

St Augustine's Catholic Primary School

URN: 143374

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Arundel & Brighton

16 –17 November 2023

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 curriculum requirements laid down by the Bishops' Conference

Yes

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

Yes

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

Fully

2

What the school does well

- The school lives out its mission and vision. It puts the personal and spiritual development of all pupils at the core of all it does. Pastoral care is outstanding.
- St Augustine's welcomes and supports all its families and all those who work there to create a nurturing and inclusive Catholic community.
- The school understands its role as Church so it places high quality prayer and liturgy at the heart of school life. The whole community responds well and benefits greatly.
- Dedicated skilled governors and senior leaders provide strong leadership to bring about improvements to what the school provides for its pupils.
- The school has successfully introduced the new *Religious Education Directory* in EYFS, Year 1 and Year 6. It is beginning to have a noticeably positive impact on teachers' subject knowledge and is widening the creative teaching strategies across the school.

What the school needs to improve

- All pupils should have a clear understanding of how well they are doing in religious education, know what they need to do to improve and articulate how they have made progress.
- Pupils should develop their capacity for evaluating the impact of the prayer and liturgy they have planned so that they can identify and implement improvements.

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

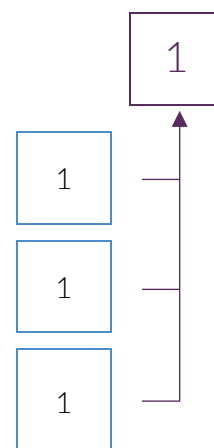
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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 have a strong sense of belonging to St Augustine's lively Catholic community. They understand that they are valued and loved by God and are eager to talk about the school mission statement and school vision, 'To be the best we can be.' Pupils speak excitedly about how they put it into practice. Pupils are proud of their leadership as RE Council, Faith in Action group, peer mediators and playground leaders. They take these responsibilities seriously but with a sense of joy. They speak enthusiastically about actions they take: responding to '*Laudato Si*' through the Christmas jumper appeal and guiding younger pupils in spiritual journeying. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is exemplary. Pupils benefit greatly from the personal social health economic education (PSHE) programme embedded in the curriculum and from the programme *Journey in Love*, for relationships, sex and health education (RSHE). PSHE includes the unit '*Celebrate Difference*' which reflects the school's increasingly diverse community. These programmes help pupils to relate their conduct, attitudes and actions to their faith and to the Gospel values which are at the heart of the mission statement.

Leaders ensure that both the mission and vision statements are central to everything the school does. Typical of parents' extremely positive views of what the school does is, 'We are enormously grateful for the loving care the head teacher and staff provide to help shape educated children who are spiritual and kind.' The mission and vision of the school are loved, known and lived by all; this leads to a strong sense of community and purpose where everyone is valued. It is an enormously warm and welcoming community. Chaplaincy provision is shared across the staff; they provide high quality pastoral and emotional care for pupils so that the range of pupils' needs are extremely well met. Leaders offer practical support to families who need it; consequently, all pupils flourish and feel safe in their Catholic community. Relationships between all members

of the school are very positive and happy; leaders make sure that all staff are welcomed, supported, offered continued professional development and induction when new to Catholic education. The Catholic identity of the school is apparent to all. There are well-used classroom prayer tables, indoor prayer spaces, and a beautiful multi-purpose prayer garden.

Leaders and governors are fully committed to the outstanding Catholic life of the school. The head teacher's distinctive vision for the spiritual and moral development of all pupils is a priority. A committed governing body has a strong sense of responsibility for the Catholic life of the school and take an active part in it; Father John and Father Paul are regular visitors in school. They meet regularly with the religious education subject leader to discuss and plan events including how to make improvements, for example, overhauling the library books to ensure they reflect the pupils' many different nationalities and cultures. All are welcome in this school. Governors place consistent emphasis on Catholic life as an improvement priority. Policies and procedures are clearly underpinned by the school's Catholic identity, and mission. Governors care for staff through liaising with the school's well-being leader to address any needs and provide welcome social events. Catholic life and mission is further promoted by a prominent presence on the school website. School self-evaluation in this area is at its strongest; it is well-evidenced and detailed. Leaders and governors monitor the progress of subject leader plans; governors hold the head teacher to account both informally and formally. Local parishes are well supported by the school and the school has a strong partnership with the diocese both contributing to diocesan life and benefiting from diocesan initiatives and training.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

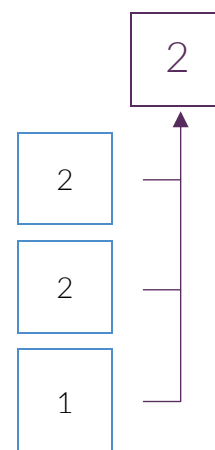
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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 gain new knowledge, understanding and skills in religious education. Where the new *Religious Education Directory* is being used, it is evident that it poses challenges which most pupils enjoy. In all classes, pupils take part in lessons and want to do their best; behaviour in lessons is good. School data shows an overall increasing trend in pupils' attainment in religious education comparable to or above what is expected. They show interest and enthusiasm when activities and resources are engaging. For example, small icons or 'widgets' which help pupils to engage with new learning and religious vocabulary. Year 1 and Year 3 pupils came alive when they used actions to support their learning. In another class, pupils moved around the classroom to look at interesting 'stations' about saints to create a prayerful litany of the saints. The Early Years Foundation Stage children's enjoyment and achievement is seen in the beautiful floor books which capture their learning against the whole-class target. Across the school as a whole, pupils' understanding of how well they are doing, how they have made progress and what they need to do to improve is not consistent.

