



St Clares Catholic Primary School

URN: 104648

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Archbishop of Liverpool

10 June 2026 – 11 June 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

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Yes

Yes

Fully

What the school does well

- St Clare's is fully inclusive and celebrates the diversity within the school population, ensuring pupils from all faiths and none, have fidelity to their own commitments, with respect for one another.
- The school has a welcoming culture for all pupils and families, and relationships between staff and pupils are based on love, support, and respect.
- Pupils enjoy their learning, and behaviour is exemplary, both in and out of the classroom, enabling pupils to make good progress in religious education.
- Staff ensure that experiences of prayer and liturgy allow all pupils to participate in line with their own beliefs and traditions, with respect and reverence.
- Leaders and governors are committed to the school's mission so that all pupils can 'let their light shine'.

What the school needs to improve

- Leaders should use strategic monitoring, analysis and evaluation to identify areas for improvement and action in Catholic life and mission, religious education, and collective worship.
- Provide precise feedback to pupils so they know how well they are doing in religious education, and how to improve their work.
- Strengthen pupil ministry to enable their greater involvement in planning and leading prayer and liturgy across all age groups.

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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Pupils demonstrate a strong, and authentic understanding of the school's mission to 'let our light shine,' explaining confidently that they are called by God to be the best they can be. They articulate the school's values of faith, respect, aspiration, friendship, and trust with clarity and describe how these are lived out in their daily interactions. The school's culture of welcome is a significant strength; pupils speak with conviction about how everyone is treated equally and without discrimination. Diversity is highly valued and celebrated. Pupils appreciate opportunities such as 'Culture Day', which enables them to share, and learn about different beliefs and traditions, thereby fostering a strong sense of unity. They are proud to be part of St Clare's, describing it as a place where all are welcomed, and deeply respected. Pupils at Saint Clare's are happy and secure. A staff member commented that 'it is a lovely place to be.' Members of the eco-council take pride in their responsibilities for recycling and maintaining the school environment, recognising this as their call to care for the common home. Pupils demonstrate an understanding of Catholic social teaching through support for those in need, including Cafod fundraising initiatives. They understand these actions as service to others.

The mission of St Clare's is highly visible and embedded within the life of the school. 'Let our light shine' is clearly understood and lived out by pupils, and staff, guiding behaviour, attitudes, and relationships. A strong family-centred ethos underpins the school's work, ensuring that all are valued, respected, and supported. Staff demonstrate a commitment to pastoral care, particularly for vulnerable pupils, reflecting a genuine culture of welcome and inclusivity. Sensory circuits, play therapy, and the sensory room itself ensures the most vulnerable pupils are supported. Relationships across the school are warm and nurturing,

characterised by a spirit of generous hospitality. Pupils say they like school 'because of the kindness of staff and everything they do for us,' which contributes to a calm and positive environment. The school celebrates its diverse community, ensuring that pupils of all faiths feel respected and included, with prayer needs met sensitively. A staff member commented, 'St Clare's could teach the world how to live in harmony and peace.' The environment reflects the Catholic character, with displays of mission, scripture, and Catholic social teaching. The use of forest school, and the prayer garden, enhance pupils' spiritual development. Provision for relationships, health and sex education meets diocesan requirements. Its curriculum enables pupils to articulate their learning about friendships, puberty and families.

Leaders and governors fulfil their responsibilities as guardians of the Catholic life and mission with commitment and integrity. Christ is clearly at the heart of decision-making, and there is a strong determination to preserve and promote the school's Catholic identity. Governors are ambitious for the school and prioritise Catholic life and mission. Policies and practice reflect the school's charism, and leaders engage positively with diocesan initiatives, including progress towards the Live Simply award. There is a commitment to Catholic social teaching, particularly in supporting those most in need. Resources are used effectively to support families. Staff well-being is prioritised through access to the 'HEARTs Project and Peace Collective'. Staff feel valued and supported, reflecting leaders' respect for the dignity of all. Leaders recognise their role in serving the local church and provide meaningful opportunities to celebrate key liturgical events. Parents are supportive of the school's mission, although links with the parish and wider community could be developed further. Monitoring and evaluation processes are established and shared; however, self-evaluation lacks sharpness. More precise strategic planning, with clearly defined and measurable actions, would strengthen leaders' ability to identify priorities and demonstrate sustained impact.

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

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Pupils behave exceptionally well, engage fully in lessons, and enjoy religious education. Consequently, they have developed a secure knowledge and understanding to aid their religious literacy. In Year 1, most pupils could talk about scripture they had encountered: The Last Supper, Zacchaeus, and The Widow's Offering. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils could make links between the laying on of hands during the anointing of the sick and holy orders. Staff have high expectations which leads to pupils' work being presented to a high standard. The use of creative tasks, including artwork to represent the Holy Spirit, and exploration through bubbles and kites, promotes pupils' enjoyment in religious education lessons. Pupils can use subject-specific vocabulary, for example, in a Year 3 lesson, pupils recalled Jewish symbols used to celebrate Passover. Additional adults are used effectively to support pupils with special educational needs and disabilities, including those who are new to school, to achieve well. Pupil achievement in religious education is better than in other core subjects. However, pupils do not always understand how well they are doing, or what they need to do to improve. They need precise feedback, so they know how to make further progress in religious education.

