



# Our Lady And St Brendan's Catholic Primary School

URN: 148256

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Leeds

22–24 May 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

1

#### 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

- The inspirational leadership of the headteacher and subject leaders ensures staff and pupils feel loved, cared for and filled with joy.
- The support, care and love for the most vulnerable pupils in the school community is exceptional.
- The recently re-visited mission is a clear and inspiring expression of the Church and the school. It is deeply rooted in the word of God and is evident in all parts of the well-maintained environment.
- The high quality support and creative differentiation for children with special educational needs enables all children to access the religious education curriculum.
- The daily pattern of prayer and liturgy, which includes both routine and innovative times of prayer, is well planned.

## What the school needs to improve

- For subject leaders to refine actions within strategic plans to ensure next steps are clear, measurable and communicated to all stakeholders.
- To develop children's independence, individuality and creativity in religious education lessons.
- To develop child-led worship across the school so that they are fully prayerful acts of reverent 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

1

**Provision**

The quality of provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school

1

**Leadership**

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school

2

1



The Catholic life and mission of Our Lady and St Brendan's Catholic Primary is outstanding. Pupils understand and embrace the distinctive Catholic identity and mission of their school. They are happy, confident and feel secure, knowing that they are valued and cared for. One pupil remarked that, 'The adults want to take care of us, protect us and keep us safe just like our parents do'. Pupils relish the numerous opportunities for pupil leadership and take a leading role in responding to the demands of Catholic Social Teaching. Pupils have opportunities to decide on which charities to fundraise for and frequently design the fundraising activities themselves. An example of this was when a group of Year 4 pupils spontaneously decided to fundraise by making jewellery to sell in aid of Candlelighters. The theology underpinning these actions is currently underdeveloped. The behaviour of pupils during lessons and around school is good. Pupils are well-supported to improve their behaviour where necessary. Pupils demonstrate respect for those of other faiths, religions and none. One pupil stated that, 'Everyone has unique gifts and talents to share so we should love them like we love God'.

The recently re-visited mission of the school is a clear and inspiring expression of the Church and school. It is embraced by all staff and is implemented across the curriculum and all areas of school life. It is referred to regularly by staff and pupils and has a visible impact on the life of the school. The school environment effectively identifies the Catholic identity of the school; shared areas and displays are well maintained and are rooted in the word of God. Each classroom has a dedicated prayer space where the mission is clearly evident. The culture of welcome is embedded and the school celebrates the presence of those from various cultures and beliefs. This was highlighted during a recent other faiths week, where children were encouraged to take a leading role in sharing their cultures and beliefs with others. Staff are exemplary role models.

Pupils and parents greatly appreciate the high levels of pastoral care and the love and support that is given to them by the school. The chaplaincy provision is strong and provides effective opportunities for the moral development of pupils and staff. The provision for relationships, sex and health education is faithful to the teaching of the Church and meets statutory and diocesan requirements.

Leaders and governors are able to clearly articulate the Church's mission. They ensure that Christ is at the centre of the school, reflecting this in all policies and school priorities. The inspirational headteacher and subject leaders provide energy and joy to the whole school community. Staff are witnesses to the Gospel and Catholic Social Teaching; they demonstrate exemplary commitment to care for the common good and those in greatest need. Professional development opportunities for staff are well-planned and effective. Governors and leaders of the Blessed Christopher Wharton Trust provide effective support and challenge. Staff feel supported and cared for. However, formal support for staff members who are new to working in a Catholic school is under-developed at present. The school's self-evaluation involves accurate monitoring and is clearly focused on the Catholic life and mission of the school. Action points and next steps are currently not specific or refined enough to prioritise improvement and ensure all staff are aware of them.

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

### Religious education key judgement grade

**Pupil outcomes**

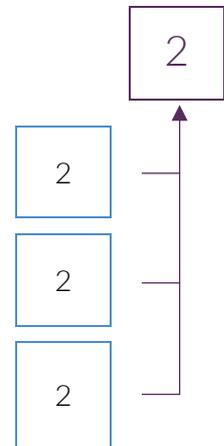
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

**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*. Although assessment and tracking systems are at an early stage of development, tracking of pupil progress is now robust and forms a key part of pupil progress meetings. This helps to ensure that timely support is given to pupils and staff to accelerate children’s progress. Religious education books clearly demonstrate progress throughout the year for all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs. Pupils are able to articulate their developing knowledge and understanding. They speak with confidence about their learning and are able to link previous learning, especially regarding the virtues that are embedded into school life. Pupils produce good work that is well presented. They enjoy their learning and have an understanding of how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. Opportunities for pupils to take greater control over their learning is currently limited. Occasions where pupils can show individuality and creativity to demonstrate their learning is not consistent across the school.

