



Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection report for **St Bernadette Catholic Primary School**

URN: 109238

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

Date: 8-9 November 2023

Overall effectiveness The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school.....	1
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.....	1
Collective worship (p.7) The quality and range of liturgy and prayer provided by the school.....	1
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

- There is a strong sense of community and culture of welcome, which is based upon the distinctive Catholic identity and sense of mission that exists in the school.
- Pupils are enabled to develop excellent knowledge, skills and understanding in religious education, making use of key concepts and subject specific vocabulary.
- Pupils speak fluently and confidently about what it means to be part of a school community that is committed to following the teaching and example of Jesus.
- The school has made strong links between Catholic social teaching and its own school values, which enables pupils to articulate the theology underpinning their actions.
- The school has a flourishing partnership with the local parish.

What the school needs to improve:

- Through professional development which focuses on Catholic life and mission, ensure that all stakeholders are actively involved in reviewing and shaping the school's mission statement on an ongoing basis.
- Develop opportunities for expertise in religious education within the school to be shared more widely to benefit other schools within the diocese.
- Develop the opportunity for children to participate in more innovative and wide-ranging prayer times.

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	1

Pupils clearly understand and embrace the Catholic identity of their school. Children are very keen to become actively involved in school life, for example through the well-planned pupil chaplaincy programme. Pupils seek opportunities to support others in response to the Catholic mission of the school. For example, children from the chaplaincy team spoke about their desire to help others to grow in faith and to get closer to God. Current pupils and members of the Year 7 Legacy Group also talked about their involvement in whole school charity work, leading prayer for other pupils and thinking of practical ways in which they could care for our Common Home. Pupils know that they are valued and respected as individuals, and as a result, treat others with the same respect. One child commented 'our school is a community where we respect each other, and everyone is treated equally.'

The school's values and mission statement are known and lived out by both staff and pupils. This is seen in the strong culture of welcome that is provided by the school. One parent said, 'The school is filled with support and love. I feel that I am leaving my daughter with family.' Adults within the school are exemplary role models for children in terms of their relationships and attitudes towards each other. Staff provide the highest levels of pastoral care and the most vulnerable in the school community are supported, for example through 'The Hub' which is used by pupils with additional needs. The school environment also witnesses to the school's Catholic ethos and its mission. The provision of relationships and sex education at the school is carefully planned and meets all statutory and diocesan requirements.

Leaders and governors are fully involved in the development of Catholic life and mission and are aware of the school's strengths and areas for development. They see this as a core leadership responsibility. The school has strong links with the diocese, for example by participating in training

offered and their proactive response to diocesan policies and initiatives. Parish links are strong as a result of the work undertaken by leadership and governors to develop this partnership. For example, the school takes part in Mass at the parish church, has involvement with parish 'stay and play sessions' and works closely with the priest and parish outreach worker who are both regular visitors to the school and known to the children. The school has highly successful strategies for engaging with parents. School leadership spoke about the importance of the school having a 'family feel' and being a 'place of hope and sanctuary'. The impact of this was clearly seen through the positive responses that were received from parents during inspection and the high numbers of parents who attend school events. Leaders and governors ensure that policies and structures are in place to support staff. This is clearly valued by those who work at the school. Staff spoke about all being approachable and willing to support each other. New staff felt that as a result of their induction, they could actively participate and contribute to the Catholic life and mission of the school. Subject leaders make cross curricular links with religious education, evidenced in the work pupils produce and in the curriculum planning. Governors are actively involved in the evaluation of the Catholic life and mission of the school. As a result, they offer challenge as well as support when necessary.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade:.....

1

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.....

1

Leadership

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

2



Pupils are developing excellent knowledge, understanding and skills in religious education. This is evidenced in their independent learning, the articulate answers offered during lessons, their recall of previous learning and in the written work that is produced. Children enjoy their religious education lessons and value the opportunities given to think creatively and to discuss the opinions and ideas of others. The progress of pupils in religious education is strong across the school. Children have a good knowledge of the vocabulary required for the religious education curriculum, which is something that the school has been actively developing. The engagement and behaviour of pupils in lessons is of a high standard. Pupils are aware of how to improve their performance in religious education and can act upon it. For example, children referred to the prompt sheets used in their lessons as a way of helping them to understand how well they are doing and how to get better.

