



CATHOLIC SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

THE NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE INSPECTION OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS, COLLEGES AND ACADEMIES



St Teresa's Catholic Primary School

URN: 117466

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Archbishop of Westminster

11 February 2026 – 12 February 2026

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 RE

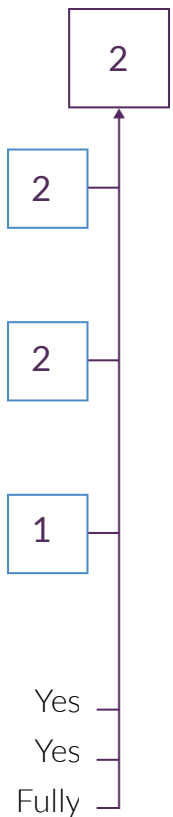
Collective worship (p.7)

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



What the school does well

- Leaders, including governors, work conscientiously to ensure St Teresa's is an inclusive environment where the school community feels an authentic sense of belonging.
- The school's values, inspired by St Teresa and her 'little acts of kindness', have a positive impact throughout the school.
- Pupils enjoy their learning in religious education as a result of a well-planned and executed curriculum.
- Senior leaders have a very good understanding of the school's areas of strength and the actions needed to develop the school further.
- The centrality of prayer and liturgy in the school is outstanding and enables pupils to participate and engage fully in the richness of the school's liturgical formation.

What the school needs to improve

- Create opportunities for staff and pupils to articulate the school's mission statement confidently with secure links to Catholic social teaching.
- Strengthen pupils' ability to engage in theological reflection, discussion and evaluation using appropriate religious language within an oracy framework.
- Develop pupil leadership to confidently lead prayer experiences that inspire them to put their faith into action.

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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St Teresa's is an inclusive and welcoming school that enables the values of its patron saint, 'to show little acts of kindness,' to be lived throughout the school. Pupils can explain that acts of kindness should not be boasted about but should be carried out with humility. Pupils benefit from knowing how much they are cared for and valued as individuals and speak proudly of how they are all different and equally special. They are recognised for their achievements and recognise the positive relationships they have with their teachers. Pupils are proud of their school and can explain the various roles they have, such as the 'Carmelites' and 'Little Lites' and 'pupil parliament'. They understand that they are encouraged to develop these roles because of their commitment to Catholic social teaching, and they are developing their ability to articulate the theology around their actions from being part of a team. Pupils enjoy linking the wider curriculum to Catholic social teaching and there were some excellent examples of this in Year 6 Science with pupils using their work on 'light' to think about sustainability. Pupils have yet to take a leading role in responding to the demands of Catholic social teaching and linking this to their school mission and the mission of the Church. They have enjoyed recent discussions about choosing their own charities and are keen to develop this.

The school is proud of its Catholic ethos and the sense of belonging it extends to all families. A member of staff commented, 'The faith in our school envelops us and gives us a stronger sense of belonging and community.' This sense of belonging is particularly evident in their welcome for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, as well as pupils and families who are most vulnerable. The school is particularly conscious of families that need support and makes it a priority to reach out and support those most in need in a variety of

ways. The school supports a range of charities, including Borehamwood Foodbank, Samaritan's Purse with Operation Christmas Child and The Catholic Children's Society. The school's commitment to valuing inclusion, diversity and equality was clearly evident in a recent project around renaming their house saints. Pupils were able to talk animatedly about the saints and their values. Pupils described the project as 'really exciting.' They said, 'Saints are like us, they are all unique.' St Teresa's mission statement, 'Growing and Learning together, as part of God's family, to be the best we can be', now needs to be at the heart of all conversations and a central feature in linking together the Catholic life and mission of the school.

Leaders, including governors, know the school well and are exceptionally supportive of the school's drive to improve standards. They understand the needs of the school, work closely with the diocesan advisor and engage in diocesan training and development. They share a common vision for supporting all pupils, and know their community very well, responding to local and national needs with care and compassion. The school is a regular visitor to the local parish church, and parents value being involved in the variety of Masses and liturgies with their children. Parental feedback included, 'My children are growing in faith, they come home and teach me,' and, 'St Teresa's has a strong Catholic ethos, and I value the spiritual and moral formation provided by the school.' The school participates in diocesan initiatives to support ongoing school improvement. Governors share in the strategic leadership of the school by their supportive visits and commitment to the vision of the leadership team.

Religious education

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 key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

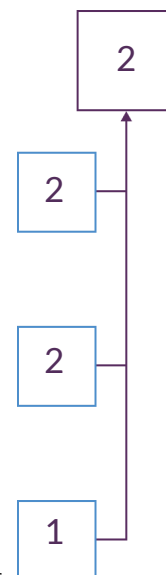
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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' positive attitude to learning in religious education, alongside their enjoyment of the subject, leads to good outcomes. Knowledge and understanding is generally secure due to teachers building on prior learning, for example, the use of flashbacks, and deepening pupils' understanding through skilled questioning. Pupils are actively engaged in lessons; they are reflective and committed to improving their knowledge. For example, in Year 6 when pupils were reflecting on the importance of the Eucharist and the eternal banquet, they were able to make connections with scripture and how this helps them live their lives. Pupils are encouraged to work collaboratively in lessons and, in the best lessons observed, were afforded opportunities to demonstrate independence when completing set written tasks. This developing independence now means that pupils are ready to take more responsibility for their individual outcomes and to develop oracy skills to reflect, discuss and evaluate what they have learned. The use of scripture across the whole school is well planned, and Bibles are used to good effect in lessons and during class worship. Pupils display a developing knowledge and familiarity of a wide selection of Bible stories and parables, and are, for the most part, able to articulate this within their learning.

