

St Richard's Catholic Primary School

URN: 126038

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Arundel & Brighton

18–19 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

2

Religious education (p.5)

The quality of curriculum religious education

2

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

- St Richard's is compliant with the general norms of the Bishops' Conference in relation to 10% curriculum time.
- St Richard's implements the diocesan bishop's requirements in relation to phased implementation of the *Religious Education Directory* and the Relationships, Sex and Health Education curriculum stipulation.
- St Richard's has fully responded to the areas of improvement from the previous inspection.

What the school does well

- Pupils feel happy and secure at St Richard's. They know and are proud to live out the mission statement.
- Christ is at the heart of the school, as demonstrated in the quality of relationships and the welcome and care shown to all.
- Partnership with parents is extremely strong. They in turn value the school's Catholic ethos that permeates all aspects of school life.
- Religious education work is extremely well presented.
- There is a wide variety of prayer experiences planned over the school year.

What the school needs to improve

- Improve teachers' pedagogy in religious education in order to improve pupil engagement and raise attainment for all groups of pupils.
- Provide high quality prayer experiences so that pupils are deeply engaged.
- Ensure that there is a rigorous and accurate self-evaluation cycle in place so that leaders and governors have a very clear understanding of the impact of their work and can appropriately plan next steps.

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

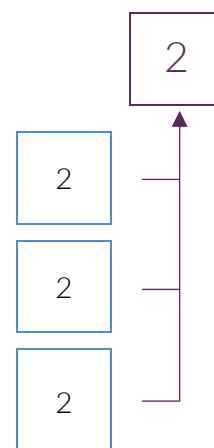
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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 extremely proud of their school. They are happy, secure and confident and know that they are cared for by all the staff. One pupil told inspectors, 'Teachers make us feel happy; our school is a safe place.' They demonstrate respect for themselves and others, including those of other faiths and cultures, saying that, 'God's message is that everyone has the same importance'. The school's mission statement, 'To know, to love, to serve' is well known by all pupils and is at the heart of the school. Pupils are becoming extremely competent at linking their charitable actions to the principles of Catholic social teaching, explaining, for example, that they support refugees through their work with Sanctuary in Chichester because of the importance of human dignity and raise money for Mary's Meals and the local foodbank to promote the preferential option for the poor. Older pupils act as Faith Buddies to younger ones, sitting with them and guiding them in liturgical celebrations and looking after them when needed in the playground. Some pupils take on responsibilities such as being a Mini-Vinnie or being a faith leader. While they enthusiastically do what is asked of them, the school now needs to give pupils more opportunities to take the lead in organising and evaluating these activities.

Staff are fully committed to living out the school's mission statement. Many talk about belonging to 'the St Richard's family' and are keen to put their faith into practice, evidenced by leading charitable and community events, such as the Big School Tidy Up and Grandparents' Tea Party, as well as taking a full and active part in the life of the parish by serving as catechists or ministers of the word. The sense of community within the staff team is a strength: many staff have served the school and community for many years and as a result know the families well. They provide an authentic feeling of welcome to everyone that comes into the school and there is a particular concern shown for the most vulnerable and for those families experiencing difficult times. One

parent commented that, 'The school has supported our family through some very tough times recently'. The school environment is very well cared for, with vibrant displays showcasing examples of how the school is living out its mission. Although staff are very loyal to the school, they should now consider how they are supporting each other and the executive head teacher with the improvements and changes that need to be made.

Leaders and governors are committed to the Catholic life of the school and to maintaining and strengthening its Catholic identity. They prioritise the pastoral care of staff, using regular staff surveys and governor visits to check on wellbeing. Staff are extremely positive about the support and care they receive, saying that 'We are given time and space for ourselves.' Partnership with parents is extremely strong and parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school, its mission and the support and care it provides for pupils and their families. One parent was keen to share that, 'The school has a strong and positive Catholic ethos that is clearly visible in all aspects of school life.' Links with the parish are similarly well-developed, with many families attending Mass at the church and parishioners attending events at school. Under the new chair, governors are starting to play a role in challenging and supporting the school in its development, but this is at a very early stage. Self-evaluation focuses primarily on what the school does. Leaders should now consider the impact of their actions so that they can better inform governors and plan next steps. They should also consider how pupils can be meaningfully involved in the evaluation of the Catholic life and mission.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

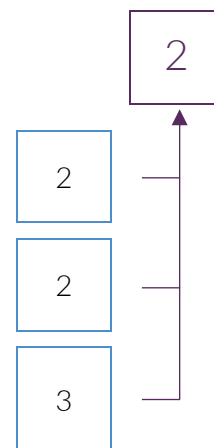
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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 the skills and knowledge required by the *Religious Education Directory*. They can speak confidently about what they've learnt and are keen to share their ideas. Pupils are positive about religious education and show a willingness to participate in the learning they are asked to do. Their work shows progress over time and good recall of previous learning was observed in lessons due to appropriate review activities. Pupils can make links between what they learn and their responsibilities in everyday life, for example, in a Year 1/2 lesson where they linked the parable of the good Samaritan to the charity work they do for Sanctuary in Chichester. Pupils take pride in their written work and see religious education as a special subject: their work is very well presented with some beautiful illustrations. There is an impressive variety of ways for pupils to present their learning, such as diaries, letters, drama and bookmarks. However, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to demonstrate their deep understanding or to show individual responses to the tasks and pupils now need to be supported to develop the skills to ask good questions of themselves and of adults to enhance their learning.

