



# St Raphael's Catholic Primary School

URN: 101925

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Archbishop of Westminster

19–20 June 2025

## 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

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

2

The school is fully compliant with the general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishops' Conference

Yes

The school is fully compliant with any additional requirements of the diocesan bishop

Yes

The school has responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection

Fully

2

## Compliance statement

- The school is fully compliant in relation to the general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishops' Conference.
- The school is fully compliant in relation to any additional requirements of the diocesan bishop.
- All areas for improvement outlined in the previous diocesan inspection have been addressed in full.

## What the school does well

- School leaders and governors work effectively together to clearly articulate the Church's mission and ensure that Christ is at the heart of the school.
- Pupils' engagement and enjoyment of their lessons in religious education results in excellent outcomes and a high level of religious literacy, as they respond to the challenge of learning.
- Pupils understand and embrace their mission, 'As we walk with Jesus, we love, live and learn.' which is reflected in the prayer life of the school.
- There is a strong culture of welcome and support for the most vulnerable pupils in the school community, so that all pupils are encouraged to 'flourish'.
- The excellent home/school/parish partnership is a reflection of the building of a strong, faith-filled community.

## What the school needs to improve

- To further develop the work on racial justice, equality and diversity so that the universal Church may be fully celebrated in the community.
- To encourage pupils to develop greater independence in their learning in religious education.
- To enable pupils to experience a deeper encounter with God in prayer and liturgy by offering a wider range of engaging and creative experiences.

## 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



Pupils at St Raphael's school embrace their mission of faith, 'As we walk with Jesus, we love, live and learn.' Pupils avidly seek opportunities to grow in virtue, pursue the common good and serve those in need by participating in a wide range of leadership roles offered to them, such as the school council, diversity champions, prayer and liturgy chaplains and the eco-council. Pupils talk positively about the difference they make to their local, national, and global communities, and they have a developed understanding of the theology underpinning their actions. One pupil chaplain explained that their role was 'fulfilling a promise to God to follow in Jesus' footsteps, doing as much as you can throughout your life.' Pupils' behaviour is exemplary, showing a deep respect for their own personal dignity and others. Inspired by the school's charism of St Raphael helping humanity, one chaplain explained, 'I love helping people who are less fortunate than ourselves,' adding, 'We try to dedicate our lives to God.' Pupils can clearly express the understanding that they are made in the image and likeness of God. They demonstrate a deep respect for others, which is strengthened by a programme of learning about other faiths. Respect for others would be further enhanced by continuing the work, already begun, of promoting racial justice, equality and diversity.

St Raphael's excels at being a Christ-centred school community. Parents speak warmly of the welcome provided to all families. One parent stated, 'My child is very happy at St Raphael's and feels it is the right environment for them to flourish in their faith.' A member of staff declared that 'Christ is at the very centre of all we do at St Raphael's.' Another commented, 'It is a place where the presence of Christ is at the heart of everything we do – from the way we support one another, to how we nurture each child with love, dignity and respect.' Staff are exemplary role models. They embrace the mission of the school, which is encapsulated not only in their

relationships with each other, but also in the highest levels of care and nurture they provide for all pupils, particularly the most vulnerable. The school environment bears exceptional witness to its Catholic identity and, through religious imagery and vibrant displays, reflects the presence of Christ throughout. The school's Catholic character is further enhanced with provision of the prayer gardens, and dedicated prayer room. The provision for relationships, sex and health education is carefully planned and meets all diocesan requirements. The programme is well-resourced and promotes a holistic vision of the human person.

