



CATHOLIC SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

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



St Catherine's RC School

URN: 101333

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Archbishop of Westminster

04 March 2026 – 05 March 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

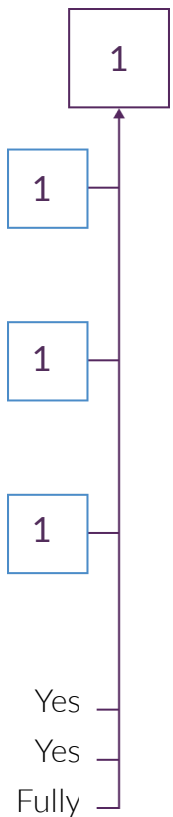
Collective worship (p.7)

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



Yes

Yes

Fully

What the school does well

- School leaders and governors have an ambitious and inspirational vision, clearly articulating the Church's mission and ensuring that Christ is at the heart of the school.
- A wide range of experiences of prayer and liturgy engage pupils deeply in full, active and conscious participation.
- The school's mission of faith, 'Loving and learning together as Jesus taught us,' is lived out through a flourishing partnership with parents and the local parish, and by pupils
- who readily embrace Catholic social teaching in opportunities to serve others.
- The school is a joyful and welcoming community of faith, celebrated in a religious education curriculum which encourages the spiritual and moral development of pupils,
- helping them to make sense of their experience of the world.
- All staff members are excellent role models who, through their relationships with each other and the pupils, consistently bear witness to the school's Catholic life and mission.

What the school needs to improve

- Develop the whole of the taught curriculum, with religious education at its core, as a coherent and compelling expression of the Catholic understanding of reality.
- Provide regular training for teachers to increase their confidence in the teaching and assessment of religious education.
- Provide regular opportunities for liturgical formation for all staff to experience the importance of developing spirituality in prayer and liturgy in the school.

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

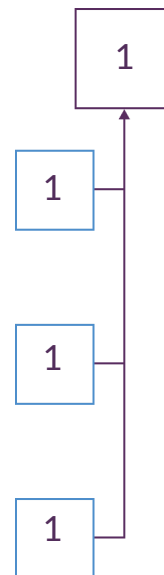
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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 Catherine's embrace their mission of faith, celebrated in the school mission statement, 'Loving and learning together as Jesus taught us.' Pupils avidly seek opportunities to grow in virtue, pursue the common good and serve those in need by participating in a wide range of leadership roles offered to them, such as the school council, house captains, chaplains, the rights respecting group, and Caritas ambassadors. Pupils talk positively about the difference they make to their local, national and global communities, and they have a developed understanding of the theology underpinning their actions. Catholic social teaching is embedded in the curriculum and is lived out in numerous fundraising activities for charities including Cafod, The Catholic Children's Society, the Noah's Ark Hospice, and donations to the local foodbank. Pupils speak about taking inspiration from the life of St Catherine in that 'she never gave up and was true to her faith.' Their behaviour is exemplary, showing a deep respect for their own personal dignity and others. Pupils can clearly express the understanding that they are made in the image and likeness of God. They demonstrate a deep respect for others, which is strengthened by a programme of learning about other faiths.

St Catherine's excels at being a Christ-centred school community. Parents speak warmly of the welcome provided to all families. One parent stated, 'St Catherine's is truly a warm and welcoming school community. From the moment you walk through the doors there is a genuine sense of care, respect and positivity.' A member of staff declared that Catholic life and mission 'is reflected in our relationships, our commitment to Gospel values, and the way we care for and include one another.' Staff are exemplary role models. They embrace the

mission of the school, which is encapsulated not only in their relationships with each other, but also in the highest levels of care and nurture they provide for all pupils. The school environment bears exceptional witness to its Catholic identity and, through religious imagery and vibrant displays, reflects the presence of Christ throughout. The school's Catholic character is further enhanced through the provision of Forest School, which celebrates creation and is a special place for prayer. The provision for relationships, sex and health education is carefully planned, well-resourced and meets all diocesan requirements. School leaders now need to consider how they can develop the whole of the taught curriculum, with religious education at its core, as a coherent expression of the Catholic understanding of reality.

