



St Gregory's Catholic Primary School

URN: 140873

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

06–07 December 2023

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

Religious education (p.5)

The quality of curriculum religious education

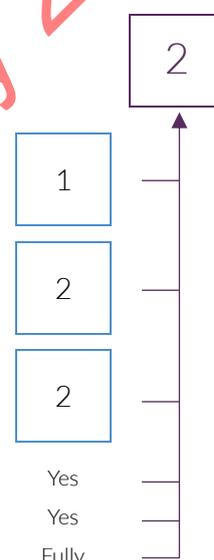
Collective worship (p.7)

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

- The creation of a prayer space with a chair, ways of praying, and a prayer tree for pupils to write their own prayers.
- The pastoral commitment of the school is a real strength.
- The new leadership team is having a significant impact on the school moving forward.
- The partnership with the local parish is very strong.
- Staff tangibly show that Christ is at the heart of the school community and are fully supportive of each person in the school.

What the school needs to improve

- Embed systems that enable all pupils take a full and active leadership role within the school.
- Create effective strategies to enable pupils to have a clear understanding of how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.
- Through effective planning enable pupils to be able to articulate fluently relative to their age and ability, what they have learned using key concepts and subject-specific vocabulary.

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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

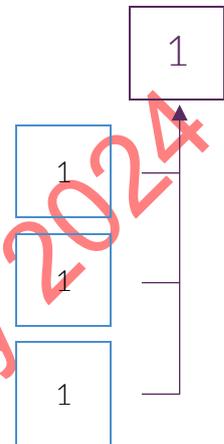
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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 Gregory's is a warm, welcoming school where all members of the community embrace the mission, 'Love of Learning, Love of One Another, Love of Our World, Love of God'. It is visible around the school and staff described St Gregory's as a place 'they feel valued and cared for as individuals,' and 'adults and children clearly reflect these values throughout every part of the school day'. Parents stated that they chose St Gregory's 'due to the nurturing environment' they immediately feel when touring the school. The school uses carefully chosen texts each half term, with a focus on personal development and to 'ease pupils back into school life.' Pupils stated that St Gregory's 'feels like home,' and 'feels like a family.' Pupils feel safe and understand fully the school is committed to following the teaching and example of Jesus in the Gospels. The pupils' response to Catholic Social Teaching, which is deeply embedded, is shown through the Mini-Vinnies who run cake sales, make shoebox presents, and they understand the theological underpinning of their actions. Behaviour of pupils is exemplary in lessons and around the school. Playground mediators from Year 6 look after younger pupils in early years and Year 1 at break and lunchtime on the playground.

The school's mission statement is embraced by all and implemented across the curriculum. Staff described leaders of the school as empowering the Catholic ethos, which 'comes from their heart, love and passion for the school and community.' St Gregory's is a community with Christ at the centre. This is visible in the quality of relationships, the strong culture of welcome, and going that extra mile. Parents describe the school as one which 'could not have done more in support'. Different cultures and backgrounds are celebrated through, for example, the house saints. Pastoral care is a real strength. Parents described the school as 'supporting one another, helping the local community and emphasising the Catholic values through all aspects of the children's learning journey.' The staff wellbeing committee, an initiative of the new head teacher, explores ways to ensure consideration of staff wellbeing is part of the decision-making process. Reflection spaces, in classrooms give pupils the

opportunity to reflect on the current liturgical time and contribute to pupils' formation. The pupil chaplaincy group shows the school's commitment to the education of the whole person, helping each to discover their own vocation. The school uses the TenTen programme for relationships, sex and health education and its own personal, social, health and economic programme, which is in compliance with Church teaching.

Leaders and well-qualified governors can clearly articulate the Church's mission for education. It is a core responsibility and ensures that Christ is at the centre of the school. Minutes show for example learning walks are carried out by governors and questioning which is both challenging and supportive. There is a comprehensive induction process for new staff detailing the significance of teaching in a Catholic school. Parish links are very strong, the parish priest is a member of the local governing committee. The parish priest visits the school regularly and explains the significance of the liturgy with the pupils. He stated that pupils attend Mass in the parish and parishioners attend Masses held in the school. Parents are fully supported in their role as first educators, describing the school as one that 'involves parents in all aspects,' and 'all my concerns and questions are always dealt with quickly.' Catholic Social Teaching involves parents and pupils in for example collecting for the foodbank and Children in Need. The English curriculum has threads running through it which highlight the Catholic curriculum. For example, Laudato Si is used to improve reading.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

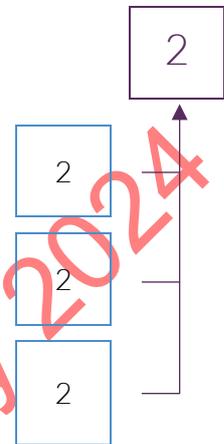
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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



Pupils are developing secure knowledge, understanding and skills that reflect the learning required. Data shows pupils, including those with disadvantages, make good progress in knowing more, remembering more, and doing more when measured against the planned curriculum for each year and achieve well in all age-phases and most year groups. In addition, data shows that pupils achieve at least average attainment when compared with other core curriculum subjects and, relative to their age and capacity, are religiously literate and engaged young people. Pupils can demonstrate what they have learnt for example they talk about the gurdwara as the place of worship for Sikhs, and the journey of Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem and they are able to talk in the context of how it relates to their lives. Lessons have good pace and use a variety of media, such as art and role play, to engage pupils. Where questioning is used effectively pupils were engaged and encouraged to show understanding. Pupils state that they enjoy their learning and approach their lessons with interest and enthusiasm and therefore behaviour in lessons is good. Pupils, however, are not able to fully articulate how well they are doing nor what they needed to do to improve.

