



St Davids Catholic Primary School

URN: 401549

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Archbishop of Cardiff-Menevia

25 March 2026 – 26 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

2

2

2

2

Yes

Yes

Fully

What the school does well

- A very strong Catholic community has been developed at the school over an extended period of time, and its members show a genuine and impressive sense of vocation.
- Leaders and governors have worked diligently with cluster school partners to develop and implement a new and impressive curriculum for religious education (RE).
- The manner in which pupils' wellbeing is prioritised and supported is very impressive.
- Many older pupils are able to use complex subject-specific vocabulary in RE in an impressively mature way.
- High priority is given to the creation of opportunities for staff prayer. This makes a significant contribution to the palpable sense of teamwork that's in place across the school.

What the school needs to improve

- Increase the rigour of monitoring, evaluating, and reviewing work to allow it to better inform leaders and governors in relation to standards being attained. This, in turn, should enable them to identify areas for improvement based on thorough analysis of empirical data.
- Develop the provision of collective worship to include the use of high quality music and other art forms to promote a sense of awe and wonder in all present.
- Work to increase the level of challenge provided by the RE curriculum for all learners.

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

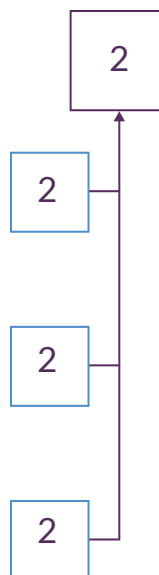
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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



St David's is a school in which pupils feel highly valued and loved. They are known by name by staff throughout the school. Consequently, they feel happy and safe; they are ready to learn. They fully embrace the Catholic identity of the school and they are active participants in its life and mission. Learners are beginning to develop an understanding of Catholic social teaching (CST) and its implications for how they should live. They were able to talk to inspectors, for example, about how the Church's teaching regarding the dignity of all persons relates to their efforts to support the local foodbank. Further, they have also worked to support Cafod, the RSPCA, Cancer Research and the St Vincent de Paul Society. Pupils exhibit high levels of respect for their peers, staff, and visitors and their behaviour is exemplary. They are a credit to staff and to their families. They respond positively to chaplaincy opportunities provided by the school, which are good. The prefect system in place, for example, allows children to support one another well, and the 'Well-being Warriors' group actively supports children who may be feeling sad or anxious. Fewer opportunities flow from the local parish and this element of school life is underdeveloped.

The school's mission statement is lived out enthusiastically by all staff members, who form a strong and supportive team. The sense of a very strong Catholic community is palpable. It has been developed over an extended period of time and all staff, including the caretaker, kitchen staff, teaching assistants, and teachers, have played a full role in its cultivation. A culture of welcome is firmly embedded and children from places far away from Wales are well

integrated. Staff relationships are very positive and provide an impressive model for pupils to emulate. Some good support for pupils is provided by an emotional learning support assistant (ELSA), and pupils have a 'chosen person' they can speak with when needed. Overall, pastoral care is strong due to the general caring attitude that staff have towards pupils. The way in which pupils' moral and spiritual development is promoted is good. The environment is clearly Catholic in nature and appropriate focal points for prayer are in place in classrooms and throughout the school; they are liturgically correct and of good quality. Provision for relationships and sex education conforms to diocesan expectations and it is rooted in the teachings of the Church.

Leaders and governors are fully committed to their roles as guardians of the Catholic life and mission of the school. The head teacher and deputy head teacher form a good team. They are dedicated to their work and they show admirable levels of respect for the dignity of all at the school. They are committed to developing the spiritual, physical, and mental well-being of staff and pupils. They work well in partnership with the diocese and they take advantage of training opportunities provided. They work well with parents, who responded positively to the survey completed as a part of the inspection. Leaders endeavour to put the Church's preferential option for the poor into practice. This is illustrated by recent work to support local elderly people, for example, and by the priority identified this year to promote CST across the school. Governors are passionate about the need to develop young people of faith. The RE link governor is active in this area and there is a clear desire to develop a more active partnership with the local parish. Leaders' self-evaluation in this area is broadly accurate, but it is descriptive in nature and therefore its ability to contribute to further improvements is limited.

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

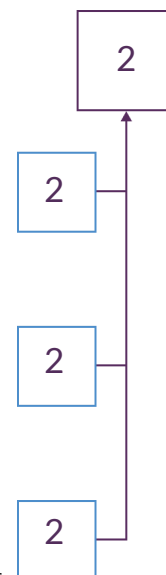
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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 across the school make good progress in their learning and it is without significant variability in year groups or in cohorts, such as those entitled to free school meals or those who have English as an additional language. Learners are developing their religious literacy well and the standards produced are good. Strong examples of this include Year 6 pupils' writing about the symbolism involved in St John's Gospel of the Passion and Year 2's diary account of Jesus' meeting with Peter the fisherman. A particular strength is the way that many older pupils are able to use subject-specific language in a mature manner; they spoke to inspectors about the nature of the Sacraments of the Church impressively, for example. Pupils show good ability to learn without constant adult supervision, however, opportunities for them to take the initiative in their learning are limited. This contributes, at times, to them being insufficiently challenged. Work is well presented but it does not consistently show signs of learners' emerging independence and creativity. Pupils have a very positive attitude towards their lessons and they are ready to learn. Engagement levels are high and they have a good understanding of how well they are doing in their learning.

