

# St Bernadette Catholic Junior School

URN: 100628

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Archbishop of Southwark

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

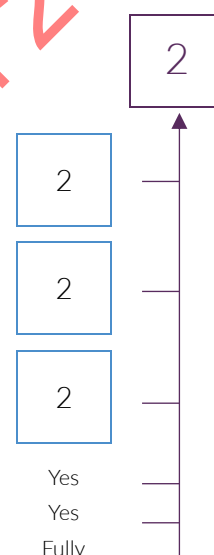
#### Collective worship (p.7)

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

- Leaders, governors and staff provide the highest level of pastoral care for all pupils and there is a strong commitment to the most vulnerable.
- There is a thriving and effective partnership between the local parish and the school.
- Parents are incredibly supportive and value the Catholic character of the school.
- Pupils are very happy to be part of their school and they are wonderful role models. Their behaviour is excellent and they show great care and consideration for each other.
- Prayer is an integral part of the school day. Pupils enjoy participating in saying their prayers and developing their spirituality and relationship with God.

## What the school needs to improve

- Implement, at a school level, a rigorous system of monitoring and self-evaluation that enhances all stakeholders' understanding of the principles of Catholic social teaching.
- Ensure that learning opportunities in religious education offer challenge through effective self-evaluation, questioning and activities allowing pupils to show a greater depth of knowledge and understanding.
- Provide a wider range of opportunities, staff training and self-evaluation for prayer and liturgy so that all pupils can independently plan, lead and evaluate with confidence.

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## 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

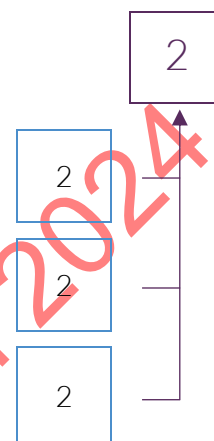
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

#### 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 are very proud to be part of St Bernadette's community and they play an active part in the life of the school. They can explain how Jesus guides them by being kind and helpful to each other. The mission statement of the school is clearly visible to all and it underpins the many relationships in the school. Pupils clearly understand that they are valued and use the mission statement, 'We Learn, We Play, We Care, We Pray' as a daily reminder of how they should act as of followers of Jesus. During assemblies, pupils congratulate their peers when receiving awards for putting their mission statement into action. They know that they are working to develop the core values of the school. Pupils actively support a variety of charities including Ace of Clubs and Cafod and they recognise the impact this makes to the lives of others. They enjoy the wide variety of opportunities offered to them and relish the responsibilities of being able to serve the school as chaplains and school counsellors. However, pupils have limited understanding of how their actions link to Catholic social teaching and how they can care for our common home. Behaviour around the school and in class is exemplary.

There is an inclusive welcoming Catholic culture at St Bernadette. Staff do embrace the mission statement, which is rooted in Gospel values. This mission is lived out by all on a daily basis. Christ is at the heart of this community and there is a powerful purpose that runs through the school at all levels. Staff are dedicated and considerate role models who know their pupils well and care for them. There is a strong commitment to the most vulnerable; for example, pastoral care is provided for those with additional needs. Staff feel well supported by leaders and pupils are happy and confident in their interactions with adults. The vibrant school environment reflects the mission of the school with displays relevant to key school saints and the liturgical year, as well as the celebration of pupils' work. The chaplaincy provision offered enables pupils and staff to develop a sense of spirituality. The parish priest commented that this was a devotional rich school. The provision for R(S)HE meets the statutory and diocesan requirements. It is fully rooted in the teaching of the church and has been shared with stakeholders. The curriculum is adapted to meet the needs of pupils, where necessary. The subject leader is currently considering applying for the Oscar Romero Award and is investigating training opportunities.

