



## Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Primary School

URN: 119627

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Lancaster

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

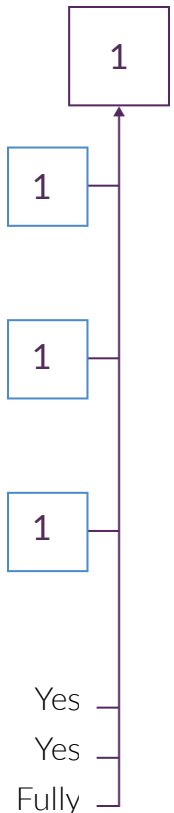
##### Collective worship (p.7)

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



## What the school does well

- The Catholic ethos of the school is vibrantly lived out by all and impacts pupils, staff, governors, families and the wider community.
- Relationships across the school are exceptionally strong. As a result, pupils consistently exhibit excellent behaviour and attitudes towards learning.
- The leadership team, guided by the clear vision of the inspirational headteacher, offers clear direction across all aspects of school life.
- Governors demonstrate outstanding leadership and provide robust support for the school.
- Achievement and progress in religious education remain consistently strong for all groups of pupils.

## What the school needs to improve

- Develop meaningful connections between discrete subjects within the curriculum, ensuring that teaching and learning consistently reflect the values and teachings of the Catholic Church.
- Actively share and embed best practice in questioning and oracy skills observed across the school, ensuring all pupils are equipped to speak fluently and confidently about their learning in religious education.
- Enhance the capacity of all staff members in designing and leading high-quality prayer and liturgical experiences, enabling pupils in every year group to participate meaningfully and actively

## 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

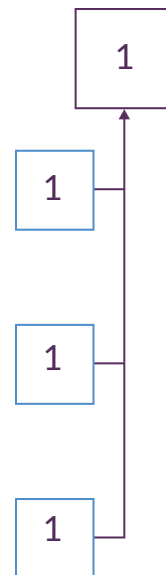
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

#### 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 have a clear and secure understanding of the school's mission statement, recognising that they are each precious in God's eyes. This strong sense of identity is nurtured through the high levels of care they receive daily. As a result, pupils confidently articulate that they are loved, valued, and created in the image and likeness of God. This knowledge underpins their excellent attitudes, behaviours, and engagement in school life.

Guided by the school's Star Charter, pupils are encouraged to live out the gospel values through charitable actions, outreach within the parish community, and a shared commitment to caring for creation. These principles are embedded across the school and are visible in the ways pupils speak, act, and contribute to the wider community. One pupil told inspectors, 'when we help those in need, they can feel God's love.'

Relationships throughout the school are of an exceptionally high standard. Pupils treat one another, and all staff, with deep respect, recognising the inherent dignity of every person. This mutual respect creates a harmonious atmosphere where all members of the school community feel safe, supported, and inspired to achieve their potential.

Together, pupils and staff uphold a learning environment rooted in love, honesty, and trust. This strong foundation enables everyone to strive to be the best they can be, both academically and spiritually.

The school's mission statement is clearly understood by all stakeholders, regularly reviewed, and meaningfully embedded in the daily life of the community. Staff consistently model its

values, serving as exemplary role models who wrap pupils in love, care, and encouragement. Their commitment to living out the school's mission is evident in their words, actions, and relationships. Staff play an active role in all aspects of the Catholic life of the school including chaplaincy. For example, many join families at the regular Sunday family Masses, serve as catechists within the parish, and fully support the Star Charter aim of strengthening connections with the parish community.

Pastoral care is a notable strength. Staff continually seek innovative ways to meet pupils' needs, such as the effective use of Forest Schools to support wellbeing, resilience, and personal growth. A culture of welcome permeates the school, ensuring that every visitor, pupil, and family feels valued and included.

The school environment strongly reflects its Catholic identity. Prominent features such as the prayer space in the main entrance, the Stations of the Cross in the hall, and the school's chapel within the grounds provide visible and meaningful opportunities for prayer and reflection. The relationships sex and health education curriculum is planned exceptionally well and meets all diocesan and statutory requirements.