Staff have a high level of confidence and expertise in their teaching of religious education. This subject is valued by staff in St Clare's and communicated to pupils clearly through teaching, expectations, and the work set. Teachers' plan effectively and in line with pupils' ages and contexts, which enables good rates of progress. In a lesson about Passover, pupils were encouraged to think about celebrations in their own cultures. Teachers use questions to

identify pupils' understanding and, where questioning is used well, this enables the pupils to reflect deeper into areas of learning. This was observed in the Year 6 class discussion about the Sacrament of the Sick. Pupils reflected on how they would feel to be anointed. One pupil responded, 'they would feel blessed and safe and know God is with them.' Children in the nursery were confident to talk about Jesus' friends and how to be caring. Floorbooks evidence the opportunities for pupils to present their learning in a variety of forms, including Ipads to create images of the crucifixion, and silhouette artwork depicting the Feast of the Epiphany. Teachers do not always provide feedback to pupils about their work. They would benefit from precise feedback to understand how to move on confidently with their work.

Leaders and governors have ensured that the curriculum for religious education across the school is a faithful expression of the *Religious Education Directory* (RED). It is regarded as a priority subject. Leaders and governors ensure that religious education is timetabled in line with archdiocesan requirements. Budgets and resources for religious education are comparable to other core subjects. Leaders ensure religious education is reported to parents annually. Leaders identify professional development as a priority. Staff have recently attended the diocesan training for the RED. The subject leader has a vision for improving aspects of religious education, including providing support for less experienced members of staff through sharing good practice. This has resulted in teaching across school being at least good. Leaders ensure that enrichment activities, such as visits to the Metropolitan Cathedral, and the local gurdwara, and visits from agencies such as Cafod, have enhanced pupils' learning. Leaders monitor religious education, and self-evaluation identifies areas for improvement. There is a need for strategic analysis that clearly identifies actions explicitly linked to improvements in provision and outcomes in religious education that can be evaluated. This would enable the shared vision to be communicated and monitored effectively.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

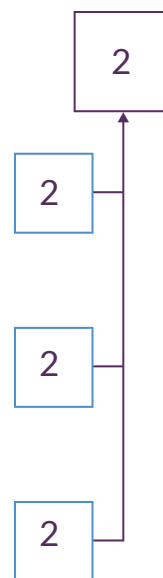
How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

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 participate in prayer and liturgy experiences and are invited to engage in ways that are appropriate to their own faith and beliefs. They respectfully observe periods of silence and join in communal prayer. Most pupils can articulate the seasons of the liturgical year and their associated colours. Pupils are familiar with singing the alleluia to welcome the Gospel. They understand Catholic traditions such as signing for the Gospel. They explain that this represents 'blessing our thoughts, words and hearts.' Pupils in Year 6 show an appreciation of meditation and its role in deepening their understanding of the wider world. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, strong and well-established foundations are evident, as children engage respectfully in prayer, contribute meaningfully to setting the focus table, and develop early habits of silence and reflection. However, opportunities for pupils to plan, lead and shape prayer and liturgy are underdeveloped. This limits pupils' ownership and restricts the depth of their understanding of worship as an active expression of faith. Consequently, pupils are not yet secure in evaluating the impact of prayer and liturgy and are unable to consistently articulate how the 'Go Forth' leads to meaningful and sustained action in their daily lives.

Prayer and liturgy is central to the life of the school, with pupils engaging with reverence. Established routines at key points of the day contribute to a consistent and embedded culture of prayer. Senior leaders model a clear and structured approach to worship, ensuring pupils experience a familiar structure of 'Gather, Listen, Respond and Go Forth'. Some pupils demonstrate an understanding of Catholic traditions. Faith ambassadors take pride in supporting worship, through preparing focal points and leading prayer. However, their leadership is not yet fully developed, as pupils rely on prayers written by adults, and they have

insufficient opportunities to plan, lead, and evaluate their own celebrations of the word. This limits their ownership and restricts the depth of their understanding of worship as an active expression of faith. Provision is enriched through the celebration of significant liturgical events, including the crowning of Mary. Pupils spoke about this as a moment of joy. Well-maintained outdoor spaces, including prayer areas, enhance opportunities for reflection. The outdoor classroom was used as the scene of the nativity at Christmas. While music and singing are sometimes included, they are not yet integral to worship. Stronger links with families, and the parish, would strengthen provision for collective worship.

Leaders ensure that collective worship is planned with clear reference to the liturgical year, providing a structured approach to prayer, liturgy and worship. Themes reflect Catholic social teaching principles and are linked appropriately to United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund. Scripture is generally well chosen to reinforce key messages, such as the use of *The Good Samaritan* to promote the school mission. Pupils reflected on this message as being lived out, 'by behaving better and doing something to get closer to God.' Leaders have engaged in diocesan training, and share this with staff to build confidence in leading prayer. The headteacher models appropriate practice, contributing to a consistent approach across the school. Worship is inclusive, with sensitivity shown to pupils of different faith backgrounds and none. Pupils are invited to 'pray in your own special way.' In addition, systems for evaluating the quality and impact of prayer and liturgy are in place but not yet sufficiently refined to clearly inform future improvements, or to enable leaders to report strengths and areas for development with precision. Governors are able to review the quality of collective worship with integrity and practical experience because they are frequent participants.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Clares Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	104648
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	3413550
Full postal address of the school	GARMOYLE CLOSE, LIVERPOOL, L15 0DW
School phone number	0151 733 4318
Headteacher or Head of School	Mrs Elizabeth MacKenzie
Chair of Governors	Mr Richard Cassidy
School Website	www.mystclares.com
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Voluntary Aided School
Admissions policy	
Age-range of pupils	3 - 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	08 May 2019
Previous denominational inspection grade	Good

The Inspection Team

Cathie Williams

Lead

Sue Leck

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