



Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection report for
Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School

URN: 144987

Carried out on behalf of the Right Rev. Alan Williams, sm, Bishop of Brentwood on:

Date: 22-23 June 2023

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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

- Christ is at the centre of Our Lady of Lourdes, and evident in the quality of relationships, making the school a supportive and joyful community. The richness of worship is enhanced by excellent singing, music and drama.
- The school shares its values and distinctive nature actively and they are understood by all. The school fully accepts its responsibility to the call of Catholic Social Teaching and supports those in need locally, nationally and globally.
- Pupils' recall of prior learning is very strong, which results in them achieving and making progress in line with other core subjects.

- The cross-curricular strengths of religious education; personal, social, health and economic education; and relationships, sex and health education support the development of pupils as articulate and confident individuals.

What the school needs to improve:

- Continue to develop teachers' assessment knowledge so that pupils can be challenged to achieve the highest standards.
- Continue to develop moderation procedures to ensure teachers have a good understanding of expected standards as the curriculum evolves, including resourcing and training in readiness for the demands of the new *Religious Education Directory*.

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



Pupils fully appreciate being part of Our Lady of Lourdes school. They enjoy the wide variety of opportunities offered to them and relish the responsibilities of being able to serve the school and their peers as liturgy leaders, house captains and prefects as they grow older. As a result, they provide very good role models to the younger pupils. They take the lead on issues relating to the Catholic life and mission of the school. House captains fully engage in their role to support their chosen charities, locally, nationally, and globally. Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of the principles of Catholic Social Teaching and the school has commenced the Oscar Romero Award to further embed this. Pupils know that they are valued, respected, and cared for as unique individuals made in the image and likeness of God. They are happy, confident, and feel safe in the warm environment the school provides; this is endorsed by a parent who reported that their children 'feel very safe and secure in its warm, welcoming environment.' Pupils know the 'Our Lady of Lourdes Way.' Their behaviour in class and around the school is good, based on mutual respect and the Gospel values of reconciliation and forgiveness. Relationships across the school community are positive. A parent commented that the commitment from staff to the children is 'unfailing' and that staff 'understand them, nurture their faith and learning', whilst another parent said, 'Our Lady of Lourdes is a truly family-centred school'.

The Mission Statement 'Loving like Mary, Serving like Mary, Learning like Mary, Believing like Mary' is a simple but highly effective expression of the Church's mission in education. It is known by all members of the school community, and, along with the school values of Faith, Understanding, Kindness, Respect, Excellence, and Responsibility is central to the life of the school and its charism. It is seen in the daily lives and activities of all. Staff act as positive role

models for pupils and are committed to the implementation of the mission statement and the core values. The physical environment of the school reflects its Catholic identity. A beautiful statue of Our Lady in the foyer proudly proclaims its Marian roots. The provision for relationships, sex and health education is good and follows a programme that meets all statutory and diocesan requirements. It is fully rooted in the teachings of the Church and has been shared with parents, staff and governors.

School leaders and governors share a common vision for the school in ensuring that Christ is at its heart. Catholic life and mission are seen as core, and new initiatives and policies reflect the Catholic identity and charism of the school, and how they impact on its life and mission. Leaders are committed to working alongside the diocese to provide effective, well-planned professional development to enable staff to deepen their own knowledge. A number of staff have completed the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies whilst another member of staff is currently enrolled on the course. Staff new to the school report that the support they have received from the diocese and school leaders has been of a high quality and has allowed them to grow in confidence and reflect on and develop their own expertise. The parish priest supports the school in delivering a range of religious services, and pupils regularly walk to the church to join members of the parish community in worship. The school has worked hard to ensure that parents are kept informed of what is happening in school via means of the regular newsletters. Parents are welcomed into school to join in 'Stay and Pray' sessions and the liturgy leaders' morning prayer meetings; to support this, school leaders have identified the Leading Parent Partnership Award as a way of developing this further.

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



Pupils enjoy religious education lessons. They are enthusiastic and are eager to learn. Pupils are articulate and eloquent when sharing their knowledge. They demonstrate secure knowledge, understanding and skills that reflect the learning required by the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*. Pupils revisit prior learning regularly, and as a result make good progress in knowing more, remembering more and doing more. They are religiously literate, and reference scripture to support their ideas. Pupils use their learning in religious education to emphasise viewpoints and to think ethically. They speak confidently about their learning, showing an awareness of key concepts, and are able to use subject specific vocabulary to evidence their knowledge and understanding. This was clearly seen in lessons when pupils were discussing the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and during a discussion with the very youngest children who confidently spoke to the inspector about the Holy Family and their love of Mary who 'goes everywhere' with them. Pupils' behaviour in lessons is good, they remain focused and attentive; they work collaboratively on tasks to discuss ideas before presenting them to others. Pupils' respect for religious education can clearly be seen in the quality of presentation of written work. Their attainment in religious education is in line with that in other core subjects.

