

# St Francis of Assisi Catholic Primary School

URN: 100494

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Archbishop of Westminster

03–04 July 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

1

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

1

## Compliance statement

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

- Pupils and staff fully embrace the school's Catholic ethos, with the mission statement and the example of St Francis guiding daily life.
- Leaders and governors have worked strategically and collaboratively to guide the school through challenging times with faith and resilience. This has resulted in a community which is growing stronger by the day.
- As a result of teachers' high expectations and strong subject knowledge, pupils demonstrate excellent scriptural knowledge and religious literacy.
- Parents value the work of the school. They speak highly of the school's inclusive, faith-filled environment and the support they receive from staff.
- Pupils know that they are 'all made in the image and likeness of Christ'. Their behaviour towards other people and themselves reflects their understanding of this.

## What the school needs to improve

- Deliberately plan Catholic social teaching across the curriculum so the children can apply the knowledge they are acquiring in religious education further.
- Extend the more able by explicitly teaching the *Religious Education Directory* knowledge lenses, thereby helping pupils make meaningful links between scripture, our beliefs (the creed), the sacraments and the pupils' lives.

## 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 Francis of Assisi wholeheartedly embrace its mission, which is encapsulated in St Francis' own words: 'Start by doing what's necessary; then do what's possible; and suddenly you are doing the impossible.' Pupils love attending school, where they treat each other with respect and listen attentively in all situations. As one Year 3 child aptly put it, 'This school is like our second home'. Pupils take pride in their inclusive environment, which welcomes everyone regardless of background. In a discussion with inspectors a group of pupils reflected that this was because all are made in the image and likeness of God. This fosters a profound sense of worth among the pupils. The way pupils discuss their faith, their school, and their peers demonstrates a clear commitment to moral development. Over recent years, the school has diligently integrated Catholic teachings into religious education lessons, and students are beginning to apply these principles across other areas of the curriculum. The next step involves making deliberate curriculum decisions to further develop a comprehensive Catholic curriculum. The pupil chaplaincy team, who apply for their roles and are highly regarded, play an active role in planning and evaluating chaplaincy provision.

The quality of provision for the Catholic life and mission at St Francis School is exemplary. Staff wholeheartedly embrace the school's Catholic ethos, with many travelling considerable distances to be part of this unique community. Those with experience in other schools recognise St Francis as a special place. Pastoral care at the school is outstanding, with staff consistently going above and beyond for their families. This dedication does not go unnoticed, as one parent remarked that a staff member had 'helped her more than they would ever know'. Pupils are actively encouraged to take on leadership roles in various teams, including the stewardship team, chaplaincy team, and communications team. They feel heard and work diligently towards

their action plans. The chaplaincy team maintains the prayer garden, leads prayer and liturgy and organises fundraising for local charities. The school supports numerous local charities including Calling London, The Passage, and Cancer Research. The vibrant school environment is adorned with displays reflecting its Catholic culture, from regularly updated exhibits to permanent features like paintings of house saints and representations of the stations of the cross. The relationships, sex and health education programme is firmly rooted in Church teachings.

Leaders and governors have a clear vision grounded in the Church's mission in education. As one governor stated, 'we know that whatever happens we have to stay first and foremost a Catholic school'. This commitment ensures that Catholic life is at the heart of all school activities. During challenging times, such as the aftermath of the Grenfell Tower fire, leaders have drawn on their faith to guide the community. They fully embrace the bishop's vision, staying aligned with diocesan direction through regular training. The chair of governors also serves on the Westminster Education Commission, highlighting their active engagement. St Francis of Assisi is part of a collaboration that employs an RE and Catholic Life leader to support leadership across four schools, demonstrating significant investment in this area. The school maintains excellent links with the local parish, with pupils and staff speaking highly of the parish priest, who frequently visits the school. Parents are extremely positive, with one noting, 'St Francis has such a supportive and inclusive community with Christ at the centre. The staff truly live their faith and are wonderful role models.' The partnership with parents begins early, with initiatives like the prayer bear in Early Years, and the school provides extensive resources to support Catholic life at home.

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

### Religious education key judgement grade

#### Pupil outcomes

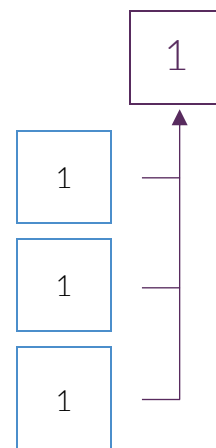
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

#### 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 in religious education demonstrate exceptional achievement and enjoyment in their learning. From an early age, children are exposed to a diverse range of parables, miracles and other scriptures, resulting in an excellent recall of these texts. This strong foundation in scripture is evident in their religious literacy, with young pupils expressing profound insights. For instance, a Year 2 child wrote, 'God is revealed best to me in scripture. In the Good Samaritan, it taught me to not just follow the rules but to follow your heart. It makes me feel loved.' Tracking data indicates that all pupils make consistently good progress. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities making outstanding progress due to careful adaptations. Further analysis of different groups could yield additional marginal gains. Pupils' books are well-presented, reflecting the value they have for religious education. The new Directory has been implemented in all year groups and has helped to develop more creative responses such as writing, art and discussion, which pupils greatly appreciate. The innovative use of QR codes linked to videos of pupils discussing their learning enhances engagement. High expectations are set for all pupils, who enjoy thinking independently and engaging in peer discussion.

