

The Holy Spirit Catholic Primary School

URN: 111321

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Shrewsbury

05 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

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

- The distinctive Catholic nature of The Holy Spirit School, with Christ at its centre, underpins every aspect of its work and mission, with outstanding pastoral support for pupils and families.
- Leaders and governors, supported by all staff, are fully committed to the service of the pupils and their families.
- Pupils at The Holy Spirit School respond passionately to the many opportunities they are given for learning and enrichment.
- The prayer life of the school is greatly enhanced by the well-planned and resourced environment.
- Pupil recall of prior learning through targeted questioning is strong and evidenced in their lessons and discern responses.

What the school needs to improve

- Ensure that pupils can clearly articulate their understanding of the Catholic life and mission of the school: that as pupils of The Holy Spirit School they represent Christ and are a channel of God's goodness for others.
- Ensure that provision for religious education is consistent across the school so that all pupils are fully engaged, can reflect on their learning, and understand what they need to do to improve.
- Leaders and governors should plan strategically to enable staff and pupils to plan, lead and evaluate engaging prayer and liturgy across all year groups.

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

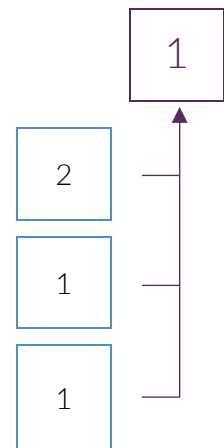
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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 at The Holy Spirit Catholic School understand their school is a distinctly Catholic community where they are valued and nurtured as unique members of God's family. As a result, they are happy, behave well, and show respect for themselves and others. Pupils can talk about the gospel and the Christian values the school strives to live by. However, they find it more difficult to explain how they live out the school mission statement, 'Together in the Spirit of Love and Forgiveness, Our family learns to Grow in Hope and Joy'. School is a safe place where pupils feel able to talk to any member of staff about their concerns. Pupils are keen to participate in various activities to look after their community and to support those who are more vulnerable than themselves. In the roles of 'mini police' they readily support police community initiatives and as Mini Vinnies, support homeless charities providing warm clothing as well as learning about and raising funds for local, national, and global concerns in Cafod club. Pupils are clear that in doing this, they are following Jesus. The older pupils are beginning to make links with Catholic social teaching and putting their faith into action.

The life and mission of the school is deeply rooted in the word of God. Staff are fully committed to the mission statement and go above and beyond in service of the school and its community. There is a strong culture of warmth and welcome for all, extending to those from various cultures and of other beliefs, including supporting prayer traditions and commitments. Relationships with each other and with pupils bear witness to their commitment to the school's mission. Staff are exemplary role models who work as a supportive team in all areas of school life. Pastoral care of the highest level for pupils and a commitment to the most vulnerable are evident. A dedicated family support worker offers practical support, including the provision of uniforms and basic hygiene items and signposts to other agencies. School-based counselling and nurture

groups impact positively on pupils' attendance and physical and mental well-being. The school environment celebrates and nurtures its Catholic life and mission. Well-planned prayer spaces, a prayer garden, nurture room, and intervention spaces provide creative and high-quality opportunities for the spiritual and moral development of staff and pupils. Relationships, sex, and health education is well-planned and meets diocesan and statutory requirements.

Leaders and governors clearly understand the Church's mission in education and ensure that Christ is at the centre of all they do. They fully embrace diocesan policies, responding positively to initiatives and training. There are strong links with other local Catholic schools to celebrate Mass and occasions such as Year 6 leavers' day enhance this mission. A good relationship exists between the school and the parish, and leaders regularly plan and promote activities to involve parents and carers in school and parish life. Resources, including staffing, effectively support pupils and their families in practical, educational, and spiritual ways. For instance, outstanding pastoral support is funded and sustained by the school. Staff report that they feel valued and cared for. Access to counselling, professional development, including coaching and mentoring, the well-planned induction of new staff, and the headteacher's vision of building a strong team ethos ensures staff needs are met. Work on the taught curriculum with religious education and Catholic social teaching at its core, is regularly reviewed. Governors make highly effective contributions to monitoring and are rigorous in evaluating and developing the Catholic life and mission of the school. Leaders and governors regularly ask for and respond to pupils' suggestions on improvements.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

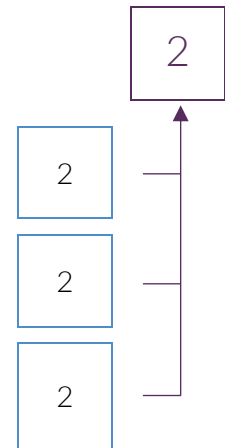
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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



As required by the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*, pupils have good knowledge and understanding in religious education. In lessons, links are made to prior learning, which help pupils to remember what they have already done and to apply this to their current learning. From Early Years to Year 6, pupils show good understanding of the work they have covered. They are able to talk about and reflect on what they have learned, speaking with confidence about key concepts. Pupils are happy to share their thoughts. For example, younger pupils talk about being part of God’s family, the Church, and helping others in need. Older pupils discuss Church as a ‘community’ with different groups forming parts of the family of the Church. They also discuss aspects of the liturgical year. In lessons, almost all pupils engage well and respond appropriately to questions and tasks; their behaviour is good. Attainment in religious education is broadly in line with other core subjects. Given their starting points on entry, pupils make good progress across the school. However, pupils are unsure about what they have done well and what they need to do to improve. They enjoy their lessons in religious education, especially when they have opportunities to be creative.

