

Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection report for **Our Lady's Catholic Primary School**

URN: 148339

Carried out on behalf of the Right Rev. David Oakley, Bishop of Northampton on:

Date: 28-29 June 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	Partially

Summary of key findings

What the school does well

- The mission statement is embedded throughout the school. It is well-known and understood by all and has a positive impact on relationships across the school community.
- The quality of pastoral care for pupils as individuals made in the image of God, results in children presenting as happy, confident and feeling safe and secure.
- Staff are fully committed to the value of religious education and recognise its importance in developing religious literacy and pupils' ability to think ethically and morally.
- Leaders and the parish priest work hard to forge outstanding links between the school and local parish, impacting strongly on their ability to serve the community
- Prayer and liturgy is central to the life of the school and a prominent part of any gathering of staff, pupils or leaders.

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:

- The school has planned for pupils to have more opportunities to apply the principles of Catholic Social Teaching but this needs to be seen in practice.
- Leaders should monitor the marking and feedback policy to ensure that it is implemented with fidelity and informs pupils of ways to improve their learning in religious education.
- The accuracy and consistency of teacher assessment needs to improve so that progress of different pupil groups from their starting points can be evaluated ensuring the needs of all pupils are being met.

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:.....

2

Pupil outcomes

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

2

Provision

The quality of provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school

2

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school

2



The school's mission statement: 'Jesus said, "Love one another as I have loved you"', is deeply embedded throughout the school and well-known and understood by all pupils at Our Lady's. School values, founded upon the Fruit of the Holy Spirit are less well known and some pupils confuse them with behaviours for learning. However, a new programme teaching the virtues is planned to replace the current focus on values and pupils' daily interactions with each other indicate that they understand the importance of acting with love and compassion. Pupils are proud of the way their school encourages them to love and respect others in order to follow Jesus' example. They say that the relatively few children that misbehave are given time to 'stop and think' and have an opportunity for reconciliation. Pupils value the chaplaincy provision and regularly participate in the activities planned for them. However, although pupils very readily engage in charitable activities such as contributing to the Food Bank and the Christmas Caritas Appeal, the opportunity for them to respond to the demands of Catholic Social Teaching is at a relatively early stage and pupils in these action groups are not yet sure of their role and purpose.

Staff at all levels are inspired by the school's charism and are strongly supportive of activities which bring the church's mission alive in their community. Staff firmly believe that Christ is at the heart of the school. One commented that; 'on a daily basis it is a privilege and joy to come to a place of work where Jesus, our Saviour, is visibly present'. Most parents are very positive about the impact of the school on their children and ninety two per cent see staff as positive role models. One said, 'The children are well supported and are engaged in all aspects of the Catholic faith'. Chaplaincy work is led by a core team including the parish priest, parish link worker, headteacher and chaplain. They meet regularly and their activities includes a voluntary Tuesday lunchtime Mass in the parish church on site, which is well attended. Projects for pupils such as the decoration of a large cross in memory of a past parish priest, impact on the physical embodiment of the Catholic character of the school. All pupils participated by adding their fingerprint as part of the decoration. Pastoral care is

characterised by an explicit commitment to supporting pupils as individuals made in the image of God so that the vulnerable receive effective care. Relationship and health education is delivered using the new Ten:Ten programme. It has gone through full consultation with parents and governors and meets diocesan and statutory requirements.

Leaders, including governors and representatives from Our Lady Immaculate Catholic Academies Trust, ensure that developing and maintaining the Catholic life and mission of the school is a key responsibility for all. Staff receive regular, training on this aspect of school life including at the induction of new staff. Leaders and the parish priest work hard to forge outstanding links between school and local parish, impacting strongly on their ability to serve the community. Policies and procedures actively promote the Bishop's vision for education and are regularly monitored by governors holding senior staff to account. Governors are involved in the school's self-evaluation process and regularly speak to pupils to ensure their views are considered. Staff report that leaders are open, helpful and treat them with respect, resulting in a positive impact on staff workload and well-being. All leaders embrace the values of the Gospel and Catholic Social Teaching, guiding decisions on curriculum, resourcing, and the inclusive nature of the school but pupils' involvement in evaluation is in its infancy.

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



The school uses 'Come and See', for planning work in religious education, as recommended by the diocese. This is appropriately sequenced to support learning and as a result most pupils are acquiring the knowledge, understanding and skills required by the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*. Teaching strategies such as recapping work from previous lessons, clear learning objectives and teacher's good questioning skills are evident in some classrooms and this help pupils to make good progress in knowing more. However, there is considerable variation in the quality of teaching across the school. Pupils say they are not tested or quizzed to strengthen their ability to recall information, but most are becoming increasingly religiously literate, as this is a focus in all lessons and is demonstrated by pupils' ability to discuss ethically and morally. Pupils are proud of their work in books which shows good coverage, is well presented, and personalised by individual pupil photographs. They say they enjoy religious education lessons when given the opportunity to be creative and pupils can work independently but evidence of teachers using these strategies is inconsistent. Behaviour for learning is good overall and attainment in religious education is an improving trend but in a small number of pupils in key stage two, active engagement is an issue. The support for children with special educational needs by additional adults is strong in some classes but not all.