The quality of teaching, learning, and assessment in religious education is outstanding. Teachers possess strong subject knowledge, inspired by the new curriculum, and have been deliberately given reading time to deepen their understanding of more challenging topics. This expertise is evident in their skilful use of questioning to identify misconceptions and enhance pupils' understanding. In the most successful lessons, questions are used to encourage deeper thinking and make connections. Behaviour for learning is outstanding which demonstrates a real love for religious education. Retrieval and recap activities are embedded in every lesson. Pupils' learning is driven by big questions that spark curiosity, and the use of mini whiteboards ensures all children are involved and engaged. Group and paired discussions are utilised effectively,

fostering collaborative learning. Planning from the new Directory provides clear support for less able children through tailored adaptations. Teachers recognise the importance of identifying pupils who can make connections, and by explicitly teaching the new Directory lenses, they aim to challenge more able pupils further. Tasks are closely matched to lesson objectives, ensuring that all pupils are appropriately challenged and supported in their learning journey.

Leaders and governors have effectively prioritised sustainable leadership across the collaboration of schools. The executive head teacher and governors have ensured that the RE leader is well-supported by a Catholic Life and Religious Education lead who works across the collaboration of schools, highlighting their commitment to nurturing and developing RE leadership. Governors actively engage with the RE provision by visiting lessons and seeking pupils' views on their learning. The RE link governor, with their background as a secondary school RE teacher, provides valuable insights that help maintain high expectations. Joint planning sessions with leaders and teachers from across the collaboration further enhance the quality of teaching. Leaders have rigorously tracked lesson objectives to ensure comprehensive coverage of the new Directory. Monitoring and evaluation are key strengths, with the RE lead having a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement in teaching. Recognising the importance of teachers' subject knowledge in raising pupil attainment has been a priority, and this focus is highly valued by the teachers. The curriculum is enriched through excellent external links, such as visits to the Gurdwara and partnerships with local charities like Calling London. These initiatives provide pupils with diverse learning experiences, further enhancing their understanding and appreciation of different faiths and cultures.

## 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

1

#### Provision

The quality of collective worship provided by the school

1

#### Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for collective worship

1

1

At St Francis of Assisi, prayer and liturgy are central to daily school life. Pupils consistently demonstrate respect during prayer times, creating a reverent atmosphere. From an early age, pupils are given opportunities to lead collective worship in their classes, with clear progression in their skills and independence as they grow. During this inspection, collective worship was observed across the school, covering themes such as human dignity, patience and peace. Pupils speak positively about these experiences, showing great reverence and respect. Scripture is at the heart of collective worship, and pupils are exposed to a rich diversity of prayer forms within the Catholic Church, including spontaneous prayer, blessings, the use of symbols, music and traditional prayers. Pupils also have the opportunity to evaluate pupil-led collective worship, making thoughtful suggestions for improvement. This practice ensures that the quality of worship remains high and that pupils are actively engaged in enhancing their spiritual experiences. Overall, the commitment to prayer and liturgy at St Francis fosters a deep sense of community and spiritual growth among the pupils.

The quality of collective worship is outstanding, with prayer and liturgy meticulously planned throughout the year. The annual plan of prayer reflects the liturgical seasons and marks significant moments, such as the anniversary of the Grenfell fire. Scripture is thoughtfully selected by both staff and pupils to align with chosen themes or the liturgical season, ensuring relevance and depth. Collective worship is both creative and artistic, incorporating a wide range of art and symbols, as observed during inspections and in pupil-led worship planning. Prayer spaces are central to classrooms and are well-maintained, with children particularly valuing the use of prayer boxes. The school has developed a progression map for prayer and liturgy, which not only enhances pupils' knowledge of traditional prayers but also fosters their independence in leading and planning worship. St Francis actively supports church initiatives, with the Jubilee

of Hope prominently featured throughout the school, especially in the entrance. The School Catholic Life hub is a valuable resource for parents, supporting prayer and liturgy at home for both Catholic families and those from other faith traditions. Strong links with the local parish further enrich the school's collective worship. Pupils and staff speak highly of the parish priest, who warmly welcomes them into the parish and regularly visits the school.

Leaders and governors know the importance of promoting, monitoring and evaluating the provision for collective worship. The collective worship policy is reviewed regularly, ensuring it remains current and relevant. Leaders have meticulously planned the progression of pupils' prayer life, attending diocesan training on the new prayer and liturgy directory to strategically enhance collective worship. With the parish priest's support, they organise a variety of Masses and liturgies, including Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and Reconciliation. The school celebrates St Francis of Assisi Day, and the parish priest blesses children in each house on their respective saints' days. Staff highly value the professional development opportunities related to collective worship. Support staff, in particular, appreciated the training on pupil-led worship, which they had specifically requested. Prayer and liturgy are well-resourced, with prayer tables featuring a variety of artefacts, prayer books and Bibles. Significant investment in strategic leadership across the collaboration of schools further supports this area. Governors play an active role by regularly attending collective worship and receiving feedback from pupil evaluations of prayer and liturgy. They understand their role in serving the community and value feedback from both pupils and parents, ensuring that prayer and liturgy continues to meet the needs of the school community.



## Information about the school

Full name of school	St Francis of Assisi Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	100494
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	2073437
Full postal address of the school	St Francis of Assisi Catholic Primary School, Treadgold Street, Notting Hill, London, W11 4BJ
School phone number	002077278523
Headteacher	Kathleen Williams
Chair of governors	John Asgian
School Website	<a href="http://www.stfrancisofassisi.org.uk">http://www.stfrancisofassisi.org.uk</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	28 <sup>th</sup> June 2018
Previous denominational inspection grade	Good

## The inspection team

Mark Holdsworth  
Katie Linnane

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