

# St Philip's Catholic Primary School

URN: 126036

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Right Rev, Richard Moth, Bishop of Arundel and Brighton

22–23 May 2024

## Summary of key findings

### Overall effectiveness

The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school

#### 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

#### Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

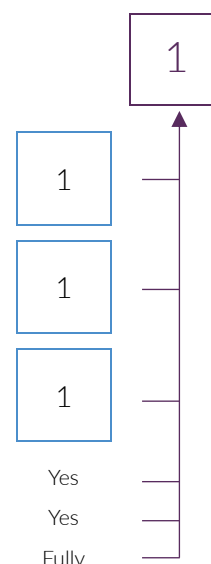
#### Collective worship

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

The school is fully compliant with the curriculum requirements laid down by the Bishops' Conference

The school is fully compliant with all requirements of the diocesan bishop

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



## What the school does well

- Behaviour across the school is exemplary – pupils learn well because their engagement in lessons is excellent
- There is a very high level of pastoral care provided by all staff to pupils especially the most vulnerable to ensure the needs of all are met
- Leaders and governors actively promote a working relationship with the local parish and have established strong links with the local community
- Pupils are highly articulate and speak confidently and enthusiastically about their learning in religious education
- Leaders and governors strive to ensure that their school is a very welcoming family community

## What the school needs to improve

- Share the outstanding practice seen here both within and beyond the school to ensure the highest quality of work in all year groups
- Utilise the evident leadership skills of pupils in whole school prayer and liturgy

## 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

St Philip's is a warm welcoming school where pupils know and understand about their patron St Philip Neri and the patron of the Diocese St Philip Howard. They deeply understand the school's distinctive Catholic identity, and value it greatly. The parish priest stated that pupils 'had an encounter and want to become part of it'. This has led some pupils to explore further and choose to become Catholics, a great joy for the community. Pupils stated, 'We love everything about St Philip's.' and 'We all get on very well.' Pupils confidently follow the teachings of Christ in all they do. During breaktimes pupils take turns on large play equipment while others invent their own games devising their own rules. They gladly embrace responsibility for Catholic social teaching raising funds for charities such as Mary's Meals, Support for Ukraine and Cafod. Over 90% of parents agreed they understand the school's mission and are supportive of it. Parents stated the head teacher 'leads the school with respect and genuine care, living out the Catholic mission of the school.' Non-Catholic parents stated, 'Our children always feel included.'

The mission statement, 'a community inspired by Christ and the Gospel teachings' is lived out and witnessed by all. It is continuously evaluated and linked to the school values to help pupils' understanding. It impacts upon behaviour which is exemplary throughout the school. St Philip's is a 'family in the truest sense'. Staff are exemplary models and relationships show they love and care deeply about the pupils and have highest levels of pastoral care for them. This reaches to the home where parents stated that due to the 'amazing relationship' between staff and parents, there is a 'bridge between school and home', which has been 'to the benefit of both school and home'. The school responds proactively to the needs of families for example providing support where there are financial challenges. One parent stated, 'You are all making a difference in the world and touching lives in the most beautiful way.' The quality and use of space within the school contributes to the dignity and formation of each. Pupils take time to prepare independently for activities such as assemblies. Relationship, health and sex education is well planned using *Ten:Ten Resources*, which meets statutory and diocesan requirements; pupils articulate their learning with confidence.

Under the inspirational leadership of the head teacher, Christ is at the centre of the school. Governors' minutes and head teacher's reports show the development of the Catholic life and mission as a core responsibility. Governors give challenge and support and, along with staff, engage in appropriate professional training. Parents are recognised as the first educators. They stated, 'RHSE is very sensitive, and consultation is made in advance so that we are ready for those conversations.' Participation in the local parish is a strength. The relationship between the school and parish is 'very strong'; pupils regularly visit the Cathedral for Mass or to explore as part of their learning. 100% of staff agreed leaders and governors have the highest levels of pastoral care for staff. For example, there is a staff wellbeing link governor, a mentoring system, and an arrangement whereby planning time is arranged flexibly to promote work-life balance. Engagement with the diocese is strong including moderation with other deanery schools. Induction of new staff is highly valued providing clarity on what it means to teach in Catholic education. Staff stated, 'The children and staff are like a family – full of support for each other during good times and the bad, it really is a very happy and special place to be.'

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

### Religious education key judgement grade

#### Pupil outcomes

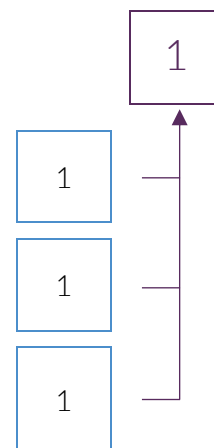
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

#### 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 religious education and for some it is their favourite subject. They said, 'It makes you think outside the box. For example we debated the statement, "Jesus' trial was fair."' Pupils are religiously literate and have a good knowledge of other faiths, for example, they are able to articulate prayer practice in Judaism and Islam. The *Religious Education Directory* has been implemented in Early Years, Year 1 and Year 6 and is positively received. A Year 6 pupil stated they 'like the new *Religious Education Directory* as it helps to understand at greater depth.' The parish priest stated, 'it gives a good foundation of knowledge,' and parents commented upon the 'improvement in progression with the *Directory*.' Opportunities are provided for pupils to work independently and with others. In one lesson pupils decided on their own pairing and engaged fully in drawing significant rules from a passage of scripture. Work in exercise books is almost always of a high quality and very well presented. Tasks are varied and allow pupils to respond to their learning creatively. Data shows that religious education outcomes are consistently in line with other core subjects.