Leaders, including governors, articulate a clear and compelling vision for the school, firmly rooted in its mission. They are committed to ensuring that every pupil develops a loving relationship with God and understands that they are precious in His eyes. The headteacher, ably supported by senior leaders, provides excellent leadership for this faith-filled community. The governing body is experienced, highly skilled, and ambitious for the school's continued success. Governors have an excellent understanding of the school's strengths and areas for further development, and they play an active role in all aspects of school life.

Leaders, including governors, have responded positively to the Bishop's vision for education across the diocese, with the school joining the Blessed Edward Bamber Multi Academy Trust imminently. This development reflects leaders' commitment to securing the best possible future for the school community.

Leaders work exceptionally well with the parish priest and parishioners, resulting in a flourishing relationship that benefits both school and parish and is a significant strength of the school's work. Regular family Masses provide rich opportunities for shared prayer and liturgy, including collaboration between the school and parish choirs and joint participation in the prayers of the faithful.

Leaders ensure that all members of the school community contribute to self-evaluation, and professional development opportunities, including for those new to the school, are excellent.

## 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

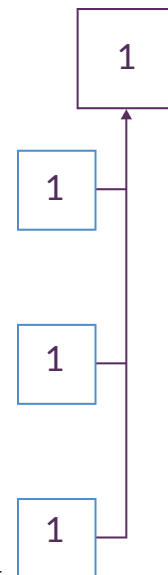
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

#### 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 demonstrate a strong understanding of religious concepts and are able to recall prior learning with confidence. For example, during inspection a pupil in Year 4 recounted the story of Abraham with accuracy and detail, illustrating secure knowledge. Across all year groups, pupils are religiously literate and use subject-specific vocabulary with confidence and ease.

Pupils engage positively with their learning, working individually, in pairs and collaboratively in groups. During inspection, in several classes, levels of motivation and participation were particularly high. One pupil told inspectors that they were actively trying to incorporate more scripture into their work in response to a class target. A Year 1 pupil also demonstrated thoughtful understanding by noting, "Lent is purple, because purple is a king's colour and the king is Jesus."

The majority of pupils report that they enjoy their religious education lessons, though a small number express a desire for further challenge. A broad range of learning activities was observed in lessons and within pupils' books, including Visio Divina, role play, letters to refugees linking their experiences to God's covenant with Abraham, diary entries, and prayer writing. These varied tasks provide pupils with meaningful opportunities to explore and express their understanding of faith.

Where teaching is strongest, lessons have a purposeful pace, a clear sense of momentum and classrooms are characterised by a positive, energetic atmosphere in which pupils are encouraged to challenge, support, and build on one another's ideas. Teachers demonstrate

secure subject knowledge and, in most cases, guide pupils effectively through the intended learning. Ensuring that this high standard of practice is consistent across the whole school remains an important next step.

Staff report confidence in using the new scheme of work to support their delivery of the Religious Education Directory, and many have taken time to adapt materials to meet the needs of their particular cohorts. In several classes, teachers successfully extend pupils' thinking by encouraging them to draw upon prior learning or to justify their responses with reference to scripture. This approach enables pupils to deepen their understanding and articulate more developed explanations, aiding oracy skills and confidence in the subject. The practice needs to be developed across the age groups.

Many teachers also demonstrate a clear appreciation of the significance of religious education within the wider curriculum. As a result, pupils are frequently provided with meaningful opportunities for reflection during lessons, contributing to a thoughtful and reflective learning environment. The impact of this was evident when children wrote a letter to themselves from God, with one pupil adding 'PS, remember you are precious in my eyes', the school's mission statement.

Leaders ensure that the curriculum provides a faithful and comprehensive reflection of the Directory. Religious education enjoys full parity with other core subjects in terms of curriculum time, monitoring, and resourcing. This reflects leaders' commitment to placing religious education at the centre of pupils' spiritual, moral, and academic development.

Staff report confidence in seeking support and guidance from senior leaders, and the programme of continuing professional development is both purposeful and effective in strengthening classroom practice. The subject leader demonstrates a clear and well-articulated vision for religious education and is strongly supported by the wider senior leadership team in realising this vision. She has ensured the curriculum is carefully planned to fully meet the needs of all learners, as evidenced in outcomes in pupil books and data.

Governors have an accurate and up-to-date understanding of standards across the school, including assessment outcomes, pupil progress, and the overall quality of teaching in religious education. Governors exercise appropriate levels of support and challenge, holding leaders to account where necessary to ensure ongoing improvement. All stakeholders are involved in evaluating the work of the school. This ensures a continued drive for excellence.

