



# Holy Cross Catholic Primary School

URN: 109244

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Clifton

25–26 April 2024

## Summary of key findings

### 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

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

## What the school does well

- This is a school that truly lives out the mission of the Church in its daily life; leaders, in particular the headteacher, and staff actively seek to understand the needs of their school community. This is greatly valued by the parents, 'the values of kindness, empathy, compassion and treating others as you would want to be treated are clearly at the heart of the school.'
- Pupils are exceptionally well cared for and, therefore, feel happy and secure and ready to learn.
- Pupils enjoy their religious education lessons as it is well taught across the school, ensuring that pupils understand what they have done well and what they need to do to improve their work.

- Pupils show great reverence and respect in prayer and liturgy including those not of the Catholic faith.
- Pupils have a deep understanding of the importance of learning about other faiths as a result of a comprehensive focus on this due to the many faiths represented in the school; they show how they value those of other faiths and none.

### What the school needs to improve

- Ensure that religious education assessment is consistent across the school so that data is accurate.
- Ensure there is a structured approach across the school to enable pupils to plan and deliver high quality age-appropriate prayer and liturgy.
- Give pupils opportunities to use their creative skills in planning and leading 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

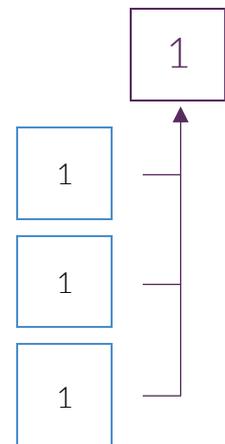
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

#### 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



This school truly understands and lives out its Catholic mission. Pupils are clear on how they welcome everyone and ensure that they feel they belong, for example, they have their photo taken and put onto a world map 'so that they know they are part of the school and belong'. Pupils are able to articulate how they can follow in Jesus' footsteps and why they should do this. Pupils understand the importance of caring for others with different needs and show great compassion and empathy. They recognise that everyone is valued in the school and are happy and feel safe. Pupils speak about Catholic social teaching (CST) with good understanding using key vocabulary. They understand people's differing needs due to many families coming from different countries with different life experiences and circumstances. They support charities such as Cafod and NSPCC but are sensitive that there are those who are unable to give to charities. Learning on other faiths is a strength of the school with visits to local places of worship. Pupils are clear about the value of learning about other faiths. Their exemplary behaviour around the school shows respect to adults and pupils alike. The Chaplaincy Team are held in high regard. They are an enthusiastic dynamic team who love to plan and deliver assemblies, support younger pupils in prayer and organise fundraising events such as 'prank the teacher'.

The mission statement is visible around the school and understood and articulated well by adults and staff throughout the day. Staff are committed to contributing to the mission of the school through their support for those most in need in their community, through fund raising events, such as the Cafod Big Lent walk, and extra-curricular activities such as leading the choir, who sang at a local care home. Christ is clearly at the heart of this school where the community are welcomed with open arms. Pupils and families from all cultures are celebrated throughout the school. Staff feel well-supported by the leaders of the school and each other and relationships are strong. Staff are exemplary role models putting the pupils' needs first at all times, 'we have created a wonderful community where an ethos of love and care shines through.' The most vulnerable pupils are well supported by all staff including the teaching assistants, play therapists and an ELSA. The school environment is a vibrant, colourful learning space with a clear Catholic identity. This is highly valued by the pupils who are very proud of

it. Relationships education provision fully meets diocesan requirements and the school goes above and beyond to be sensitive to the needs of their families.

Leaders understand and are fully committed to the Catholic life and mission of the school. The headteacher's dedication is recognised by the whole school community as she goes above and beyond to ensure the mission of the school is at the core of all they do. The involvement in the Aquinas partnership is invaluable as a support for school improvement and a platform for professional conversations. This permeates through to class teachers who value working with other local Catholic schools. Leaders and staff seek to find out the differing needs of their families so that they are able to support them, for example, giving out uniform or offering free breakfast club. The headteacher is well supported by the Chair of Governors and the Aquinas partnership. The school is beginning to embed CST principles across the wider curriculum. Governors are involved in regular monitoring and evaluation of the Catholic life of the school. They offer challenge and support where appropriate. They regularly review their skills to ensure that training meets identified gaps. Targets from self-evaluation are included in action plans which are regularly reviewed at governor meetings. Staff access training from the diocese, the headteacher, and religious education lead on a regular basis. There is a bi-annual training day with the Aquinas partnership. Induction procedures are thorough and effective.

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

### Religious education key judgement grade

#### Pupil outcomes

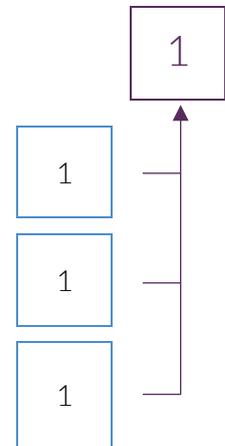
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

#### 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, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are making good progress across the school as a result of being given plenty of opportunities in lessons to show their knowledge, understanding and skills. Key religious vocabulary is displayed on the religious education wall in each classroom and enables pupils to use this in context at an age appropriate level. Most pupils are able to work independently and show good concentration in class. Learning in books shows a high standard of presentation and individuality is seen, in particular, in the pupils' responses to feedback from teachers. Most pupils show they are engaged and enjoy their religious education lessons. They have a clear understanding of how well they have done in their work and how to improve it through a comprehensive marking policy that is consistent across the school. Data shows that most pupils including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are achieving well in comparison to other core subjects. The school has recognised that attainment of more able pupils is a priority. There are clear links in all lessons to CST and the pupils can speak confidently about each of the principles. Quotes from Pope Francis are effectively used to enrich and enhance lessons across the school, with many pupils able to speak about the messages in *Laudato Si* and the impact of this in their daily lives. Relationships are strong, leading to pupils feeling secure and confident to contribute to class discussions.

