

# St Philip's Catholic Primary School

URN: 108033

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Leeds

11–12 July 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

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

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

2

## What the school does well

- Staff are exemplary role-models who work together extremely well. They bear witness to the school's Catholic life and witness through the love and high standard of pastoral care they show for pupils, their families and each other.
- Highly skilled support of children with Special Educational Needs ensures that all learners achieve well in religious education.
- The inspirational leadership of the school demonstrates a deep commitment to the Catholic life of the school and the learning and wellbeing of all stakeholders.
- The behaviour of pupils is exemplary; they are polite and show a deep respect for themselves and others.
- Pupils' engagement and participation in prayer and liturgy is of a high standard; they value and appreciate the opportunity to pray and develop their relationship with God.

## What the school needs to improve

- To increase the opportunities for children to show independence, individuality and creativity to demonstrate their learning.
- To develop a consistent assessment system throughout school to ensure pupils know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.
- To develop the creativity and evaluation of pupil-led worship.

## 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

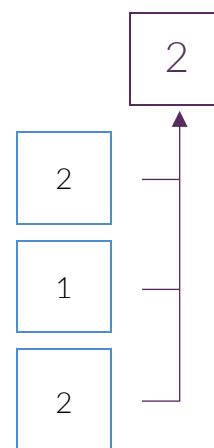
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

#### 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 have a good understanding of the distinctive Catholic identity, charism and mission of the school. The school's mission statement is displayed prominently throughout the school and is referred to regularly. Pupils feel supported and cared for. One pupil reported that, 'There is always someone that we can turn to who will support, help and care for us.' Pupils are actively engaged in supporting those in need both globally and locally. Their ability to articulate Catholic Social Teaching is currently underdeveloped though. Pupils show a deep respect for those of other faiths and backgrounds. Pupils talk readily about how, when joining the school, they have 'felt part of the school straight away' because of the warm welcome they have received. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. This is particularly evident during religious education lessons and prayer and liturgy sessions. Pupils value the chaplaincy provision and actively participate in it but opportunities for leadership, as identified in the school's self-evaluation, are currently limited.

The quality of provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school is outstanding. The school's mission has been regularly re-visited, and enhanced, and is deeply rooted in the word of God. Staff enthusiastically embrace opportunities to reflect on the mission and service that the school offers. There is a very strong culture of welcome in the school. This is evident from the first moment you enter the school and are greeted by the school office staff. Parents and visitors appreciate and value how the school goes the extra mile to make everyone feel part of the school community. Staff are exemplary role models for pupils. They are highly committed to the care and well-being of each individual child. The very effective learning mentor support ensures that the pastoral care for pupils is of the highest standard. The school environment reflects the school's mission and the Catholic character of the school, but there are further opportunities to enhance the quality of class displays and create a devoted space for prayer. Relationships, sex,

and health education is well planned to meet both statutory and diocesan requirements. Children are able to talk very articulately about their work in this subject and link it well to the faith life of the school, particularly the taught virtues.

Leaders and governors are all excellent role models of Catholic leadership and ensure that Christ is at the heart of the school. The school works closely with the parish priest to enable a flourishing partnership between the school and its local parish. This is evident in the school's charity work for the St Vincent de Paul Society that benefits both families in school and in the local community. The school enjoys a very positive partnership with parents. Parents report that all staff are, 'approachable, helpful and encouraging'. They appreciate how easy it is to communicate with staff, and value the numerous opportunities to visit the school for liturgies, assemblies and concerts. The effective Year 6 buddy system led one parent to reflect, 'It feels like my four year old child has a big brother in school'. There is the highest level of pastoral care for staff. Staff readily praise the leadership team for the support they give to their professional and spiritual development. There are currently missed opportunities for subject leaders to make connections between discrete subject areas and their learning in religious education, particularly in the pupils' English work. Governors are committed to the Catholic life of the school. They provide challenge and support to the leadership team, but do not currently make focused visits to help evaluate the Catholic life of the school.

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

### Religious education key judgement grade

#### Pupil outcomes

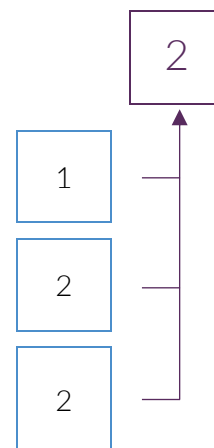
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

#### 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 secure knowledge, understanding and skills that reflect the learning required by the *Religious Education Directory*. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported through well-planned activities and excellent support from teachers and teaching assistants. Pupils are religiously literate. They use key concepts and subject-specific vocabulary to apply their learning, and can reflect spiritually on how this impacts their lives. Pupils frequently have the opportunity to discuss ideas, themes and questions with their peers. Collaborative work is subsequently of a very high standard with pupils focused, engaged and enthusiastic about their learning. As a result, pupils' behaviour in lessons is outstanding. Pupils produce good work that is well-presented, but opportunities for pupils to take greater control over their learning is currently limited with too much scaffolding and direction currently used in some classes. Occasions where pupils can show individuality and creativity to display their learning is not consistent across the school. Pupils do not currently have a clear awareness of how well they are doing in religious education and what they need to do to improve. Pupils concentrate extremely well during lessons. They rise to the challenge of learning and are curious, thoughtful and interested learners.

