



St Catharine's Catholic Primary School

URN: 150342

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Clifton

25 June 2026 – 26 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

2

1

2

2

Yes

Yes

Fully

What the school does well

- Pupils have a very clear understanding and take pride in the identity and ethos of their school. They are living ambassadors for the school mission; Courage, Compassion and Community, inspired by the life of their patron saint. They demonstrate a deep sense of belonging and moral responsibility as they willingly put faith into action.
- Staff are enthusiastic and fully committed to preparing for and delivering the new Religious Education Directory (RED) curriculum. They are skilled in determining pupil understanding through effective questioning, so that all can make progress from their starting points.
- The headteacher, with the support of the Little Way Catholic Educational Trust (LWCET), has successfully re-ignited a strong sense of ethos and identity and an engaging prayer life for the community after a period of change. Catholic social teaching principles are now routinely linked with worship opportunities, the broader curriculum and the daily life of the school.
- The religious education leader is driven by a clear and informed vision for teaching and learning in the subject and demonstrates a strong level of expertise in securing this vision.
- Passionate and highly effective governors are ambitious for the school, reflecting their responsibility to its mission in all decision making. High quality monitoring and evaluation by governors, leaders and the trust inform planning and has driven accelerated improvement across the school.

What the school needs to improve

- Re-establish the full capacity of the chaplaincy team, so pupils have ownership of a well-planned and effective range of opportunities; to fully enhance the prayer life and ethos of the school.
- Provide pupils with relevant and specific feedback to celebrate achievement as well as inform pupils of their next steps in learning.
- In response to the new Prayer and Liturgy Directory, expand St. Catharine's community of prayer by developing the depth and richness of staff and pupil led prayer opportunities and experiences.

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

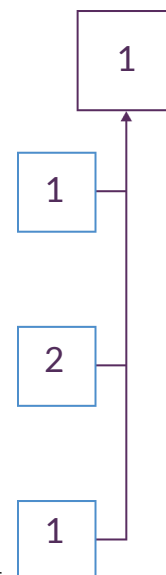
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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 demonstrate a secure and joyful understanding of the school's Catholic life and mission, confidently articulating and living out their mission; **Courage, Compassion and Community**. They speak with pride about belonging to a school where they feel they have a genuine stake in decision-making, shown through their leadership in the **pupil parliament**, house charity initiatives and enthusiastic involvement in **Laudato Si work**. A strong **sense of worth** is evident. Pupils describe themselves as known, valued and cared for, and this secure foundation supports their growing moral development. They make thoughtful choices rooted in kindness, justice and responsibility, expressing **Catholic social teaching** principles with clarity and maturity. One pupil explained them as "like British values – they're not laws, but guidelines on how to behave to make all people feel safe and included." Respect for self and others is a hallmark of behaviour. Pupils show deep curiosity when learning about other faiths, recalling new learning confidently and expressing dignity for all believers or none. Pupils respond positively to **chaplaincy provision**. They feel valued as chaplaincy team members, enjoy contributing to prayer and worship, and express a desire to take on even greater leadership in the spiritual life of the school.

A renewed sense of **identity and mission** is clearly evident following the recent mission review, with pupils, staff and families confidently articulating and living out *Courage, Compassion and Community*. Staff demonstrate wholehearted participation in the school's **Catholic life**, actively modelling gospel values and contributing to initiatives in the school and local community that strengthen this mission. A culture of community and pastoral care runs through daily school life, with staff ensuring that every child's needs are identified and met,

that their gifts are celebrated and all members feel **valued, included and supported**. Adults serve as strong **role models**, demonstrating kindness, respect and professional integrity. As one parent reflects, *"We chose this school for the warm, nurturing, inclusive feel."* The **school environment** provides a high-quality visual witness to Catholic identity. Classrooms and shared spaces highlight scripture, spirituality and global awareness, including displays celebrating the natural world inspired by David Attenborough's birthday and the spiritual significance associated with the recent Artemis II voyage. Chaplaincy provision is developing, with leaders committed to re-establishing a **regular chaplaincy programme** that strengthens pupil leadership and enriches spiritual life. Relationship and sex education is carefully planned and delivered, meeting diocesan expectations and supporting pupils' holistic formation.

