



# Holy Family Catholic Primary School

URN: 138636

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Clifton

27–28 November 2024

## 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

1

#### 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

1

The school is fully compliant with the general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishops' Conference

Yes

The school is fully compliant with any additional requirements of the diocesan bishop

Yes

The school has responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection

Fully

2

## Compliance statement

- 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 made good progress in responding to the areas for improvement from the last inspection.

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## What the school does well

- The whole school community is warm, joyful, vibrant and welcoming
- The focus on religious vocabulary has led to pupils being highly articulate in their knowledge and understanding
- There is an abundance of leadership opportunities for pupils, with the buddy system being especially effective and appreciated
- The Chaplaincy leads and their contribution to the prayer life of the school are highly valued
- The inspiring and dynamic co-heads and governors are supported effectively by the religious education lead, and by a committed staff team. The whole school community works hard to ensure continuous progress

## What the school needs to improve

- Ensure tasks set in religious education lessons allow pupils to show the extent of their knowledge and understanding in their written work to match their oral expression.
- Ensure there is enough challenge in lessons for pupils to achieve greater depth.
- Enable pupils to fully understand what they have done well and how they can extend their learning through quality feedback in books.

## 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

1

**Provision**

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

1

**Leadership**

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

1

1

Pupils know the school's mission statement and its virtues well. They are able to explain what this means in their daily life. They are strongly aware of being part of the local and universal Church, with photos of the Bishop and the Pope around the school. From the youngest age they know that they are loved by God and they are special. Relationships are strong leading to pupils feeling cared for, happy and secure. They have a clear understanding of their duty to care for our common home and help others in need and embrace opportunities to do so, 'we are here to serve like Jesus did when he washed the disciples' feet.' They actively support local and global charities such as the food bank and Cafod. Pupils are polite and respectful to all and behaviour is exemplary. They enjoy learning about other faiths and understand that 'it is really important to respect others' cultures.' Chaplaincy leads are well led by a passionate member of staff and are highly valued in the school. They lead prayer each day in the Sanctuary, a safe and quiet space that is well resourced. Chaplaincy leads are proud of their role, 'everyone is a chaplain but we have been chosen to lead'.

The mission statement, rooted in the Word of God, is embedded throughout and is lived by all each day. Staff are highly committed to the Catholic life of the school and value this. They enthusiastically contribute, especially through their care and support for the whole school community, going the extra mile to ensure that those most vulnerable have their needs met. There is a warm welcome for everyone. The school provides a tight knit, inclusive community which looks after everyone; with all staff, being exemplary role models. There is an abundance of pastoral support for those in need, including the Sunshine Room, trauma informed trained staff and the buddy system, where older pupils look after younger pupils. The school environment is a true reflection of its Catholic identity with beautiful, carefully designed and

resourced spaces and displays to support pupils' formation. These are highly valued and respected by the pupils. The school went through a rigorous process of choosing and implementing the right relationships education programme, which is linked to scripture. After consultation with the staff, parents and governors, this has been adapted for the needs of the community.

Leaders and governors fully embrace the mission of the school, as a result, the school is a happy, joyful place with 'cheerful children'. The school enthusiastically engages with diocesan initiatives and appreciate the training offered. The parish priest supports the school with the pupils regularly visiting the church for Mass. Parish links are strengthened by the support of the local sisters. Communication with parents is exemplary and parents fully support the Catholic life of the school., 'I am proud of my children and how passionate they are about all aspects of school life.' The governors contribute to the mission through their support of families in need. Staff are proud to work in the school and highly value the support from each other and the individual support offered by leaders. The co-heads support each other well and feel greatly supported by the governors. All subject areas are seen through a Catholic lens, underpinned by scripture quotes, such as, 'O Lord, you are our father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are the work of your hand' Isaiah 64:8, for Art. The experienced governors offer support and challenge as appropriate and work closely with leaders to ensure that they are fully informed and involved in school improvement. There is a rigorous monitoring cycle in place which leads to well targeted action plans. New staff feel well supported in their induction, including support from the religious education lead, their mentors and diocesan training.

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

### Religious education key judgement grade

**Pupil outcomes**

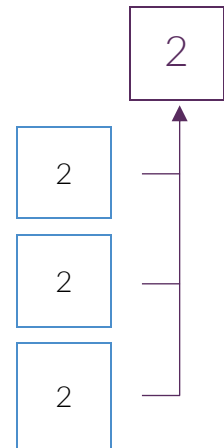
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

**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 enjoy their religious education lessons, due to the range of tasks that they are set, including artwork and drama, and the high-quality resources available. They enjoy looking more closely at scripture to support their learning, developing a deeper understanding of God’s word. Pupils are developing secure knowledge, understanding and skills and are therefore making good progress. They are able to reflect spiritually and ethically and say how this impacts on their daily life, particularly in their behaviour towards others. Pupils ask good questions, sometimes using quite challenging vocabulary, following modelling by teachers. Pupils concentrate well and work independently when given the opportunity to do so. They are actively engaged in lessons and seek to improve their knowledge and understanding. Pupils with specific needs are sensitively supported by teaching assistants, as well as adapted resources, so that all can achieve the same learning objective. Pupils articulate their learning well using religious vocabulary and higher order thinking, however tasks set in lessons do not always allow pupils to show the depth of their understanding in their written work. High quality work in books is seen in some classes, however, this is inconsistent. Some pupils are unsure of how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve their work. School data shows that attainment is in line with other core subjects.