Where teaching is outstanding, it is based on sound subject knowledge and highly effective teaching. Teacher questioning is used skilfully to draw deep and sometimes profound responses from the pupils. This leads to engagement from almost all pupils maximising their learning. In Year 2 in response to a question about the importance of the Golden Rule, a pupil said, 'If you don't like someone, it doesn't mean you shouldn't show love.' Pupils' responses show the impact religious education has on their moral and spiritual development. Another pupil responded, 'If you're hurt it's hard to love them.' Parents are 'delighted to see them engaged in religious education and nurtured in moral values.' Most parents agreed they know how well their children are doing and how to improve. Parents stated, 'They are thriving in RE and have spoken about their learning with enthusiasm.' Teacher planning includes a broad variety of activities that

enables pupils to present their learning in a wide variety of forms. Time is given for reflection such as pupils use and understand the three crosses liturgical sign before reading from scripture. All pupils are eager to share their learning with other adults which ensures excellent outcomes.

Leaders and governors ensure that the school curriculum for religious education is a faithful expression of the *Directory*. Parity is given with other core subjects. The subject leader undertakes training to ensure the *Directory* is embedded and is successfully introduced in all required year groups. Professional development for all staff is a priority as is planning and resourcing the *Directory*. This is also supported by the parish priest who supports staff subject knowledge. He also visits every class regularly and educates the children in various topics. The subject leader is an outstanding practitioner with an inspiring vision for outstanding teaching and learning which is clear in her classroom practice. Whilst this is shared with a new teacher who said it was very helpful in improving her practice, this expertise could be shared more widely within and beyond the school, including with diocesan colleagues. The link governor meets with the subject leader termly, reviews action plans, undertakes learning walks and produces reports for the governors. External visitors, for example the imam, are used effectively to enhance learning.

## 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

The pupils' experience of prayer and liturgy engages them deeply, they behave in a reverential manner and participate fully. During teacher-led whole school assemblies, pupils sing joyfully and have set their prayerful mission statement to music which they sing enthusiastically. Staff stated that 'children are always very respectful in times of prayer and worship,' and parents stated that these are 'done in an inclusive way so children of non-Christian families feel at ease with the prayer.' In class, pupils work very collaboratively with others in preparing and leading prayer and liturgy. These experiences are very beautiful, pupils behave with great reverence, and there are real opportunities for spiritual growth. A parent stated, 'My eldest has enjoyed preparing a class liturgy with his friends recently where he liked sharing his prayer with the class and leading others.' Pupils stated they would like the opportunity to plan and lead whole school assemblies. This is identified by staff as an area for development. Prayer and liturgy influence the wider curriculum, for example in a history topic on pirates, pupils shared their own prayers for pirates, 'Dear God, please bless all who go to sea especially the pirates who need your forgiveness.'

Pupils pray at key moments of the day such as before lunch and at the end of the day, which, a parent stated, 'My child enjoys the end of the day prayer.' Pupil faith buddies are highly valued supporting younger pupils and are enthusiastic in their role. A parent stated, 'The Faith Buddy system is wonderful; my daughter was delighted to sit beside her faith buddy at Mass in the Cathedral.' Staff are very adept at helping pupils plan and lead, such that pupils fully own the planning and leadership of prayer and liturgy. Talents of pupils and staff, such as signing a hymn or guitar playing are integrated thereby enhancing experiences for all present. Well cared-for prayer spaces are used creatively and monitored by faith leaders who review them suggesting improvements or ensuring they reflect the liturgical year. Pupils view the greatly valued prayer

garden as somewhere you get peace. One pupil said, 'The Cross reminds us of Jesus. I visited it once about someone in my family who died'. Parents are involved in the liturgical life of the school stating they enjoy 'coming into school to share in Mass and liturgies and being able to do this really made the whole family feel part of the praying community.'

The policy on prayer and liturgy is well-formulated and fit for purpose, supporting staff to lead prayer and liturgy with confidence. The ease with which pupils can participate in prayer and liturgy as they grow through the school is evidence that leaders and governors have developed different levels of skills according to age and ability of pupils. Regular opportunities for celebrating the Eucharist and Reconciliation are provided both within the school and the Cathedral and these are inclusive of all. The parish priest encourages all present to come forward at communion to receive a blessing. Staff stated that, although not a Catholic, it is a 'privilege to be part of the Catholic community that St Philip's cultivates in all that it does.' Professional development is a high priority, as a result staff fully understand the centrality of prayer and liturgy in the life of the school and are highly skilled in leading it. Pupils confidently report to Governors on the outcomes of their own monitoring and evaluation of prayer and liturgy. Governors also monitor and evaluate prayer and liturgy provision through visits and observations and this informs future planning.

## Information about the school

Full name of school	St Philip's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	126036
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	9383328
Full postal address of the school	London Road, Arundel, West Sussex, BN18 9BA
School phone number	01903 882115
Headteacher	Lucy Horne
Chair of Governors	Fiona Gardiner
School Website	<a href="http://www.stphilipsarundel.org.uk">www.stphilipsarundel.org.uk</a>
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	N/A
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Voluntary Aided School
Admissions policy	N/A
Age-range of pupils	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	June 2017
Previous denominational inspection grade	1

## The inspection team

Stephen Horsman  
Ursula Hargrave

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