



Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection report for St Alban's Catholic Primary School

URN: 6813321

Title. Carried out on behalf of the Most Reverend Mark O'Toole, Archbishop of Cardiff on:

9th - 10th March 2023

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

✓

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

Fully

Summary of key findings

What the school does well

- St. Alban's is a good Catholic school. The mission statement is central to the day-to-day life of the school. It guides the work of leaders, staff, pupils, and the parish community in this inclusive school where everybody is welcomed.
- The governing body and leaders prioritise and promote the school's Catholic life and mission, and focus on developing its good Catholic ethos.
- The head teacher exhibits excellent levels of passion and commitment that are required in order to ensure that the necessary improvements are made.
- There is a strong and effective partnership between the school and parish which contributes exceptionally well to pupils' spiritual formation.

- Pupils respond reverently to prayer and worship and plan thoughtful and reflective child-led prayer and worship.

What the school needs to improve:

- Further develop the Mission Task pedagogy throughout the school so tasks include more challenge and opportunities for in-depth learning to secure pupil progress.
- Develop opportunities for extended writing in Religious Education throughout the school.
- Use information from data analysis and school monitoring and evaluation to set challenging targets and key actions at school, class and pupil level to raise standards in teaching and learning.

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:.....

2

Pupil outcomes

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

2

Provision

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

2

Leadership

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

2

St Alban's is a warm, welcoming and caring faith community built on and driven by Gospel values and their Mission Statement 'Every day we learn, love and pray following in the footsteps of Jesus.'

The Catholic character of the school is embedded in all aspects of school life and recognises the uniqueness of the individual as a gift from God. Pupils state that they feel safe, happy and looked after. They know and value each other and their mission, and spoke of how it should be lived out in their daily lives through their actions and words. They are proud to be active members of the varied Senedd Committees, which include Mini Disciples and Community Champions, who articulated that priority is given to Catholic Social Teaching through their fundraising activities e.g. Cafod. Planet Protectors recognised the need to accept responsibility to care for God's creation through recycling clothes to reduce landfill and to help people in need. During the inspection the school was presented with the UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools Gold Award and pupils said they were very proud of this achievement.

Pupils spoke about the importance of the virtues, and how certificates are awarded for demonstrating the virtues in daily life as they help and care for each other. One pupil articulated her appreciation for the World Faith Day and the importance of learning about and respecting people of other faiths and religions. Pupils also stated they enjoyed attending Mass on a weekly rota and the class discussions with the parish priest at the end of the celebration.

Strong links to the parish, enhanced by quality and dedicated chaplaincy provision, ensures pupils receive many opportunities for spiritual and moral development. The priests of the

parish are regularly invited and welcomed into school. They work closely with the school in supporting and promoting the Catholic life through school and parish Masses, pupil collective worship and staff prayer breakfasts. Chaplaincy provision is valued and has the potential to grow.

The school has good links with the high school and during the inspection joined with the older pupils to plan and lead a Lenten collective worship. They value this experience describing it as great collaboration. There are strong home, school, parish and community links. Parent/carers questionnaires were overwhelmingly supportive of the school.

The school community is supportive and inclusive and staff and pupils expressed a real sense of belonging, one where differences in culture are recognised and celebrated. Staff understand their responsibility in developing Catholic life, they are good role models and readily participate in activities that reflect the school mission.

The lead pastoral practitioner provides quality interventions and there are carefully designed whole-school pastoral programmes to meet the needs of pupils throughout the school. Staff members work hard to support both children and their families, especially those in need.

Leaders ensure that all staff, including new staff, receive professional development on Catholic ethos, which promotes an understanding of the school's mission and Catholic values. The school actively implements diocesan policies and the Pupil Profile, meditation and Examen are established within the curriculum. Policies are in place and provision for relationship and sex and health education R(S)HE uses diocesan approved materials appropriately.

The head teacher and governors have a clear vision for Catholic education and this is reflected in decision making and priorities for raising standards. Leaders are committed to the Church's mission in education and work hard to inspire and motivate the whole community.

The governing body has a wide range of skills, knowledge and understanding and is fully involved in the Catholic life of the school. They are proactive and add appropriate support and challenge to the school evaluation process and the developments planned to improve Catholic life and ethos.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade:.....

2

Pupil outcomes

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education.....

2

Provision

The quality of teaching, learning, and assessment in religious education.....

2

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor, and evaluate the provision for religious education.....

2

Overall, standards in Religious Education are good. Pupils steadily improve their knowledge and understanding in Religious Education, making expected progress from their starting point as they move through the school. Teachers plan lessons using the Come and See scheme. In the best lessons observed pupils behaved well and engaged readily in the learning process, however there was some variation in teaching across the school, though it is good overall. Pupils religious literacy skills are good, and their growing understanding of the liturgical year and how they should live their lives based on Jesus's teachings was evident. Pupils use and understand religious vocabulary in Religious Education lessons and are able to answer teacher-led questions and ask questions to enhance their learning. In lessons observed, all pupils throughout the school received small group support from adults and work was often scaffolded by them. Opportunities for independent learning are developing well.

