



Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection report for **St Clare's Catholic Primary School**

URN: 103476

Carried out on behalf of the Most Rev. Bernard Longley, Archbishop of Birmingham on:

Date: 09-10 November 2023

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The school is fully compliant with the curriculum requirements laid down by the Bishops' Conference	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The school is fully compliant with all requirements of the diocesan bishop	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The school has responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection	Fully

Summary of key findings

What the school does well

- The mission, 'To live, love and learn together in the light and example of the life of Christ,' underpins all areas of the school and community, resulting in strong cultures of welcome and inclusivity.
- All staff are deeply committed to transforming pupils' lives. They offer hope for the future due to their nurturing care and loving relationships, enabling everyone to have the ambition to succeed.
- High-quality teaching and staff training have enabled pupils of all faith backgrounds to access engaging religious education lessons.
- Pupils and staff are committed to coming together to pray in this inclusive community.

- Leaders and governors are highly ambitious and share a combined vision for the Catholic life and mission of the school. The head teacher's commitment to placing Christ at the centre of words and actions is commendable.

What the school needs to improve:

- Develop the principles of Catholic social teaching within the full curriculum so that staff and pupils can articulate how it reflects the Church's mission to respond to people's needs locally, nationally, and globally.
- Provide consistent opportunities for pupils to reflect deeply on their learning in religious education.
- Ensure that all prayer and liturgy are spiritual encounters with God.

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:.....

1

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

2



Pupils clearly understand their mission in school, 'to live, love and learn together in the light and example of the life of Christ,' which underpins all areas of school life, resulting in a strong culture of welcome. The school's ethos is rooted in the teachings of the Church. This culture enables pupils to grow and learn in a faith-filled atmosphere. Pupils told the inspectors that they 'are all created in God's image and must follow the right path.' Pupil leaders demonstrate stewardship, actively leading and contributing to the chaplaincy opportunities available. These leadership groups support the local community by prayer, fundraising, and caring for our common home. The 'Kingdom Builders' articulate that they 'make everyone's voice in the community heard.' Pupils are actively involved in responding to the demands of Catholic social teaching; however, the full curriculum is not yet sufficiently developed to express these principles so that staff and pupils can articulate how it reflects the Church's mission to respond to people's needs. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary, demonstrating a deep respect for their personal dignity and respectfulness of people from other faiths, to the extent where the line becomes invisible. The Mini-Vinnies and Little Angels undertake active roles in monitoring, checking prayer areas, and feeding back to the class teacher concerning areas for improvement.

Christ is at the heart of St Clare's, where strong, quality relationships help secure a culture of safety and welcome in which everybody is respected. School life is cemented in God's word. All staff, including leaders, are deeply committed to transforming pupils' lives, giving them hope for the future due to their nurturing care and loving relationships, enabling everyone to have the ambition to succeed. The school goes the extra mile in providing exceptional social outreach to the local community. For example, all children are given a breakfast bagel at school. There is also a food bank for families, and the school provides English lessons for parents for whom English is an additional

language. Staff exemplify Christ's teachings by modelling the faith to the pupils, celebrating aspects of various cultures and beliefs, and going the extra mile to understand the community's needs. Consequently, pupils are happy and confident, feeling safe in their school environment. They are inspirational witnesses to Jesus' teachings. Chaplaincy provision is central to all aspects of school life, and every community member is supported in their vocational journey. The provision for relationships, sex, and health education (RSHE) is carefully planned. Pupils talk confidently about their learning in this subject and its application to their lives.

Leaders and governors are secure in ensuring that all policies and procedures clearly reflect the school's Catholic identity and mission. The governors are deeply committed and passionate and constantly support school leaders. Leaders are committed to working well with parents and the local parish, which is evident in the promotion and engagement of parents who are highly supportive of developing pupils' vocations. Leaders and governors respect all staff, which is recognised in gestures to support well-being. Staff told inspectors that 'God is at the centre of all we do. We follow his greatest commandment: sharing love and respect with everyone in our family.' A wealth of meticulous monitoring ensures that school improvement remains a priority. However, it is not yet forensically evaluated in a way that identifies and shares priorities so that the impact is compelling. Parents are united in celebrating how inclusive the school is in supporting the community and enabling pupils to be respectful, kind, and caring.

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.....

1

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



Pupils enjoy religious education and are fully engaged in lessons. They approach these with significant commitment and enthusiasm. Pupils are keen to respond to questions that deepen their learning and are highly motivated to achieve their best. For example, a pupil explained that being attentive means listening and responding to God. From their low starting points, pupils consistently progress in knowing and remembering more. Pupils show secure levels of religious literacy, and many achieve above-expected outcomes by the time they leave year 6. Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) are given the tools and confidence to succeed in religious education and make good progress. In most lessons, pupils can work independently and articulate what they are learning, recalling their prior learning confidently. Pupils are keen to learn and show great excitement in their lessons, approaching tasks with passion and enthusiasm. Therefore, behaviour is generally outstanding. Pupils' work is well-presented in most classes, and they take pride in it, though this is not yet the case in every year group.