Most teachers are confident in their subject knowledge due to training delivered by the diocese and the religious education lead and the useful resources from the new *Religious Education Directory*. The school has recently introduced the new *Religious Education Directory* across each year group and have adapted it to ensure it is followed sequentially for the older classes. Staff are annotating planning and assessing pupils’ progress regularly, to adapt for future planning. Effective questioning across the school enables pupils to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding, follow up questions enable extended learning. Staff praise and encourage pupils

in lessons. A range of tasks are offered such as, a walk around the school grounds to better understand Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem and writing a letter to the people of the earth from the point of view of the animals or the trees, ensure that pupils are motivated and enjoy religious education. Not all tasks planned allow enough challenge for pupils to achieve at greater depth. Teachers have a profound understanding of the impact of religious education, particularly with a focus on Catholic social teaching, on pupils' spiritual and moral development. This is strengthened by time given for purposeful reflection.

Leaders have introduced the new *Religious Education Directory* across the whole school this academic year and, in order for early career teachers to be supported in their teaching, leaders have placed experienced teachers in each phase to work alongside others and model good practice, plan together and moderate work. Staff value working together in this way and being able to support each other. Religious education has parity with other core subjects in terms of timetabling, staffing and resourcing. Leaders are committed to ensuring high quality training is delivered regularly through the diocese and the highly valued religious education lead. This secures the development of subject knowledge. The religious education lead is passionate and has an ambitious vision of religious education for the school. Rigorous regular monitoring enables the religious education lead to understand where the best practice is and where further support is needed. This leads to an effective action plan with impact seen. The school is grateful to the local sisters who provide invaluable enrichment to religious education lessons for example, showing pupils around the church and baptising their dolls. The focus on Catholic social teaching also provides enrichment as well as multi faith days, and trips such as to Malmesbury Abbey. Self-evaluation includes parent, pupil, staff and governors' voice which leads to good outcomes.

## 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

1

**Provision**

The quality of collective worship provided by the school

1

**Leadership**

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for collective worship

1

1

From the youngest age pupils show a deep respect and reverence for times of prayer and meditation. The early years children are able to sit in silence and reflect and also join in with the Our Father. All pupils engage fully in prayer and worship, sitting quietly and reflecting, singing with enthusiasm, and joining in with traditional or spontaneous prayer. They understand that liturgical seasons influences prayers at different times of the year. The Chaplaincy team lead prayer such as the Rosary in October and Remembrance in November. They were proud of their bidding prayers written for the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary Mass which were then read out by a pupil at church on the following Sunday. Pupils fully embrace and enjoy working with teachers and each other to plan, deliver and evaluate class prayer and worship at an age appropriate level. Pupils are aware of the need to pray for local and global needs. They are aware of how prayer leads to action, for example, showing kindness and love to family and friends.

Prayer is central to the daily life of the school. There is a weekly timetable including gospel assembly, and good news assembly, which is linked to the school virtues and Catholic social teaching, and class worship. The breadth of the Catholic tradition is celebrated in creative ways, for example, the Chaplaincy team working with the local partnership acting out each of the stations of the cross. Pupils are given the opportunity to pray spontaneously in the Sanctuary. Pupils are encouraged to write their own prayers and display them in creative ways such as hanging prayers on the tree in the hall. Well-chosen scripture is central to all prayer and worship and to the overall message. Staff are good role models in participating and leading prayer and are confident to support the pupils in planning and leading meaningful worship. Pupils enjoy worship through artwork and other activities provided by the liturgy leads in class worship. The school uses spaces in the school in creative and imaginative ways to support the prayer life of the school. There are areas in each class with age appropriate artefacts as well as dedicated

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indoor and outdoor prayer spaces which are cherished by the pupils. Parents are supportive of the prayer life of the school and, along with parishioners, are invited to all whole school and class Masses in church.

There is a useful policy which has been reviewed and is accessible to support staff in the expectations of liturgy in the school. Alongside this there is a prayer progression which outlines prayers for each year group, age appropriate responses expected at Mass and a progression of skills to enable all pupils to plan, lead and evaluate class worship. The school goes to the church regularly for whole school and class Mass; this includes the beginning and end of each term and holy days of obligation. There are reconciliation services at Lent and Advent, led by the Chaplaincy leads. The co-heads and the religious education lead are good role models for the staff and this, alongside training, has ensured staff confidence in planning and leading worship, and supporting the pupils to do this. A format followed by the staff and pupils ensures consistent purposeful worship. There are high quality resources available to support the prayer life of the school. The religious education lead ensures that pupils, staff and parent voice contribute to the self-evaluation of prayer and worship, alongside governor observations.



## Information about the school

Full name of school	Holy Family Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	138636
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8663001
Full postal address of the school	Holy Family Catholic Primary School, Marlowe Avenue, Swindon, SN3 2PT
School phone number	01793 521933
Headteacher	Karen Bathe and Nadia Mossop
Chair of governors	Andrew Szeliga
School Website	<a href="http://www.holyfamily.swindon.sch.uk/">www.holyfamily.swindon.sch.uk/</a>
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Holy Family Catholic Primary And Nursery School
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Academy
Admissions policy	Non-selective
Age-range of pupils	2-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	September 2017
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

## The inspection team

Dawn Summers-Breeze  
Christina Hall

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