

Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Primary School, Dalton-in-Furness

URN: 149513

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Lancaster

–03 May 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

- Our Lady of the Rosary provides a very positive, calm learning environment resulting in excellent relationships between staff and pupils.
- This is a highly inclusive school which offers an outstanding level of care to vulnerable pupils and families including those with special educational needs, this being a central feature to the strong sense of family and community. The school has responded well to the changing needs of the community post covid pandemic.
- Links with the parish have been strengthened and are appreciated in the school and parish communities.

- Governors and leaders are ambitious for the school and committed to collaborative ways of working to improve outcomes for pupils, they have prioritised professional development to support staff with the changes to curriculum.
- Parents and pupils are rightly proud of their school and value the support given to them.

What the school needs to improve

- Revisit the school mission statement to reflect the unique identity of the school.
- Ensure consistency in the delivery of religious education across the whole school with the development of the new curriculum and its increased expectations.
- Continue with planned progression for the formation of pupils in line with the new Prayer and Liturgy Directory.

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

1

Provision

The quality of provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school

1

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school

1

1

Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Primary School is a beacon of love, joy, calmness, and hope. It is very strong in the pastoral care of its community and is led well by a dedicated head teacher who is supported by governors and a staff team that share in the Church's mission in education. The pupils are happy, confident and feel secure in school. They are well behaved and understand that forgiveness is at the heart of their school rules. Pupils can clearly express that they are valued and cared for as unique persons and show a deep self-respect and great consideration for others. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of other faiths and cultures has been nurtured since the last inspection. Everyone is welcomed in a spirit of generous hospitality, especially those new to the area and the vulnerable. The children put their faith in action through their enthusiasm by fundraising for charities, both locally and globally, including the local homeless shelter, St Mary's hospice and Cafod. The mini-vinnies group recently organised a whole school fundraising event to benefit schools in Rwanda, responding to the demands of Catholic social teaching.

Catholic life and mission provision is outstanding because there is a lived sense of community in the quality of the relationships observed within the school and playground. Gospel values and school motto 'Lovingly we learn in harmony' is lived out in classrooms, in the playground and through daily interactions with each other. However, the mission statement should be revisited so it is lived out and understood by everyone in school. Staff enthusiastically participate in, and contribute to, all activities which reflect the life and mission of the school and the service it offers the community. They spoke with sincerity about how everyone was welcome. The calm, safe school environment effectively bears witness to the Catholic mission in education. Pastoral care is excellent, and staff provide the highest levels of pastoral care for

pupils and their families through nurture and support. This was challenging during the recent pandemic and staff continue to respond well to the changing needs of families in terms of mental health and wellbeing.

Directors, governors, and leaders are deeply committed to the school. They exercise their duty as guardians of the Catholic life and mission of the school extremely well, ensuring Christ is at the centre of everything they do. They are energised, joyful and determined in the pursuit of this mission and are a source of inspiration for the whole community. Gospel values are lived and celebrated throughout the school. The leaders and governors of the school embrace parents as first educators of their children and fully support and empower them in meeting the demands of this vocation.

Parents appreciate the work of the school, and many responded positively to the parent questionnaires and interviews, stating that 'The school is very supportive, welcoming, loving and nurturing'. Another said, 'I cannot fault this school, it's a family and everyone is made to feel welcome' and 'My children are involved in charity work and always know who and why the school is supporting different charities throughout the year'.

Leaders and governors embrace and actively promote the Bishop's vision for the diocese. They respond well to diocesan policies and initiatives, being one of the first schools to form the Mater Christi Trust in the north of the diocese. Support from governors is strong, with regular visits to school to both challenge and support. All have completed *Formatio* training offered by the Catholic Education Service. Leaders and governors are inspirational witnesses to the Gospel and to Catholic social teaching in their direction of the school at every level. They embody the Church's preferential option for the poor and ensure that resources are effectively targeted towards those in greatest need.

The provision for relationship health and sex education meets both the statutory and diocesan requirements. It is faithful to the teachings of the Church and pupils are able to discuss what they have learned in these lessons. Parents were fully involved in the consultation process when the curriculum changed.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

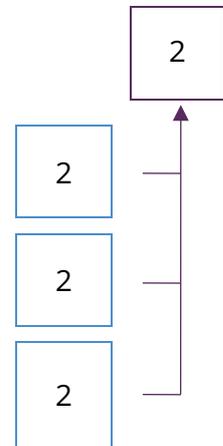
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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



The school has met the areas for development from the last inspection under the framework that it was set. Religious education outcomes are good because assessment data, pupils' books and the school's self-evaluation show that religious education attainment is in line, or slightly better than the other core subjects.

Pupils speak with confidence about what they have learned in religious education, showing an awareness of some key concepts, and using some key vocabulary. For example, children were able to identify that Peter had betrayed Jesus three times, but that Jesus had predicted that earlier, to the disbelief of Peter. Some Early Years Foundation Stage children, on seeing the picture of the Last Supper said that 'Jesus broke the bread and gave it out,' and 'this wine is my blood.' Some Year 2 pupils said that Jesus died on the cross and rose from the dead,' and were able to identify Mary as the mother of Jesus. These examples show that pupils are familiar with Bible stories and language and can bring them into their own explanations and understanding. One pupil interviewed stated 'I really enjoy RE. It makes me think but it's not always easy'.

Pupils engage very well in lessons and show a willingness to improve their knowledge, understanding and skills. They enjoy their learning and therefore behaviour in lessons is very good. All pupils are well supported by staff. The allocation of support staff enables pupils who have special educational needs or disability to be included in all aspects of learning, removing barriers to their success.

