



Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection report for St Gregory's Catholic Primary School

URN: 143633

Carried out on behalf of the Most Rev. Bernard Longley, Archbishop of Birmingham on:

Date: 11-12 October 2023

Overall effectiveness The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school.....	1
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.....	1
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	✓
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	Fully

Summary of key findings

What the school does well

- Pupils at St Gregory's have exemplary learning behaviour which allows them to make good progress in religious education.
- The religious education curriculum is taught creatively by staff throughout the school.
- Senior leadership at St Gregory's is strong, which is supported by effective governance from the local governing body and multi academy company.
- The school is rigorous in its monitoring and analysis which enables effective planning and evaluation of progress to take place.
- Catholic life and mission permeate throughout the school environment, demonstrating that this is central to all that happens at St Gregory's and every aspect of school life.

What the school needs to improve:

- As a result of skillful questioning, adapt tasks so that pupils with higher prior attainment are appropriately challenged in religious education lessons.
- Enable pupils to plan prayer independently of adults.
- Link the Church's social teachings to subject areas, wherever relevant, so that pupils clearly articulate their importance to the topics they learn about and how they influence individuals' actions.

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:.....

1

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



Pupils are very aware of the Catholic mission of St Gregory's and articulate it strongly. They understand that they are valued and cared for as unique creations of God. For example, one child said, 'It doesn't matter whether you are Catholic or not, you are still loved by God.' Pupils feel happy, confident, and secure in school. Great respect for others is demonstrated amongst staff and pupils in their daily interactions. Pupils understand the importance of following the teachings and example of Jesus and the Church's social teachings and are keen to live these out in the acts of charity undertaken, which is led by the Mini Vinnies group. Pupils articulate a secure understanding of vocation, as evidenced in their proactive willingness to undertake leadership roles and charity work in school and the local community. Pupils demonstrate a personal responsibility to care for the earth as our common home through initiatives such as becoming Planet Protectors in school. Their proactiveness reaches beyond their school community, into the local area, for example by participating in litter picking activities, undertaken as an act of service.

The school's mission statement is clear and the children know and understand what this means for them at St Gregory's. This means it is fully embraced and lived out in school life. The mission statement is revisited constantly through prayer and religious education lessons. Staff equally understand, value, and live out the mission statement of the school. The school is proud of its fully inclusive nature, meaning staff and pupils of all cultures and beliefs are warmly welcomed. The school extends its culture of welcome to all by marking events from other faith traditions. This means that all feel welcomed, valued, and respected. Parents overwhelmingly agree that they are welcomed into the school's heart. One parent told inspectors, 'The school is supportive of all children and the whole family. This makes me feel part of a community and not alone.' The relationships, sex, and health education curriculum is fully embedded and staff and parents are

involved in its ongoing development. It is well planned and meets all diocesan requirements, meaning pupils can speak with confidence about what they have learnt in this subject.

The local governing body demonstrates ambition for the school because they are fully involved in the development of its Catholic life and mission. They have a secure awareness of the school's strengths and areas of development in this area because of the reporting mechanisms that are in place and their visits to school. This is supported by the Our Lady of the Magnificat Catholic Multi Academy Company (MAC) which also holds the school to account in relation to Catholic life and mission. The school works hard to create a strong partnership with the parish; there are regular visits to the local church, and parishioners also visit the school. Pupils are directly involved in serving parish life, for example by writing letters to those who are sick. Pastoral support for staff is of importance to leaders and there is a good commitment to staff well-being. This is valued by staff, who feel well cared for in their work. Staff training is planned meticulously through in-service training, diocesan events, and external providers, such as EducareM. Consequently, staff have a secure understanding of the school's Catholic identity and are confident in actively supporting its mission.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade:.....

1

Pupil outcomes

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

1

Provision

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

1

Leadership

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

1

Pupils demonstrate excellent knowledge, understanding and skills in religious education. This is shown in the way that they articulately answer questions, their reflective thoughts, and in the written work produced. Furthermore, this demonstrates the positive impact religious education has on their spiritual and moral development. Pupil progress in religious education is consistently strong across all year groups. This is due to the forensic analysis of religious education data and actions taken by the senior leadership team and teaching staff, meaning there is a constant drive to continue to improve outcomes for all. Pupils have a good knowledge of religious vocabulary, which the school has been consciously and successfully developing. Key vocabulary is displayed during lessons and on classroom displays and made accessible to all pupils using visual symbols. Consequently, pupils use technical terms accurately. Pupils' engagement and behaviour in lessons is exemplary, meaning it is easy for pupils to concentrate in lessons and they learn very well. Attainment in religious education is high and compares favourably to other core subjects; this has been sustained over a period of time.

Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the curriculum is consistently strong across the school, meaning they impart subject knowledge to pupils confidently. The type of work produced by pupils is varied and often creative in content because of the range of teaching strategies used by teachers. Pupils really value the opportunity to learn and record their understanding in a variety of ways. This contributes to their engagement with the subject significantly, and ensures the curriculum is accessible to all. The use of music and art to enhance the curriculum offer is seen in lessons throughout the school; for example, at the start of each lesson teachers use a piece of art to capture pupils' interest. This creative way in which religious education is taught is a real strength of the school. The highly effective teaching of religious education contributes significantly to pupils' enjoyment of the subject. Because of the feedback pupils are provided, they are aware of how to improve the quality of their work. They make use of their teacher's suggested next steps and are

given the opportunity to reflect on these at the start of each lesson. Learning for most pupils is advanced in a timely fashion by use of a challenge activity that is set in each lesson. This helps them to reflect on the learning in greater depth. However, teachers do not always make full use of opportunities to make links to previous units of work or use questioning even more effectively to address misconceptions and to challenge pupils with higher prior attainment sufficiently.

Leaders and governors ensure that the curriculum taught at St Gregory's meets all expectations of the archbishop. The subject has full parity with other core subjects, as indicated in classroom timetabling and the quality of work completed in lessons. Leaders' high expectations are fully communicated to and understood by all. Leaders work hard to ensure that the curriculum is stimulating, as they know this enhances the pupils' enjoyment. Subject monitoring is very thorough; subsequently, staff are given clear and constructive feedback concerning how to develop their professional practice. This is especially evident in the support provided to teachers new to the profession, which enables them to become strong practitioners. Governors and leaders ensure that standards moderation occurs internally and also externally within the MAC, meaning that teachers and leaders are accurate in their judgements of religious education and are rightfully confident in the standards of outcomes achieved by pupils and the school's quality of provision.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade:.....

1

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

Pupils actively participate in prayer and liturgy, meaning they are consciously engaged in conversation with God whilst at St Gregory's. They are very reverent in their participation; for example, they can sustain prayerful silence, offer reflective responses, and support their peers' prayer journeys through their prayer leadership. A wide range of prayer opportunities are experienced at St Gregory's which are greatly valued by staff and pupils. Pupils articulate how prayer and liturgy influence their lives, through the actions that they take in school and in the wider world. All have the opportunity to lead prayer in school and demonstrate confidence in doing so. This is because of the modelling provided by adults and the progressive expectations detailed for each year group. The structure of prayer time is also consistent across the school. As a result, pupils can fully engage and have a good knowledge of the significant seasons and feasts in the Church's year. Pupils are provided with the opportunity to evaluate times of prayer and liturgy, which are evidenced in class 'mission' books. Consequently, pupils know how they want to improve their future prayers and are given the opportunity to do so.

Prayer and liturgy are at the core of school life. Significant moments in school and parish lives are identified, planned for, and then celebrated in prayer. The detailed plans created by the senior leadership team at the start of the year ensure that a variety of prayer and liturgy are experienced by the school community. These opportunities reflect the rich heritage of Catholic prayer traditions. The school community is enabled to participate in a range of faith enriching prayerful activities, such as retreats, as well as liturgy and worship events provided by the MAC. The school environment is used exceptionally well to enhance opportunities for prayer throughout the day. Prayer stations are positioned around the school; for example, a 'Bible roulette' activity in the library and the post box for prayers to Mary capture pupils' interest and desire to pray. Pupils have also developed a prayer garden in the school grounds, with quotes from scripture adorning the fencing and benches. Staff aspire to further enhance the prayer garden, with support from the

parents' association. Families are actively involved in the prayer life of the school. They value the opportunities provided for them to share in worship with their children. One parent commented, 'We are regularly invited to Mass and class prayer sessions. I think it is wonderful that the pupils can lead their own collective worship.' Parents are also invited into school for special events, such as a 'saint museum'.

Leaders have worked hard to develop an effective model of prayer and liturgy, which is used by all staff and pupils, instilling confidence in their prayer skills. Staff have received extensive training to further ensure that they feel equipped to support prayer and liturgy and they clearly understand its significance within the school and the wider community. The school's policy ensures there is a clear progression within expectations surrounding prayer, appropriate to the age and stage of each pupil. Prayer and liturgy are monitored by leaders and other stakeholders, including the local governing body, parish priest, and the MAC. This ensures they have an excellent and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Senior leaders are involved in sacramental preparation for First Holy Communion and Reconciliation, further strengthening the school's relationship with the parish. Governors ensure that there is sufficient budget available to resource prayer and liturgy. Keen to contribute to the pupils' prayer lives, the parents' association made a financial contribution towards prayer boxes that were purchased for each class; further evidence of the strong inclusive culture at St Gregory's.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Gregory's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	143633
Full postal address of the school	Avenue Road, Stratford upon Avon, CV37 6UZ
School phone number	01789 204517
Name of head teacher or principal	Katie Wilkes
Chair of governing board	Yvonne Brennan
School Website	www.stg.magnificat.org.uk
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Our Lady of the Magnificat Catholic MAC
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy
Age-range of pupils	4 to 11
Trustees	Archdiocese of Birmingham
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	June 2016
Previous denominational inspection grade	2

The inspection team

Nicola Slack	Lead inspector
Jo McAleenan	Team 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