Teachers demonstrate a deep commitment to religious education and have high expectations of pupils within lessons. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the curriculum is strong, especially at key stage two. There is a consistent approach employed across the school to ensure that opportunities are provided for children to recall previous learning. There is evidence that children are given the opportunity to demonstrate their learning in a variety of ways, including through art and drama. Pupils value the opportunity to be creative within their religious education lessons and stated that they would like these opportunities to be more frequent. Tasks are scaffolded for learners and adults are used very effectively to optimise the learning for all pupils.

Leaders and governors ensure that the religious education curriculum taught is what is expected by the diocese. It has full parity with other core subjects, as indicated in class timetabling and demonstrated in the work completed by pupils during lessons. Leaders and governors ensure that

there are regular professional development opportunities for staff relating to religious education. This takes place in school and through diocesan events. Following external training, relevant information is shared with staff by the subject leader. Staff also value the opportunity to work with teachers in school to develop their own practice. Some members of staff gave examples of where they had watched lessons to develop their expertise in religious education. Although the subject lead works collaboratively within the Aquinas partnership, good practice and expertise in religious education identified in the school has yet to be shared more widely for the benefit of other diocesan schools. The monitoring of religious education is systematically planned during the year. Following monitoring activities, staff are given clear and constructive feedback relating to how they can develop practice. The impact of this feedback can be identified in the work produced in subsequent lessons. Moderation takes place internally and also externally with other schools in the Aquinas partnership. Leadership ensure that pupils are provided with engaging enrichment activities, for example visiting the church and Emmaus House.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade:.....

1

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

1



Prayer is embedded within daily life at the school, with regular opportunities to gather during the day. Pupils actively participate in prayer and worship. They are very reverent in their approach, offer reflective responses and support others by leading worship. Children have a good knowledge of scripture and can make links as to how this can help with daily life. For example, teaching about how to care for others. Children evaluate the quality of the prayer and liturgy that they have planned and identify how they might improve. For example, the school's pupil chaplaincy team were keen to share how each of their prayer sessions are planned, delivered, and then evaluated. Children could speak clearly about ways in which their prayer sessions could be adapted, so as to improve the experience for others next time.

There are a variety of different prayer opportunities available for pupils which are part of the Catholic tradition. The school has used a range of ways to pray including silence and meditation. Some children spoke about appreciating the opportunity to pause and reflect during prayer times in school. Children gather together regularly during the week, both as a whole school and as a key stage. Children demonstrate an excellent understanding of the Church's liturgical year and can explain how it is expressed through the prayer life of the school. Children could identify how the liturgical year is reflected in church and school, for example, by the colour of the cloths used. They also spoke about different liturgical services that were held in school such as Stations of the Cross during Lent. Holy days of obligation are also planned for within the school calendar. There are many opportunities for Eucharist to be celebrated at St Bernadette's. The school is looking to develop the number of opportunities that are now available for the Sacrament of Reconciliation to be experienced by children in school. Families are also involved in prayer and have the opportunity to come into school to share in worship with the children regularly. Although there are some creative prayer experiences offered, these could become more regular, so as to create a balance between

routine and more innovative times of prayer. Relevant staff have a good understanding of the liturgical norms of the church and help pupils to draw on these in their own preparation of liturgy. The school makes very good use of the spaces available in classes and around the school for prayer. Currently the school is looking to develop an outside prayer area.

Leaders and governors have developed a school policy for prayer and liturgy which enables a consistent approach to be taken to prayer and its structure across the school. The expectations of pupils build progressively and are based on their age and capacity. Significant moments of school life are identified, planned for, and then celebrated in prayer. Staff have received professional development to plan prayer and liturgy, so that they feel equipped and confident to support and lead prayer. This has been delivered by leadership in school and by external sources, such as the diocese and the parish priest. Although there is a naturally embedded daily pattern of prayer, there could be further opportunities to include more innovative times of prayer. Leaders ensure that sufficient budget is prioritised to adequately resource prayer and liturgy in school. As a result, all classes have their own resources to use. Prayer and liturgy are monitored by leadership and other stakeholders, such as governors. Following monitoring activities which include an evaluation of liturgy and pupil voice, changes are implemented by the school.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	109254
Full postal address of the school	Gladstone Road, Hengrove, Bristol BS14 9LP
School phone number	0117 3772373
Name of head teacher or principal	Barbara Lee
Chair of governing board	Mr. Mervyn Amesbury
School Website	www.st-bernadette-pri.bristol.sch.uk
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	N/A
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age-range of pupils	2-11 years
Trustees	Diocese of Clifton
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	February 2017
Previous denominational inspection grade	1

The inspection team

Nicola Slack	Lead inspector
Rita McLoughlin	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