Inspectors saw work of a consistently good quality and well presented, with some signs of individuality, when compared to other core subjects. The variety of tasks included, retelling

the story of Genesis through music, personal plans of action, diary entries, reflections, storyboards, guided meditation and powerpoint slides. This variety in teaching and learning could be more consistently practised across all age ranges.

Religious education provision is good. Lesson observations and interviews with pupils and staff show there are systems in place to check knowledge at the start of the unit and reflect on learning at the end, including knowledge organisers within books. Teachers are highly committed to the teaching of religious education and its value well beyond the classroom. They have a high level of subject knowledge and confidence in delivering engaging religious education lessons across a mixed age setting. Planning is linked to current assessment so that most pupils learn well. Questioning during lessons is developing to identify where pupils are in their understanding, thus improving learning for all pupils.

The head teacher, who is also the subject leader for religious education, has a clear vision for teaching and learning and a good level of expertise in securing this vision, ensuring that the school curriculum is a faithful expression of the current expectations. Elements of the new *Religious Education Directory* have been introduced across the year groups in preparation for full implementation by 2026.

Pupils achieve well in religious education when compared to other core curriculum subjects and progress is accelerated from very low baselines on entry. Tracking systems are in place to follow and record the development of pupils through the school. Data suggests that pupils in Year 6 currently have a standard in religious education above that for writing. Outcomes are improved by enrichment opportunities, for example, church visits, and a recent visit to see the relics of St Bernadette in Carlisle.

Leaders and governors ensure that religious education is comparable to other core curriculum subjects, in terms of professional development, resourcing, timetabling, and staffing. There is regular work sampling at senior leadership and governor level. Self-evaluation is accurate and has led to improved outcomes and external diocesan moderation verified this. Professional development activities have been made available for all staff, with a focus on the classes delivering the new, ambitious curriculum, enabling sufficient opportunities for learners to progress sequentially through subject content in readiness for the new *Religious Education Directory*.

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

Prayer and liturgy is central to the life at Our Lady's and is valued by all. From a young age, pupils respond well to experience of prayer and liturgy; they participate through respectful reflection, joining in prayer and singing enthusiastically, as witnessed throughout the inspection. Prayer and liturgy is appropriate to pupil age and stage of learning. Pupils have a rich variety of ways of praying that are part of the Catholic tradition. In the Early Years for example, children knew that they light a candle to show that Jesus is the light of the world. Pupils are able to recognise and talk about the ways in which prayer and liturgy influence the wider life of the school, for example praying for peace in Ukraine and the Holy Land. They would benefit from shared liturgies with local schools and the wider family of schools in Mater Christi Multi Academy Trust.

Prayer is routinely planned and is a central part of every school day, forming routine gatherings of pupils, staff, and leaders. Interviews with pupils and observations show that this daily pattern of prayer reflects the rhythm and prayer life of the church. Seasonally appropriate scripture is shared across the liturgical year with the Sunday gospel of the week shared and reflected on each Wednesday.

Older pupils were seen leading prayer and a very calm, well-structured, and delivered service, based around the use of scripture was observed. Their peers were given opportunities for individual reflection and finally a mission to go forth. All the pupils responded well and were familiar with and comfortable taking part in prayer and liturgy. In discussion, the lead group explained that they had planned it themselves, following diocesan guidelines, with staff available for support if needed. They said that prayer and liturgy activities are regularly evaluated in class, on an oral basis and that they felt this, 'Makes an impact on the calmness

in class and pupils are being kinder because of it.'

All prayer and liturgy observed during the inspection started in a calm manner with music to gather to and reflect. The inspection took place in Eastertide and seasonally appropriate scripture passages were central to prayer and liturgy, which enabled everyone present to fully participate. The pupils sang enthusiastically in liturgies to a high standard. Pupils interviewed said they enjoy worship and are able to discuss what they have learned. Parents, parishioners, and governors are welcomed to share in the spiritual life of the school through various services, including assemblies and Masses throughout the year.

Leaders celebrate the uniqueness of the Our Lady's community with support given to the most vulnerable. They understand the liturgical year and are role models to both staff and pupils. Priority is given to high quality professional development for staff and governors and the head teacher commented on the impact of the Catholic Headship Programme on her leadership and vocation. Progression with formation needs to be planned in line with the new *Prayer and Liturgy Directory* moving forward.

The school works well with the parish priest and local parish to help pupils participate more fully in the liturgy, especially after the recent pandemic. This partnership is a growing strength. Newsletters are shared, enabling effective communication between home, school, and parish.

Good use is made of the indoor spaces available for prayer and all classes have dedicated prayer tables. The displays in classes and around school are of a high standard, including the recently commissioned contemporary stations of the cross in the hall. An outdoor prayer space would further develop the opportunities for the pupils and the Laudato Si gardening club could help with the design and planting. The school provides regular opportunities for pupils to visit the parish church for the celebration of Mass and the parish priest regularly celebrates class Masses in school. He recognises and appreciates the children's improved participation in the liturgy.

Information about the school

Full name of school	Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	149513
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	9433551
Full postal address of the school	Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Primary School, Crooklands Brow, Dalton-in-Furness, LA15 8LB
School phone number	01229 467987
Headteacher	Bernadette Charnley
Chair of Local Governing Body	Mary Page
School Website	www.furnesscatholicfederation.cumbria.sch.uk
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Mater Christi Multi-Academy Trust
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Academy
Admissions policy	N/A
Age-range of pupils	2-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	December 2017
Previous denominational inspection grade	2

The inspection team

Frances Wygladala

Alan Parry

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