

St Anselm's Catholic Primary School

URN: 118765

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Most Rev. John Wilson, Archbishop of Southwark

31 January-1 February 2024

Summary of key findings

Overall effectiveness

The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school

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

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

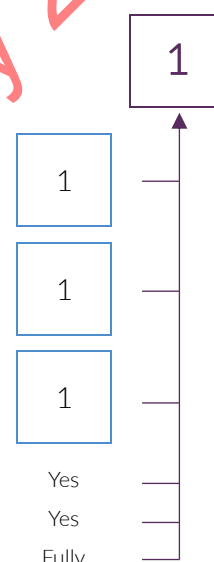
Collective worship

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

- Catholic life and mission of the school are outstanding in every regard, offering exemplary pastoral support to all staff, pupils, their families, and the wider community.
- Religious education provided by the school engages all pupils, who enjoy their lessons and have good subject knowledge.
- The prayer garden, spaces and communal displays have been thoughtfully and beautifully presented, creating a respectful, purposeful Catholic ambience.
- Staff and pupils are encouraged to develop their skills in planning and delivering effective prayer and liturgy.
- School leaders and governors effectively use their monitoring and evaluation in all areas to promote school improvement.

What the school needs to improve

- Provide all pupils with more opportunities to apply and extend their knowledge in religious education whilst expressing their individuality and creativity.
- Review religious education assessment to ensure consistency across the school to provide a more robust analysis of pupils' next steps in learning.
- To upskill the pupil-led prayer and liturgy groups to further their evaluation of the content of liturgies they plan and lead to ensure they are content and age appropriately relevant.

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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

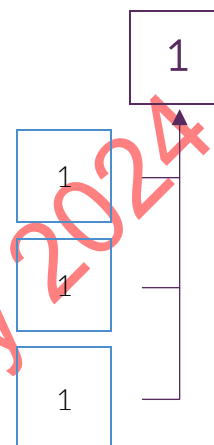
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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



St Anselm's is a community of faith, serving local families and providing a strong Catholic education. There is an excellent understanding of the mission statement, which pupils reflect on daily, using the mission statement crosses they designed that are displayed in every classroom. There is clear evidence of the centrality of it within the school's affirming, nurturing environment. As a small school, its energetic and inspirational leadership team is deeply committed to the Church's mission and is focused on the ongoing development of the Catholic life of the school. Pupils demonstrate that they understand that they are 'Called to serve'; they recognise the importance of fundraising and: 'Helping people who really need it' by supporting a range of charities. Termly charities nominated by pupils are selected following 'pitches' to the school by pupil groups presenting why their preferred charity should be supported. Pupils enthusiastically take on positions of responsibility, such as being Marians, Franciscans, Faith Friends, Worship Leaders and Buddies. They are committed to these roles and are outstanding ambassadors for the school. Pupils show deep respect for themselves and others, the behaviour of almost all pupils is exemplary; they fully appreciate the importance of reconciliation and know that if they make a mistake, then there will always be: '...a new day and a fresh start'. Pupils feel they are listened to and cared for and that their voice is valued. They also appreciate: '...that the school gives us time to reflect on our mistakes'.

The school has clear policies and structures in place which ensure that pupils receive a high level of pastoral care and parents are particularly appreciative of the excellent guidance and support given at the height of the pandemic. This includes a full-time Parent Support Adviser who is employed to specifically support vulnerable families and pupils. Pupils take full advantage of the many opportunities provided for their personal support and development. Parents are appreciative of the wrap-around care the school provides. All staff are fully committed to the Catholic life of the school and strive, on a daily basis, to live the school's mission through their relationships with children,

parents and each other and enthusiastically participate and provide strong role models to pupils. Staff are well-supported, and they report that the school is a community where people work collaboratively, with very good relationships between and among staff, pupils, and parents. The school holds the Well-Being Award and is being assessed for the Oscar Romero Award.

