



Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection report for **Holy Rood Catholic Primary School**

URN: 137074

Carried out on behalf of the Right Rev. Declan Lang, Bishop of Clifton on:

Date: 17-18 May 2023

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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

- The school mission statement, values and motto of "Belong, Learn, Achieve" unite the school community and underpin all areas of school life.
- Leaders have created a strong, warm, and inclusive school culture where all are welcomed and valued as made in the image and likeness of God.
- Pupils demonstrate a deep sense of belonging to the school community. They behave extremely well, are polite, and appreciate all the school offers them.
- Consistency in the planning and teaching of religious education ensures that all children make progress that is at least good.
- Leaders and staff have embraced Catholic Social Teaching and make explicit links to it in all areas of school life and learning.

This Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection was carried out under canons 804 & 806 of the code of canon law. For maintained schools and academies in England it fulfils the statutory requirements of s.48 of the Education Act 2005. For maintained schools and academies in Wales it fulfils the statutory requirements of s.50 of the Education Act 2005.

What the school needs to improve:

- Increase opportunities for all pupils to plan, lead and evaluate a wider range of prayer and collective worship.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to participate in and improve their learning in religious education with greater independence and creativity.
- Ensure that the Catholic life and mission of the school and collective worship are included in strategic and school improvement planning and self-evaluation.

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 demonstrate a strong understanding and sense of belonging to this inclusive Catholic community enriched by its ethnic diversity and high-quality relationships. These are underpinned by its exceptionally strong pastoral provision which is embedded in Gospel values. Pupils are active in their commitment to the school's mission and values; frequently and spontaneously referring to them. Pupils of all ages understand the importance of living your faith and this is evident in their engagement in chaplaincy and with a range of charities and initiatives which are linked to the demands of Catholic Social Teaching. Pupils are enthusiastic in their involvement with Cafod, the local food bank, and Swinpups. Their ability to confidently articulate the links of their actions to the theory of Catholic Social Teaching is extremely strong across all age groups. The behaviour and attitudes of pupils in lessons and around the school are excellent. All pupils consider themselves to be chaplains. They have a strong sense of self-worth and demonstrate respect and care for others. Pupils are positive about the leadership opportunities that exist in the school, and many serve as chaplaincy leaders, school council representatives, welfare ambassadors, anti-bullying ambassadors, and eco-warriors.

The mission statement is at the heart of the school. Each term, pupils focus on two different school values, which are reinforced in assemblies and visual displays around both school sites. Leaders have ensured a consistent approach across both sites. The school environment clearly reflects its Catholic identity and ethos which are fully alive in the daily life of the school. Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent, with the school community frequently being described as a family. There is a well-embedded culture of welcome and leaders are proactive in working to ensure that all groups represented in the school are recognised and celebrated. The quality of care shown to all members of the community is outstanding. The pastoral team is highly skilled in providing support for vulnerable pupils and their families. The school has good systems in place

to support staff, who feel valued. The Catholic life of the school is further supported by a range of chaplaincy activities and by a local priest who gives generously of his time. Personal, social, and health education (PSHE), and relationship, sex, and health education (RSHE) are well thought through, planned, and delivered to reflect Catholic teachings and principles. Great care has been taken to ensure that what is taught is shared and understood by all parents.

Leaders and governors are passionate about promoting and developing the Catholic life of the school. They see this as a core leadership responsibility and ensure the whole curriculum contributes to the spiritual and moral development of pupils. Leaders are committed to working closely with parents and the school website and newsletter are engaging and informative. A very high percentage of parents feel well supported as the first educators of their children and are extremely positive about the provision for and impact of the Catholic life of the school on their children. The school responds well to diocesan policies and initiatives and makes good use of diocesan training opportunities and resources. The induction and training provided to staff is good and the school engages in collaborative work within the Samuel Partnership. Some monitoring of the Catholic life and mission of the school is undertaken but this is not yet linked to a whole school self-evaluation framework which informs school improvement planning. As a result of this, improvements in the Catholic life of the school are not planned for in the same way as for curriculum areas.

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

Pupils develop secure knowledge and understanding in their learning of religious education. Overall, most children, from their varied starting points, make good progress in each key stage, with no significant variation between groups of learners. They respond well to the structure of their lessons and to the regular opportunities to recall prior learning and make links in their learning. The religious literacy of pupils across the key stages is extremely strong and plays a key part in enabling them to grow in their understanding of faith and its application to daily life. Pupils' attitudes to all aspects of their learning in religious education are consistently positive and consequently, they are very well-behaved. This in turn has a good impact on the progress they make. Pupils speak with confidence about their learning. They enjoy their lessons, participate enthusiastically, and relish opportunities to further their learning. Pupils take pride in their work. They are keen to fulfill their potential and would welcome opportunities to work independently, undertake research, and participate in class discussions. Most pupils understand how well they are doing in religious education and seek to improve their work when directed to do so.