Teachers subject knowledge is strong as a result of the support offered by the religious education lead and the diocese, which they greatly value. They show high expectations across the school for all pupils. The front cover sheets used at the beginning of each unit of work enables teachers to plan for pupils' needs. Teachers use questioning effectively in lessons and delve into responses to ensure that pupils' thinking is deepened. Effective questioning is also used in feedback in books, which pupils are given time to respond to. Teachers understand that the spiritual and moral development of the pupils permeates all that the school does, not just in religious education lessons. High quality resources are used in all lessons, for example, pictures used across the school to inspire the pupils in learning about the Ascension. Pupils with differing needs are supported effectively in class by Teaching Assistants. Teachers and teaching assistants offer constant praise, guidance and encouragement which motivates pupils to extend their learning.

The religious education scheme used by the school is supported by diocesan planning to ensure delivery of the *Religious Education Directory* (RED). The curriculum is planned to ensure sequential learning which builds on prior learning. The new RED has been introduced in two classes with support from the diocese and also the religious education lead who is on the working party to develop the resources that are used across the diocese. Leaders have ensured that religious education has parity with other core subjects in terms of timetabling, budgeting and resourcing. The headteacher and religious education lead are highly valued in the support and guidance that they provide for the staff and governors. The religious education lead has a clear vision for religious education in the school and monitors teaching and learning regularly and effectively, putting support in place where needed, to ensure that all pupils' needs are met. She is supported by the governors in monitoring. The religious education lead works with the other Aquinas partnership schools in sharing expertise and offering support in religious education. Visits to places of worship for other faiths provides enrichment for the religious education curriculum.

## 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

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

1

1

Pupils show great respect and reverence in whole school assembly. They are eager to make contributions that show deep thinking and listen to adults and each other carefully. They sing beautifully and with clear enjoyment. Most pupils are prayerful during class Celebration of the Word and all are reflective. Pupils show an understanding of a wide variety of ways of praying including the Rosary, the Stations of the Cross, silent reflection and their own prayers. There is some understanding of the liturgical year. Some pupils have the opportunity to plan and lead class Celebrations of the Word. However, there is no consistent format across the school to ensure that pupils develop their planning and delivering skills. From the early years foundation stage upwards, pupils understand that prayer is influenced by world events and are aware that prayer is a way of helping people in need across the world. Pupils understand they can pray at the prayer stations in school and anywhere, as 'God is always with us.'

Prayer and liturgy are central to school life, with daily prayers said across the school day. Pupils take advantage of the class prayers stations and those located across the school to say spontaneous prayer. The Chaplaincy Team lead assemblies on CST and also the Stations of the Cross for the whole school. Scripture is at the heart of all worship in the school and pupils read confidently, fluently and with understanding. Staff are committed to being good role models in leading prayer and liturgy. They are able to support pupils to lead Celebration of the Word in the classroom. Pupils love singing at mass and assemblies and during their weekly hymn practice they are able to explore the meanings of the words of the hymns. The school makes excellent use of the spaces within the school to provide prayer stations in all classes and key stages. There is also a prayer station for those of other faiths to worship when and how they would like, which is highly valued and respected by all pupils. Despite the lack of access to a local parish church, which has had a huge impact on the local Catholic community, leaders, and in particular the headteacher, have endeavoured to ensure that pupils are able to experience Masses and services across the liturgical year with the support of their allocated Deacon. Families are regularly invited into whole school Masses and to Lent and Advent services in school.

There is a prayer and liturgy policy in place which is a useful guide for staff. The school uses appropriate resources to enable pupils to lead Celebration of the Word in class. The Deacon allocated to the school by the Bishop supports the school well, including engaging priests to enable the school to have Mass regularly including class Masses. He has worked with the Chaplaincy Team to guide them in working with younger pupils, and is a regular visitor to the classrooms, for example, to talk to them about Lent. His work is highly valued in the school by leaders, staff and pupils. Training provided by the diocese, the religious education lead and the headteacher, as well as observing each other has led to staff being confident in planning and delivering Celebration of the Word in class, which is usually of a high quality and engages most pupils. The prayer and liturgy opportunities that are the most engaging include opportunities to sing and pray together, and for all to contribute and to reflect. There are appropriate and useful resources available across the school to ensure that there are high quality focal points for prayer. Governors and pupils are involved alongside the headteacher and religious education lead in evaluating prayer and liturgy across the school. The Chaplaincy team is well led by the religious education lead, they monitor class and school displays and are able to suggest resources which are needed to enhance the prayer life of the school.

## Information about the school

Full name of school	Holy Cross Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	109244
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8013401
Full postal address of the school	Holy Cross Catholic Primary School, Dean Lane, Bedminster, Bristol, BS3 1DB
School phone number	01173772199
Headteacher	Jo Kingston
Chair of Governors	Angela Serjeant
School Website	<a href="http://www.holycross.bristol.sch.uk/">www.holycross.bristol.sch.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	March 2017
Previous denominational inspection grade	Good

## The inspection team

Dawn Summers-Breeze  
Angela Bennett

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