



St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School

URN: 124372

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Archbishop of Birmingham

13 March 2024

Summary of key findings

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

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

What the school does well

- The school is a family where pastoral care is the highest priority and pupils, staff, parents, and governors feel valued.
- The mission statement is a powerful driver of school life, instilling a sense of belonging. Pupils can clearly articulate the mission and how they live it out daily.
- Staff's commitment to the mission, driven by the head teacher's vision, hard work, and passion, is palpable. The headteacher 'walks the walk' and has a 'big heart.'
- Investment in staff training has provided the skills needed to ensure consistency in effective teaching and learning within religious education for this growing and developing school.

What the school needs to improve

- Implement a monitoring cycle in which leaders demonstrate the impact of their actions for provision and outcomes in Catholic life and mission, religious education, and collective worship.
- Develop pupils' understanding of Catholic social teaching so they can articulate its impact on their actions and the decisions they make in their daily lives.
- Align prayer provision to the Church's liturgical year so that staff and pupils can confidently plan relevant prayer and liturgy that enrich pupils and staff's understanding of liturgical seasons.

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

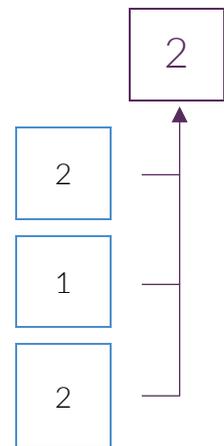
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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



St Bernadette's is a welcoming community where every effort is given to involve everyone in living out the Catholic faith. Pupils, staff, and parents are involved in developing the school's mission, which is revisited annually. Pupils subsequently reflect on how they live out and share the mission. Everyone in the school feels a sense of ownership over the mission and truly knows and lives it out; it is living and breathing throughout St Bernadette's. Pupils enjoy being at school and describe their school as 'amazing', 'kind' and 'caring'. They recognise what the school provides to support them daily and feel a part of their school family. Subsequently, they have a sense of purpose and a role. There is evidence of the impact of pupils' involvement in monitoring and evaluation by way of the development of the library and the care and concern they show for the whole school environment. They confidently report on areas that do not 'help us to feel close to God' and know they will be listened to. Many recent developments are in place to enhance pupils' involvement in the school's Catholic life and mission. Still, the school recognises that more needs to be done to enable pupils to understand and embrace Catholic social teaching and their awareness of the Catholic Schools Pupil Profile.

All staff confidently articulate the school's vision and mission. They are deeply motivated to want the best for pupils and parents, offering care and a helping hand to those in need within the community. Parents comment, 'The school goes above and beyond in its care provision; nothing is ever too much.' St Bernadette's is a family growing together in God's love to provide the best for all pupils and their families. The head teacher leads with a passion and drive that the whole community recognises. She 'walks the walk'; her door is always open, and her heart is big. This is reflected in the school's culture of love, tolerance, kindness, and empathy. The environment reflects this; any visitor to the school is left with no doubt that they are in a Catholic school. The

pupils are very proud of the new St Francis room, where they can reflect and pray whenever they want to. They are proud of their school, what it gives them and how they contribute. The school and parish work closely to ensure children have varied opportunities to grow their spirituality. The head teacher and parish priest work closely, and parish involvement is evident in the pupils' lives. For example, the parish-based Mini Vinnie coordinator attends the Mini Vinnie meetings in school, supporting pupils in planning charitable events; the assistant priest regularly visits to talk to pupils.

Governors and leaders articulate their Catholic vision, mission, and role in moving these forward. They display a deeply motivated desire to want the best for St Bernadette's, accurately identifying the strengths and areas for development around Catholic social teaching and the Catholic Schools Pupil Profile. The pastoral care and well-being of everyone are the top priority. Governors have been particularly supportive of the staff's well-being, including the head teacher. For example, they instigated leadership days, providing time for subject leader development. Governors listen to staff feedback and are a visible presence in the school. They have a high regard for the staff's commitment to the school. Monitoring takes place but does not inform a systematic approach that enables effective lines of enquiry relating to school developments around Catholic life and mission to be followed and evaluated.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

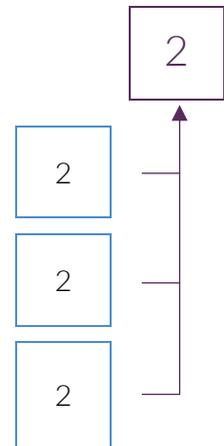
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

Provision

The quality of teaching, learning, and assessment in religious education

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision of religious education



Pupils are confident in their responses and display eloquence in their ability to articulate their learning in religious education. All pupils make expected progress, which aligns with their progress in other core subjects. Pupils listen and respond well in lessons; they are engaged and behave excellently. They generally enjoy their learning and are incredibly confident in their knowledge of the Old Testament Bible passages and how they support them in their faith lives. These are prominent on displays around the school. Pupils enjoy various tasks, including writing poetry, listening to parables, and learning psalms. They know how important it is to learn about different faiths because this ‘prevents discrimination’. Pupils recognise when they are achieving well and respond appropriately to teachers’ feedback. However, they are unclear in explaining how they have improved. Nevertheless, they are secure in acquiring new knowledge, and pupils are proud of their work.