There is a strong focus on scripture, prayers and reflection in lessons. Teachers create a positive climate for learning and, as a result, pupils are engaged and eager to participate. Staff are very well-supported with training, including group planning surgeries with the religious education lead. Consequently, teachers are confident in their delivery of the subject and ensure that lessons are engaging and challenging for all pupils. Lessons are well-structured,

with clear success criteria, supported by interactive strategies such as talk partners, drama, and tactile resources to ensure accessibility and depth of understanding. There is effective use of flashbacks to ensure pupils remember more and 'hooks' into lessons which ensure high levels of enthusiasm and interest. Pupils enjoy their religious education lessons; one pupil said, 'I like reading Bible stories and connecting with God through writing.' Most additional adults are used effectively to support identified pupils and groups of pupils during lessons. In the best lessons, teachers use questions skilfully, adapt tasks to lead pupils to a better understanding of their faith and make links to Catholic social teaching. For example, in a Year 4 class, explicit links between a lesson on St Carlo Acutis and human dignity were made and how pupils can use talents to help others.

The headteacher, religious education lead and governors have very high expectations and ensure that religious education truly is at the core of the curriculum. They have ensured that pupils across all phases are equipped with the relevant knowledge and skills of the new Religious Education Directory. Continuing professional development is not only provided within the school but also through partnerships and invitations to other local schools and with the diocese. The religious education lead has an inspiring vision of outstanding teaching and learning and a high level of expertise in securing this vision. She supports teachers during in-school sessions to ensure this vision leads to improvements in teaching and learning. The religious education lead has developed a consistent lesson structure - 'Ingredients for a Successful RE Lesson' - which has empowered staff to plan and deliver high-quality religious education lessons with confidence and clarity. Leaders have ensured that religious education is inclusive and responsive to pupil needs. Differentiation is evident across the school, with some sensory-based provision for pupils with significant needs and carefully planned environments in Early Years. The governors accurately understand the strengths of the school's provision and outcomes. Governors triangulate evidence through direct engagement with classroom practice and pupil voice, which results in a strategic overview and challenging targets.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

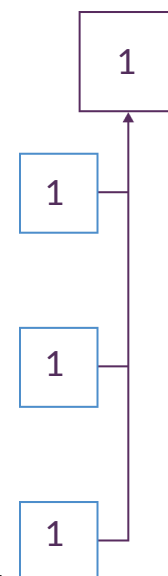
How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

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



Prayer and liturgy are outstanding and central to the life of St Teresa's. Pupils are engaged deeply and fully in a range of prayer and liturgy experiences and participate through prayerful silence, attentiveness and response. The varied experiences of prayer and liturgy inspire pupils to reflect, and they can articulate the benefits of prayer with increasing confidence. An example of this is one pupil's response to meditation – 'it helps me to connect to Jesus, and I feel calm to start my day'. Prayer and worship are embedded into the daily rhythm of school life, with pupils given regular opportunities for meditation, reflection and celebration of the word. They respond positively to prayer experiences, confidently reading scripture, composing their own prayers, and engaging in moments of reflective silence during worship. There are a variety of different forms of worship, including meditation, Visio Divina and the Examen which further engage pupils' interest. They follow the cycle of the liturgical year, and opportunities are also taken to reflect on contemporary issues. Pupils work collaboratively with staff and other pupils to plan, lead and evaluate liturgies, for example, a celebration of the word liturgy observed in Year 5, where pupils participated confidently and with reverence. Pupils said, 'prayer helps me to make the right choice and be a better person,' and, 'I liked the worship because it was peaceful and I could hear the leaders clearly,' Another said, 'Lighting the candles made the classroom feel joyful,' and 'I felt closer to God as we were praying and listening to the Gospel.' This outstanding practice sets the pupils up to now readily discuss how prayer can lead to action.

The experience of prayer and liturgy for the whole school community is thoughtfully considered and expertly planned. The vision of the leadership team to empower staff in

supporting pupils to experience a wide range of ways of praying is having an excellent impact on the prayer life of the school as well as encouraging outstanding relationships between staff and pupils. Wellchosen scripture passages in line with the liturgical year and linked to learning in religious education are used to support pupils in reflective moments of prayer. The pupil-led 'Carmelites and Little Lites,' provide opportunities for these pupils to lead the school in various liturgies. In discussions with these pupils, they made it very clear that, although they are leading and modelling, it is expected that every pupil feels included as a 'Carmelite'.

The leadership of this area is exceptional. Training is provided to support members of staff at all levels. Leaders ensure prayer and liturgy are included in induction for new staff and, as a result, they feel confident and inspired. They ask for support when needed and this indicates the strong sense of community. Governors are clearly committed in their support for the school's cycle of collective worship and regularly attend Masses, assemblies and other forms of prayer and liturgy. Pupils also attend Mass regularly in the local parish and can avail of the Sacrament of Reconciliation during Advent and Lent. The school's monitoring schedule is designed to support all aspects of worship within the school, including self-evaluation by the pupils. Parents are also given opportunities to give feedback on occasion. It is evident that leaders place the highest priority on the quality and impact of prayer and liturgy, giving pupils a voice to become an integral part of the school's evaluation, which contributes to the outstanding practice within the school.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Teresa's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	117466
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	9193384
Full postal address of the school	St Teresa's, Brook Road, Borehamwood, WD6 5HL
School phone number	0208 953 3753
Headteacher or Head of School	Mrs Ella Ryan
Chair of Governors	Mrs Florence Zakari-Ayankoya
School Website	www.stteresas.herts.sch.uk
Trusteeship	Diocesan
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	03 February 2023
Previous denominational inspection grade	Requires Improvement

The Inspection Team

Monica Mccarthy

Lead

Sue Cunningham

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