

The Holy Family Catholic Primary School

URN: 140980

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Archbishop of Southwark

05–06 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

Religious education (p.5)

The quality of curriculum religious education

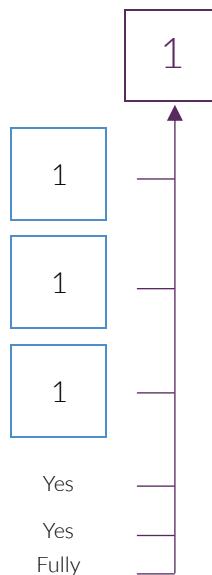
Collective worship (p.7)

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

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

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

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



Compliance statement

- Leaders ensure that religious education counts for at least 10% of the curriculum.
- The school is fully compliant with the requirements of the diocesan Bishop.
- All of the areas for improvement from the last inspection have been responded to fully.

What the school does well

- Holy Family Catholic primary school is a place of security and love for pupils where Christ is firmly rooted in everything.
- Pupils demonstrate high knowledge, skills and understanding of both theology and Catholic social teaching.
- From their starting points, progress in religious education is exceptional for all pupils.
- Leaders promote a vision of exemplary Catholic education, resulting in pupils being devoted ambassadors for the Church.
- Pupils play an important role in ensuring that collective worship is a living and integral part of school life, which inspires a love of God and positive relationships amongst all.

What the school needs to improve

- Provide pupils with opportunities to generate and explore their own questions, so as to deepen their learning and understanding in religious education.

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

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Holy Family Catholic primary school is a warm and welcoming school where all pupils know they are valued. They have a clear understanding of what it means to be a member of the Holy Family community – that of learning well and supporting each other, within the love of Christ. They know and value the school's mission and understand that within this, they are cared for by all members of staff. As a result, they possess a strong sense of self-worth, self-respect and the ability to care for each other, made in the image and likeness of God. This is further supported by their knowledge of Catholic social teaching and its theological roots, freely quoting Bible passages to illustrate the principles. Due to their deep knowledge and understanding of the need to serve others, pupils take the lead to care for their world and to look after those who are vulnerable. They readily refer to *Fratelli Tutti* and *Laudato Sí*, explaining that these are 'papal encyclicals' containing messages of how to live well and to celebrate people from different cultures, faiths and backgrounds. The example of the school's 'Mini Vinnies' clearly knowing the basis of their role and mission highlights that pupils value the chaplaincy and leadership roles that are offered to them.

The mission statement 'Love Jesus, love learning, love each other' is so obviously lived out in the school, that it is a source of inspiration for all pupils. It is a clear expression of the educational mission of the Church. Alongside this, the school has adopted the parable of the Good Samaritan to underpin its values. Pupils understand how this passage of scripture provides them with a model of service to others, especially those in need. The school has a plan for formation of adults and pupils, resulting in all staff being highly supportive of the school's mission, committing to its implementation. They are excellent role models for pupils, who know that 'when you fall down they (the adults in the school) pick you back up'. The values of the school, with a specific focus upon one each half term, are tangible - from the welcome which pupils receive, to the environment in which they live and learn. Further support is provided through the school's approach to relationships and sex education which fully meets diocesan and statutory requirements. Pupils welcome this approach. Above all the school provides the highest level of pastoral care for all pupils, especially those who are most vulnerable.

Leaders and governors have worked with ambition to embed the Church's mission into the heart of the school, ensuring it is reflected in many aspects of daily life. Their relentless support for local families is tangible and welcoming, including helping parents to transport their children to school or

supporting payments for school outings. A family liaison officer and school counsellor provide emotional support and advocacy for both pupils and families. Leaders make sure every pupil has access to school uniform, books for reading at home (known as the 'Book Swap'), and financial support to participate in extra-curricular activities. The school's commitment to the diocesan Archbishop is demonstrated through its achievement of the Oscar Romero award at 'developer' level, and its encouragement of aspiring Catholic leaders. The fruits of the partnership with the parish are evident in whole-school Masses held at the church. Leadership decisions are guided by Catholic social teaching, with Christ at the centre, incorporating the views of pupils and thorough evaluation by governors. These decisions influence everything from staff well-being, adult and pupil faith development, to the curriculum, demonstrating clear links to Church teachings in each subject area. These developments have flourished due to the effectiveness of the school's approach to professional development.

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

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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 of all ages at Holy Family develop strong knowledge and skills in their religious education, due to the school's approach being linked explicitly to the *Religious Education Directory*. All pupils make excellent progress from their starting points, supported by annotations and scaffolds for pupils with additional needs, and they report their enjoyment of lessons. Pupils demonstrate strong religious literacy, making explicit connections with previous learning and different curriculum areas. One pupil linked Pontius Pilate with King Lear, explaining that 'they both chose pride over wisdom' in their decision-making. Pupils are confident to speak about their learning, owing to the approach that the dynamic marking policy adopts. They are actively engaged in lessons, and all questions that teachers offer in books are responded to, which help to deepen pupils' learning further. They relish the challenge of expressing their understanding, when given opportunities to do so, and concentrate for long periods of time working independently due to being highly motivated to produce their best work. Exercise books are consistently well-presented, containing a range of approaches such as drama, artwork, and debates of moral and ethical matters. Some books contain 'QR' codes which link to recordings of pupils' verbal responses to specific tasks. Behaviour is exemplary in all lessons.