The quality of teaching is consistently good. Overall, teachers' subject knowledge is good and all staff show high levels of commitment to RE. An impressive feature is the manner in which Catholic staff support those who are not of the Faith. Staff have worked conscientiously to implement a new curriculum and the quality of their planning is good. In the best teaching observed, pace was good and engaging and appropriate activities were well explained to

learners. Teachers' initial questions are good; however, they are often not followed by further questions designed to check for the depth of pupil understanding or to improve the quality of their responses. Teachers and support staff work very well in a collaborative manner, and pupils' efforts are positively acknowledged and celebrated. Good work is done to allow pupils to present their learning in a variety of ways, including the written form, digitally, and through the use of expressive arts. At times, the latter does not reach the same standard as, for example, extended writing. Marking is positive in nature, but opportunities for pupils to respond to it are not routinely taken. Teachers often create opportunities for reflection during lessons; this is an impressive element of practice. The way that staff promote the development of children's moral and spiritual development is good.

Leaders and governors have worked impressively with cluster school partners to implement a new curriculum. This has been achieved with an aim to broaden the range of learning experiences for pupils within a high quality, scripture-rich programme of learning. A good programme of professional development has enhanced the implementation process. The subject leader for RE is committed to her role and her work has significantly contributed to the good standards achieved by learners. This work has ensured that good progression is evident across the school. Some good work has been done to create a purposeful planning system for learning; however, it does not create sufficient opportunities for a range of particularly challenging learning experiences to be a regular feature in practice. Leaders have carried out some good monitoring work in relation to teachers' planning. However, teaching has not been formally observed for some time. Consequently, it is difficult for leaders to clearly identify strengths and weaknesses in teaching and to plan for high quality professional development aimed at excellence in pedagogy. Some potentially very useful data has been collated in relation to pupils' standards, but it has not been analysed effectively in a way that may afford targeted support to be in place to raise standards. Self-evaluation in this area is reasonable but it lacks in depth analysis.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

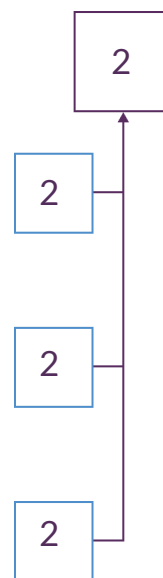
How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

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



Most pupils respond positively to the experiences of prayer and liturgy provided at St David's, for example, by joining in prayer and song and serving as Ministers of the Word with growing confidence. The quality of collective worship is good. Pupils enter prayerful spaces respectfully and participate well. Behaviour during observed acts of worship was exemplary, with pupils engaging thoughtfully in moments of reflection. Younger pupils are also given opportunities to participate in spontaneous prayer. Pupils demonstrate an understanding of a variety of ways of praying; periods of silence and meditation enhance this. The range of prayers known by children is generally good; however, those known by older children reflect a limited amount of progression. Many speak confidently about aspects of the liturgical year, particularly those involved in the pupil chaplaincy group. They spoke enthusiastically about a prayer they composed for the governing body, which is now shared at the beginning of meetings. Older pupils have opportunities to prepare and lead prayer and worship and are developing the necessary skills to do so, including voice projection and fostering a sense of reverence. Through the school's provision, pupils willingly undertake liturgical ministries and evaluate their experiences using the *Gweiddiwn* structure of gather, listen, respond, and go forth. Pupils are increasingly able to reflect on these experiences and describe how they inspire action, such as fundraising for charities.

Prayer and liturgy are central to school life, supported by a well-established daily pattern of prayer. Pupils are familiar with key traditional prayers, although opportunities to broaden this range are more limited. Parents are encouraged to engage in the spiritual life of the school through regular assemblies, services, and 'Stay and Pray' sessions, with positive parental

feedback shared with inspectors. Staff are strong role models in prayer and liturgy, and leaders provide clear guidance and support. Staff understanding of the liturgical year enables them to help pupils to plan meaningful experiences, such as Reception pupils contributing Lenten promises to a shared prayer focus. However, the use of music and creative arts to enhance prayer and foster a deeper sense of awe and wonder is less well developed. The school makes good use of available spaces, including a central garden used for prayer and reflection, such as Stations of the Cross during Lent. However, some prayer areas within the school are not consistently maintained to fully support a prayerful atmosphere. The school demonstrates a commitment to developing links with the parish, although external factors have limited progress in this area.

Leaders and governors have ensured that appropriate policies for prayer and liturgy are in place and have established a clear approach to developing pupils' participation. They are committed to providing opportunities for pupils to take part in Mass and the Sacrament of Reconciliation, not merely in terms of policy setting, but through active support for pupils. Professional development is well supported, with senior leaders engaging in parish evangelisation events. They use this learning to inform next steps. As a result of strong peer support, non-Catholic staff are enabled to confidently teach religious content and lead prayer and liturgical experiences. This is a strength of the school. Consequently, staff provide a good role model for pupils in the delivery of collective worship. Staff report that they greatly value the supportive approach of leaders. Spending on RE is in line with other core subjects, and while self-evaluation does not yet fully reflect the expectations of excellence in prayer and liturgy, leaders demonstrate a clear commitment to ongoing improvement. Monitoring processes are developing, and the school is well placed to strengthen this aspect further in the pursuit of excellence.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Davids Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	401549
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	6803300
Full postal address of the school	St Davids RC Primary School, Park Crescent, NEWPORT, NP20 3AQ
School phone number	01633 816027
Headteacher or Head of School	Louise Robinson
Chair of Governors	Reema Cross
School Website	www.stdavidsrcprimary.co.uk
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Voluntary Aided School
Admissions policy	Non Selective
Age-range of pupils	4 - 11
Gender of pupils	Not applicable
Date of last denominational inspection	12 March 2018
Previous denominational inspection grade	Good

The Inspection Team

Lyndon Watkins

Lead

Sarah Marie Jones

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