plan and share their prayer experiences with one another and prayer times contribute to the Catholic ethos of the school. *Gweddiwn*, used by pupils to plan a four-part session including a gather, Word, response and mission, is well established and highly valued by children. They take on roles willingly and are confident in the delivery and use of these resources. For example, older pupils leading Prayer Club supported younger pupils in reflecting upon the Sacred Heart of Jesus during lunchtime. There is a good standard of Welsh language used in prayer, for example, the sign of the cross and responses, and the pupils prayed the 'Our Father' and 'Hail Mary' using sign language very well.

Acts of worship take place regularly, they are meaningful and age appropriate. They follow the cycle of the liturgical year and staff work very well with the local parish to help pupils participate in liturgy. This happens through class Masses in school and a regular Mass in the parish, for example, to celebrate the Feast of Pentecost. Themes from the liturgies are often reinforced in lessons, ensuring that all pupils understand them and can apply them to their daily lives. Leaders and school staff facilitate preparation for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Holy Communion in conjunction with the parish. All members of the community speak positively about worship opportunities, for example being invited to assemblies and Mass, and how well they reflect the Catholic character of the school. Pupils have daily opportunities to meditate using guided meditation, reflective music and questioning. They enjoy meditating and were able to articulate how it helps them to feel relaxed

and calm. However, opportunities for pupils to participate in Christian Meditation specifically are less developed. Furthermore, prayer and liturgy could be enriched to ensure a sense of awe and wonder is present in their opportunities to encounter God.

The work of leaders and governors has resulted in the quality of collective worship, overall, being good. Leaders have enhanced collective worship provision with areas such as the prayer room and prayer garden. The school's environment demonstrates its Catholic ethos through reflective displays and prominently featured Pupil Profile Virtues. Every classroom includes a focal point for prayer, reflecting the liturgical year or the curriculum, which includes pupil responses and individual prayers. However, some prayer areas need to be more attractive and engaging. Developing facilities like the Prayer Room is a priority as is aiming to engage parents in the school's prayer life. Staff have opportunities for spiritual development, including weekly prayer gatherings and a recent staff training day of prayer and spiritual reflection, which allowed staff the opportunity to pause and reflect on their own spirituality and how they can support pupils in their faith journeys. The Travelling Crib initiative links home and school, involving families in their children's spiritual growth. However, leaders' work in monitoring and evaluating the provision for collective worship is underdeveloped.

Information about the school

Full name of school	Our Lady of the Angels Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	401456
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	6783321
Full postal address of the school	Our Lady of the Angels Catholic Primary School, Victoria Street, Cwmbran, Torfaen, NP44 3JR
School phone number	01633484673
Headteacher	Ceri Prosser
Chair of Governors	Patricia Landers
School Website	www.ourladystorfaen.co.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	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	23 rd - 24 th June 2014
Previous denominational inspection grade	Good

The inspection team:

Lead Inspector - Mr Lyndon Watkins

Team Inspector - Mrs Laura Taylor

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