Teachers have a good understanding of how pupils learn and the introduction of a consistent approach across all curriculum areas has strengthened practice. The provision for joint planning of religious education lessons boosts and supports teacher confidence and subject knowledge. Teachers are effective in planning lessons that consolidate and extend pupils' learning and there is much excellent practice. They structure lessons so that prior learning is systematically checked, and pupils can acquire knowledge, develop understanding and make links. Pupils are ready to be given greater autonomy in their learning and would like to present their learning in a variety of ways. Teacher questioning is effective and frequently focused on extending learning. In the best examples, teachers push pupils to develop their answers. Teachers are aware of the different needs of pupils in their class and support individual learners. The dedicated teaching assistants need to focus more on the learning of individual children. Staff provide lots of praise and affirmation to learners and the learning environment is vibrant and supports learning. Though teachers provide regular

feedback the pupils are not always given a range of opportunities to respond and improve their work.

Leaders and governors maintain religious education at the heart of the curriculum. They ensure that the religious education curriculum meets the requirements of the *Religious Education Directory* and that the required amount of time is given to it. The subject leaders of religious education have carefully considered the intent and implementation of the religious education curriculum so that learning meets the needs of pupils in each key stage and prior learning is enhanced and built upon. They have a clear vision of what they want to achieve and have introduced systems to make teaching more targeted and learning more focused. Together with senior leaders, they form the religious education team, which provides effective and valued support to staff and ensures that staff receive regular training and development. Leaders have systems for tracking and monitoring the delivery of religious education. These include lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work, seeking the views of pupils, and analysing pupil progress data. The link governors for religious education undertake monitoring activities and report to the governing body. The religious education subject plan identifies priorities but does not distinguish clearly enough between religious education as a curriculum subject and the Catholic Life and mission of the school. Such a distinction would enable planning to be well-targeted and linked to self-evaluation.

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

1

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

Prayer and liturgy are central to the life of the school. Pupils show reverence and respect during prayer and collective worship. Appropriate to their age and capacity, they have a secure knowledge of traditional prayers and an understanding of Catholic tradition and cultural variations. They enjoy singing hymns and do so enthusiastically. Older pupils have regular opportunities to plan, lead and evaluate prayer in their classes. They are willing and confident, incorporating a range of approaches such as reflection, scripture, use of art, and music. Younger pupils are increasingly being involved in the planning of collective worship, choosing approaches they would like to include. Chaplaincy leaders in Key Stage 2 lead daily prayers in their classes and on occasion lead whole school worship. Other pupil leaders within the school also lead collective worship. Many pupils who are not leaders feel confident and able to lead prayer with larger groups. Pupils enjoy attending Mass and have regular opportunities to do so. They have a strong understanding of the liturgical year and of the importance of prayer in responding to world events. They contribute to the prayer tables in their classrooms and have ownership of a class prayer and liturgy book.

Collective worship is an integral part of the life of the school and is part of the daily experience of all pupils and staff. The school day is punctuated with prayer and a focus on the liturgical year offers a variety of opportunities and experiences. Art and music support the prayer life of the school and technology is skillfully used to enable pupils across both sites to come together virtually in weekly worship, in addition to being able to attend Mass together in the local church. Pupils and staff understand and value the importance of prayer. The religious education team is a strong role model in collective worship, leading by example and offering support and guidance. Displays around the school are vibrant and supportive of prayer. Pupils have opportunities to contribute to these displays and to write their own prayers. Pupils are proud of the outdoor prayer garden. Opportunities for groups of pupils to use it and the prayer areas in communal

spaces around the school could be further developed. Links with the parish are effective and the local priest provides valued support. Parents are positive about the school's work in nurturing faith and greatly value their children being able to attend Mass during the school day.

Leaders and governors understand the importance and centrality of the prayer life of the school. This is also reflected in the school policy on prayer and liturgy, the website, and school documentation. Leaders and teachers have a secure understanding of the liturgical year, seasons, and feasts, and ensure that prayer and collective worship are relevant and have a clear purpose and message. At Key Stage 2, they promote pupils' planning and leading of prayer and collective worship. Pupil evaluation of prayer and worship takes place, but this is only at class level in Key Stage 2. Staff are effectively inducted into the prayer life of the school. All staff meetings begin with prayer and professional development to support prayer and collective worship is regularly offered. The governing body is active in its commitment to the prayer life of the school and governors frequently attend and support whole school worship. Leaders have undertaken audits related to the prayer life of the school and the link governors for religious education undertake monitoring activities. This and pupil monitoring are not yet fully linked to evaluation or made explicit in the school development plan.

Information about the school

Full name of school	Holy Rood Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	137074
Full postal address of the school	Reception and Key Stage 1 site - Groundwell Road, Swindon, SN1 2LU Key Stage 2 site - Upham Road, Swindon, SN3 1DH
School phone number	01793 523802
Name of head teacher or principal	Miss Naomi Fry
Chair of governing board	Mrs Katarzyna Polewka Mendes
School Website	www.holyroodcatholicprimary.co.uk
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy
Age-range of pupils	4-11
Trustees	Diocese of Clifton
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	13 – 14 October 2016
Previous denominational inspection grade	Good

The inspection team

Basia McLaughlin	Lead inspector
Tracey Sessions	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