



Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection report for
Holy Spirit Catholic Academy

URN: 149029

Carried out on behalf of the Title. Arch/bishop's name, Arch/bishop of Diocese on:

Date: 21st -22nd June 2023

Overall effectiveness The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school.....	2
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.....	2
Religious education (p.5) The quality of curriculum religious education.....	2
Collective worship (p.7) The quality and range of liturgy and prayer provided by the school.....	2
The school is fully compliant with the curriculum requirements laid down by the Bishops' Conference	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The school is fully compliant with all requirements of the diocesan bishop	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The school has responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection	Fully

Summary of key findings

What the school does well

The mission statement, values and vision are at the core of all the school does. Christ is at the centre.

Strong, caring relationships are evident between every member of school family. There is a palpable culture of welcome for all.

There is a shared commitment in providing all pupils with a safe and loving haven while challenging them to be the best they can be.

The leadership of the headteacher is a powerful force for positive change. This is embraced by all.

All are committed to ensuring that religious education is at the forefront of the school's work.

This Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection was carried out under canons 804 & 806 of the code of canon law. For maintained schools and academies in England it fulfils the statutory requirements of s.48 of the Education Act 2005. For maintained schools and academies in Wales it fulfils the statutory requirements of s.50 of the Education Act 2005.

What the school needs to improve:

In religious education teachers should carefully consider independent tasks so that all pupils are challenged in their learning to deepen their knowledge, skills and understanding.

Religious education and collective worship should be strengthened by careful thought given to how the richness of Catholic tradition and liturgical norms are used.

Build upon work already started in making strong, explicit links within the wider curriculum (foundation and core subjects) and the Catholic curriculum including Catholic contributions to culture.

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:.....

2

Pupil outcomes

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

2

Provision

The quality of provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school

2

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school

2



The pupils of this school know and own their mission statement and proudly attest to following the 'Holy Spirit' way. Behaviour of pupils at play and in lessons is good. Pupils are highly engaged in their learning and enthusiastic to share what they know and can do. Those pupils with different behaviour needs are well supported and understood. Teaching assistants are particularly proactive in ensuring pupils needs are being met. This reflects the shared understanding that all are created in the image and likeness of God. Pupils seek out ways to be kind to each other and at play they ensure that no one is 'left out.' The school is a calm and positive place to be. Pupils are proud to come to this school. Older pupils spoke about the changes which have happened over the last eighteen months. They told inspectors, the headteacher 'makes sure we're smart. She gets nice things for us.' The 'Shining Lights' are role models for others. They are committed to their role in sharing their mission and leading initiatives such as working towards the CAFOD 'Live Simply' award.

There is a strong and apparent sense of community at Holy Spirit. All members of staff embrace the mission statement and are enthusiastic in its implementation. All members of the school family were involved in its review and the writing of the school's vision and values. This firm sense of ownership is clear in the way that staff can articulate its meaning and impact on school life. One member of staff commented that, 'We're a family now.' The sense of lived community and culture of welcome is embedded in all the school does. This is evident from the moment any visitor, child, parent, or staff member enters the school grounds. The recent investment in the physical environment reflects the centrality of the school mission and provides a safe and caring haven. Pupils spoke about school being a safe place now. The provision of relationships and sex education is in its infancy. A thorough and well thought out policy is in place. This is supported by content plans that are aligned with statutory and diocesan requirements.

'Christ is at the heart of our school, and it is beating hard again.' This quote from a member of the governing body reflects their total and consistent commitment to the school and its life in the Church. They believe that under the leadership of the current headteacher the school has been 'resurrected' and 'new life' has come. Members of the trust board commented that the headteacher is a 'woman of faith' and a 'leading light' for her fellow headteachers. The senior leadership of the school are passionate about their school. They are clear in their expectations to provide an environment and experiences where all can achieve their potential. This is shared by all staff members because of the inclusive work which was undertaken to review the mission statement and to create the values and vision of the school. Conversations with members of staff showed their commitment to this process. Relationships are warm. It was clear that all staff put the children and their current and future happiness at the centre of their work. Staff commented that due to recent changes and improvements following the headteacher's appointment, 'Staff are happier, children are happier, and parents are happier too.' Pastoral care is a priority and the recently extended pastoral team provide a range of services, interventions, and support so that children facing a range of difficulties are enabled to thrive and achieve. It is recognised by all that rapid change was needed. This has been undertaken mindfully to ensure that staff well-being and dignity has been protected and enriched. The Trust supports the school well in providing opportunities for members of staff to support their own well-being and develop spiritually. All staff we spoke to commented on the mutually supportive atmosphere whereby everyone is ready to support and help.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade:.....

2

Pupil outcomes

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education.....

2

Provision

The quality of teaching, learning, and assessment in religious education.....

2

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor, and evaluate the provision for religious education.....

2

Attainment in religious education is in line with other core subjects, despite some gaps in learning. Religious education is carefully planned and assessed. Internal moderation processes have begun. This will be strengthened further through planned engagement in moderation with the local cluster. This will ensure that judgements are accurate especially those at greater depth. Pupils are highly engaged in their learning. This is reflected in pupils' excellent behaviour because they enjoy their lessons. During the inspection, no poor behaviour was observed. Most pupils make good progress and are knowing more, remembering more, and doing more. Consistent routines and strategies including revisiting prior learning, a focus on key vocabulary and providing thinking time in the best lessons, means that pupils are enabled to deepen their knowledge and make good progress. In Year 6, pupils were confident in making links between scripture passages previously taught and new learning. In the same lesson, questioning was used skillfully to deepen the pupils understanding and knowledge. In Year 5 pupils were enabled to demonstrate their deepening understanding of scripture. These pupils used what they had learned about the commandments and the beatitudes to write their own versions inspired by the values and vision of the school. In Early Years, children are enthusiastic to learn and some exclaimed, 'Yes!' when asked to complete independent tasks. They were enabled to think carefully about what it means to be a friend of Jesus. In the best books, presentation is good, a range of strategies is evident and marking and feedback enable pupils to make more progress. This good practice should be shared. Further work needs to be undertaken to ensure that all independent work is challenging, and opportunities are exploited to be creative.