Leadership and governance promote the mission of the school with clarity, energy and deep commitment. Catholic life and mission are securely embedded in policy, ensuring a shared direction that guides decision-making and daily practice. Governors bring high levels of expertise and ambition, offering purposeful monitoring that led to the recent mission review and strengthened **self-evaluation**. Their oversight ensures the **Catholic curriculum** remains coherent, values-driven and aligned with diocesan expectations. The headteacher, supported by the trust, has re-ignited a strong sense of ethos and identity after a period of change. Catholic social teaching is now routinely woven through curriculum and school life, shaping pupils' understanding of justice, stewardship and the common good. Leaders maintain strong **engagement with the diocese** and seek to work closely with the parish and priest. Partnership with parents is positive, with families well informed and supportive of the mission. One parent commented that they were impressed by how the school promotes and embeds Catholic values in everyday life. Leaders demonstrate respect for the rights and dignity of employees and continue to refine staff wellbeing approaches. High-quality **training and induction** ensure staff are equipped to contribute confidently to mission. Pupil voice increasingly informs **evaluation**, strengthening leadership impact across the school.

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

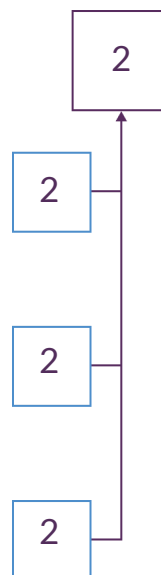
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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 achieve well in religious education and speak with genuine enjoyment about their learning. They particularly value creative approaches such as drama, roleplay, hot-seating and artwork, which deepen engagement and strengthen **knowledge and understanding**. Their enthusiasm for learning about other faiths is notable; pupils recall a recent talk from Islamic speakers, demonstrating growing respect and curiosity. Behaviour in lessons is very good, with pupils showing strong levels of **engagement** and concentration from the earliest ages. They respond well to multiple-choice 'hinge' questions, using them to recall prior learning and prepare for next steps. Pupils are developing secure **religious literacy**, confidently linking Old Testament prophecies with gospel stories and using specialist vocabulary with increasing accuracy. Pupils take pride in their workbooks as a record of progress, while class floor books capture enrichment activities such as discussions, re-enacting parts of the Mass, artwork and visits to the Mill House Care Home. These provide a rich picture of learning beyond written outcomes. There are no regular opportunities for pupils to practise **discernment**; listening, forming opinions and asking their own questions. There are no structured routines to develop **self-assessment** so that pupils can evaluate their learning and identify next steps with greater independence.

Teaching and learning in religious education are underpinned by strong subject knowledge, high expectations and a clear commitment to embracing the new RED curriculum across the school. Teachers demonstrate confident, well-developed teaching practice and respond positively to diocesan training, in-house support and guidance from leaders. Effective

questioning is a notable strength. Quick quizzes and customised hinge questions help establish prior learning, identify misconceptions and guide next steps. Provision supports pupils' spiritual and moral development well. In the strongest practice, teachers make meaningful links between scripture, the YouCat, Catholic social teaching and current affairs. Examples such as the war in Ukraine and the lives of St. Carlo Acutis and other saints, **inspiring role models** such as Popes Francis and Leo, Greta Thunberg, Jane Goodall and even fictional characters illustrate virtues in action. This is a developing strength and offers an opportunity for pupils to express their own opinions and questions. Celebration and feedback are developing, with teachers praising effort and now needing to provide challenge and constructive guidance that moves learning forward. Further work is required to embed **assessment for learning approaches** and regular opportunities for pupils to **evaluate their own learning** so they can better understand their progress and next steps.

Leadership and governance promote, monitor and evaluate religious education with clarity, commitment and increasing precision. Governors provide ambition and informed oversight, maintaining a strong focus on **core parity** and ensuring religious education is firmly rooted in the school's mission. The subject leader demonstrates enthusiastic dedication and a clear vision for colleagues, valuing her own **professional development** and maintaining purposeful dialogue with trust and diocesan partners. She responds to monitoring feedback in a timely, well-informed manner, ensuring that improvements are quickly embedded. Self-evaluation processes are increasingly robust, drawing on monitoring activities such as pupil voice, work scrutiny and lesson visits to identify strengths and next steps. Leaders act responsively; for example, when staffing changes affected a year group, the headteacher taught religious education to ensure continuity and minimise disruption. Regular feedback and in house training enable staff to deepen confidence and consistency. Curriculum design is strengthened by the subject leader's work to personalise knowledge organisers and close gaps between learning objectives and tasks. This has been valued by staff and improved clarity and progression. Leaders seek to ensure provision meets **pupils' needs** and that enrichment, such as visits, speakers and creative learning, is increasingly woven through the curriculum.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