Teachers’ confidence and subject knowledge is good and is improving due to excellent tailored support from the subject leader. Previous monitoring identified teachers’ subject knowledge as an area for development, and teachers report effective professional development has had a significant impact. Teachers demonstrate a deep commitment and high expectations for religious education, and this is evident in their teaching. The teaching of virtues is embedded very well and is consistently integrated into teaching and learning activities. Where teaching is at its strongest, questioning is used skilfully to adapt explanations and tasks, although this is not consistent throughout the school. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children access the religious education curriculum through engaging and creative learning and play opportunities. For example, in the outdoor area, children were able to re-enact the ascension of Jesus by raising

a puppet of Jesus. A robust system of assessment has been developed but it needs time to develop and be refined in order for planning to be linked more closely to pupils' attainment. Differentiation of religious education is a strength of the school. Teachers and teaching assistants, expertly aided by the school's special educational needs co-ordinator, skilfully adapt and create tasks to ensure all learners fully access the religious education curriculum.

Leaders and governors ensure that religious education has at least full parity with other core curriculum subjects. This is especially evident during feedback to pupils and reporting to parents. Leaders ensure that regular, high quality professional development, particularly in association with the Diocese of Leeds, is accessed by all practitioners, who cite the impact of this as being significant. The subject leader leads by example and has a high level of expertise in supporting and improving religious education in the school. Religious education is imaginatively and thoughtfully planned by leaders to meet the needs of all pupils. The numerous chaplaincy teams, including Catholic club, Mini Vinnies, Live Simply and Laudato Si, enrich the pupils' learning and engagement with religious education. They facilitate excellent links with the wider community who value the notable impact from the school. Staff currently have a limited understanding of the priorities of the school in relation to religious education. While self-evaluation is accurate, action plans lack specific next steps that detail areas of future improvement.

## 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

2

2

Pupils respond well to the experiences of prayer and liturgy provided by the school. They engage well, demonstrating respect and a strong understanding that prayer and liturgy is a key part of their life in school. Pupils show reverence by reflecting in silence and show enthusiasm through regularly singing songs of praise and worship. One child in Key Stage 2 stated that 'liturgies give me a chance to have quiet time and help me to be calm'. Pupils willingly give up their time during playtimes to take part in prayer sessions. Pupils understand a variety of different elements of liturgies that reflect the Catholic tradition. Child-led worship is a regular part of school life; pupils and staff work well together reflecting the levels of independence set out in the school's worship progression document. Pupils are beginning to evaluate their liturgies and can articulate how prayer and liturgy affects them and impacts their life. Pupils require further support in ensuring that their liturgies are acts of worship rather than lesson-style sessions. Further development to add creativity to child-led liturgies is at an early stage.

There is a clear, embedded pattern of prayer at Our Lady and St Brendan's. This is planned well by leaders and includes whole-school, key stage and class liturgies. In addition to this, there are innovative additions to the prayer life of the school, such as 'Stay and Pray' sessions during playtimes. Scripture passages are well-chosen and are selected taking into account the liturgical season of the Church. Further development to upskill staff to support the creative elements of child-led worship is yet to take effect. Staff are exemplary role-models. They engage fully in all prayer and liturgy sessions regardless of whether they are leading the sessions or are participants. The school makes imaginative and creative use of the spaces available. Each classroom has a specific area that is devoted to prayer; there is also a special place in the school hall that is beautifully maintained and is valued by the children as a place they can 'be with God'. The school seeks to work well with the local parish to help pupils participate more fully in the

liturgy. The parish priest is a regular visitor to school and can talk confidently about how actions from leaders have developed children's understanding and participation in Mass.

The school's policies for prayer and liturgy are well formulated and fit for purpose, they clearly reflect every day practice. Leaders have a strong knowledge and understanding of different ways of praying which meets the needs of their community. There is strong evidence of the positive impact of professional development to improve the quality of prayer and liturgy. All staff understand the importance of prayer and feel well-supported by leaders in developing their knowledge and understanding. The quality and impact of prayer and liturgy lacks precise monitoring, particularly in child-led worship, to enable further improvement and development. There is a clear strategy for building up the independence and participation levels of pupils as they progress through the school. The school calendar and timetable are well-planned to ensure all holy days of obligation, and other significant days, are celebrated. Leaders have clearly recognised the importance of prayer and liturgy, and this has been evident through the financial resourcing and timetabling of this area. Pupils play an important role in the evaluation of prayer and liturgy; their views are sought regularly and they understand the need for further improvement.

## Information about the school

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| Full name of school                            | Our Lady And St Brendan's Catholic Primary School  |
| School unique reference number (URN)           | 148256   |
| School DfE Number (LAESTAB)                    | 3803353  |
| Full postal address of the school              | Our Lady And St Brendan's Catholic Primary School,<br>The Bank, Idle, Bradford, BD10 0QA |
| School phone number                            | 01274611992  |
| Headteacher                                    | Sarah Delany   |
| Chair of Local Governing Body                  | Sharon Langford  |
| School Website                                 | <a href="http://www.ourladyandstbrendans.co.uk/">www.ourladyandstbrendans.co.uk/</a>     |
| Trusteeship                                    | Diocesan   |
| Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable) | Blessed Christopher Wharton Catholic Academy Trust                                       |
| Phase  | Primary  |
| Type of school                                 | Academy  |
| Admissions policy                              | Non-selective  |
| Age-range of pupils                            | 4-11   |
| Gender of pupils                               | Mixed  |
| Date of last denominational inspection         | 22-23 June 2016  |
| Previous denominational inspection grade       | Good   |

## The inspection team

Christopher Power (Lead inspector)  
Laura Wharton (Team inspector)

## 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 |