Teachers are confident in their subject knowledge. Careful planning alongside colleagues ensures that staff are aware of what each year group is working on and what their own group needs to achieve by the end of each topic. Questioning is used effectively to identify where pupils are in their understanding. Teachers' high regard for and commitment to the teaching of religious education, ensures that a wide range of creative tasks are presented to pupils for them to showcase their understanding, develop their skills, and at the same time enhance their enjoyment of learning. As a result, pupils appreciate responding to religious art, drama,

poetry, and a variety of writing tasks. Teachers have high expectations of pupils, using praise effectively to celebrate learning, which in turn leads to high levels of motivation from pupils. Positive relationships ensure that everyone's efforts are respected and valued, resulting in an environment which is highly conducive to learning. The subject leader for religious education, along with her senior colleagues, provide regular opportunities for staff to come together as a school, as well as with colleagues from across the Trust, to monitor and evaluate pupil work. This results in teacher assessment which is accurate. Further adults are deployed effectively to support pupils with additional needs.

School leaders and governors ensure that the curriculum for religious education fully reflects the requirements of the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*. Religious education enjoys parity with other subjects in terms of time allocation, resourcing, and accommodation. Leaders make sure that staff have access to high quality professional development from the diocese and the Trust. This allows the curriculum to be delivered securely and consistently by teachers, resulting in sequential progress through the curriculum. Leaders have a clear vision for religious education and the subject leader is conscientious, hard-working, and dedicated to supporting staff to ensure that they are empowered to secure positive outcomes for all pupils. The introduction of knowledge organisers has been very successful in identifying clear learning intentions, cementing understanding, and promoting pupil understanding and engagement.

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

1

Leadership

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

2



Pupils enjoy and, as a result, respond very well to the experiences of prayer and liturgy offered by the school. Pupils speak enthusiastically of the ways in which they pray, enjoying the traditional prayers of their rich Catholic heritage as well as writing and reading aloud their own prayers. Pupils describe how using the Holding Cross when praying helps and guides them, and the younger pupils spoke with great confidence of using their decorated prayer stones. Pupils work very well with their peers and adults to plan and prepare creative, well-constructed and spiritual experiences of prayer and liturgy. They undertake ministries with confidence. Liturgy leaders spoke with great enthusiasm of how they had encouraged everyone in the school to write prayers onto yellow cards in celebration of the school feast day. They then made these cards into flower petals, before creating them into flowers and placing them on the altar. During the inspection two 'Stay and Pray' sessions were observed; both demonstrated pupils' excellent creative and artistic skills, were beautifully presented, and were very well attended by parents. Pupils ensured that relevant, well-researched passages from scripture were used to support their message, along with traditional and personal prayers. Song, drama, poetry and dance were also included in the celebrations, and these were notably enhanced by joyful and exceptional singing. The singing and signing of the Hail Mary prayer also provided a powerful message during a singing assembly. A key strength of the school is pupils' engagement with singing in worship.

Prayer and liturgy are integral to daily life for all at Our Lady of Lourdes, where praying together at various times of the day is an important and uplifting experience for all. The use of scripture in prayer and liturgy is firmly embedded across the school. Scripture passages are always the focus for liturgies and are chosen carefully to deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding of the wealth of Catholic education. Staff are highly skilled in supporting pupils

to confidently plan and lead prayer and liturgy. Year 5 pupils were rightly proud of their excellent assembly, showing what they had learnt during their recent religious education topic, relishing that everything was put together by groups of pupils using individual talents and gifts. Pupils have the opportunity to celebrate significant moments throughout the year. Partnership with the local parish enables pupils to join the parish community to celebrate holy days of obligation, and the recent Education Sunday was celebrated in church with pupils attending in school uniform. Older pupils are able to participate in reconciliation services during Advent and Lent and praying the rosary. The Crowning of Mary celebration, enjoyed by all, demonstrated the school's tradition of Marian devotion, and provided the opportunity for pupils to extend their knowledge of traditional prayers. A musical retelling of the Stations of the Cross allowed all pupils, including the youngest, to join in and reflect upon Christ's sacrifice and resurrection. Classrooms have well-appointed prayer spaces which pupils use to support their prayer life. Liturgy leaders take the responsibility to ensure these are well maintained.

The school's policy on prayer and liturgy is well formulated, providing support to staff in preparing activities and celebrations. It is accessible to all and is reviewed regularly by senior leaders. School leaders, governors and staff have a secure understanding of the liturgical year and ensure that prayer and liturgy celebrations are relevant with a clear purpose and message, and so provide an engaging and uplifting experience for pupils. Teachers are experienced in preparing pupils to become confident leaders of prayer and worship as they journey through school. The school ensures that high-quality resources are made available for all when preparing celebrations; these resources have an impact on the quality of pupils' experience.

Information about the school

Full name of school	Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	144987
Full postal address of the school	Manchester Drive. Leigh on Sea. Essex. SS9 3HS
School phone number	01702 475689
Name of head teacher or principal	Mrs Sally Nutman
Chair of governing board	Mr Bernard Arscott
School Website	www.olol.co.uk
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	The Assisi Trust
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy
Age-range of pupils	2-11
Trustees	The Diocese of Brentwood
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	25 January 2017
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

The inspection team

Mrs Angela Podmore	Lead inspector
Mrs Sheila Birtles	Team inspector
Mrs Bernadette Horton	Shadow Inspector

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

