



St Thomas More Catholic Primary School

URN: 100176

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Archbishop of Southwark

01–02 May 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

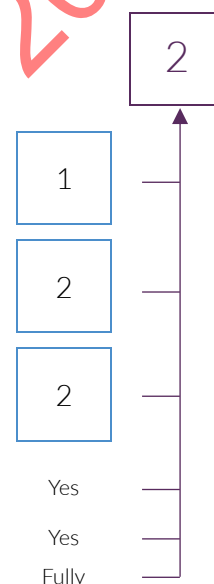
Collective worship (p.7)

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

- Religious education is taught for a specified portion of each repeating cycle, and this constitutes 10% of the taught curriculum time.
- The school is fully compliant with the requirements of the Archbishop.
- The school has fully met the recommendations from the last report.

What the school does well

- Pupils know and appreciate they are valued and cared for as unique individuals.
- Pupils enjoy religious education lessons and demonstrate a good attitude to learning.
- Pupils' leadership of Prayer and Liturgy is excellent.
- The Catholic identity of the school is thoughtfully displayed throughout the school, including all classrooms.

What the school needs to improve

- Leaders must create a specific training programme that will improve more effective strategic planning of lessons.
- Governors should introduce a more rigorous system to evaluate the school's monitoring of teaching and learning of religious education.

Date Published: 2nd June 2025

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

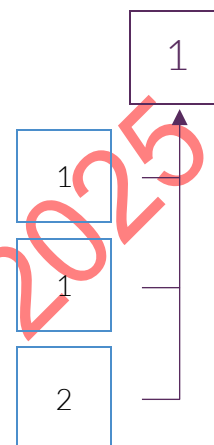
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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 are central to the Catholic life of the school. They know they belong to an overtly Catholic Christian community. The joyful manner in which they work and play together shows they fully embrace their part in creating an inclusive family in which everybody is respected as individuals made in the image of God. Pupils speak warmly about what the school provides for them, for example, the way teachers look after them with care, irrespective of their strengths and unique challenges. As a result, pupils feel loved, welcomed and empowered. Older pupils enjoy being leaders in responding to Catholic social teaching by organising certain events such as fundraising, showing a clear understanding of the principles of human dignity and option for the poor. For example, the 'wear green day' raised awareness of the need to care for the environment. They made and sold bracelets to raise funds for the Catholic children's society. As a result of a whole school family ethos and high expectations, pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They show a clear understanding of right and wrong and the importance of tolerance and forgiveness. One parent said they appreciated the way the school 'operates like a family'.

The school's mission statement, 'Share the light of Jesus, by learning together and loving others', is an inspiring expression of the school's educational mission. It weaves throughout the fabric of school life, providing a moral compass for pupil's actions and behaviour, evident in the trusting relationships throughout the school. Staff embrace the mission statement, implementing it across the curriculum and all aspects of school life. It is seen in the way they care for each other and provide profound levels of pastoral support for their pupils. A teacher said, 'from the beginning, I was made to feel welcome by both staff and pupils.' The support for vulnerable pupils and families by staff and appropriate outside agencies, gives them a sense of safety, belonging and emotional support, by ensuring they have adults they trust and confide in. The majority of parents appreciate this caring support. The St George's room, for example, is a highly effective resource that ensure pupils receive the support and

care in a very individual way. The Catholic nature of the school is evident from the moment you arrive and throughout the school. Displays related to religious education and the Catholic life of the school are of a very high standard and reflect their understanding that this is a Catholic school. The programme for relationships, sex and health education, is in place and delivered effectively.

Leaders and governors show true commitment to the educational mission of the Church, ensuring that Christ is at the heart of the school. Governors know the school well and ensure they are updated through headteacher reports and by regularly visiting the school. They are aware, however, that more strategic processes to support and challenge school leaders are needed to ensure it continues to grow as a highly effective Catholic school. They consciously ensure that resources are targeted at the school's most vulnerable pupils, enabling them to participate fully in all the opportunities the school offers. The headteacher is a model of care for all members of the community. She is passionate about providing the best for pupils. Leaders and governors also acknowledge that more strategic training for staff will further enhance the quality of provision. The well-being of staff is a priority for leaders, evident in the well-being breakfasts that promote staff morale, creating a supportive and stable environment for teachers. As a result, staffing is stable and morale is high.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

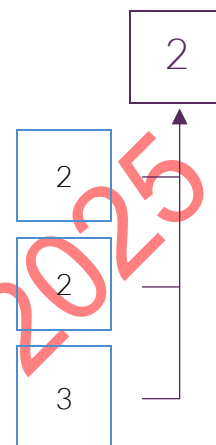
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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 enjoy religious education lessons and are happy, engaged learners. In all classes pupils respond willingly and with confidence as a result of the praise and encouragement they receive for their work and attitude. They are motivated to succeed because of a learning ethos where all pupils try their best to learn. Consequently, pupils' behaviour for learning in lessons is good and reflects their personal interest in the subject. This shows pupils are engaged with teachers and each other in a respectful way. Pupils confidently speak about what they have learnt in religious education. Throughout the school they use subject-specific key vocabulary in age-appropriate ways. Although they produce work beautifully using a range of ways, such as art, that show their knowledge, pupils are not given opportunities for deeper learning consistently enough across the school. For example, when trying to interpret pictures from scripture, some opportunities to develop a deeper understanding of how the gospel event relates to their lives, are missed. Pupils understand religious education is an important part of learning about the faith. School data shows that outcomes for all pupils, including those with special education needs and/or disabilities, are broadly in line with overall school outcomes.

