



Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection report for
Holy Family Catholic Primary School

URN: 117481

Carried out on behalf of the Most Rev. Cardinal Vincent Nichols, Archbishop of Westminster on:

Date: 8 - 9 February 2023

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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	Fully

Summary of key findings

What the school does well

- Pupils treat each other and care and respect showing that they live the mission of the school as a family.
- The prayer spaces and communal displays have been thoughtfully and beautifully presented creating a respectful, purposeful Catholic ambience.
- Relationships in school are strong, staff feel well supported.
- Centrality of Worship in school is a strength
- Behaviour of pupils in lessons is a strength

What the school needs to improve:

- To ensure Catholic social teaching is embedded across the curriculum and is carefully matched to the ability of all learners.
- To ensure assessment for learning processes enable pupils to have a clear understanding of how well they are doing, of what they need to do to improve and to enable them to articulate how they have made progress.

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:.....

1

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

1



Pupils in Holy Family are confident and articulate. They were keen to speak to inspectors about their Catholic school. They clearly understood the school's mission and the importance of that mission in everyday life. They explained to inspectors that they knew they had to live out their mission and provided many examples of how they did this every day. Inspectors spoke to a wide range of pupils, in class and in small groups. Pupils had a clear understanding that everyone is made in the image of God. They explained that they felt their voices are heard, their opinions are valued, and they make change happen. They gave an example of how their house saints are representative of the whole community to illustrate this point. Pupils feel safe and secure in Holy Family. Pupils understand clearly that being part of Holy Family means to be part of a community rooted in the teachings and example of Jesus. They were able to quote both Scripture and Pope Francis' teachings to explain that they have responsibility for each other, for the wider community and for our planet. Pupils take a leading role in fundraising for various charities throughout the year. They explained that this work is rooted in the Gospel teachings. They quoted *Jesus feeding the five thousand*, *The Good Samaritan* and *Jesus and the tax collector* as pieces of Scripture that spoke directly to them and influenced their actions for the poor and vulnerable. Inspectors observed that pupils in Holy Family show a deep respect for one another, both in lessons and around the school. Their behaviour in this regard is exemplary. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have opportunities to become members of the school chaplaincy team. Their work involves leading worship and helping others to lead worship. Pupils value the opportunities provided by the school to lead; they value their weekly meeting with the leader for religious education. They described to inspectors how they contribute to the Catholic life and mission of the school in a meaningful way.

The mission statement is displayed in every classroom in a large, colourful and engaging way. Pupils and staff embrace the mission statement in an interactive manner. It is truly embedded in every action in the daily life of this school. Relationships in Holy Family are strong. Staff feel well supported by senior leaders, pupils are happy and confident in their interactions with staff. Staff are exemplary role models for pupils. The visitor is left in no doubt that this is a loving Catholic school that prides itself in offering a genuine, warm welcome. There is a strong sense of community and a deep appreciation of the beautiful environment created. The stained-glass window in the entrance and its accompanying prayer serves as a reminder to everyone that Christ is at the heart of Holy Family. Prayer spaces and displays in the communal areas reflect a deep respect for the school environment; fresh flowers and electric candles are well placed to remind the visitor to stop, reflect and welcome the Holy Family into their heart. Staff provide the highest levels of pastoral care; there is a deep commitment to the most vulnerable. Pupils enjoy their relationships, sex and health education (RSHE) lessons. The school follows a programme that meets all statutory and diocesan requirements. It is fully rooted in the teachings of the Church; it is well planned and meaningful for pupils.

Leaders and governors ensure that Christ is always at the heart of the school. This is evident in the carefully crafted environment; in the relationships in school and in the outside spaces created which invite everyone to reflect in the presence of Christ. Holy Family works closely with other diocesan schools and is committed to ensuring staff engage in training offered by the diocese. The local parish priest is chair of governors and a regular visitor to school. There is a strong dynamic partnership between the school and the local parish. Parents are invited to take part in liturgy and Masses. They spoke to inspectors about how well the school uses music to enhance worship. Parents appreciate being invited into school. They were keen to express that this school provides inspirational examples to pupils of how to live their lives as Jesus asked. Leaders and governors provide the highest levels of pastoral care for staff and inspectors observed that there is a deep commitment to their physical and mental wellbeing. Governors are highly ambitious for the Catholic life and mission of the school. New initiatives and policies are viewed in relation to their impact on Catholic life and mission. Professional development is well planned and effective; new staff value the support received. Induction programmes inspire all staff to contribute to the Catholic life of the school.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade:.....

2

Pupil outcomes

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education.....

2

Provision

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

2

Leadership

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

2

Inspectors visited classes and talked to a wide range of pupils. Pupils enjoy their religious education lessons; their teachers plan lessons that reflect the learning required by the *Religious Education Directory*. Pupils build on their learning each year and make good progress in knowing more, remembering more and doing more. Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND, achieve well. Pupils are religiously literate; they use their learning in religious education to emphasise viewpoints and to think ethically. They can speak with confidence about what they have learned, take pride in their work and make sure it is well presented. The school ensures that a variety of creative tasks are presented to consolidate learning and develop skills. Pupils show enthusiasm in lessons and consequently behaviour is a strength. In the best lessons observed, pupils were engaged in high quality debate and demonstrated that they could use Scripture to strengthen their argument. Pupils' achievement in religious education is in line with other core curriculum subjects.

