



# Our Lady of Compassion Catholic Primary School

URN: 148089

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Archbishop of Birmingham

28–29 February 2024

## 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

#### Religious education (p.5)

The quality of curriculum religious education

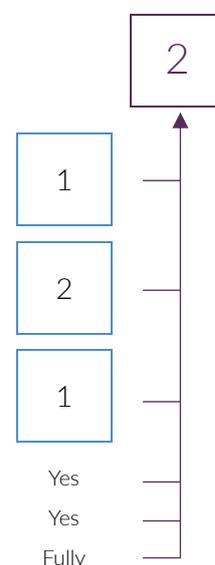
#### Collective worship (p.7)

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

- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding because they have a secure understanding of how to enact Christian values.
- Quality relationships that are consciously centred on the values Jesus taught have cultivated a strong and fully inclusive community where pupils are inspired, and staff are proud to work.
- Teachers have secure subject knowledge and skilfully question pupils which means they know whether pupils have understood key concepts within the lesson.
- Leaders and governors have a clear vision and a strong sense of direction. Rigorous and honest evaluation systems are in place, which ensure the school accurately identifies its strengths and precisely targets strategic improvement work in all areas.

- The excellent partnership between the school and parish clearly demonstrates that Catholic life and mission is flourishing at Our Lady of Compassion.

### What the school needs to improve

- Establish a system for pupils to evaluate a wide variety of prayer and liturgy provision, enabling them to lead aspects of improvement work in this area.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to deepen their learning in religious education lessons, including giving time for personal reflection.
- Feature Catholic social teaching within all taught subjects, so that the entire curriculum is delivered through a Catholic lens.

## 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**

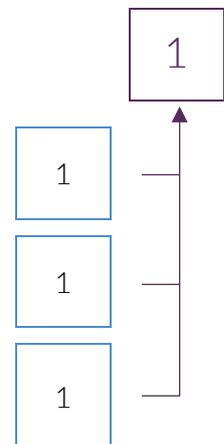
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

**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



All pupils deeply value the love and care that they receive in school. They talk confidently about how staff help them to grow and develop and can confidently explain what it means to, ‘follow in his footsteps.’ This is because leaders and staff embrace the mission and are dedicated to promoting it in all aspects of school life. Relationships between all within the school are exceptionally strong and are truly based on an authentic belief that Christ is at the centre of the community. Pupils experience excellent pastoral support in a caring and nurturing environment. This results in pupils feeling safe and being confident, happy learners. Pupils have a strong awareness of local and global issues and know how they can help others. This is demonstrated through their work in supporting the parish by selling conkers to raise money for the church roof, planting trees with the local Columbian missionaries, as well as raising funds for urgent global appeals. Pupils speak enthusiastically about such opportunities to witness their faith in practical ways but cannot always make links with the Catholic social teaching themes they have learnt. Pupils’ behaviour is exemplary because they have a deep sense of self-worth, demonstrated by the care and kindness they show to each other. Pupils value learning about other faiths and religions and how this supports their life in modern Britain.

Staff wholeheartedly support, participate, and share in the school's mission. They work enthusiastically to achieve the best outcomes for the children in their care and are exemplary role models. New staff members are fully supported within this strong Catholic community. Staff who were once former pupils say that ‘Working at Our Lady of Compassion is like coming home.’ Adults within school give time willingly at weekends through catechist work to promote and nurture the school’s Catholic life, setting an inspiring example to pupils on how to live out Christ’s mission actively. There is a strong commitment and investment to the most vulnerable; for

example, the school has a 'pupil premium pledge' which ensures the needs of the most vulnerable are met. The school is committed to promoting pupils' and staff's spiritual and moral development, and this can be seen through the chaplaincy provision offered throughout the whole school. The school environment explicitly reflects the school's Catholic identity, and the recent addition of the school chapel is a powerful reminder to all of its importance and centrality to the life of the school. The school's provision for relationships, sex, and health education (RSHE) meets all diocesan and statutory requirements and is firmly rooted in Catholic values and tradition.