The expectations of the Religious Education Directory are fulfilled. The Come and See programme is followed. Timetables and the balance of recorded work reflect the expected commitment to the subject. Teachers are confident in teaching religious education because of valuable guidance and professional development which has been provided. However, further work needs to take place to


ensure that subject knowledge, particularly knowledge of Catholic tradition is secure. Religious education is carefully planned and assessed. Although data is in line with other core subjects and is strong in areas, this is not always reflected in pupils work, especially at the higher standard. Written feedback is inconsistent and at times reflects an English subject base and so does not move pupils learning on in religious education. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together to support all pupils in their learning. This is particularly evident for less able pupils and pupils with additional needs who are seamlessly included in learning. Questioning and independent work is skillfully adapted to ensure that they too learn and progress well from their starting points.

Leaders and governors are firm in their commitment to religious education as the core subject in school. They know their school well and are accurate in their evaluation of current practice. They are proud of the changes which have taken place. The religious education lead is enthusiastic in her role. This commitment to religious education has had a positive impact on the way teachers approach their lessons. In taking up her role, she lost no time and quickly put in place structures and strategies to ensure that religious education is being taught well. Her determination to continue to improve the provision of religious education is evident. Her monitoring is thorough and reflects some of the improvements made. She has sought out support from other subject leads and the diocesan religious education advisers, whilst ensuring professional development is regularly carried out. Class teachers know that they can come to her for support and advice which she readily gives.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade:.....	2
Pupil outcomes How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship	2
Provision The quality of collective worship provided by the school	2
Leadership How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for collective worship	2



Prayer and Liturgy is central to school life and praying together is part of the daily experience for all pupils and staff. Pupils respond well to the experiences provided for them and are reverent and respectful. During observed acts of prayer and worship, some of the youngest children in school in Year 1 and Reception, were able to listen reverently to the Gospel and reflect in prayerful silence, led and modelled by their class teachers. In observed acts, scripture was central, and time was given to reflect on its message. Music was used to create a calm atmosphere at the beginning and to support reflection. The headteacher shared her role in leading prayer and liturgy for the whole school. Pupils engage joyfully in singing. Prayer and liturgy are well structured and relevant. Meaningful content means that pupils are enabled take the message of the worship into their personal lives both in school and in the wider community. Guidance given by staff reflects the liturgical year together with links to valuable resources. Staff must be careful to ensure that scripture comes from an appropriate source and resources are used thoughtfully so that their own planning reflects the needs of their class.

There is a plan for prayer and liturgy provided by the subject leader, which gives some valuable guidance to classes. Alongside this there is a developing programme of whole school and community worship. This includes joint masses with the other school within the parish and with the parish community at Lent and Advent. This was spoken of very highly of by the parish priest. There are increasing opportunities for parents to share in acts of worship in school and with the parish. They respond very well. Prayer and liturgy are planned to involve pupils from across the trust, which provides a powerful model of good practice. Liturgical norms are under utilised and therefore pupils are not always given the opportunities to embrace the richness of Catholic tradition. Work has begun to create prayer spaces in school; for example, the prayer garden which pupils spoke highly of their engagement in developing. More thought should be given to the siting of prayer spaces

within classrooms and other spaces around school so that they are available to inspire and support spontaneous prayer.

Leaders and governors have committed time and resources to ensuring that prayer and liturgy takes place every day and that staff have received training. Leaders have ensured that there is a supporting calendar that includes the liturgical year and important feast days. Pupils have some understanding of a range of ways of praying within the Catholic tradition, but this is limited. The lead for prayer and liturgy has ensured that there is a useful and developing policy in place. This would benefit from a review to ensure it provides further guidance of different forms of practice used with the Catholic tradition. Further work could be undertaken to ensure that teachers have enough guidance to support pupils in developing their skills of participation and leadership. Leaders have modelled prayer and liturgy. Consequently, staff can plan acts of worship that are engaging, accessible and relevant. The senior leadership team has undertaken valuable monitoring of prayer and liturgy and has a clear understanding of its continuing development. This has fed into the Trust wide development plan, which identifies prayer and liturgy as an area for ongoing enrichment.

Information about the school

Full name of school	Holy Spirit Catholic Academy
School unique reference number (URN)	149029
Full postal address of the school	Poulsom Drive, Bootle, Liverpool, L30 2NR
School phone number	0151 525 7497
Name of head teacher or principal	Mrs M. Forrest
Chair of governing board	Father C. McCoy
School Website	https://holyspiritcatholicprimary.co.uk/
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	St Joseph's Catholic Multi Academy Trust
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy
Age-range of pupils	3-11 years old
Trustees	St Joseph's Catholic Multi Academy Trust
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	20 th January 2016
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

The inspection team

Mrs Louise Byrne	Lead inspector
Mrs Clare Dwerryhouse	Team inspector
Name of inspector	Lead/team
Name of inspector	Lead/team

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