The Catholic life of the school is prioritised by leaders and governors in all aspects of strategic planning, with an appropriate focus on staff training, monitoring and evaluation processes. Parents appreciate the school's strong, traditional Catholic values and the family atmosphere that permeates the school and report that they are given many opportunities to engage in the Catholic life of the school. One parent wrote, 'The school has definitely fostered a welcoming, positive environment to nurture my child's spiritual development alongside their academic development. It feels absolutely integrated into the fabric of the local Catholic community and excels at teaching the core values of being a Christian in today's world.' The sense of family is clear, through displays that echo the centrality of this approach. Governors are deeply committed to the Catholic life of the school and it is prioritised within staff development. Following consultations with parents and training for all staff, leaders and governors have successfully implemented teaching personal, social, health and economic education and relationships and sex education. Catholic social teaching is implicitly embedded in the school's curriculum and benefits from the explicit topics studied in the summer term.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

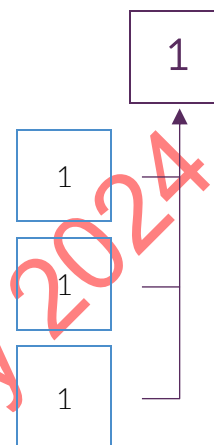
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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 follows the 'Come and See' scheme of work, which is skillfully supplemented to ensure that pupils develop knowledge, understanding and skills, that reflect the learning required by the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory (2012)*. Pupils are actively engaged in religious education lessons. They deepen their knowledge by asking meaningful questions and, consequently, can talk confidently about what they have learned, reflecting excellent progress from a generally below-average starting point. When pupils work independently, the written outcomes reflect the potential and deeper understanding of the faith for many. Pupils understand their achievements in religious education and how to improve their work because they look at what teachers have highlighted as good work. Pupils are religiously literate, make very good contributions to class discussions and demonstrate good understanding of what they have learned. In Early Years Foundation Stage, pupils are well-prepared for progress in later years through what the school describes as 'uncapped' opportunities for pupils to undertake child-initiated tasks and to share their understanding and opinions. Class big books and pocket folders strongly capture the wider learning opportunities that pupils experience and demonstrate. This is enhanced by the generally consistent implementation of the school's marking and feedback policy in religious education that positively impacts pupil progress.

Subject knowledge demonstrated by all teachers is strong throughout the school. This is enhanced by the subject knowledge support given by the parish priest through regular visits and retreat days for staff. Lesson planning is of a high order, consistently based on a five-part lesson structure from Year 1 comprising of: opening reflection and prayer, input, group/individual task, plenary, closing reflection and prayer. Teachers make good use of the enhanced curriculum resources developed by the subject leaders. While a high percentage of teaching is outstanding, with no teaching less than good, more consistency could be achieved by providing pupils with increased opportunities to express their individuality and creativity. Teachers listen astutely to what pupils say and use questioning techniques skilfully, enabling the re-shaping of explanations to clarify misconceptions and stretch more able pupils. Because of this, pupils from varied starting points make good progress between lessons. The teaching of other faiths is well-structured and invitations are made to external speakers to talk to pupils. This could be further enhanced through opportunities to visit other places of worship. There

is excellent use of adult support in classrooms; they have good subject knowledge and move learning forward through effective questioning and capturing learning. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are catered for and, as a result, make good progress. Staff celebrate pupils' work clearly which enthuses pupils.

The subject has full parity with core subjects regarding professional development, resourcing, and staffing. It is held in high esteem throughout the school, as evidenced by its displays, pupils' behaviour, behaviour for learning, and pupil voice activities. The religious education subject leaders, supported by the school's Leadership Team have a clear vision for teaching and learning and have a good level of expertise in securing the vision; therefore, they are effective in improving teaching and learning in religious education, resulting in teaching that is never less than good. Staff welcome the support from the highly effective senior leadership team. A parent responded, 'The school provides excellent religious education and has lovely connections with the parish church. We feel like one Catholic family. The school and the church support each other'. Another parent commented, 'The school plays a key role in helping my child form a moral compass, in addition to giving them the platform to be a life-long learner. They are kind, polite, respectful and well-mannered'.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