Leaders and governors rightly see the school as a source of inspiration for the whole community and are highly ambitious about its contribution to the lives of those it serves. Governors on the Catholic life committee are committed, well-organised and conscientious, and minutes bear witness to their determination to uphold the school's mission through support and challenge. They ensure that all policies reflect the Catholic mission of the school and have prioritised investment in this area, so that resources are targeted to support those in greatest need. The school leadership team show their commitment to the principles of Catholic social teaching by integrating them into a planned religious education curriculum closely matched to the Religious Education Directory. Leaders and governors work closely with the diocese, attending training and working in partnership to enthusiastically respond to diocesan policies and initiatives. They are highly committed to the development of all staff. Leaders and governors recognise the parish as being central to the Catholic life of the school, which is demonstrated through the flourishing partnership with one of the local parishes. The school builds on this partnership by providing a vibrant parent/carers engagement strategy, ensuring that parents/carers are kept well-informed about key events in the Catholic life of the school. As a result, one parent commented, 'We feel very grateful to be part of such a nurturing and faith-filled environment, where every child feels valued, safe and encouraged to grow.'

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

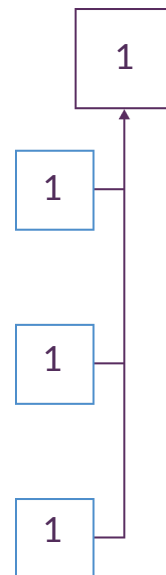
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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 are developing excellent knowledge, understanding and skills in religious education which exemplifies the learning required by the Directory. There is a consistent structure and excellent pace to lessons throughout the school so that pupils are enabled to progress through their learning, fully engaged and using their knowledge, understanding and skills to reflect spiritually and think theologically. Recall questions are used effectively to link prior learning to new knowledge. Pupils are adept at relating learning in lessons to their own lives and use subjectspecific vocabulary seamlessly during class discussions. They can work both collaboratively and independently and their passion and enthusiasm result in excellent progress. Pupils are given time to reflect on learning in lessons to consolidate learning. Effective adult support and excellent visual resources are used so that all groups are given the help they need to achieve success. Achievement in religious education is above average and is in line with other core subjects. Richly creative learning activities enhance pupils' engagement and allow them to explore their learning through a wide variety of media. For example, Year 6 pupils recently created a podcast which was broadcast on a Catholic radio station. Presentation of pupils' work is meticulous and is of a consistently high standard.

Teachers are skilled and knowledgeable in the subject. They demonstrate a deep commitment and bear powerful witness to their belief in the impact religious education has on the spiritual development of pupils. This is particularly evident when pupils are led into periods of reflection in lessons, which they greatly value and which lead to a deeper and more meaningful experience for them. In learning about God's forgiveness, a Year 2 pupil stated,

'We should say sorry and God will still love us and forgive us'. A Reception class child stated confidently, 'Jesus is God.' As a result of regular professional development, through diocesan courses and support from the religious education subject leader, well-designed lessons extend pupils' knowledge and understanding so that pupils learn extremely well. Scripture is used as an integral part of lessons which has given pupils the opportunity to become skilled at linking messages in scripture to their daily lives. Teachers' questioning encourages pupils to 'delve deeper' into their theological understanding to maximise learning. Pupils' achievements are celebrated in whole-school assemblies, and their work is proudly displayed in classrooms and corridors. Teachers would now benefit from ongoing training to increase their confidence in the teaching and assessment of religious education.

Leaders and governors have ensured that the religious education programme faithfully delivers a sequential, imaginative and creative curriculum as set out in the Directory. They have ensured that religious education enjoys a parity with the other core subjects in terms of staff training, resources, and accommodation. The religious education subject leader is inspirational in supporting staff in planning and delivering the scheme of work so that innovative and creative teaching methods are used to promote active learning and fully engage pupils. Staff speak appreciatively of the generous support and the 'open-door' policy provided by the subject leader and senior leaders. Thorough, collaborative planning sessions secure coherence across the ages and phases of learning. Through carefully planned lessons, and high-quality resources, additional adults in class are highly effective in supporting vulnerable pupils to achieve. Action plans are shared with governors so that priorities are implemented, and their impact analysed. Governors visit the school regularly, providing a clear and strategic vision for development. Regular, forensic monitoring and analysis by the religious education subject leader, senior leaders and governors result in accurate self-evaluation leading to outstanding outcomes for pupils. One parent commented on the impact of religious education: 'pupils are encouraged to reflect, ask questions and apply Gospel values to their own lives. The school does a wonderful job of nurturing both their spiritual and moral development, and we are very grateful for that.'