All teachers demonstrate a high level of both confidence and expertise in the teaching of religious education. They are fully committed to deepening their curriculum knowledge, ensuring that pupils learn effectively, while also preparing themselves to understand key concepts and information to a very deep level. This ensures that there are very high expectations for the achievement of every pupil. Alongside this, the high quality of support provided by assistants ensures that the content is made accessible to pupils, ensuring that all are included. Teachers have a clear understanding of how pupils make the best progress and, through effective planning, they pose excellent questioning during lessons and in books, to deepen pupils' learning. The school's approach to marking and assessment also supports the strong progress that pupils make, with colour codes and commentaries that help pupils to understand their 'next steps'. Additionally, the explicit links to the Catholic social teaching principles that are contained within different subject plans, ensure that pupils' spiritual and moral development are also addressed effectively. The broad variety of resources that teachers have access to enables them to make use of different approaches resulting in meeting the needs of all pupils.

Leaders and governors have ensured that religious education is a faithful expression of the *Religious Education Directory* due to the learning objectives taking the skills and knowledge directly from the document. Through this, the published scheme is supported by a 'big question' approach and creatively embellished to provide effectively for the pupils. Religious education is central to the

curriculum, occupying more than the required allocation within the timetable. Allocated resources have parity with other curriculum areas, and religious education is always the starting subject in the school's pupil progress tracking strategy. The effectiveness of the teaching and support staff is due to professional development being prioritised to religious education over other subject areas. The religious education subject leader has a clear, inspiring vision for pupil learning, embraced by staff and reflected in both classroom environments and the quality of teaching. Her expertise extends beyond the school, contributing to moderation sessions with local Catholic schools and diocesan training opportunities. Pupils benefit from enriching experiences such as collaborations with CAFOD, visits to Aylesford Priory, and explorations of sacred buildings from other faiths. A structured cycle of monitoring and evaluation, including active governor visits, informs pupil progress discussions and school development initiatives.

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

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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

All pupils at Holy Family Catholic primary school are fully engaged in prayer and liturgy, looking to reflect carefully and respectfully during their experiences. During liturgies, including Mass, pupils participate fully in prayer, whether these are spoken or sung, traditional or spontaneous. At the beginning of meetings, such as that of the 'RE Council', pupils insist upon praying for their own intentions and completing the introduction with a reading from scripture, which sets the tone for the following discussion. As a result, pupils have a deep understanding of the worship structure of the liturgical year. Pupils of all ages are confident to undertake their ministries in classrooms, the assembly hall and in the neighbouring church, from reading with great skill and expression, to the setting up of focal areas. This established leadership presented by pupils includes them being able to create and present whole school liturgies, with minimal guidance from school leaders. Pupils understand the role that prayer occupies across the curriculum and wider life of the school, with the impact borne out of the school's focus upon Catholic social teaching. Regular opportunities provided to them to reflect upon how prayer influences them can be seen through their spontaneity to pray – and being encouraged to do so.

The school's Prayer and Liturgy Annual Plan of Provision (APoP) is a comprehensive document which sets out the yearly approach to how all matters of liturgy are developed across the year, ensuring that prayer is central to the school in its entirety. Prayer is wholly embedded into the school day, with meetings and gatherings always beginning with a prayer, reflection, and scripture, which is chosen carefully by both staff and pupils. Prayer is inclusive, with a lunchtime prayer being spoken in French and classroom prayers being accompanied with sign language. The range is broad and varied, such as through using artwork, music and associated lyrics to encourage thinking deeply, through outdoor processions during the year, opportunities for quiet reflection and a more detailed focus with 'lectio divina'. This latter approach has a depth of impact on pupils' abilities to reflect upon the application of scripture into their daily lives – and staff demonstrate the confidence and ability to provide these opportunities for pupils. The physical environment also supports a focus on prayer, from well-kept prayer areas in classrooms, to corridor displays, and the cherished prayer garden, widely used by both pupils and staff. The use of the Good Samaritan parable to underpin the school's values is testament to the commitment to scripture at the school.

Along with the school's APoP, the policy, which is fully aligned to the *Prayer and Liturgy Directory*, forms a powerful and holistic blueprint for the quality of collective worship at the school. These documents are regularly reviewed by leaders and governors, taking into account the views of pupils

to make improvements – such as developing pupils' own prayers and their opportunities to present liturgies. The document includes the celebrations and sacramental opportunities that pupils experience during the school year, and is developed with the parish priest. Leaders ensure that staff are well supported to deliver excellent opportunities for prayer and liturgy in the classroom; this is part of the plan for adult and pupil formation that leaders have devised. Teaching staff recently attended a trust-wide retreat and development opportunity to strengthen their understanding of supporting effective prayer provision at the school. The model that leaders provide, results in staff and pupils being able to lead the preparation and delivery of high quality liturgies. There is a regular programme of monitoring this provision, by leaders and governors, which seeks to evaluate the quality of pupil engagement, their liturgical understanding and their leadership. The content of this report indicates that this school is a beacon of excellence in Catholic education.

Information about the school

Full name of school	The Holy Family Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	140980
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8862041
Full postal address of the school	The Holy Family Catholic Primary School, Bicknor Road, Park Wood, Maidstone, ME15 9PS
School phone number	01622756778

Headteacher	Megan Underhill
Chair of local governing body	Rob Sharpley
School Website	www.holyfamily.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	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	11-12-2018
Previous denominational inspection grade	Good

The inspection team

David Hennessey

Lead

Helen Frostick

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