



## Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection report for **The Catholic School of St Gregory the Great**

URN: 115731

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

Date: 8-9 June 2023

Overall effectiveness The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school.....	2
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The school is fully compliant with the curriculum requirements laid down by the Bishops' Conference	x
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 Catholic School of St Gregory the Great is a welcoming, inclusive community rooted in its faith values.
- Pupils are respectful, demonstrating genuine care and affection towards each other and behaving extremely well.
- Leaders and staff are passionate about providing the best possible care and support for every child and their family.
- Teacher subject knowledge in religious education is strong and is supported through high-quality induction and training.
- The school works effectively with a range of partners, sharing practice and facilitating growth and development.

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:

- Provide pupils with opportunities to work independently and in a range of creative and original ways when learning in religious education and when planning and leading collective worship.
- Ensure that 10% of curriculum time is given to religious education and that religious education lessons in KS1 are balanced between old and new learning, to improve pupil progress.
- Develop forensic monitoring and searching evaluation by leaders and governors to inform school development planning in relation to the Catholic life of the school, religious education and collective worship.

## 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



All pupils embrace the school's mission statement, "We are a safe and happy school where we all shine as part of God's family." They have a strong sense of belonging to this highly inclusive Catholic community which is enriched by the diversity of its members and the quality of relationships at all levels. Pupils are active in their commitment to the school's values and respond positively to the many opportunities they have to reflect upon them and apply them to their lives. The pupil chaplaincy team ably leads the school vote for the following term's key value and delivers sessions about it to all classes. Pupils display genuine care and concern for each other and for others beyond the school community. They take responsibility and are proficient in regulating their behaviour. Pupils understand Catholic Social Teaching and regularly put their faith into action by visiting local care homes, supporting a foodbank, Cafod, the NSPCC and through the school Go Givers initiative. They have a deep-rooted sense of their own self-worth and the value of every individual as a child of God, something which is celebrated at every opportunity. Pupils relish opportunities to take on leadership responsibilities linked to helping others, such as being chaplaincy team members or restorative stars.

The excellent provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school is rooted in the commitment of the senior leadership team and governors to Catholic tradition and practice. Leaders are passionate about ensuring that every child is welcome, provided for and not just included but celebrated. Staff embrace this approach and are strong role models in actively contributing to the faith life of the school community. The extensive pastoral team is highly skilled in supporting pupils and their families, especially the most vulnerable. Parents greatly value this and feel the school "goes above and beyond". There are excellent systems, such as staff check-in, to support staff well-being and staff feel valued. The induction of staff into working in a Catholic school is comprehensive and effective. The Catholic life of the school is further supported by the well-

embedded chaplaincy provision and a growing focus on Catholic Social Teaching. The school environment clearly reinforces its Catholic identity and ethos as do the house names and the work on 'saints like us'. Personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE), and relationship, health and sex education (RHSE) are well thought through, planned and delivered to reflect Catholic teachings and principles.

Leaders and governors see themselves as guardians of 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 work closely with parents, providing many opportunities for them to come to the school. The school website and newsletter are vibrant and informative. Parents say the school supports the spiritual social and moral development of their child very well, in addition to supporting parents as the first educators of their children. The school responds well to diocesan policies and initiatives and makes good use of diocesan training opportunities and resources. The school engages in collaborative work within the Little Way Partnership and is playing a key part in the establishment of a Catholic multi-academy trust. Furthermore, it is recognised as a centre of excellence for the inclusion of every child. The Catholic life and mission of the school are a key area in the school development plan with priority developments identified. Leaders and governors undertake some monitoring of the Catholic life of the school, but this is not yet integrated into a formal plan of monitoring and evaluation.

## 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. This is stronger in Key Stage 2 than in Key Stage 1. Pupils are familiar with the routine structure of lessons and respond well to regular opportunities for retrieval of previous learning. Pupils of all ages and abilities use religious vocabulary well and can link their learning to daily life. They have a strong understanding of appropriate behaviours for learning and want to be competent learners. They have positive relationships with their teachers, whom they value. Pupils take responsibility for their learning and consequently, pupils' behaviour in lessons is excellent. Most pupils enjoy religious education. They value being able to share ideas with a partner but would welcome the opportunity for a greater range of independent and creative learning activities, debate, and group work. Pupils take pride in their work which is well presented. They respond positively to teacher feedback in their books. Pupils speak confidently about how they learn but some pupils struggle to articulate how they have made progress in terms of religious education knowledge and how they can achieve a deeper understanding of the topics covered.