The recently introduced Mission Tasks underpin Religious Education lessons and provide the foundation for learning. Pupils enjoyed the varied activities, accompanying resources and Information Technology (IT) opportunities to engage in lessons, however, Book scrutiny in KS2 including some Year 2 pupils indicated that topics of the scheme of work are covered and teachers provide opportunities to present their work using a variety of forms of expression, however there was little evidence of extended writing. The book scrutiny showed that pupils understand the green pen marking scheme to reflect on their learning and next steps, and respond appropriately to teachers' comments and suggestions for further explanation.

Floor books used throughout the Foundation Phase were well presented, celebrated pupils' work and indicated curriculum coverage. Tracking and assessment systems in Religious Education were evident and effective. This data could be further developed to ensure targets are set at school and individual level to further drive learning and standards. More challenging, and rigorous assessment opportunities that are explicitly linked to the 'driver words', especially those which encourage deeper understanding of the topics, should be developed and planned for Religious Education lessons.

Leaders and recently appointed governors recognise that the school is on a journey of improvement and have an aspiration to make St Alban's a Catholic faith community of distinction. The headteacher, since her appointment in 2020, has implemented a more systematic monitoring and developmental planning approach within the school. The recently established Religious Education team works well to ensure that Religious Education has a prominent profile in the school. They have begun to systematically track pupil progress and monitor provision through book scrutinies, learning walks and lesson observations, which are reviewed each term. This approach and practice now needs to be regularly appraised, refined and further developed to ensure impact on pupils' learning. Religious Education has parity with other core curriculum subjects in relation to resourcing, staffing and professional development. New staff receive induction training and are supported by a member of the Religious Education Team.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade:.....

2

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

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At St Alban's school Collective Worship is a central part of school life and pupils respond positively to the opportunities provided. The upper KS2 worship led by the headteacher and other class liturgies observed during the inspection were good. Pupils gathered with reverence, sang, listened well and confidently used traditional prayers during these worship opportunities. The personal way in which the head teacher was able to share the message and mission of the worship allowed pupils and staff to see her as a Christian as well as their school leader. Acts of collective worship in class and throughout the school follow the gather, listen, respond, go forth model and were recorded on a liturgy planning board. Pupil-led Gweddiwn is well established from Reception to Year 6 and is highly valued by children. The opportunity for meditation and Examen is established and provides pupils with time to reflect and grow spiritually.

Prayer and liturgy is planned to encompass a wide variety of collective worship throughout the year. There is an up-to-date Collective Worship policy adhered to by all staff. All observed collective worship had a clear message and purpose based on Catholic teaching and Gospel Values.

The liturgical seasons of the Church year are given prominence in the planning of worship and a display providing a visual road map of the season to date provided an excellent backdrop to the headteacher's assembly and was understood by pupils. Feast days are marked in the life of the school and whole school and weekly class Masses are celebrated with governors and parishioners. All classes are named after Saints and pupils were well versed in their history and traditions.

The observed Virtues collective worship led by the deputy head teacher, celebrated pupils' active participation in the current virtues 'Learned and Wise'. Certificates were presented to nominated pupils who had demonstrated them throughout the week. It was a joyful and relaxed occasion where pupils showed delight in their peers' nominations.

Classroom sacred spaces and whole school prayer areas indoor and out reflect the liturgical season and are attractive and inviting. In all classes these areas were understood and appreciated by the pupils. The school is currently developing an Edible Garden which will include a permanent dedicated prayer space to be used by staff and pupils. There is a good range of resources to support prayer and liturgy which includes liturgically correct altar cloths and quality artefacts.

There are systems in place to formally monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship. Pupils' views are routinely sought and responded to. The Prayer Bear initiative provides a good link to home and an increased opportunity for families to be involved in their child's spiritual development and the prayer life of the school. There are plans in place to further develop prayer and liturgy through liturgical bags. The school development plan sets key actions and intended impact outcomes for all three Religious Education areas. It is evaluated regularly. Staff are models of good practice to the pupils and all are proud to be part of the faith community of St Alban's.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Alban's Catholic Primary
School unique reference number (URN)	671331
Full postal address of the school	Mona Place, Tremorfa, CF24 2TG
School phone number	029 2046 2915
Name of head teacher or principal	Mrs R. Woodward
Chair of governing board	Father Sebastian
School Website	https://www.stalbansprm.cardiff.sch.uk
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Click or tap here to enter text.
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age-range of pupils	4-11 years
Trustees	Cardiff
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	November 2011
Previous denominational inspection grade	Adequate/Unsatisfactory

The inspection team

Mrs J. Phillips	Lead inspector
Mrs S. McCool	Team inspector
Name of inspector	Lead/team
Name of inspector	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