Leaders and governors are able to articulate the church's mission in education. They support and respond well to diocesan policies and have accessed training opportunities. St Bernadette works closely with other Catholic schools in the diocese and the subject leader organises meetings, and she greatly values the opportunity this provides. There is a flourishing partnership between the parish and the school. This is evident from school Masses and other liturgical celebrations. The parish priest is a regular visitor to the school and the pupils know him and greet him with enthusiasm. The school liaised with the parish to support the training of altar servers. The school ensures that parents feel most welcome and they strive to communicate with them effectively and regularly. They feel welcomed in to times of prayer and other school events. Any issues or concerns are swiftly dealt with. The school seeks to support families in any way they can. One parent commented that "the school has a family feel, not just a number on roll". Governors are frequent and keen visitors to the school. They know the school extremely well and they effectively challenge school leaders. School leaders do monitor the Catholic life and mission of the school, however, there is a need to ensure that leaders as well as pupils are regularly part of the self-evaluation processes, and this will lead to planned improvements. The subject leader provides staff training and there is an effective induction programme in place for those who are new to the school and new to Catholic education.

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

### Religious education key judgement grade

#### Pupil outcomes

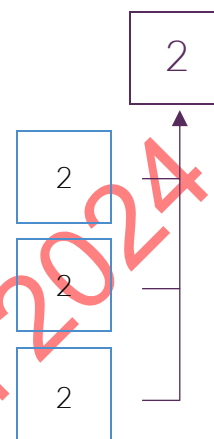
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

#### 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 Bernadette enjoy religious education and are developing their knowledge, skills and understanding in accordance with the learning required by the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*. Pupils readily see the links of religious education to their daily lives. Their work is generally well represented, and books reflect a range of activities to support learning, some of which are creative and individual. Most pupils make good progress in knowing more and remembering more and there is a focus on key vocabulary which pupils are expected to use accurately. Pupils were very knowledgeable about the importance of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Pupils with additional needs, and those who are disadvantaged, are supported with great care to achieve their best. The leaders of the school should focus on ensuring that all pupils are challenged to think more deeply, especially for those pupils with high prior attainment. All pupils are attentive, show exemplary behaviour in lessons, and demonstrate their ability to work independently. Pupils understand how well they are achieving, so leaders should focus on enabling pupils to evaluate what they need to do to progress further.

All teachers demonstrate a commitment to the values of religious education and are well supported by leaders to develop their skills and knowledge. The majority of teachers are confident and have a good knowledge of how pupils learn. Teachers' planning follows the diocesan strategy and is usually informed by assessment and monitoring. Generally, pupils understand how well they are doing in religious education and could explain how teacher feedback supports their understanding. Support staff are effectively deployed and have a positive impact on enabling pupils to access the curriculum. Teachers ask a range of good questions during lessons and so the school's leaders should build on this by enabling pupils to deepen their knowledge through more opportunities for dialogue between peers during lessons. Most teachers assess pupils' learning effectively, providing feedback, which enables pupils to deepen their knowledge. Leaders should adopt a more consistent approach to this to ensure that all pupils make more rapid progress. There is a clear understanding from all staff members of the impact that religious education has upon pupils' spiritual and moral development, so teachers should focus on reflection time for pupils during lessons. Good quality resources are used to support pupils' learning.

Religious education has full parity with other curriculum areas and is faithful expression of the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*. This is reflected in the focus upon resourcing, timetabling, budgeting and staffing, led by leaders and governors. The curriculum is planned in tandem with the liturgical year, enabling pupils to access and progress through the subject content. Many tasks completed by pupils are a variety of written tasks and where creative activities are planned for; pupils work is enlivened and offers challenge. The subject leader is passionate about the delivery of religious education. She provides support to staff throughout the year and when requested. She regularly attends training that is then disseminated to staff. She completed monitoring with the parish priest who is the link governor. Staff members appreciate the care that the school's leaders give in inducting and supporting new and existing staff and this support enables teachers to strengthen their impact upon the outcomes of pupils. They should also place more emphasis upon monitoring and evaluating standards with greater rigour and with increased self-challenge so that all pupils make more rapid and sustained progress.