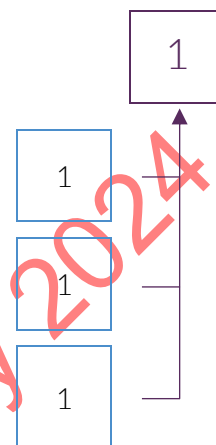
How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

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 are highly knowledgeable about prayer and liturgy and are very reverent in their prayerful responses. Pupils' singing is outstanding, joyful and a strong indicator of their enjoyment of worship; they describe it as an opportunity to 'pray twice'. Pupil engagement and involvement is well-developed due to the support they receive from all staff; pupils are willing to undertake liturgical ministries and feel proud to lead prayer and liturgy. Marians enthusiastically plan liturgies in small groups reflecting at the end on what went well and what needs to be improved before planning the next session. Key Stage 2 pupils volunteer to be Faith Friends; they lead prayer clubs throughout the year and actively maintain prayer spaces around the school. Worship Leaders from Year 6 prepare worship spaces and resources for key stage and whole school liturgies. They willingly give up their own time to carry out their ministry. Pupils are involved in planning class assemblies, written according to the liturgical year, placing a scripture message at the centre demonstrating their strong understanding. Pupil Faith Leaders support their peers in prayer and are proud of their vocation to this role; consequently, pupils lead prayer willingly and confidently. They enjoy the opportunities they are given to pray together and do so with reverence and respect. Pupils can reflect theologically about prayer and so can articulate how important prayer is to them. Pupils know prayer is important for 'listening' to what God tells them because simply 'hearing' about God isn't enough.

Prayer and liturgy are prioritised; daily and seasonal celebrations are clearly identified and rooted in prayer. Prayer is naturally embedded across the school, and pupils understand that alongside the more formal times for prayer, they can also pray independently at other times, such as in the Prayer Garden or at their class prayer tables. There is a creative balance between routine and innovative prayer times including; litany, Lectio Divina, guided meditation, silent contemplation, traditional prayers, prayers of intercession, spontaneous prayers and creative prayer. Prayer stations feature around the school, with additional stations being set up at specific times of the year. Staff are skilled in leading prayer and liturgy, resulting in pupils becoming skilled in leading each other. The word of God is central to liturgy and scripture is always carefully chosen. Consequently liturgies are well-planned and based on a consistent four-part structure: gather, word, respond and mission. A staff member said, 'As a non-Catholic, I have been on a journey of my own discovering lots about the

Catholic faith. This has been supported incredibly well by my colleagues, who are always ready to help, offer advice or give guidance’.

Links with the parish are very strong and provide further support for pupils to participate fully in the liturgy of the Church with termly Sunday Mass, where pupils lead the readings. Parents are thoughtfully involved in the school’s prayer life. The school’s policy for prayer fully reflects the vision of leaders that it is central to the life of the school. It is accessible to staff and shows that leaders are ambitious to develop pupils’ skills at different stages throughout the school. Staff appreciate the training they receive in prayer and liturgy, and subsequently use what they have learnt to support the pupils and their spiritual formation. Leaders are keen to ensure that all staff lead prayer in an effective, authentically Catholic way. The monitoring and evaluation of prayer and liturgy is rigorous and is the responsibility of all stakeholders. Strategies utilised by leaders and governors ensure that strengths and areas for development are identified and analysed accurately, leading to further improvements.

Date Published: 28th February 2024

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Anselm's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	118765
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8863728
Full postal address of the school	St Anselm's Catholic Primary School, Littlebrook Manorway, Dartford, Kent DA1 2HX
School phone number	01322225173
Executive Head teacher	Laura White
Chair of Governors	Daunna Kendall
School Website	http://www.st-anselms.kent.sch.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	5-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	14 June 2016
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

The inspection team

Stephen Beck
Rufina Ebenebe

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