

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School

URN: 106502

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Archbishop of Liverpool

26–27 June 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

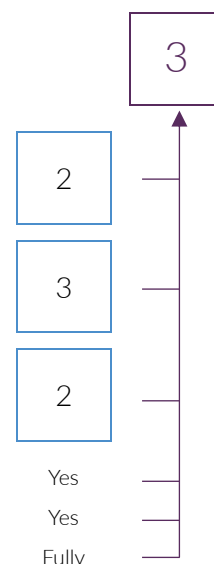
Collective worship (p.7)

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

- Sacred Heart school has Christ at its heart offering a warm welcome to all.
- Pupils are proud of their school, are joyful members of the community and they work hard to use the school 'high five' values every day.
- There is a strong sense of family where everyone is recognised as an individual; diversity is embraced and celebrated.
- All members of staff, leaders and governors are highly committed to Sacred Heart. They are determined to provide the best for the pupils in their care.

What the school needs to improve

- Leaders should provide well planned opportunities and bespoke training for staff so that religious education is consistently well delivered across all key stages.
- Leaders and governors should ensure that there is a rigorous and systematic self-evaluation cycle in place so that they have a very clear understanding of the impact of their work and can appropriately plan next step 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

Pupil outcomes

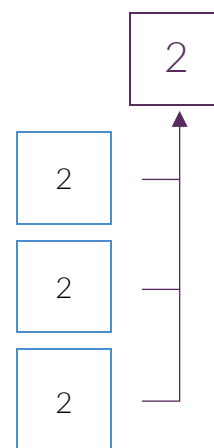
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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 at Sacred Heart are happy, kind and caring young people. They understand the Sacred Heart mission to 'Live and Learn with Jesus', and to live the values of fairness, kindness, love, friendship and happiness which underpins this statement. Pupils live out the mission as they are regularly challenged to 'give me five' (values) during the school day. Pupils speak about their school with pride, explaining that they care about each other and demonstrate this through their actions which include helping around school and supporting each other during free time. One year four pupil told inspectors that they were '*proud of their school because of the way they offer to help lots of people*' through their charitable work. Pupils are actively engaged in supporting those in need and there are many opportunities for the school to come together to support others. Anastasia Day (set aside to commemorate the life of a past pupil) exemplifies this work and is a powerful example of the depth of care that all in the Sacred Heart community have for each other. Members of the Cafod and youth St Vincent de Paul groups are ready for the next stage of their chaplaincy journey namely taking the responsibility to select some of their own charities. They would welcome further opportunities to be leaders of their mission.

The staff community at Sacred Heart understands the mission and how to support pupils to live this out through the school values. The school conducts an annual mission focus which provides an opportunity to revisit and review its statement so ensuring it remains relevant and fit for purpose. One member of staff says, "*Sacred Heart is a family community where everyone demonstrates the values and mission of our school.*" This is a view shared by many. A significant number of staff, including the long standing and highly respected head teacher, have served the school and community for many years and, as a result, they know the families well and can offer a range of well appreciated support. Staff, including early careers teachers, willingly give their

time to participate in activities which reflect the mission. They support the work of the subject lead, senior leaders and the parent body in a range of charitable works. There is a tangible sense of community where differences are actively celebrated, and all are made to feel welcome. Statutory requirements for the relationships and sex education curriculum are met. Pupils have access to the Archdiocesan recommended programme, Journey in Love.

Leaders and governors are emphatically supportive and complimentary about the work of the staff and pupils at Sacred Heart. They are committed in their pursuit of the common good and are particularly proud of pastoral work that they do which has a significantly positive impact on pupils and their families. One parent responded to the survey saying, *'the support to the children and myself as a carer has been outstanding'*. Leaders, including the ambitious and committed subject lead, support the families and wider community of Sacred Heart whom they serve with an unwavering commitment. Leaders and governors care about each other and the staff in turn value their support. One staff member referred to the head teacher as *'an inspiration to all staff and children...she leads the school with Christ in her heart.'* Staff benefit from and appreciate the informal support offered by the subject lead. Early careers teachers, who are a welcome addition to the team, are complimentary of the work of all leaders saying that they are made to feel like *'a crucial part of the staff team.'* The self-evaluation of the school focuses primarily on what the school does. Leaders now consider the impact of their actions so that they can better inform governors and plan next steps. They should also consider how pupils can be meaningfully involved in the evaluation of the Catholic life and mission.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

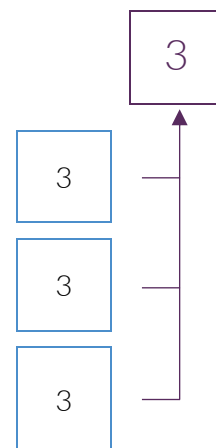
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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 are developing their knowledge in religious education. They are well behaved in lessons and will do whatever is asked of them. They respect staff and want to do their best. In their books, work is generally presented well, and they are proud of the effort they make. As pupils progress through the school, they know and remember more. Where outcomes are stronger, pupils are given daily opportunities to recall prior learning at the start of their lesson. However, this does not happen consistently in all lessons and across all key stages. Many pupils demonstrate that they are religiously literate with some eager to share their understanding during lessons. In one lesson observed, a year four pupil linked Scripture to an example of the school's mission in action. Pupils in upper key stage two spoke confidently about their learning. They particularly enjoy creative tasks and in lessons where pupils are provided with imaginative ways to explore new learning they make better progress. Pupils in year six tackled a difficult concept with ease when it was brought to life because they were given a range of opportunities to discuss their learning. However, in some classes observed, the pupils were passive due to an over reliance on teacher input and not enough opportunity to rehearse answers prior to responding.