Teaching across the school is generally good, and most teachers are confident in their subject knowledge. They show a high commitment to religious education and fully understand how it shapes pupils' moral and spiritual development. High-quality teaching and staff training has enabled all pupils to access engaging religious education lessons. Teachers use assessment effectively to adapt tasks for different groups of pupils, particularly for pupils with EAL, using symbols and pictures to ensure they can fully access the curriculum. Planning is often well-considered and sequenced to build on prior learning using a starter question at the beginning of every lesson. Most teachers use questioning to

consolidate knowledge and identify where pupils are in their understanding of religious literacy. Teachers' feedback is comparable with that in other curriculum subjects; however, it does not always extend pupils' learning. Opportunities to reflect on their learning through deeper thinking and reflective questioning are not routine.

Leaders and governors ensure that the requirements of the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory* are taught through the diocesan strategy. They are fully committed to the profile of religious education across the school and ensure that the subject has parity with other core subjects regarding staff training and resourcing. The subject leader is fully committed to her role and works effectively with the link governor for religious education. The link governor is generous in her commitment to supporting and challenging the school, ensuring standards improve. The subject leader provides extensive support for all teachers, meaning teaching allows pupils to achieve high standards of religious literacy, regardless of their faith or background. Through regular monitoring, the subject leader identifies support for teachers new to teaching and offers invaluable guidance and advice. However, this is not strategically planned throughout the year in a way that ensures outcomes continue to improve. Leaders' and governors' evaluations of the standards of religious education are robust and lead to an effective programme of well-targeted training.

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

Pupils plan and lead prayer and liturgy throughout the school, working collaboratively with the staff. In Key Stage 2, pupils lead with increasing independence. Pupils understand the Church's liturgical year well and know that this influences the rhythm of school life. They make connections between the cycle of seasons and various school events. The experience of being in a faithful, prayerful community positively impacts all pupils' spiritual and moral development. Pupils respond well to experiences of prayer and liturgy; they participate with reverence and confidence. They have a good understanding of the daily prayer routine used across the school; however, pupils cannot articulate a detailed, progressive understanding of the Church's traditional prayers and have limited knowledge of these. Nevertheless, they join in with prayers and listen with interest. Pupils understand how to reflect on their experiences of prayer and liturgy, but some pupils cannot clearly articulate how these experiences have shaped how they think about themselves and the world and how this has inspired them to act. Other pupils understand the relationship between prayer and action, as demonstrated through their support with Citizens' UK, with pupils telling inspectors, 'We try and make everyone's voice heard in our community.'

Prayer and liturgy are part of the school's daily life, and prayer is included in celebrations and all assemblies. Scripture is a key feature of all prayer and liturgy; passages used are liturgically appropriate. Pupils understand that prayer is an opportunity to talk to God and can happen anywhere, at any time. Staff are committed to being good models of prayer and liturgy. The experience of living and working in a faithful, prayerful community has a very positive impact on all pupils' spiritual and moral development. Through training, staff have been upskilled to support pupils in planning and leading well-constructed prayer and liturgies. Pupils are beginning to use various creative forms; however, prayer is not always a spiritual encounter with God because question-answer sessions punctuate it. High-quality music, art forms, and moments of meditation

and reflection are not consistently used. The school chapel is a precious sacred space, along with the prayer stops, allowing pupils to reflect and pray to become closer to God. The school fosters a flourishing partnership with the community to develop the prayer life of the pupils, giving them the opportunities to share their faith openly and inviting parents into the school to pray and reflect together.

Leaders and governors ensure the schools' policy on prayer and liturgy is accessible and used by the staff. However, it does not fully support the development of pupils' knowledge of a sufficient range of prayers as they move through the school. Leaders and governors ensure a clear plan of events throughout the liturgical year to support each pupil's faith formation. The whole community celebrates holy days of obligation and saints' days; leaders prioritise these. All staff understand the centrality of prayer, and leaders ensure that all staff are supported to lead worship. Leaders invite the community into school for prayer and liturgical celebrations, helping make Christ known to all. Leaders and governors support teachers to lead experiences of prayer and liturgy in classes. Pupils contribute to the school's regular review of prayer provision and its impact. However, this information is not always used effectively when planning for improvements. Leaders and governors are committed to ensuring that all staff have access to training for their spiritual formation and have plans to source external providers to support them.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Clare's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	103476
Full postal address of the school	Robert Road, Handsworth, Birmingham, B20 3RT
School phone number	0121 554 3289
Name of head teacher or principal	Victoria Rivett
Chair of governing board	Barbara McPhillips
School Website	www.stclare.bham.sch.uk
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	N/A
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age-range of pupils	3 to 11
Trustees	Archdiocese of Birmingham
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	October 2017
Previous denominational inspection grade	2

The inspection team

Paul Madia

Lead inspector

Tara Davies

Team inspector

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