There is a commitment to teaching religious education well at St Bernadette’s. All teachers are confident and display strong subject knowledge effectively delivered to all pupils. Where teaching is strongest, there is a good pace of learning, effective knowledge retrieval practices, appropriate teaching strategies, and organisation of activities. In such lessons, pupils are taught to know and remember more through exciting and varied activities. This is because expectations are high for all these lessons, and teaching assistants are used effectively. In other classrooms, too much teacher talk slows down the learning pace, which, although valuable for reinforcement, hinders those pupils who have a clearer understanding and are ready to move on. At times, the activities provided by teachers do not match the intended learning objective, which can sometimes lack precision. Teachers have responded well to the training provided by the diocese around effective questioning. Whilst this is a strength, too much time is spent on it in some lessons, leaving less time for pupils to complete tasks demonstrating their achievements.

Teachers plan varied activities and work hard to provide time for reflection on learning, but this is inconsistent. The investment in new Bibles is having an impact on the delivery of high-quality activities linked to scripture.

The school uses the prescribed diocesan scheme. Great care ensures pupils develop their skills in a clear and relevant sequence. The curriculum is enriched through diocesan resources, such as *RE Live* and those produced by Missio and Cafod. Leaders recognise the value of these in enhancing the quality of provision and have planned effective staff training to improve teachers' confidence and subject knowledge. The school is tireless in its drive to improve. Governors are fully involved in ensuring the school meets the bishops' expectations concerning curriculum time and actively monitor this. They know the school's priorities and visit lessons to check their progress. Teachers are confident in assessing pupils' work accurately because time is dedicated to staff meetings for this. There is currently no clear, systematic termly monitoring and evaluation plan. However, leaders are accurate in their discussions about the school's priorities.

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 respond respectfully to prayer and liturgy and are confident to participate well. For example, pupils sang Shalom spontaneously during an assembly. Pupils enjoy prayer and can articulate its impact on everyday life at St Bernadette's, from daily prayer times to spontaneous opportunities, such as in the St Francis Room. It is central, and there are clearly embedded prayer routines, from the invitation to prayer, 'Go into your heart room,' to recognising and responding to the music marking classroom times of prayer beginning. These are known and respected by even the youngest children. Pupils have recently begun to plan prayer in pairs and are enthusiastic to do this. The prayer provided by the school is appropriate to pupils' ages and stages of development. Pupils have historically started St Bernadette's with a limited knowledge of prayer styles; however, due to the development of 'playground prayer' each morning, many younger siblings now show an increased knowledge of prayer when they begin in Reception. Upper Key Stage 2 pupils take more independent leadership of prayer most of the time, whilst younger pupils receive more guidance; their confidence to lead prayer is not yet developed. All pupils talk confidently about prayer and how they are supported in their prayer life, from the prayers displayed in the school hall, which help younger pupils to pray, to the prayers in the reflection room, which support pupils who visit there. Pupils cannot confidently articulate the structure of the Church's liturgical year or how it impacts prayer.

There is a good rhythm to the school's prayer life. Pupils are provided with varied opportunities to pray, from traditional forms, such as the Rosary during May, to spontaneous prayer in the reflection room or the playground in the morning. The head teacher works closely with the parish priest to plan opportunities for the pupils' experiences to be enriched through Catholic traditions, such as an annual Marian procession and celebration of the Lord's Passion. The community comes together for regular Masses and celebrations in the parish church. These are

well attended by parents, parishioners, and governors, highlighting St Bernadette's inclusive ethos. Pupils undertake liturgical ministries within these services and carry them out confidently. The parish priest commented on the excellent participation of the pupils and how well-prepared they are for prayer and liturgy. For example, every Mass is introduced and has a 'go forth' mission at the end. The partnership between the school and parish is strong; the head teacher and parish priest meet regularly, and the assistant priest visits the pupils in school to talk to them. Staff commitment is highly evident, and they appreciate and value the training they have received. All staff are incredibly well supported. They articulate how they want to improve their practice, recognising inconsistencies in expectations, delivery, and evaluation. For example, Scripture is used inconsistently within prayer because staff do not have a deep understanding of Catholic prayer traditions throughout the liturgical year and how the Bible is used within them.

The school has a newly revised prayer and liturgy policy, which ensures good prayer and liturgy at St Bernadette's. The governors regularly drop in to share in school and classroom prayers and appreciate teacher and pupil commitment around its planning and delivery. They are also present in parish-based school celebrations and are highly supportive. There is evidence of their observations, constructive feedback, and support to enhance the school's prayer provision further. However, leaders and governors cannot demonstrate the impact of their monitoring because it is not yet systematic and planned.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	124372
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8603481
Full postal address of the school	Lindale Drive, Wombourne, Wolverhampton, WV5 8DZ
School phone number	01902 894787
Headteacher	Jayne Keegan-Hobbs
Chair of governing board	Daniel O'Dell
School Website	www.stbernadettesprimary.co.uk
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	N/A
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Voluntary Aided School
Admissions policy	Non-selective
Age-range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	May 2016
Previous denominational inspection grade	2

The inspection team

Louise Bury
Vicki Wayman

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