## Collective worship

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

### Collective worship key judgement grade

#### Pupil outcomes

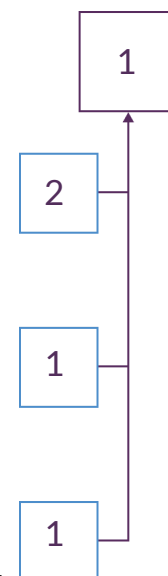
How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

#### 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 with enthusiasm and reverence to the varied opportunities for prayer and liturgy provided across the school. They are developing an age-appropriate and increasingly secure understanding of the Church's liturgical year, and many are able to identify and appreciate a range of prayer forms. Pupils demonstrate awareness of the importance of scripture, symbolism, liturgical music, and moments of silence in shaping their spiritual lives.

Across all year groups, pupils participate positively in communal singing, contributing to a sense of unity and shared worship. They collaborate effectively with their teachers and their peers when planning and leading prayer experiences, showing respect for different approaches to prayer and liturgy.

Older pupils are beginning to articulate some ways in which their personal prayer practices are influenced by the wider school community. For example, pupils told inspectors they regularly pray for members of the school community who are sick or who have died. Some older pupils told inspectors they would like more opportunities to lead prayer across year groups.

The targeted mentoring and support for staff which takes place will ensure that pupils of all ages continue to be guided towards a deeper, more meaningful engagement in prayer and liturgical participation.

Prayer is deeply embedded at the heart of school life, shaping daily routines and contributing significantly to the school's ethos. The use of scripture is consistently appropriate and integral to every act of prayer, ensuring that opportunities for reflection are purposeful, spiritually rich, and firmly rooted in the liturgical tradition of the Church. Staff act as strong role models for pupils, both in class prayer and whole school celebrations of the Word. Their ability to plan and lead engaging prayer experiences is continually strengthened through focused support from school leaders, including targeted mentoring and coaching for those new to the school. This collaborative and reflective approach helps to cultivate a spiritually vibrant community in which all are encouraged to participate, reflect, and grow.

The school's physical environment has been carefully developed to enhance the prayer life of the community. The dedicated prayer space at the school entrance offers a welcoming area for quiet prayer and reflection, while the chapel, located within the school grounds, provides a calm space for class or group prayer. In addition, the early years prayer garden enables younger pupils to engage in moments of stillness and prayer within a natural and accessible setting. Together, these thoughtfully designed spaces contribute significantly to the spiritual formation of both pupils and staff.

The school has a clear, well-structured, and accessible policy for prayer and liturgy, which is effectively communicated to all staff. It includes guidance for each year group, building up skills of participation and follows the liturgical year. This enables teachers and support staff to lead and participate in prayer with confidence and consistency and to support pupils in leading prayer. Professional development is thoughtfully planned across the year, ensuring that staff continue to grow in their liturgical understanding. Where needed, targeted mentoring and coaching are offered.

The school calendar reflects the Church's year and ensures regular opportunities for reflection and participation. Pupils and staff are offered the Sacrament of Reconciliation, at particular times during the year, including Advent and Lent. Special celebrations, including holy days of obligation and feast days, are thoughtfully designed to engage pupils, staff, and families in meaningful worship, strengthening the spiritual life of the whole community.

Parents value their involvement in the school's prayer life, particularly through initiatives such as the prayer bags shared at home during Advent and Lent, which help to extend spiritual engagement beyond the classroom.

Leaders prioritise the prayer life of the school when making budgetary decisions, and the positive impact of this commitment is evident throughout the school environment.



## Information about the school

Full name of school	Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	119627
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8883715
Full postal address of the school	KENILWORTH ROAD, LYTHAM ST ANNES, FY8 1LB
School phone number	01253 726015
Headteacher or Head of School	Mrs Natalie Gregan
Chair of Governors	Mrs Dee Hills
School Website	<a href="http://www.ourladystarofthesea.lancs.sch.uk">www.ourladystarofthesea.lancs.sch.uk</a>
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Voluntary Aided School
Admissions policy	
Age-range of pupils	4 - 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	04 December 2019
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

## The Inspection Team

Jacqueline Hampson

Lead

Alan Parry

## 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