Leaders and governors rightly see the school as a source of inspiration to the whole community, and are highly ambitious about its contribution to the lives of those it serves. Governors are committed, well-organised and conscientious. Governors' minutes bear witness to their determination to support the school's mission through support and challenge. They ensure that all policies reflect the Catholic mission of the school and have prioritised investment in this area, so that resources are targeted to support those in greatest need to 'flourish,' as articulated by one governor. The leadership team shows their commitment to the principles of Catholic social teaching through the provision of a planned curriculum closely matched to the *Religious Education Directory*. Leaders and governors work closely with the diocese, attending training and working in partnership to enthusiastically respond to diocesan policies and initiatives. They are highly committed to the further development of all staff. Leaders and governors recognise the parish as being central to the Catholic life of the school, which is demonstrated through the flourishing partnership with the local parish. The school builds on this partnership by providing a vibrant parent engagement strategy, ensuring that parents are kept well-informed about key events in the Catholic life of the school. As a result, one parent observed that 'the school has strong links with the parish'; another commented, 'The school works closely with our local parish and children actively take part in the Catholic life of the church.'

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

### Religious education key judgement grade

#### Pupil outcomes

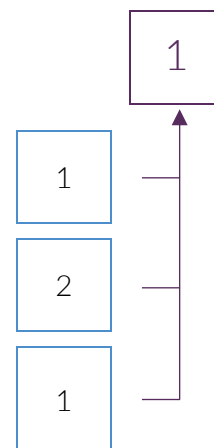
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

#### 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 excellent knowledge, understanding and skills in religious education which exemplifies the learning required by the Religious Education Directory. At the beginning of lessons, pupils are invited to recall prior learning through retrieval practice, reviewing their knowledge and linking what they already know to new learning. There is a consistent structure throughout the school so that pupils are enabled to progress through their learning, fully engaged and using their knowledge, understanding and skills effectively to reflect spiritually and think theologically. They are adept at relating learning in lessons to their own lives. Pupils use subject-specific vocabulary seamlessly during class discussions. They can work both collaboratively and independently resulting in excellent progress. Pupils are given the opportunity to explore their learning through the use of 'big questions' and sentence starters. The sentence starter, 'I love God with all my heart, soul and strength means...' was ended by a Year 5 pupil: 'putting God first whatever we're doing, everywhere we go.' Effective adult support and excellent visual resources are used so that all groups are given the help they need to achieve success. Achievement in religious education is above average when compared with other core subjects. Rich and creative learning activities enhance pupils' engagement and allow them to explore their learning through a wide variety of media. Presentation of pupils' work is of a high standard. Pupils have a clear understanding of how well they are doing, and of what they need to improve.

Teachers demonstrate a commitment to the value of religious education, and they communicate this effectively to their pupils. As a result of regular professional development, through diocesan courses and support from the religious education subject leaders, planning is thorough. Well-designed lessons extend pupils' knowledge and understanding so that pupils learn well. Scripture is used as an integral part of lessons which has given pupils the opportunity to become

skilled at linking messages in scripture to their daily lives. Teachers' questioning encourages pupils to delve deeper into their theological understanding to maximise learning. A child in reception class was able to share the knowledge, 'I know that Jesus loves us even if we are different.' Teachers give pupils space and time for reflection within lessons, as observed in a Year 4 class where pupils reflected on the importance of forgiveness and silently offered their responses in written form, placed on the prayer table. Pupils' achievements are celebrated in whole-school assemblies, and their work is proudly displayed in classrooms and corridors. Pupils would now benefit from developing notable independence in their learning in order to fully embrace the challenge of learning with interest, passion and enthusiasm.

Leaders and governors have ensured that the religious education programme faithfully delivers a sequential, imaginative and creative curriculum as set out in the Directory. They have ensured that religious education enjoys a parity with the other core subjects in terms of staff training, resources, and accommodation. The religious education subject leaders are inspirational in supporting staff in planning and delivering the scheme of work so that innovative and creative teaching methods are used to promote active learning and fully engage pupils. Staff speak appreciatively of the generous support and the 'open-door' policy provided by the subject leaders. Thorough, collaborative planning sessions secure coherence across the ages and phases of learning. Through carefully planned lessons, and high-quality resources, additional adults in class are highly effective in supporting vulnerable pupils to achieve. Action plans are shared with governors so that priorities are implemented, and their impact analysed. The link-governor for religious education visits the school regularly, providing a clear and strategic vision for development. Regular, forensic monitoring and analysis by the religious education subject leaders and governors result in accurate self-evaluation which leads to outstanding outcomes for pupils. One staff member commented, 'Our shared mission, rooted in Gospel values, inspires me to give my best and to help every child grow academically, emotionally and spiritually.'