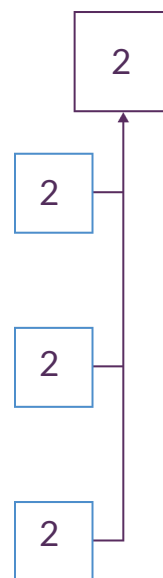
How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

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 liturgy and prayer with respect and reverence and express how much they value praying as a community. They speak of prayer as a meaningful way of building a relationship with God and that their own intentions are as important as traditional prayers. They would welcome more opportunities to include these in class and community worship. Pupils demonstrate an understanding of the rhythm of the **liturgical year** and engage respectfully in daily prayer opportunities. They speak positively about whole-school worship led by the headteacher, particularly those linked to current affairs, the world Church and the Jubilee Year of St Francis. A **variety of planned prayer experiences**, including the rosary, the May procession, pilgrimage-style prayer stations and regular celebration of Mass, deepens their engagement. Older pupils seek to contribute actively to worship. Year 6 pupils write **prayers of the faithful** for Mass and lead a weekly rosary club for younger pupils. Class worship follows the diocesan four-part structure and is now celebrated weekly. Pupil leadership is developing, with older pupils supporting younger classes in modelling worship. Pupils do not have the opportunity to broaden creative prayer, silence, spontaneous intentions and meaningful **self-evaluation** so they can reflect more deeply on their personal response to worship.

Collective worship holds a central place in the life of the school and shapes the daily experience of the community. The weekly pattern includes worship rooted in the Sunday gospel or liturgical season, pupil-led class worship and a celebration assembly, enabling pupil **engagement**. The school's annual prayer offer is well planned, marking traditional feast days and holy days with Mass or liturgy, whilst honouring some key traditions such as the May

procession and Jubilee pilgrimage. Pupils are familiar with some traditional Catholic prayers, though their access to the wider richness of prayer forms remains limited. The musical gifts of a local resident enhance hymn repertoire and contribute to a prayerful atmosphere. Staff show commitment to worship and are increasing **skill** in using scripture, symbol and ritual. The school's use of focal points and space is thoughtful, though pupils wish to develop the prayer garden and to make greater use of the neighbouring church building. Partnerships with families and the parish are positive, with parents expressing a desire to be invited more regularly to worship. The school welcomes all involvement of the parish priest.

Leadership and governance ensure that collective worship remains central to school life, with structures that guide practice and promote consistency, and the shared Little Way Trust policy providing clear **direction**. Holy days of obligation and significant celebrations, such as the school feast day, Little Way week and the trust's veneration of the relics of St Carlo Acutis, are marked with reverence through Mass and whole-school worship, strengthening pupils' connection to the wider Church. The headteacher demonstrates secure **knowledge and skill** in the liturgical year, ensuring worship is purposeful and accessible. Leaders' commitment to quality **training**, through diocesan or trust INSETs and ongoing in-house formation, is effective. The recently introduced prayer progression offers a helpful framework, but it not yet fully embedded. Leaders monitor worship with clarity and purpose; identifying a focus that develops confidence and skill so staff can support pupils in planning and leading worship creatively. Not all staff are fully equipped to lead high-quality prayer experiences rooted in the rich traditions of the Church. Governors play an active role, frequently attending celebrations and acting as a valuable link with the parish.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Catharine's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	150342
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	9163354
Full postal address of the school	Lower High Street, Chipping Campden, GL55 6DZ
School phone number	01386 840677
Headteacher or Head of School	Mrs Nicola Tippen
Chair of Governors	Mr Vincent Kelly
School Website	www.st-catharines.gloucs.sch.uk
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Little Way Catholic Educational Trust
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Academy
Admissions policy	Non Selective
Age-range of pupils	4 - 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	16 January 2020
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

The Inspection Team

Rita McLoughlin Lead

Tracey Sessions

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