Staff are committed to religious education, and they recognise its value. Teachers' subject knowledge is variable across the school and some staff would benefit from continued professional development in this area. While the inspection team were able to cite examples of engaging and exciting lessons taught, particularly in key stage two, the delivery of high-quality religious education lessons is inconsistent. In the best lessons observed, teachers are succinct, focused on pupil engagement and participation, and question to ensure the learning is deepened. In these classrooms, additional adults ensure that pupils are supported and challenged. They are aware of the needs of pupils enabling them to predict and intervene

accordingly. The effective use of probing questions to assess prior learning and to enable progress is variable. Teachers use written feedback to celebrate effort, but they do not provide precise feedback or targets, either verbally or in written form, so that all pupils are clear about their next progress steps.

The Come and See programme is used across the school and as a result, leaders and governors ensure that the curriculum accurately reflects the requirements of the current Religious Education Directory. The subject lead is hard working and passionate and has shared her expertise across the school. Members of staff value this when they say, *"She leads the subject well and is very organised. She is very approachable and always there to offer advice and support."* The subject lead has worked hard to create a vision for religious education. However, its provision is variable across the school. She would benefit from the support of senior leaders to enable regular monitoring and accurate measurement of the impact of actions undertaken. Senior leaders are clearly committed to religious education, and the governors are supportive in their role, offering strong links between home, school and parish. Despite these efforts the self-evaluation of religious education lacks accuracy. The governors require external training to support their effective monitoring of progress in religious education.

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

2

Leadership

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

3

2

Pupils respond positively to opportunities provided and they conduct themselves well during dedicated prayer time. Pupils across all key stages thoroughly enjoy the opportunity to sing and pray together, as observed during inspection when the whole school celebrated a thanksgiving Mass at the parish church. Pupils can describe aspects of the liturgical year, and some understand the variety of ways of praying describing contemplation in silence or singing to give thanks and praise. In class, pupils' participation across the school varies and, in the best examples pupils respond actively, reflectively and sing joyfully. Here, they are well prepared for talking to God because the scene is set beautifully, and a pattern of worship is followed. Pupils know their school prayers and a variety of traditional prayers and participate with enthusiasm. During inspection, a group of key stage one pupils spontaneously sang The Lord's Prayer beautifully, as taught by the parish priest. While pupils take part in all they are asked to do, they are not yet planning their own prayer and liturgy. They enjoy taking on a variety of roles, such as reading from Scripture or responding with spontaneous prayer. Many would relish the opportunity to lead acts of worship and, alongside this, plan and evaluate their work.

The subject leader and head teacher have planned themes to support prayer and liturgy across the school. These are supplemented by the curriculum focus in every year group. Teachers use the four-part plan to gather, respond, listen and go forth. There is a Rosary Club which provides some richness of tradition, and pupils experience reconciliatory prayer during Lent and Advent. Pupils are also able to do this independently using the prayer stations located on each level of the school site. The older pupils were able to explain that the 'prayer seat' is used to provide the opportunity to sit, reflect and think about saying sorry or for sharing their sorrows. Staff say that the subject lead is a model of good practice and value her support in their skills development. Sacred is Heart is the living Church for many of its pupils and staff equip them to know how to

respond during Mass and in their individual class gatherings. Although space is limited, pupils are keen to develop an outdoor prayer area and the subject lead has identified this as an area for development.

Whilst the print copy of the policy is relevant and fit for purpose, there are two policies online which is confusing. Leaders have planned the school calendar so that pupils are able to access Mass and other services. For example, the feast of Saints Peter & Paul was celebrated in conjunction with thanksgiving for the children who had received the sacrament of the Eucharist earlier this year. Despite budgetary restrictions, resources for prayer and liturgy have been allocated appropriately across the school. Staff have had opportunities to develop their skills through training offered by the Archdiocese and they feel that this has been beneficial. The impact of this training should be shared with governors so that they are clear of the strengths and areas for development of the school. Staff would appreciate and benefit from further training so that they understand the wide variety and richness of Church tradition and all it has to offer. As part of the school evaluation schedule, leaders and governors should monitor the strategy for levels of participation so that all pupils are given equal opportunity to participate. Once monitored governors should assess impact and identify ongoing training needs.

Information about the school

Full name of school	Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	106502
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	3593403
Full postal address of the school	Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School, Windermere Road, Leigh, WN7 1UX
School phone number	01942674226
Headteacher	Helen Ahmed
Chair of Governors	Acting Chair of Governors Catherine Halliday
School Website	http://www.leighsacredheart.wigan.sch.uk
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	23/01/2018
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

The inspection team

Rachael Tyler
Alan Saunders

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