

## Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection report for St. Austin's Catholic Primary School, Liverpool

URN: 104643

Carried out on behalf of the Title. Arch/bishop's name, Arch/bishop of Diocese on:

Date: 19-20 January 2023

### Overall effectiveness

The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school.....

2

### 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.....

2

### 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.....

2

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

- The distinctive and individual Catholic identity, charism and mission of the school is evident in all areas of school life and welcomed by all.
- Pupils understanding and embracing of their school mission is very well embedded and has a clear purpose.
- The school offers plentiful opportunities for pupils to direct and lead the Catholic Life and Mission of school and they do this with a commitment to following the examples of Jesus.
- Learning Support Staff, directed by the teachers, are effective in meeting the needs of all pupils.
- Teachers are confident in their planning and understanding of how pupils should make links between liturgy and how they live out their learning.

This Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection was carried out under canons 804 & 806 of the code of canon law. For maintained schools and academies in England it fulfils the statutory requirements of s.48 of the Education Act 2005. For maintained schools and academies in Wales it fulfils the statutory requirements of s.50 of the Education Act 2005.

What the school needs to improve:

- In Catholic Life, Religious Education and Collective Worship, continue to develop a systematic approach that shows how monitoring is acted upon, ensuring evidence of impact, support and purpose.
- In Religious Education increase the use of questioning and discussion to allow pupils opportunities to develop and deepen their explanations and maximize their learning during discussions and in written work.
- In Collective Worship review systems and policies to ensure documents support the professional development of all staff.

## Catholic life and mission

How faithfully the school responds to the call to live as a Catholic community at the service of the

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 .....

1

### 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

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school is outstanding. Pupils and staff clearly embrace the distinctive Catholic identity, charism and mission of their school. They are proud of it! Their outstanding sense of belonging is tangible. Pupils recognise their uniqueness and are committed to following the teachings and examples of Jesus. They have respect for themselves and for each other. They are active participants in school events and do so with purpose and conviction, feeling it is their duty to seek opportunities to serve others. They are willing participants in a range of activities to support their community and charities. Pupils enthusiastically recall collections for the Ukraine, taking books to the cathedral, work for CAFOD, NSPCC and making donations to foodbanks. Their recent parish gatherings were a great success and ensured they demonstrated their personal responsibility to serve. They are encouraged and duly motivated to participate in groups to serve the needs of others, and so develop their personal virtues. For example, there are RE ambassadors, reading ambassadors and a group called Caretaker Crew, all of which met during inspection. These are just three of many such groups facilitated throughout school and devoted to serving others. Pupils show maturity in their understanding that they are made in the image and likeness of God. Pupils are highly caring of visitors, stating to an inspector, "more importantly, how are you?" when questioned about their safe arrival in school that day.

The quality of provision for the life and mission of school is good and in some areas it is outstanding. The mission statement is an inspiring embodiment of pupils' hopes and beliefs in their schools' identity. Staff questionnaires state it is the "The golden thread at the heart of everything we do." Staff embrace the mission statement and implement it across the

curriculum and whole school life. This is celebrated in the range of displays exploring the areas they have committed to. Staff are positive role models of love, care and a common bond with God. This is a strength that school is rightly proud of. Evidenced from discussions, all staff members, in their variety of roles, are valued, supported and treated fairly. Professional development, for example Rainbows training, is used effectively. The chaplaincy room is an example of a safe space for pupils to access pastoral care or have time for themselves. The website and twitter account are used effectively to inform and to celebrate.

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school is good. Christ is at the heart of the school and partnerships are strong. Leaders and governors provide many examples of their involvement. They are determined to help ensure that the school mission is shared, meaningful and relevant. It was delightful to hear that past pupils continue to believe and live out the mission showing how it has prepared them for all stages of their life. During the inspection and in the questionnaires, staff members shared specific times when they experienced the highest levels of pastoral care that was committed to their wellbeing. One commented that, "Staff are by my side and my family's side...". Staff also recognise the many improvements they feel are evident since the last inspection. Governors are ambitious for the school. School works in partnership with its families. As cited in recent questionnaires, parents share the view that, "St. Austin's is at the heart of all that is good" and is "fully inclusive and takes pride in its teaching". There is a strong school and parish partnership that is enriched by enthusiastic and regular support from the local clergy. The provision for RSHE meets both statutory and diocesan requirements. There is a policy document for RSHE which requires some further development. The supporting programme of study is concise and informative. The content is rooted in the teaching of the church and so fulfills diocesan requirements. The content meets the statutory requirements. Pupils articulate what they have learnt in lessons.

## 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

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education is good. Evidence from lesson observations, discussions and work scrutiny shows that pupils are developing a secure knowledge, understanding and skills. They are making good progress from their starting points. During lesson observations the quality of responses from the pupils was strong. They spoke with confidence about their learning. Re-visiting prior learning has a positive impact on their ability to link that content with new learning. They reflect spiritually and think ethically and theologically and continue to develop their religious literacy. Pupils use most subject-specific vocabulary accurately and naturally. They work independently and do so with respect for each other, ensuring their enthusiasm for their learning has a positive impact on their peers. The way pupils learn with and from each other is a cause for celebration. Pupils concentrate well and have stamina to work hard and produce good work. Learning observed during the inspection included effective use of technology, individual, paired and group work and other interactive learning opportunities. Their knowledge of driver words gives them a clear direction of study as they work toward completion of the Learning Focus. Pupils explain how they enjoy the different activities in their lessons, particularly when presenting their work in different ways. This was evident in lessons and during work scrutiny. Pupils' achievement in Religious Education is in line with attainment in other core curriculum subjects. Progress is good. Some classes have made accelerated progress over the past two years as evidenced in the school's tracker and in some lessons.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education is good. Teaching across school is consistently good. Teachers demonstrated their understanding of how their pupils learn and clearly value religious education. Planning is well-structured. Questioning was