Teachers have an excellent understanding of how pupils learn and ensure that their lesson planning meets the individual learning needs of their pupils. The school learning tree and a consistent whole-school approach to structuring and talking about learning are evident in all classes. Teachers communicate high expectations about religious education. They create a safe, positive, and respectful environment for learning, encouraging, and celebrating pupils' achievements. The religious education lead provides regular, valued support relating to lesson content and delivery. As a result, teachers are confident and feel well-supported to teach religious education. Teaching partners (assistants) are effectively deployed to support pupil progress and participation. The teaching of religious education is well-resourced and high-quality, regular training opportunities are provided. Teachers are effective in planning lessons that retrieve and consolidate pupils' previous learning. At times, and especially in Key Stage 1, the imbalance between previous and new learning

slows the pace of the lesson. Teacher questioning is effective and frequently focused on embedding learning. In the best examples, teachers push pupils to acquire or demonstrate a greater depth of understanding. Teachers affirm pupils by giving them verbal feedback on their work and marking books regularly.

Leaders and governors ensure that the content of the taught curriculum meets the requirements of the *Religious Education Directory*, however, the school is not currently compliant in ensuring that 10% of curriculum time is given to the teaching of religious education. The percentage time allocation at Key Stage 1 is lower than at Key Stage 2, but both key stages need to be addressed to ensure compliance. The subject leader of religious education and senior leaders have carefully considered the intent, implementation, and desired impact of the religious education curriculum so that progression in learning is clear and meets the needs of all learners. The introduction of learning journeys supports pupil understanding of the bigger picture of their learning over time. Leaders have systems for monitoring the delivery of religious education. These include lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work, seeking the views of pupils, and analysing pupil progress data. Governors meet regularly with leaders and undertake some monitoring activities of their own. The findings of monitoring activities undertaken are not systematically formally evaluated and referenced against an evaluation framework.

## 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 show reverence and respect during prayer and participate willingly. They have a strong understanding of the liturgical year and of the importance of prayer in responding to world events. Appropriate to their age and capacity, they are familiar with traditional Catholic prayers and the use of Scripture in prayer but have limited opportunities for spontaneous prayer or using a variety of prayer styles. Older pupils have regular opportunities to plan and lead worship in their classes. They take this responsibility seriously and use the planning framework provided by staff. However, they do not have the flexibility to move beyond this framework and many would welcome the opportunity to be more creative or to lead worship for other classes or larger groups. Pupils do not evaluate the worship they have led. Younger pupils are invited to choose elements of their class worship. Chaplaincy leaders support daily prayers in their classes and are responsible for the prayer table. Pupils talk enthusiastically of the prayer bears and the opportunity to take them home and share the school prayer book with their families. Pupils have the willingness and ability to take on a greater range of leadership responsibilities in collective worship across the school.

Collective worship is a key feature of daily life at the school and prayer is included in all school gatherings and celebrations. It also has a high profile in school newsletters and on the website. Collective worship reflects the liturgical calendar, the values of the school and responds to world events. There is a weekly schedule of worship which includes Sunday gospel, school values, hymn singing and class worship. Pupils have termly opportunities to attend Mass at the local church and have recently participated in Stations of the Cross and a May procession. Staff support pupils in preparing class worship by providing planning grids and passages from the Bible. Pupils are familiar and comfortable with the format and adhere to it, as a result, there is limited variety in class collective worship. An inviting and vibrant school chapel is at the heart of the school and is cherished by pupils. The head and deputy head facilitate Wednesday morning prayers before school and family meditation sessions, which enable families to join their children in prayer at the school.

Parents are positive about the opportunities for prayer provided by the school and the support given by the school to the sacramental programme and parish.

Leaders and governors understand the importance and centrality of collective worship in the school. This is reflected in the school policy on prayer and liturgy produced by the Little Way Partnership and the prayer progression document which maps pupils' participation as they progress through the school. Care has been taken to acknowledge the different home languages that may be used in prayer by pupils and to be sensitive to the prayer practices of those of other faiths. 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. Staff are effectively inducted into the prayer life of the school. All staff meetings begin with prayer and staff have professional development opportunities to develop their own understanding and confidence. The governing body is active in its commitment to the prayer life of the school and governors frequently attend and support whole school worship. Collective worship is identified as a whole school priority in the school development plan. The provision for it is monitored and regularly reviewed but the quality and impact of it are not systematically or rigorously evaluated.

## Information about the school

Full name of school	The Catholic School of St Gregory the Great
School unique reference number (URN)	115731
Full postal address of the school	Saint James Square, Cheltenham, GL50 3QG
School phone number	01242 513659
Name of head teacher or principal	Charlotte Blanch
Chair of governing board	Anna Elliott
School Website	<a href="http://www.st-gregorygreat.gloucs.sch.uk">www.st-gregorygreat.gloucs.sch.uk</a>
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	n/a
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age-range of pupils	4-11
Trustees	Diocese of Clifton
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	November 2016
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

## The inspection team

Basia McLaughlin	Lead inspector
Samantha Land	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