Leaders demonstrate an exceptional commitment to the Church's educational mission, ensuring that Christ is at the heart of all the school does. The expertise of the multi academy company's (MAC) board of directors, the school improvement lead, and the local governing body ensures that their vision for Catholic life and mission is fully realised. Local governing body members regularly visit the school and therefore know it very well. They carry out their responsibilities with integrity and offer both challenge and support to leaders in the school; consequently, they can be confident that the school's self-evaluation is accurate. The school works exceptionally well with the local parish, showing a deep commitment to its mission. Leaders and governors have great regard for staff well-being. They ensure leaders receive time for their formation and prioritise opportunities for staff to nurture their spiritual and moral development, such as through retreat days. Staff make links to Catholic social teaching within some of their lessons; however, this is not yet formally taught across all areas of the curriculum.

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

### Religious education key judgement grade

**Pupil outcomes**

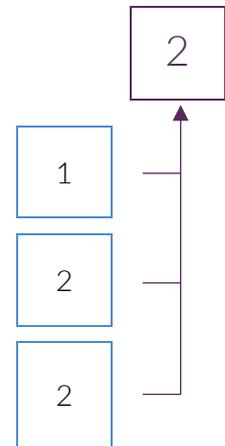
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

**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



Within the planned curriculum, all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND), know, remember, and do more with their learning and achieve strong outcomes. They routinely recall and visit prior learning and can articulate themselves very clearly when discussing what they have learnt. They use technical vocabulary efficiently, accurately, and fluently. Pupils thoroughly enjoy their lessons and speak enthusiastically about the fun they experience, primarily when actively engaged in their learning. Pupils are highly confident and can relate their understanding of Scripture to everyday life. Pupils concentrate for extended periods of time and work well in pairs and groups, listening respectfully to one another. Pupils of all ages can work independently without the direction of an adult, and their behaviour remains excellent at all times. This means pupils can progress in a timely manner through the curriculum. Work in books is generally well-presented, though there are some inconsistencies in quality. Verbal feedback tells pupils how well they are doing and what they need to improve; subsequently, pupils are confident in articulating how they make progress in religious education.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge and demonstrate this excellently, appropriate to the age they are teaching. Staff adapt their teaching for different groups of pupils through their questioning; this contributes to most pupils achieving the learning objectives of each lesson. Pupils with SEND are well provided for because teachers adapt resources and work alongside skilled teaching assistants to engage and motivate this group of learners. Beyond this, most teachers deploy other adult support well; in the best examples, good subject knowledge is used to question pupils, facilitating effective support to improve learning for all pupils. Resources, including Bibles, are used effectively by staff to optimise learning. Teachers make effective use of religious art which evoke thoughtful responses from the pupils, such as when they learn about

The Presentation of Jesus in the Temple. Teachers adhere consistently to the school's feedback policy, recognising and valuing pupils' efforts. Pupils' personal development through the provision of time and space in lessons is not yet provided to support them in developing their spiritual and moral reflections at a deeper level.

The school uses the diocesan strategy to ensure good coverage of the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*. Religious Education is well planned to meet the needs of the different groups of pupils, in particular those with SEND. Pupils receiving one-to-one support are well catered for and adaptive teaching strategies are used well for them. Leaders and governors ensure that the subject has parity with other core subjects in terms of funding, resourcing, and training. The school takes advantage of the high-quality training offered through the MAC and by the diocese to ensure that all staff remain current in their skills and knowledge. The school works with Catholic schools throughout the MAC to moderate religious education standards, helping to improve the quality and accuracy of teachers' assessment. The subject leader is well-supported by the school's senior leadership team and the diocesan adviser. She has a clear vision for developing the subject and is motivated to achieve this vision. She is much valued and respected by all who work with her. All staff feel highly supported by the subject leader which aids the subject's development. Staff say, 'We can ask for help at any time, and it is always given.' Opportunities for pupils to engage in enrichment activities that enhance the school's delivery of the curriculum are evident through MAC visits to the Catholic secondary feeder school and through its engagement with 'One Life' music opportunities, as well as residential experiences to Alton Castle.