Teachers are confident in their subject knowledge. They are supportive of one another and value religious education. Teachers use effective questioning in class to identify where pupils are in their understanding. Activities for pupils with SEND are appropriately scaffolded. Pupil effort is celebrated. Verbal feedback and pupil conferencing opportunities are provided; pupils work collaboratively to peer assess each other's work. However, assessment for learning that effectively impacts on pupil progress is not consistently applied. Consequently, not all pupils clearly understand what they need to do to improve. Adults use well-planned resources to engage pupils with SEND.

Leaders and governors have chosen a religious education scheme that delivers the curriculum aims set out in the *Directory*. The budget for religious education is equitable to other core subjects. High quality professional development in religious education is provided to deepen subject knowledge. Leaders have funded further studies for teachers who wish to avail of the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies. The subject leader for religious education has a clear vision for teaching and learning and a good level of expertise in securing this vision. Leaders are aware of the need for Catholic Social Teaching principles to underpin the curriculum, this work is not yet embedded. The leader of religious education regularly supports staff with planning and assessment. She has worked with staff to ensure that activities provided in lessons are creative and engaging for pupils. As a result, teaching in religious education is at least consistently good. In the best lessons observed, teachers planned lessons carefully to ensure that pupils were given opportunities to present their learning in a variety of forms, as a result pupils were enthusiastic and engaged in learning. Leaders have ensured that there are processes in place to monitor the teaching of religious education. However, on occasion assessment does not accurately inform planning, as a result the needs of all groups of learners are not always met.

Collective worship

The quality and range of liturgy and prayer provided by the school.

Collective worship key judgement grade:.....

1

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

1



Pupils told inspectors how they plan and lead collective worship. They explained how the chaplaincy team works with younger year groups to help them plan. Class worship books showed that pupils were thoughtful in the evaluation of their worship. The school's collective worship planner is used to provide a good range of worship experiences throughout the year. Music is very much part of worship in Holy Family and pupils demonstrated how this helped them to make sure they had prayerful silences to reflect on the Word. Pupils enjoy singing hymns, composing music, and during this inspection, Year 4 wrote additional verses for the school hymn. Pupils are confident to stand up in assembly and read Scripture. They have a clear understanding of the structure of collective worship. They enjoy a variety of experiences of prayer. They are used to praying traditional prayers, meditating, reflecting, and praying spontaneously. They are confident to reflect on their own experience of prayer and liturgy and can explain how these experiences have helped them on various occasions.

Prayer is central to life in Holy Family. The rhythm of the school day is punctuated with opportunities for prayer. Prayer is integral to every gathering and is used as a regular response to times of celebration and times of sorrow. Scripture is embedded into daily life; pupils understand the liturgical cycle and use this to enhance liturgy. The communal areas of the school invite a prayerful response; they are beautifully and carefully presented for all to appreciate. Senior leaders are inspiring models of exemplary practice to other staff and pupils as participants in and leaders of prayer and liturgy. Worship is thoughtfully planned, and music chosen enhances the experience for all. Prayer spaces are carefully prepared so pupils are left in no doubt about the importance of worship in the daily life of this school. The school has made creative use of every space to ensure

pupils have a high-quality experience of prayer and worship. The prayer garden outside is a beautiful space with focal points for pupils to use to help them pray and reflect. The hall has religious artifacts for pupils to quietly reflect upon. The entrance corridor displays the stations of the cross for traditional prayer experiences. Parents who responded to the survey, and those the inspectors spoke to, feel welcomed to participate in worship and liturgy.

Holy Family has a carefully formulated policy on prayer and worship. Pupils are provided with opportunities to participate in prayer at their own level and as a result they grow in confidence. Pupils in a nursery lesson were encouraged to choose how they wanted to respond to the Word and showed reverence as they prayed together. The local priest works with the school to celebrate Mass at key times of the liturgical and school year. He ensures all pupils have a thorough understanding of the Mass and liturgy. The leader of religious education models worship for new staff and they are well supported to lead collective worship. The leader of religious education ensures worship is of the highest quality and all staff feel confident to provide prayer opportunities that are engaging and meaningful for the whole school community. All staff receive training from senior leaders to ensure high quality experiences of prayer and liturgy. Pupils experience a wide range of prayer that is part of the Catholic tradition. As a result, prayer in Holy Family is an engaging, creative experience for all. Prayer is meaningful for pupils, and they plan experiences that engage their peers. Governors have ensured a budget is set aside to enhance liturgy. Bibles, artefacts and music are used to enhance worship consistently and effectively.

Information about the school

Full name of school	The Holy Family Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	117481
Full postal address of the school	Crookhams, Welwyn Garden City, AL7 1PG
School phone number	01707375518
Name of head teacher or principal	Katie Linnane
Chair of governing board	Canon Norbert Fernandes
School Website	http://www.holyfamily.herts.sch.uk
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Click or tap here to enter text.
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age-range of pupils	3-11
Trustees	Diocese of Westminster
Gender of pupils	mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	16 July 2019
Previous denominational inspection grade	Good

The inspection team

Evelyn Ward	Lead inspector
Anne Moloney	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