Teachers are committed to the importance of religious education and recognise its value with reference to the moral development of pupils. Their subject knowledge is strong but not all staff demonstrate best practice of how pupils in different key stages learn most effectively. In the best lessons, teachers are succinct, focused on pupil engagement and participation and have a sense of purpose and enjoyment. In a Year 3/4 lesson observed, for example, the teacher effectively recalled previous learning about the Sacrament of Reconciliation before moving on to the topic of absolution by using partner talk and revising key vocabulary. In lessons where learning is less successful, teachers can talk for too long and use strategies that are not always appropriate for the age and abilities of the pupils. Additional adults are used to support pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities to achieve good outcomes, by such ways as adapting the task

or repeating and clarifying instructions. Teachers use written feedback to celebrate effort, including special stickers and a gold cross for work that they feel pupils should be especially proud of. They should now improve the quality and preciseness of their feedback, either verbally or in written form, so that all pupils are clear about specific next steps to progress.

Leaders and governors ensure that the curriculum accurately reflects the requirements of the *Directory*. They ensure that staff attend training provided by the diocese and provide time for staff development. However, leaders' view of the quality of teaching and learning in the school is inaccurate and overly positive, meaning that they are not accurately identifying the areas that need to be improved. A particular concern is the lack of provision to meet the needs of different groups of pupils, which means pupils are not always achieving as well as they could. Leaders need to seek external support to implement a detailed and graduated plan to improve teachers' pedagogy for religious education. This should include key milestones and measures so that governors can check on progress. Governors need to implement a clear schedule of evaluation so that they have accurate and sufficient information on which to challenge and support leaders. The executive headteacher has a more realistic view of the quality of education within the school and governors should ensure that he is supported to lead rapid improvement.

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

3

2

Pupils respond well to the experiences of prayer and liturgy provided by the school. They can reflect in silence, join in responses confidently and particularly enjoy singing joyfully. When enabled to do so, they participate by reading lines of scripture and prayers they have written, such as in a class worship observed in Year 3/4 on the theme of the Blessed Sacrament. However, they have limited opportunities to deeply engage in prayer because the experiences provided by the school are not routinely of high quality; they are sometimes too long and not appropriate for the age of the pupils. Pupils can describe aspects of the liturgical year, including the colours and traditions associated with particular seasons, for example, that they pray the stations of the cross in Lent and take part in the procession of Our Lady in May. Pupils participate in daily prayer and explain how this happens in their classrooms, including for older pupils the opportunity to lead the class worship. While pupils take part in all they are asked to do, they are not yet effectively preparing prayer and liturgy and require training and support to evaluate and develop the current provision.

Prayer and liturgy is embedded into the daily routine of school life and pupils are able to demonstrate their familiarity with daily prayers, for example, the morning offering and the prayer of St Richard of Chichester. There is evidence of a variety of prayers and ways of praying being used, such as guided meditation, formal liturgy and spontaneous praying. In an effective Year 1/2 celebration of the word on the theme of Corpus Christi, the teacher used quiet music and an attractive prayer focus to enable pupils to be still and reflect on the scripture they were hearing. However, prayer and liturgy experiences sometimes lack the opportunity for prayerful reflection and spiritual development which means not all pupils are fully engaged. Relevant staff use their gifts to enhance the liturgy, such as playing the piano and guitar and leading the singing and each classroom has a designated prayer space which is well resourced and aesthetically

appealing. Although seasonally appropriate scripture is used, for example, the Sunday gospel used for the weekly gospel assembly, staff should ensure it is always given due prominence and centrality within the worship. The school works successfully to involve parents in prayer life, with one parent commenting, 'I have felt included and supported, accessing Catholic events as part of the school community.'

Leadership of collective worship requires improvement because leaders do not have an accurate view of the current provision nor a clear and detailed plan for improvement. Although there are relevant and appropriate policies for collective worship and progression in leading prayer and worship, these are not understood or implemented across the school, resulting in the inconsistent quality in the prayer opportunities observed by the inspection team. While the executive head teacher has the required skills and knowledge to make the required improvements, he now needs to train the school's religious education leadership team to be models of good practice for all staff and pupils. Governors must ensure that there is a robust and accurate evaluation cycle for collective worship: this should include honest evaluation involving external support, followed by relevant and precise actions that are checked on in a timely manner. Despite these concerns, there are some strengths to be celebrated, notably the flourishing relationship with the local parish. The priests work with leaders to plan the school's annual provision of prayer, which include regular opportunities for Mass, the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the annual Corpus Christi procession which takes place from the church to the school.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Richard's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	126038
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	9383330
Full postal address of the school	St Richard's Catholic Primary School, Cawley Road, Chichester, PO19 1XB
School phone number	01243 784549
Executive Headteacher	Peter Edgington
Chair of governors	Tony Lucas
School Website	https://www.strichardsprimary.co.uk/
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	5-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	18 th October 2018
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

The inspection team

Michael Lobo
Ursula Hargrave

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