Teachers are committed to religious education and have been well-formed by both school-based and diocesan training. Teachers incorporate prayer or reflection time into their lessons and know this has an impact on the spiritual and moral development of all pupils. For example, Year 1 Godly Play was based on their work on The Visitation. Most teachers are confident in their subject knowledge and know how their pupils learn. They provide different ways for pupils to show their learning: Pupils in Year 6 wrote high quality persuasive letters related to Catholic social teaching; Year 6 pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and pupils with English as an additional language make good use of 'widgets' to support their use of language and religious vocabulary; Year 4 pupils wrote a reflective litany linked to scripture where some pupils were given an extra challenge and for others the task was carefully

scaffolded. In Year 3 explicit use of key religious vocabulary helped pupils to know exactly what to do to be successful. Teaching does not always reflect teachers' knowledge of how pupils learn. Sometimes it does not engage or meet the needs of all groups of pupils; this means that not all pupils can talk about their learning and not all pupils know how to make progress.

Leaders and governors make sure that religious education has equal status with other core subjects. It is given the same priority in terms of resourcing, staffing and budget. They provide enrichment opportunities to enhance religious education such as the Wintershall travelling crib and a much-enjoyed visit from a rabbi to enhance the teaching of other faiths. Parish priests enrich religious education by presiding at liturgical celebrations and school Masses. Governors have prioritised high quality training for all staff in preparation for the new Directory and training is a continuing priority as the Directory is rolled out across other year groups. The link governor for religious education meets regularly with the subject leader to look at provision and future plans. Together leaders and governors monitor subject leader improvement plans. The subject leader is passionate, knowledgeable and inspirational. She guides teaching staff, especially those new to Catholic education, and promotes religious education extremely well. She is highly regarded by the whole community, the Xavier Trust and the diocese as an effective leader who brings about improvement.

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

Pupils have a high level of engagement and reverence in all prayer and liturgy. Older pupils provide wonderful role models for younger pupils in whole school prayer. Behaviour is exemplary. At an appropriate level, pupils of different ages understand different ways of praying. Pupils can work with others to use given resources to plan liturgies of the word. In planning, pupils can use scripture, silent prayer and meditation, spiritual journalling and traditional prayers from the Catholic tradition. They know that singing and music is part of prayer and they sing with sincerity and beauty. Pupils can write or say their own prayers in response to planned liturgy or particular occasions such as praying for the Holy Souls in November. The Faith in Action group is responsible for making sure that the display in the school reception area reflects the liturgical calendar. Older pupils lead younger ones in making reverent use of the prayer garden. Even the youngest pupils know how to gather quietly and set up a sacred space at a gentle signal. Pupils understand that action, gesture and movement can be part of praying and they can do this reverently from the heart: processing into the hall to unaccompanied singing with hands joined in prayer, created a sense of awe and wonder. Pupils and especially the school council are involved in evaluating the quality of prayer and liturgy.

A well-planned range of prayer and liturgy provide a framework for the structure of the school day and for the spiritual life of the St Augustine's community. It covers the Church's year and traditional feasts and seasons. Mass is celebrated on significant feasts and on days of importance to the school such as St Augustine's feast day. The school works hard to have a flourishing relationship with local parishes. School grounds and classroom spaces are used creatively to encourage pupils to pray privately and reflectively. The school provides opportunities for traditional communal prayer, such as praying the rosary and stations of the cross, making use of statues, and carvings in the prayer garden. The school supports staff

unfamiliar with Catholic prayer, liturgy or spirituality. Consequently, they are able to join in with the prayer life of the school and become good role models for pupils as well as benefitting spiritually themselves. Staff are confident at leading prayer and liturgy and in supporting pupils to plan and lead prayer. More experienced and well-qualified staff are excellent role-models in leading prayer and liturgy. Families feel well supported by the school; one parent noted, 'My daughter prays and talks about God every day.'

Leaders and governors know their role in promoting the prayer life of the school. A carefully planned calendar of prayer and liturgy reflects the Church year, including the celebration of Mass for holy days of obligation where possible and the Sacrament of Reconciliation during Advent and Lent. Leaders and governors successfully promote events through the website and newsletters. Parents are very appreciative of the opportunities the school gives them to be included; all events are very well attended. The experienced senior leaders make sure that prayer and liturgy is engaging and has a clear focus. They have a strong and skilled presence leading and promoting prayer and liturgy for all key stages. Senior leaders monitor and evaluate quality and effectiveness through visiting classrooms and listening to pupils' opinions. This feedback to governors helps to shape further development; for example, governors have recently funded Godly Play training and have worked hard with the whole community to create the much-loved prayer garden.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Augustine's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	143374
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	9363933
Full postal address of the school	St Augustine's Catholic Primary School, Tomlinscote Way, Frimley, Camberley, GU16 8PY
School phone number	01276709099
Headteacher	Alison Walsh
Chair of Local Governing Body	Rebecca Clark
School Website	www.staugustine.surrey.sch.uk/
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Xavier Catholic Education Trust
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Academy
Admissions policy	Non-selective
Age-range of pupils	5-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	23 rd March 2017
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

The inspection team

Anne Parr	Lead
Timothy Hallett	Team
Grainne Byrd	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