Staff are dedicated to the value of religious education for pupils and can articulate how it underpins the whole curriculum. In the best lessons, good quality resources are used well to enhance the learning. Training and support for the delivery of religious education lessons is regular and planned well in advance. However, the subject knowledge of teachers is very varied, often depending on background and career stage. Although staff talk positively about the support they can access when needed, subject knowledge is not being developed proactively and this affects the teacher's ability

to deepen pupils' understanding with follow up questions and their ability to provide next-steps feedback. Teachers value and praise pupils' efforts, encouraging and motivating them to do their best. The marking and feedback policy incorporates a reflective question for pupils to respond to and live marking in lessons. However, the requirement for teachers to feedback from marking daily on the 'What are our next steps in learning?' sheet is not being implemented and significant misconceptions in books are being missed. Pupils know how to improve grammatical errors but not their religious education knowledge and skills.

Leaders clearly prioritise religious education as a core subject in the school supporting its continuous development and resourcing. The involvement of the headteacher as an enthusiastic subject lead and the chair of governors in regular monitoring and evaluation activities is testament to the importance placed by leaders on achieving good outcomes for pupils in this subject. Leadership of religious education was taken on by the headteacher this academic year in response to the previous subject lead's lengthy illness. She is well regarded for modelling her faith, her expertise and commitment to her staff. Self-evaluation activities and outcomes are shared with governors and link clearly to priorities for action in the School Improvement Plan. They are an honest reflection of the school's strengths and areas for development, but some actions are at an early stage and need embedding. Leaders need to ensure that monitoring of attainment is always compared to targets based on a pupil's prior attainment. Currently, progress of different groups of pupils, especially those with special educational needs and the more able, is unclear, limiting intervention work.

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

Prayer and worship are central to the life of the school and pupils respond reverently when praying together. They appreciate the large range of experiences that form a key part of every gathering and celebration such as classroom prayers, Gospel assemblies, 'Sacred Space' reflections, reconciliation opportunities with the parish priest fortnightly, Taizé worship, whole school Masses for feast days and celebrations and hymn singing. A voluntary Mass is provided every Tuesday lunchtime that is well attended, and pupils are keen to take on the role of reader or altar server on these occasions. A governor present at one of the voluntary Masses said that 'a series of children said their own prayer aloud for something or someone that was important to them, whilst the others listened respectfully and silently. I felt it said a great deal about how confident and safe the children felt in that environment, that they were happy to pray in this way in front of their peers'. Most pupils demonstrate a good understanding of how the liturgical year influences the cycle of prayers and say that they are proud of how their faith binds them together as a community.

Staff and parents talk enthusiastically about prayer and liturgy provision and its positive impact on the lives of pupils, in particular on their spiritual and moral development. One member of staff wrote: 'We are blessed to have a church attached to our school with so many opportunities to strengthen the faith of pupils, staff and our wider community'. Prayer spaces across the school are imaginative, creative and well cared for. Pupils use them as a focus for daily prayers and treat them with due respect. Liturgies are supported by relevant passages of scripture and enhanced through use of reflective music, hymn singing and religious artefacts. The chaplaincy team has formed strong connections between the school, parishes, and local community and the parish priest interacts regularly with pupils. He offers support not only with prayer groups but also to support staff with their religious education subject knowledge. Catholic pupils volunteer to go to him for confession and non-Catholic pupils like to meet informally to discuss problems they feel he could help with. The school has junior mission teams of older pupils to focus on liturgy, community and environment

but they are unclear of their role, and are yet to show impact. Currently pupils are enthusiastic about taking on these roles but have very limited opportunities to plan and lead.

Leaders are skilled at communicating the importance of prayer and liturgy in a Catholic school, stimulating enthusiasm in the community they serve. Governors ensure the allocation of resources, including staffing, to prayer and liturgy is a clear priority. The decision to budget for a non-teaching lay chaplain is a strongly positive statement. Governors also monitor the impact of prayer and liturgy on the school community. An up to date policy is in place that outlines the comprehensive calendar of dates for liturgical celebrations planned over the school year. Opportunities to celebrate the Eucharist at significant times of the year, including feast days and Holy Days of Obligation are a clear priority. Leaders ensure staff receive induction training that includes support for their ability to participate, contribute and model the prayer life provision in the school and there is ongoing support from the lay chaplain. This results in staff being both confident and competent about leading prayer. Many pupils are inspired to take on active roles in various liturgies but have not yet had much opportunity to plan or lead these occasions.

Information about the school

Full name of school	Our Lady's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	148339
Full postal address of the school	Henshaw Road, Wellingborough, NN8 2BE
School phone number	01933 224900
Name of head teacher or principal	Miss Elise Gribble
Chair of governing board	Mr Joseph Burns
School Website	www.ourladycatholic.northants.sch.uk
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Our Lady's Catholic Academies Trust
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy
Age-range of pupils	4-11 years
Trustees	Diocese of Northampton
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	June 2016
Previous denominational inspection grade	Good

The inspection team

Jane Crow	Lead inspector
Amanda Dowling	Team inspector
Name of inspector	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