Teachers enjoy teaching religious education. They have good subject knowledge which ensures pupils are developing an understanding of their faith and other faiths. Relationships with pupils are excellent because teachers have high expectations of pupils and freely use positive affirmation of pupils' learning, for example, using the pink marking system. As a result, pupils know what is expected of them and quickly settle in class and begin learning. This happy engagement creates a purposeful learning environment. Teachers know that effective teaching is important for the moral and spiritual development of pupils. They are enthusiastic in their delivery and are able help to pupils acquire a good level of knowledge. Teachers use questioning that helps pupils build on prior learning, although there is scope for more challenging questions that will motivate all pupils, particular those of high ability, to become more independent learners. There is challenge and support for pupils in lessons from other adults that ensure all pupils can access learning. Although teachers offer challenge for

pupils to think deeply, they do not provide sufficient feedback to help pupils know how to improve their learning. There are termly assessments, but the school now needs to ensure they use assessment to plan for pupils next steps more consistently.

Leaders and governors have a clear understanding of the importance of religious education in nurturing the faith of young people. The self-evaluation is honest and accurate about their strengths and areas for development. They articulate and share a coherent vision for Catholic education across the whole school. They are ambitious for improving standards of teaching and learning. Governors and the headteacher form a strong partnership and demonstrate total commitment to providing high quality teaching and appropriate resources to ensure pupils can continually make progress in their knowledge and understanding of the faith. The school development plan sets out the school's plans for improving outcomes, but this must now include a coherent response to the lack of rigour with tracking and assessment. The school follows the *Come and See* for planning. However, a more thorough approach to monitoring how it is implemented is necessary to ensure it is delivered more consistently to ensure outcomes improve. The headteacher is passionate about the school and cares deeply about improving opportunities for pupils to make progress. She understands the importance of religious education in a Catholic school and is aware of the next steps to develop more effective subject leadership.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

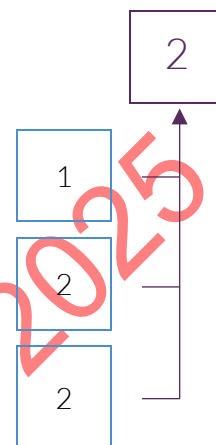
How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

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



Pupils happily participate in prayer and liturgy in assemblies and in class. They respond respectfully and reverently and through their prayerful engagement create a quiet, spiritual environment. This reflects how prayer is part of the natural routine of daily life and is inclusive of all pupils. The parish priest confirmed that pupils are prayerful, when attending parish and school masses in church. An example of leadership is evidenced by the Lighthouse team of pupils who meet weekly to evaluate the school assembly and independently plan the next one. The whole school liturgy shows they are a confident group who are very visible role models for pupils by inviting them to participate through prayer and singing. Pupil-led class liturgies further demonstrate the understanding pupils have of the value of prayer. Across the school, it is clear pupils understand that prayer is a way of being with God by saying thank you, sorry and making petitions. They are at ease offering their intentions and answering questions. The way they pray together reflects the evident impact on their spiritual and moral development of pupils. Singing is a feature of prayer and liturgy and it enhances the spiritual experience of all prayer occasions. Pupils have a good understanding of the Church's liturgical year, its feasts and seasons. For example, they can explain the significance of the colours used throughout the year.

It is evident that from the start of school life that pupils develop a special relationship with God through prayer. The centrality of prayer is evidenced by the planned programme of assemblies, religious celebrations and liturgies, including Mass in the parish church. The provision ensures a wide range of prayer experiences for the whole community to pray as a family and independently. The direct impact of this provision is that pupils are helped to develop their own personal prayer life and relationship with God. Pupils' spiritual needs are met also because prayer and liturgy have a clear purpose and message to guide pupils as they pray. The provision of further opportunities for more pupils across the school are now needed to ensure the development of pupil spiritual leadership in every class. Provision is enhanced by the regular presence of the parish priest and the local church.

The school make good use of the church, not only for school masses, but also to familiarise pupils with the rituals and traditions of the Catholic faith. It is also used as an appropriate setting for school celebrations.

Leaders and governors know their responsibilities as Catholic leaders and embrace them in good faith. They understand the importance of prayer and know it is a thread that must run through the life of a Catholic school as is fundamental to helping people be close to God each day. This is evident in the range of opportunities for prayer provided for the school, including families, making it a genuinely prayerful community. Leaders and governors ensure the liturgical year is followed with major feasts being celebrated in the parish church. Governors know the school well and monitor the quality of provision by observing liturgies. The curriculum leader for religious education plans the programme of Mass with the priest who is a frequent and welcome visitor to the school. He confirms that the provision is well planned. Liturgical and spiritual development is part of professional development for staff. They deliver good, spiritual experiences for the whole community. They ensure they are fully informed through discussions with the headteacher and appropriate staff. The headteacher and staff model good practice in preparing and leading prayer and liturgy.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Thomas More Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	100176
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	2033604
Full postal address of the school	St Thomas More Catholic Primary School, Appleton Road, Eltham, London, SE9 6NS
School phone number	002088569153
Headteacher	Laura Collins
Chair of governors	Nicholas Tildesley
School Website	www.stmprimary.org
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	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	30 April 2018
Previous denominational inspection grade	1

The inspection team

Damian Fox
Suzy Sanders

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