Teachers demonstrate a deep commitment and high expectations for religious education. Effective staff training has ensured that all teachers are confident in their subject knowledge and have a good understanding of the best ways to help pupils learn. The use of 'flashbacks' at the beginning of each lesson are effective in ensuring lessons consolidate previous learning and extend pupils' knowledge and understanding. Teachers use questioning skilfully during lessons to support and challenge pupils. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils were challenged to think deeply about how the Church is the body of Christ. One pupil commented, 'It is not the building that makes the church, but the people'. Verbal praise during lessons celebrates pupils' efforts and

achievements. Formal assessment systems though, are not currently rigorous and consistent enough to allow teachers throughout the school to make judgements that can help inform future planning and track attainment and progress. Teachers ensure pupils have sufficient time and space to reflect on their learning. They recognise the impact that religious education has on the development of their pupils. Pupils' books show that teachers plan different ways for pupils to present their learning, although this is directed and opportunities for independent choice of recording style is limited. Other adults are used effectively to ensure that all learners can access learning and achieve well in religious education.

Leaders and governors are committed to high quality religious education. They have ensured that previous inspection areas for development have been met and that religious education is given parity with other core subjects. Staff speak very positively about the regular, high quality professional development that they have received. They report how this has increased their subject knowledge, confidence and pedagogy. Staff also appreciate the approachability of leaders; they feel able to ask informal questions and ask for advice about their teaching. The recently appointed subject leader is knowledgeable, experienced, passionate and has a clear vision for religious education and how to further improve it. The support for pupils with special educational needs is a strength. Leaders ensure religious education is creatively and thoughtfully planned, building on a strong knowledge of individuals' characters and learning styles, to meet all pupils' needs. Regular communication between school leaders and governors is in place to ensure that governors have a clear picture of religious education in school. Formal monitoring visits, linked to strategic actions for improvement, are not currently in place though.

## 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

2

2

Pupils are reverent and respectful during all prayer and liturgy sessions. They participate in them appropriately by, for example, singing enthusiastically, reflecting in silence and joining in with communal prayers. The respect for liturgy is embedded from the earliest age in school. Nursery children were encouraged to reflect quietly on how they can help others during a class liturgy. Pupils are able to articulate confidently the impact prayer has on their life. One pupil in Year 5 remarked that, 'Prayer helps me grow in faith. I know that if I am worried about anything, God can help me'. Pupils are given regular opportunities to lead prayer and liturgy sessions. They have a good understanding of the components of a liturgy and can describe parts of the Church's liturgical years. Pupils work well with others to plan these liturgies, but planning templates are currently heavily scaffolded and do not allow opportunities to deliver more creative acts of worship. Pupils are beginning to evaluate the quality of the prayer and liturgy that they have planned and delivered, but this is at an early stage of development.

Prayer and liturgy are central to the life of St Philip's. They form part of the school's routine and involve regular gatherings of pupils, staff, leaders, parish priest and parents. Staff feel confident in leading, supporting and participating in prayer and liturgy sessions. Experienced leaders and teachers have modelled good practice to develop less experienced members of staff. This has been effective in helping staff grow in confidence and understanding. Staff are now skilled to support pupils in planning and leading well-constructed prayer and liturgy. The parish priest is well-known to the school community. He regularly attends school and greatly enhances the religious education and prayer life of the school. Pupils throughout the school recognise the parish priest as a prominent person in the spiritual dimension of the school. The prayer life of the school is reflected in each classroom through scripture on each door and a prayer table.

School leaders recognise that a key area of improvement is to develop the use of space in school to ensure pupils have special places that they can pray.

The school's prayer policy has been reviewed and shared with staff. It accurately reflects the provision in place. Leaders understand the skill and capacity of children. The progression for participation and leadership of pupils is realistic and effectively builds up the level of independence as pupils move through the school. Staff are supported in leading prayer sessions through observing excellent role models. During the inspection, the school's executive headteacher led a high-quality liturgy that engaged all pupils. The key message of, 'Don't worry, pray' was inspirationally shared and was memorable to all pupils, resonating with their own concerns of coming to the end of the school year and preparing to move classes/schools. As a consequence of these regular examples of a high standard of practice, staff are increasingly able to deliver high-quality experiences of prayer and liturgy. Leaders regularly review the quality and impact of prayer and liturgy, but pupils' roles in evaluating prayer and liturgy is currently underdeveloped. Leaders fully recognise the importance of prayer and liturgy. This is reflected in action planning, setting budgets and allocating resources and time. Leaders have clear plans in place for how to further develop the prayer and liturgy life of the school.



## Information about the school

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| Full name of school                            | St Philip's Catholic Primary School  |
| School unique reference number (URN)           | 108033   |
| School DfE Number (LAESTAB)                    | 3833379  |
| Full postal address of the school              | St Philip's Catholic Primary School, St Philips Avenue, Middleton, Leeds, LS10 3SL |
| School phone number                            | 01132716763  |
| Headteacher                                    | Peter McQuillen Strong   |
| Chair of Governors                             | Joanna Wilson  |
| School Website                                 | <a href="http://www.st-philips.org/">www.st-philips.org/</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                            | 3-11   |
| Gender of pupils                               | Mixed  |
| Date of last denominational inspection         | 21-22 June 2017  |
| Previous denominational inspection grade       | Outstanding  |

## The inspection team

Christopher Power  
Carmel Utting

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 |