Generally, teachers have good subject knowledge and benefit from a range of training and support. They understand the differing needs of their pupils. All staff are committed to delivering religious education lessons that are at least good. The most effective lessons use a variety of creative ways to engage and motivate pupils. The pace of some lessons could be improved, ensuring pupils remain engaged and motivated. In some lessons, questioning by adults is effective and helps pupils to move on in their learning. Although work is celebrated and praised verbally, feedback is limited and is an area where pupils could be helped to understand what they need to do to make progress. Time for reflection and interaction with peers is a part of most lessons. However, this could be used more effectively. Teachers’ planning is linked to current pupil assessment and pupils learn well. Teachers adapt planning for the differing needs of their

pupils, providing appropriate support and challenge and providing opportunities for pupils to present their work in a variety of creative ways. The use of discern questions is being implemented from the youngest pupils across all classes and this challenges pupils to think more deeply about what they have learnt.

Leaders and governors ensure that the curriculum aims for religious education as stated in the Directory are reflected in practice. Planning and training for the new curriculum is in hand, in line with diocesan expectations. Careful planning, to ensure pupils receive lessons appropriate to their needs, is based on a two-year cycle, taking account of mixed-age classes across the school. Resources, including staffing, are good and a number of enrichment activities, including visiting speakers, external visits and work with cluster schools enhances the religious education curriculum. Leaders and governors are fully committed to the professional development of staff and make every effort to support this. The relatively new religious education lead (almost 2 years in post) is mentored by the headteacher who is experienced in leading this subject. The dedicated headteacher and governors have a clear vision for teaching and learning in religious education. Supported by knowledgeable and committed governors, the religious education lead and the headteacher form a strong team, using their expertise to identify and support effective staff development and continuous improvement in teaching and learning. Leaders and governors plan thorough monitoring and analysis to inform the strategic plan for religious education in order to secure good outcomes for pupils.

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

Pupils respond well to the experiences of prayer and liturgy provided by the school. Daily prayer times are central to the life of the school and reflect the liturgical year. For example, in May, Marian prayers are said in classes. As pupils progress through the school, they learn traditional prayers and different ways of praying, such as praying the rosary. Staff support pupils in planning and leading prayer and liturgy, with planned opportunities to share these with parents and carers. In discussion, pupils can talk about the different seasons of the Church's year; they can explain how this influences prayer and liturgy in school. For instance, they can describe how Advent, Lent and Easter are celebrated. However, pupils need support in evaluating their prayer and liturgy experiences, so that they reflect on what they have seen and heard and can say how this inspires them and others into action. Pupils sing confidently and with pride. The parish priest comments that pupils' singing is of a phenomenal quality. In discussion, pupils happily sing the school hymn and compliment each other on how well they sing.

Prayer and liturgy form part of the everyday life and of celebrations at The Holy Spirit School. The prayer and liturgy policy ensures that staff and pupils experience a range of prayers and ways of praying. Daily, and across the year, these experiences vary from simple morning prayer to liturgies with appropriate Scripture passages and hymns that reflect the prayer life of the Church, encouraging active participation. Pupils receive additional singing tuition from the diocese and their singing is a strength of the school. Senior staff model good practice in leading and participating in prayer and liturgy for staff, increasing their confidence to lead prayer and liturgy beyond their own classrooms. In turn, staff plan opportunities for pupils to do the same. In classrooms and around the school, prayer spaces reflect the importance the school places on prayer and liturgy; they are well-planned and resourced. Outside, a lovely prayer garden further enhances the provision. The school works hard to engage parents and carers in the prayer life

of the school, and looks for additional ways to encourage their participation, working well with the parish and parish priest to ensure all have the opportunity to take part in Mass and other liturgies.

Leaders and governors have developed a policy for prayer and liturgy that is well-planned and fit for purpose. There is planned provision across the school and liturgical year; it is continuously evaluated and reviewed in line with national developments. With the parish priest, opportunities for celebrating liturgies and the Sacraments of Eucharist and Reconciliation are identified. One parent commented, 'The assemblies really celebrate the ethos of the school, you always come out feeling uplifted, absolutely stunning. The children are really engaged.' Professional development, in-house, cluster wide and diocesan, is encouraged and promoted for all staff. Attendance at diocesan training and the high-quality resources they allocate demonstrate leaders' and governors' growing understanding of the demands of ministry and participation in prayer and liturgy. The monitoring and evaluation of prayer and liturgy, focusing on areas that require further development, as well as exploring how to make celebrations of the word more creative, is part of the school's regular monitoring cycle. Enabling pupils to carefully evaluate the provision for prayer and liturgy will help inform the school's strategic planning, which in turn supports class and school delivery of high-quality prayer and liturgy.

Information about the school

Full name of school	The Holy Spirit Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	111321
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8763511
Full postal address of the school	The Holy Spirit Catholic Primary School, Cotterill, Halton Brook, Runcorn, WA7 2NL
School phone number	01928563148
Headteacher	Lorraine Connolly
Chair of Governors	Kathy Keig
School Website	www.holyspiritruncorn.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	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	27 June 2017
Previous denominational inspection grade	2

The inspection team

Carol Morgan
Louise Conlon

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