## 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

2

1

Pupils thoroughly enjoy and respond well to the experiences of prayer and liturgy the school provides. They really appreciate any opportunity to contribute to and be part of prayer, demonstrating increasing confidence and ease when leading. However, their involvement in evaluating different types of prayer and liturgy is not fully realised. They are supported in becoming more and more independent in their prayer planning, and by the time pupils reach Upper Key Stage 2, they need very little guidance and support from staff. Pupils are supported in their understanding of traditional prayers and the importance of having personal conversations with God. They are excited about the *Year of Prayer* and are keen to learn the Lord's prayer in different languages during Pentecost so they can be 'little missionaries' in spreading God's word. Pupils' attention to detail when planning prayer and liturgy results in concentration in active prayer times and silent moments. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, teachers use repetition exceptionally well to enable children to learn simple prayers and to understand why these prayers are said. As children progress through the school, their knowledge of Catholic prayers and their purpose improves significantly.

Prayer and liturgy are central to the school's daily life. All key gatherings and events are centred upon the Word of God. Staff appreciate the opportunity to pray regularly and make use of the liturgically focused prayer tables with pupils in each classroom and around the school as well as in the prayer garden outside. Formal prayers are said daily and there is also time for spontaneous prayer, reflecting the richness of Catholic prayer tradition. Through effective training and accessible online courses, staff are highly skilled in supporting pupils to plan and lead well-constructed prayer and liturgy. The use of space is highly creative and imaginative; the new school chapel is a beautiful sacred space, along with the poignant cross which is a central focal point within the school. Pupils say that this is a place where they can be 'close to Jesus.' The

school works hard to secure flourishing links with the parish and pupils' families, securing a high participation rate in the 'Stay and Pray' during Lent and Advent for example with parents volunteering to read the bidding prayers. Parents relish the invitation to join their children in prayer at school and respond positively to such opportunities, saying 'I really value the numerous opportunities to share prayer with my child within school time.'

Leaders and governors identify prayer as a central priority, evident in the well-formulated prayer policy and how they construct the school calendar around prayer. The school calendar for prayer and liturgy includes all holy days of obligation and other important times within the Church's year, such as Advent, Easter, and Christmas. The parish priest offers the opportunity for the Sacrament of Reconciliation during Advent and Lent to pupils. Leaders understand pupils' need for progressive development as they move through the school and plan well to develop this. This is reflected in the quality and amount of support pupils need to plan, lead, and participate in worship sessions as they grow older. Staff training is given high priority and is provided by school leaders, the archdiocese, and the MAC. Leaders have used these occasions to help staff improve the pupils' response to prayer and liturgy. Leaders and governors recognise the importance of prayer and liturgy and dedicate appropriate time, resources, and funding to ensure high standards. Although leaders monitor and review the impact of prayer and liturgy, the regular involvement of pupils in this process to ensure continued impact and accountability is only in its infancy.

## Information about the school

Full name of school	Our Lady of Compassion Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	148089
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	3343504
Full postal address of the school	Kineton Green Road, Olton, Solihull, B92 7EG
School phone number	0121 706 9508
Headteacher	Neil Emery
Chair of Governing Board	Paul Bentley
School Website	<a href="http://www.olc.solihull.sch.uk">www.olc.solihull.sch.uk</a>
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Our Lady And All Saints Catholic Multi Academy Company
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Academy
Admissions policy	Non-selective
Age-range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	October 2017
Previous denominational inspection grade	2

## The inspection team

Rebecca Nash	Lead
Joanna McAleenan	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