Teachers describe religious education 'the most important subject at this school', and they communicate this effectively to their pupils. Teachers are confident in their subject knowledge and have a good understanding of how pupils learn, appropriate to the phase in which they are teaching. They use a variety of ways of learning, such as role play, to help pupils develop their own deep questions. For example, in lessons pupils wrote questions such as 'How did the wise men know that the star would lead them to Jesus?' and 'why did God choose Mary to be Jesus' mother?' The teachers' own enthusiasm for the subject is obvious and they celebrate pupils' effort by, for example, using the 'Gold Letter' which is awarded by the head teacher. They make links to the school values such as questioning how Jesus showed the values in his life. This was linked to one child consoling another in the lesson. Teachers give pupils space and time for reflection in lessons. For example, in response to a question about the wise men, pupils responded 'a gift from the heart'. Parents described the impact

on their children, for example, their child told them "X was having a difficult day today but it is important to help if someone is struggling, it is the right thing to do".

The Way, The Truth and The Life programme is used therefore ensuring that the school curriculum for religious education is a faithful expression of the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*. Religious education is comparable to other core curriculum subjects, in terms of professional development, resourcing, timetabling, staffing and accommodation. Whole school policies, such as those on homework, and reporting to parents are equitably applied across the curriculum. Leaders ensure that staff receive regular opportunities for professional development and the religious education subject leader is ensuring he is up to date with the *Religious Education Directory* and plans to cascade this to staff in readiness for when it is implemented fully. The subject leader for religious education has a clear vision for teaching and learning and a good level of expertise in securing this vision. Staff state, 'The RE leader is always there to provide advice and support to allow non-Catholic staff to teach effectively and with confidence'. As a result, teaching is consistently good. Pupil learning for all groups is enhanced through effective planning, adaptive teaching, other enrichment activities such as Forest School, and visits to other schools. Parents described the impact upon their children, they 'loved going to Ashford and St Lawrence to meet other schools.' Minutes of meetings which include head teacher reports, data drops and visits show leaders' and governors' self-evaluation of religious education is well informed.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

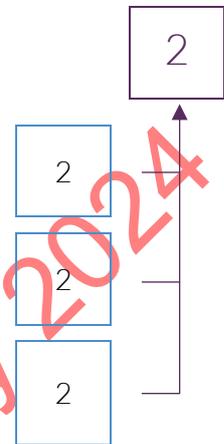
How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

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 respond well to the experiences of prayer and liturgy consciously relating them to their own lives. A time of prayer on the theme of hope pupils prayed 'from the heart' saying 'I hope that this Christmas homeless people have a home,' 'I had hope in my life when my sister was born.' They participate through joining in prayer, singing enthusiastically and respond to times of stillness reverently. Scripture is used well reflecting the Church's year and pupils know and understand its significance. Pupils know the liturgical year and its impact upon the prayer life of St Gregory's. The chaplaincy group works well with others in preparing engaging experiences of prayer and liturgy. They describe their role as, 'the chaplaincy does best to spread the Word of God.' And they ask others 'if they want to share prayers from the heart'. Staff demonstrate to pupils in the chaplaincy group how to lead in prayer and liturgy and they guide them well. This, however, liturgy is limited to the chaplaincy group. Pupils are altar servers, readers, operate technology and the parish priest encourages them to dress the altar in preparation for Mass.

Prayer is central to school life and forms part of the daily routine of St Gregory's. Pupils have a good knowledge of prayers and recite the school prayer enthusiastically. Staff provide opportunities for prayer which give pupils time for quiet reflection which leads to spontaneous prayer. Scripture passages are appropriate to the liturgical season enabling pupils and staff to engage fully with the liturgy. The school makes creative and imaginative use of spaces for prayer. These spaces reflect the liturgical season and are in classrooms and around the school. A special prayer space called the Prayer Tree, gives pupils space to be still, reflect and write their own prayer to hang on the tree. The vast majority of parents said the school works well with the local parish and are invited to be involved in the prayer life of the school. One described a feeling of 'honour that their child was preparing the altar for Mass' At an Advent Mass many parents and parishioners attended, 'the fact we are invited to enjoy Mass with the children is lovely.' Those not of the Catholic faith are helped to feel included in prayer

and liturgy. Parents state that, 'the school positively promotes and encourages all faiths to participate in prayer and worship.'

Minutes of meetings and discussions with governors show that leaders, including governors, understand the different levels and skills of participation that are reflective of the age and capacity of pupils. The school's policy on prayer and liturgy is formulated and fit for purpose and the majority of staff feel that it is useful in carrying out their role. The school calendar is planned to allow time to celebrate the Eucharist and the parish priest has opportunities to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation with pupils. Staff are aware of the variety of ways of praying which are a part of the Catholic tradition and use these within prayer and liturgy in the classroom. The majority of staff responding felt that leaders, including the parish priest, support and help them in planning and leading prayer experiences which staff stated have helped them 'feel more confident in their roles.' Resources and the budget for prayer and liturgy, which is a separate budget, ensures staff are supported in developing quality experiences of prayer and liturgy. The school improvement plan and governor minutes show that governors and leaders place the highest priority on the evaluation of prayer and liturgy. Through visits, observations, they monitor and evaluate so that planned improvements can be identified.

Date Published: 12th January 2024

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Gregory's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	140873
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	886/3889
Full postal address of the school	Nash Road, Margate, Kent, CT9 4BU
School phone number	0184 3221896
Head teacher	David Walker
Chair of Local Governing Body	Debbie O'Shea
School Website	http://www.st-gregorys.kent.sch.uk/
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Kent Catholic Schools' Partnership
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Academy
Admissions policy	Non-selective
Age-range of pupils	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	April 2016
Previous denominational inspection grade	2

The inspection team

Stephen C Horsman
Catherine Quirke

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