## Collective worship

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

### Collective worship key judgement grade

#### Pupil outcomes

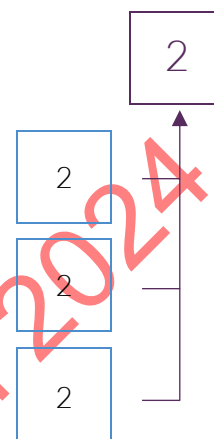
How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

#### 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



Pupils show reverence and actively participate in liturgies, joining in with responses, and there is great joy when they sing and sign many hymns. They are familiar with, and understand why prayer is so important to them. Pupils enjoy opportunities to pray traditional prayers and can often create reflective prayers for themselves, for their own needs, as well as for others. In class prayer sessions, most pupils are engaged and listen attentively to scripture. Pupils could talk about the liturgical year and the Masses that they have celebrated and they recognise how scripture shapes their lives and how this may lead to action. They could explain important feasts and celebrations including that of St Bernadette. One pupil described that when they pray they become closer to God and feel His presence. Another pupil stated that they can share their personal feelings and it helps them live their lives successfully. Pupil chaplains welcome the opportunity to prepare prayer and liturgy with the subject leader and they take these responsibilities seriously. However, not all pupils are consistently or successfully planning, leading and evaluating prayer and liturgy.

The centrality of prayer and liturgy is evident throughout the school and it is an integral part of daily life. They begin each morning with the school creed and there are other set prayers that are timed throughout the day. The scripture that is used in worship is well selected and seasonally relevant. Pupils enjoy celebrating and preparing for events throughout the year. Staff appreciate the opportunity to pray regularly, they are models of good practice in leading prayer and they have a growing knowledge of the liturgical norms of the church. Staff skills now need to be developed to enable them to empower pupils to independently shape and evaluate prayer and liturgy. Focal areas in classrooms are given the highest priority, they are well cared for and support pupils to develop their prayer experiences. The school ensures that these areas are well cared for. The pupil chaplaincy group organise and lead a monthly prayer club that is always well attended. Through the class prayer books, which are sent home, families are invited to share in the prayer life of the school. They are encouraged to write prayers in their home languages.

Leaders and governors have a wealth of knowledge regarding prayer and liturgy. They play an active role in the prayer life of the school. Leaders and governors recognise the importance of prayer and liturgy and it is well resourced. There is a detailed timetable of planned events to celebrate the Eucharist, holy days of obligation and other significant days. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is offered throughout the school year. Pupils were able to talk about significant services including Harvest and Ash Wednesday. Leaders and governors have made sure that the school maintains its commitment to the fullness of Catholic worship, whilst ensuring that all faiths still feel included and valued. The school's collective worship policy is a useful document, which is accessible and available to all staff. Staff to support them when planning for liturgies should revisit this policy. Leaders now need to consider appropriate staff professional development so that they are well trained and understand the expectations around how pupils plan, lead and evaluate prayer and liturgy experiences. Leaders also need to ensure that self-evaluation is more systematic and includes the views of pupils to ensure improved outcomes.

Date Published: 15th March 2024



## Information about the school

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| Full name of school                            | St Bernadette Catholic Junior School   |
| School unique reference number (URN)           | 100628   |
| School DfE Number (LAESTAB)                    | 2085200  |
| Full postal address of the school              | St Bernadette Catholic Junior School, 1 - 4 Atkins Road,<br>Clapham Park, London, SW12 0AB |
| School phone number                            | 02086732061  |
| Headteacher                                    | Ewa Ostryska   |
| Chair of Governors                             | Meabh Quoirin  |
| School Website                                 | <a href="http://www.fedstbb.org.uk">www.fedstbb.org.uk</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                            | 7-11   |
| Gender of pupils                               | Mixed  |
| Date of last denominational inspection         | 2 <sup>nd</sup> March 2017   |
| Previous denominational inspection grade       | Outstanding  |

## The inspection team

Miss Isabel Quinn  
Mr David Hennessey

Lead  
Team

## Key to grade judgements

| Grade    | England              | Wales  |
|----------|----------------------|--|
| <b>1</b> | Outstanding          | Excellent  |
| <b>2</b> | Good                 | Good   |
| <b>3</b> | Requires improvement | Adequate and requires improvement                |
| <b>4</b> | Inadequate           | Unsatisfactory and in need of urgent improvement |