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

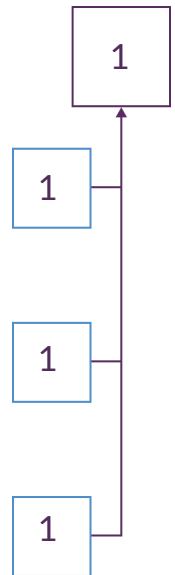
How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

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 engage reverently in a full, active and joyful prayer life. A wide range of ways of praying is offered to pupils, including meditation, silence, and reflection, along with well-loved traditional prayers. Pupils are encouraged to pray their intentions at prayer stations throughout the school, asking for help for themselves, their families, the wider community and the world, thereby demonstrating their understanding that everything is dependent upon God's abiding love. Pupils are skilled at planning, leading and evaluating classroom worship, as evidenced in the class collective worship books. Scripture is central to prayer and is used meaningfully to deepen pupils' experience of prayer. Appropriate liturgical music is chosen during liturgies to provide a calm, prayerful atmosphere. Pupil singing is of the highest standard; they readily and enthusiastically sing hymns which complement liturgies, and the school choir enables pupils to use their gifts and talents to enhance prayer and liturgy. The prayer life of the school is a full expression of the Church's liturgical year. Mass is celebrated frequently, particularly on feast days and holy days. A staff member commented, 'We teach the children that you can pray any time, that God is always listening, whether it is to give thanks, to ask for help, or to ask for forgiveness, so that the dialogue and relationship between us and God is continuously open.'

Prayer supports and nourishes the school community, and pupils draw inspiration from the lives of the saints. High-quality prayer areas in classrooms, corridors, and the prayer garden provide a focus for prayer. Moments of joy and sorrow within the school community are celebrated in prayer. Pupils can say their daily prayers with confidence and reverence, and individual prayers are recorded in class prayer books. Teachers designate moments of silence

during prayer to facilitate deeper reflection and contemplation. Prayer times are a cherished part of the school's daily life. The school community works hard to recognise the wider Church family and, through its prayer life, helps pupils to develop a deeper relationship with God. The school's excellent partnership with the local parish priest ensures that pupils participate in the breadth and richness of Catholic tradition. Staff are excellent role-models for pupils, participating fully, with reverence and commitment. A staff member explained, 'Our main task is to support children to grow in their faith, to love God and to learn what the Gospels teach us so that it can be lived out in our everyday lives.' Leaders and governors ensure that pupils in the school are offered a wide range of high-quality, meaningful experiences of prayer and worship. They support staff to lead appropriate prayer and liturgy through a clear, effective policy.

Leaders and governors ensure that the school calendar reflects significant dates in the liturgical calendar, resulting in a wealth of opportunities for pupils to celebrate the Eucharist. Parents are invited to attend assemblies, liturgies and Masses through regular newsletters and through the school's vibrant website. The Lenten pack for families encourages prayer and reflection at home. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is offered at key times in the liturgical year. Governors prioritise a budget for resources, and for developing prayer areas, and they place the highest priority on providing continuous professional development for all staff. Staff are given the opportunity to attend relevant diocesan courses and are given regular guidance and support from governors and school leaders. As a result, staff understand the centrality of prayer to the life of the school and are well-supported to lead it. Staff would now benefit from opportunities for liturgical formation to experience spirituality in prayer and liturgy. As part of the school's self-evaluation, parent, staff and pupil voice questionnaires are regularly used by leaders to review and improve the quality and impact of prayer and liturgy. A parent commented appreciatively, 'Our children speak positively about prayer, Mass and pupil-led liturgies, and it's lovely to see their confidence in expressing their faith growing.'

Information about the school

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| Full name of school | St Catherine's RC School |
| School unique reference number (URN) | 101333 |
| School DfE Number (LAESTAB) | 3023504 |
| Full postal address of the school | Vale Drive, Barnet, EN5 2ED |
| School phone number | 020 8440 4946 |
| Headteacher or Head of School | Miss Maureen Kelly |
| Chair of Governors | Dr Alessia Errico |
| School Website | www.st-catherines.barnet.sch.uk |
| Trusteeship | Diocesan |
| Phase | Primary |
| Type of school | Voluntary Aided School |
| Admissions policy | Non Selective |
| Age-range of pupils | 2 - 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Date of last denominational inspection | 20 September 2019 |
| Previous denominational inspection grade | Outstanding |

The Inspection Team

Honoria Lelia Flatley Lead

Katie Linnane

Patricia O'Donnell

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 |