



Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection report for
Our Lady Of Lourdes Catholic Primary School

URN: 101331

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

Date: 22-23 June 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 have a deep understanding of their mission statement, 'In God, we are, we know, we act' and how it brings them closer to God.
- The vision of leaders and governors in working as a team to secure improvement.
- High levels of pastoral care are provided for pupils and their families in a nurturing environment.
- There is a dynamic school-parish partnership which ensures Christ is at the heart of the school.
- A flourishing engagement with parents has forged an energised, joyful school community.

What the school needs to improve

- Ensure that high levels of expectation are consistent across the school to enable pupils of all abilities to achieve success in their learning and make better progress.
- Continue to support pupils in developing a fluent understanding of the principles underpinning Catholic Social Teaching.
- Develop pupil-led prayer so that pupils can evaluate and improve the quality of the prayer and liturgy they have planned.

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:.....

2

Pupil outcomes

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

2

Provision

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

2

Leadership

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

2



Pupils at the school are happy, confident and feel secure. They are respectful and kind to each other and behave well in lessons. They speak enthusiastically about their learning about other faiths and can describe how this learning helps them to understand and respect others. Older pupils support the younger pupils in the playground, around the school and in particular, as prayer partners. All pupils in the school have a prayer partner, with pupils in Key Stage 2 assigned as designated partners to the younger pupils. A member of the chaplaincy team in Year 5 described how the team were 'leading other children to Jesus' when accompanying Reception class children to the prayer room for worship. As a result of the many opportunities pupils are given to participate in helping others, the school enables them to actively live out their faith. Pupils are able to express an understanding of their motto derived from the Mission Statement: 'In God, we are, we know, we act.' They have acted in a variety of ways to support those in need, including raising funds for the local foodbank, the Catholic Children's Society and Cafod. Recently, senior leaders ran in the London Marathon, which inspired 52 pupils to participate in the mini London Marathon, raising funds for the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC). The Mini Vinnies group sought to help the people of Turkey and Syria after the recent earthquake. As a result of one pupil's suggestion, a tea towel with images of all pupils and staff, sold to the school community, is raising much-needed funds for earthquake relief. In addition, pupils are able to articulate an understanding that, in acting to help others, they are following in the footsteps of Jesus.

The school is a welcoming community with Christ at its centre. Staff are positive role models for pupils. One staff member commented, 'We work hard to be inclusive and celebrate

diversity and all children's achievements.' The recent International Day promoted an appreciation of the school's diversity and a celebration of its various cultures. Prayers in community languages were shared and celebrated. A high level of pastoral care is provided through play-based therapy and good support for the most vulnerable pupils. As a result, all pupils feel valued and are encouraged to thrive and be successful in their learning. The school's culture of welcome extends to all, as evidenced by one parent's view on the school's provision for their child: 'We feel that the way the school has supported and cared for him reflects the love of Christ.' The school environment provides strong witness to its distinctive nature as a Catholic school. The school motto is reflected throughout the school and takes pride of place, engraved on the benches in the prayer room. A new chaplaincy group, composed of Year 5 pupils, has recently been trained to support further development of spirituality, prayer and worship in the school. A programme for relationships, sex and health education, which meets statutory requirements and contributes to the school's commitment to their pupils' human flourishing in faith, is in place. Pupils are able to articulate their learning in this area.

Governors rightly see the school as a source of inspiration for the community and are highly ambitious about its contribution to the lives of the people it serves. They fully support school leaders in the school's core mission and ensure that policies and procedures demonstrate its Catholic identity. Governors are committed to the professional development of leaders and school staff. Senior leaders attend deanery meetings; teachers and governors attend diocesan courses; and the religious education subject leader participates in diocesan moderation meetings. All work in partnership to promote the Catholic life of the school. As a result, school leaders have an ever-deepening understanding of their Catholic mission in education, and all staff are very aware of their own roles as ministers of the Gospel in action. Leaders and governors are proud of the school's strong links with the parish. Weekly newsletters to parents prioritise information about the Catholic life of the school through a focus on the current week's gospel. One parent commented, 'We feel supported in raising our children according to our faith.'