## 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

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

2

Pupils engage reverently in the prayer life of the school. A range of ways of praying is offered to pupils, including traditional prayer, meditation, silence, and reflection. Pupils readily take on the responsibility to lead worship with the support and guidance of class teachers. Class prayer and liturgy files evidence pupils' evaluation of the classroom worship they have planned. Pupil chaplains work together with leaders to plan prayer opportunities for the school community, praying the rosary during the months of May and October, leading prayers in Gospel assemblies and in the prayer garden, and being responsible for class prayer bags to support prayer at home. Scripture is central to prayer and is used meaningfully to deepen pupils' experience. Appropriate liturgical music is chosen during liturgies to provide a calm, prayerful atmosphere. Pupils know a repertoire of hymns which complement liturgies and are linked to the liturgical year. Designated prayer spaces are provided throughout the school, in the classrooms, and in the prayer gardens and prayer room. The prayer life of the school is a full expression of the Church's liturgical year. Pupils are able to describe the parts of the Church's liturgical year and articulate how it influences the prayer life of the school. A member of staff observed, 'The children understand that prayer is part of school life and are respectful when taking part in liturgies.'

Prayer supports and nourishes the school community and pupils draw inspiration from the lives of the saints. Designated prayer areas provide a focus for prayer, and pupils can say their daily prayers with confidence and reverence. Teachers designate moments of silence during prayer to facilitate deeper reflection and contemplation. Prayer times are a cherished part of the school's daily life. The school community works hard to recognise the wider Church family and, through its prayer life, helps pupils to develop a deeper understanding of the Gospel message and the call to serve. The school's partnership with the local parish priest ensures that pupils participate in the sacraments. Staff, including senior leaders, are models of good practice to other staff and

pupils by engaging with and leading prayer and liturgy. Pupils are given regular opportunities to plan, lead and evaluate liturgies. A staff member described the prayer life of the school and its impact: 'We pray throughout the day as a school and all children are respectful during these times,' adding, 'I feel truly blessed to work at this school.' Pupils would now benefit from being offered a deeper encounter with God in prayer and liturgy through a wider range of engaging and creative experiences.

Leaders and governors ensure that pupils in the school are offered a range of meaningful experiences of prayer and worship. They support staff to lead appropriate prayer and liturgy through a clear, effective policy and regular professional development opportunities. Leaders and governors ensure that the school calendar reflects significant dates in the liturgical calendar, resulting in a wealth of opportunities for pupils to celebrate the Eucharist. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is celebrated at key times in the liturgical year. Parents are invited to attend assemblies, liturgies and Masses through newsletters, social media and the school website. Praying at home is encouraged using prayer bags which are sent home with artefacts (candle, cross, rosary beads) at key times during the liturgical year. Governors prioritise a generous budget for resources, for developing prayer areas and for providing professional development for all staff. Staff are given ample opportunity to attend relevant diocesan courses, deanery meetings and moderation days. As part of the school's self-evaluation, staff, parent and pupil voice questionnaires are regularly used by leaders to review and improve the quality and impact of prayer and liturgy. A staff member observed, 'The pupils all enjoy engaging with prayer and worship and exploring their faith. By teaching and growing together with our school staff, I have found my own faith deepening.'



## Information about the school

Full name of school	St Raphael's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	101925
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	3073508
Full postal address of the school	St Raphael's Catholic Primary School, Hartfield Avenue, Northolt, UB5 6NL
School phone number	02088410848
Headteacher	Tracey Brosnan
Chair of governors	Barbara Amponsah-Abedi
School Website	<a href="http://www.st-raphaels.org/">www.st-raphaels.org/</a>
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	N/A
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Voluntary Aided School
Admissions policy	Non-selective
Age-range of pupils	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	June 2018
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

## The inspection team

Norah Flatley	Lead
Tracey Peters	Team
Vera Jajechnyk	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