evident during lessons. This was used effectively to engage pupils but only limited to basic responses. The opportunity to offer deeper responses that would challenge pupils to achieve the best possible outcomes was limited. The range of ways in which work is presented engages pupils. This variety was clearly shown in the learning journals of the youngest pupils. Effort is celebrated during lessons and pupils are motivated and motivate each other. Pupils are keen to share how the teachers and other staff help them to improve their work. This celebration of effort is not as evident in books. During group discussions, pupils shared how their learning in school was useful in their lives. This is something to be proud of. Pupils value the fact that learning is also about how to be kind, make friends and walk in Jesus' footsteps. Pupils of all abilities are well supported and access the focus of the lessons. Support for pupils who have special needs or need additional support to access the lessons was effective. Time for reflection was observed at the start and end of some lessons. Resources are good, including the efficient deployment of other adults.

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education is good. The content is a faithful expression of the Religious Education Directory. Religious Education as the core subject shares a parity with other core subjects in terms of resourcing and staffing. Professional development of staff is valued and offered to all, with the subject leader attending and then cascading developments from the Archdiocese. The impact of the professional development needs greater measure and purpose. The wealth of knowledge and experience within the RE Team ensures that there is a strong vision. However, the current process for monitoring and analysis is having a limited impact on challenge in a minority of areas.

## 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 .....

2

### Leadership

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

2

How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship is good. The experiences of prayer and liturgy provided by school engages pupils and leads them to active participation. Prayerful music encourages and supports pupils' reverence. Pupils respond well to their experiences by offering some insightful and mature contributions. They enjoy the opportunities to pray. Pupils are respectful and thoughtful and as one staff member stated, "Prayer enables all pupils to develop their relationship with God." Enhanced by the focus area that provides prompts, pupils understand their role during prayer and worship. Pupils are confident in leading prayer using symbols, silence and reflection. Pupils' planning for and leading of prayer and liturgy was evident. All pupils, regardless of their age, understood and valued their roles. These included lighting a candle, listening to music or singing, ringing a bell to signal prayer time, and passing items around for individual opportunities to respond. During discussions, older pupils were able to talk about how they plan and evaluate their experiences. They explained how they reflect on their week, pray for people they love, and how prayer is connected to their lives. Where responses were especially strong, pupils were observed encouraging each other to be themselves and not to be afraid to stand out. These were moments of real spiritual celebration.

The quality of collective worship is good. Prayer and liturgy are appropriately planned and central to the life of the school. It forms a valuable part of any gathering. It is seasonally and liturgically appropriate and linked to other ideas generated by the pupils and staff at appropriate times in their school year. Teachers work hard ensuring pupils know how to plan prayer and liturgy to a good or better standard. As a result, pupils know how Catholic liturgies should be constructed and how to engage other pupils in these experiences. Staff all embrace

the opportunity to take part in prayer. Consequently, it is evident they are supporting pupils by their example. Music is used to enhance reverence. In some collective worship, pupils were observed singing, so adding enrichment to their experience. There are opportunities in classrooms and around school for pupils to pray and the school makes good use of the spaces available. The school strives to secure flourishing partnerships with the parish. This helps pupils understand more fully the liturgy and aids their sacramental preparation. The school choir summed up the atmosphere of the inspection at the end of Day Two with their reverence and joyful singing.

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate provision for collective worship is good. The school has a Prayer and Liturgy policy in place, which is accessible for all and is fit for purpose for experienced staff to follow. However, it is limited in detail for those new to the school. This is partly addressed by the support given by leaders and through peer observations. Leaders, including governors, understand the different levels and skills of participation that should be reflected by pupils according to their age and capacity. They have a planned school calendar and timetable to celebrate key events of the liturgical year. This calendar works alongside the celebration of other significant events, so enabling pupils to react to moments that are important to them. The RE Lead has shared training resources. All staff had access to recent archdiocesan training in the autumn term. As a result, they understand the importance of prayer and liturgy and are supported to lead. However, in a minority of incidences, they are not yet evaluating how good the prayer life is, so that improvements can be planned. Overall, leaders recognise the importance of prayer and liturgy. They allocate their budget accordingly to provide good quality resources, and many quality experiences.



## Information about the school

Full name of school	St. Austin's Catholic Primary School, Liverpool
School unique reference number (URN)	104643
Full postal address of the school	Riverbank Road, Liverpool, L19 9DH
School phone number	0151 427 1800
Name of head teacher or principal	Mrs C Hickey
Chair of governing board	Mrs A Hosey-Davies
School Website	<a href="http://www.st-austins.co.uk">www.st-austins.co.uk</a>
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Not Applicable
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age-range of pupils	3-11
Trustees	Governors
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	26 November 2014
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

## The inspection team

Mrs J M Farrimond	Lead inspector
Mrs D Albon	Team inspector
Mrs D Bradley	Team inspector
Name of inspector	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