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



Most pupils are able to make good progress in religious education. They behave well during lessons and are competent learners as a result. Each lesson starts with a focus on prior learning so that, over time, pupils know more and remember more, and are able to apply their existing knowledge to new learning in the subject. Pupils are interested and enthusiastic about their learning in religious education and can speak with confidence about what they have learned. Their written and oral work demonstrates good levels of religious literacy across the topics. Opportunities to work creatively through art, drawing, music, and drama contribute to pupils' enjoyment of the subject. Access to key concepts and subject-specific vocabulary during lessons results in written work which is well-presented. Pupils regularly respond to developmental marking to improve their work. One pupil in Year 5 noted that marking helps because it 'retraces your memory.' Pupils achieve broadly average attainment when compared with other core curriculum subjects and against national data. In the best lessons, pupils are given work which is carefully adapted to their ability. However, greater clarity and detail is needed in the planning for those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities to enable them to make better progress and achieve better outcomes. In addition, more opportunities for challenge are needed so that all pupils are given the opportunity to develop further in their learning.

Teachers are confident in their subject knowledge, which is supported by half-termly training on the religious education topics, provided by the scheme's author. As a result of regular professional development, teachers have grown in confidence in delivering the scheme of work's content. Their subject knowledge is further aided by in-school training provided by senior leaders, and resources provided by the diocese ('Catholicism Unpacked') so that their

knowledge is developed over time. Teachers show a commitment to the value of religious education and are fully aware that it forms the core of the curriculum. Creative activities are offered to pupils through a range of media, such as art, music, poetry and drama. Pupils' books are well-presented and are a testament to the use of creativity in the lessons. A Year 6 pupil described his favourite religious education lesson, which was learning about the psalms and then writing his own psalm, which he proudly read aloud. Another pupil described his understanding of building the kingdom of heaven: 'The kingdom is a way of living. It's a time of living under God's rule.' Teaching assistants are deployed to optimise learning for pupils who need support. Opportunities for reflection during lessons attest to the fact that teachers recognise the impact religious education has on the moral and spiritual development of pupils. Dedicated spaces for reflection and prayer, available throughout the school and on the school grounds, promote pupils' independent reflection. Pupils' achievements are celebrated in whole-school assemblies and through the 'living the motto' awards. Achievements are shared with parents. One parent commented, 'My child enjoys her religious education and regularly discusses what she has learnt at home.' Teachers' use of questioning during lessons does not yet probe pupils' understanding in the subject or offer enough challenge to accelerate learning and improve standards.

Leaders and governors ensure that the curriculum for religious education is well-planned and sequential. The curriculum is faithful to the requirements set out in the *Religious Education Directory*. The religious education subject leader has a clear vision for securing good teaching and learning in the subject. Staff feel well-supported by the coaching and direction which the subject leader willingly provides. They regularly draw upon her expertise to improve standards in religious education. Senior leaders ensure that time is allocated to pass on important information from the diocese and to explain concepts in the planning of lessons. Staff also speak highly of the support given by the subject leader in modelling lessons. The governors' religious education committee works closely with the subject leader in completing work scrutiny and learning walks. This team approach has enabled the governors and subject leader to work towards a better understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement of the school's provision and outcomes. Although the subject leader works closely with senior leaders and governors to monitor and evaluate provision, leaders and governors now need to take strategic action to improve standards so that all groups of pupils achieve their potential by providing a curriculum which is planned in enough detail to meet the needs of different groups of pupils.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade:.....

2

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

Pupils engage reverently during daily prayer times and in moments of quiet reflection. A range of ways of praying are offered to pupils, including meditation, silence, reflection, and traditional prayer. Scripture is central to prayer and is used meaningfully to deepen pupils' experience. Appropriate liturgical music is chosen during liturgies to provide a calm, prayerful atmosphere. Pupils readily sing hymns which complement liturgies. Prayer spaces are provided both in the classrooms and in the outdoor setting. Each class has a prayer box where pupils' individual prayers are offered and shared with peers. Throughout the year, pupils participate in prayer linked to the liturgical year. For example, pupils processed and prayed at an outdoor grotto which was prepared during the month of May in honour of Our Lady. The school's annual Spirituality Day, entitled 'Be Spirited', occurs in the summer term and is linked to the feast of Pentecost. It enables pupils to focus on different forms of prayer and consider the presence of God in their lives through religious art activities, and special assemblies. Pupils willingly undertake liturgical ministries in the school led by the new chaplaincy team and the Mini-Vinnies. Mass is celebrated on feast days and holy days during the liturgical year. Pupils enthusiastically participate in the celebration of Mass as altar servers, and in the singing, readings, drama and offertory processions. Pupils work well with others, such as teachers and other pupils, to prepare prayer and liturgy sessions. Pupils would now benefit from opportunities to plan, lead and evaluate worship independently.

The school is a prayerful community. Prayer supports and nourishes all members of the school community. Staff, including senior leaders, model full participation in prayer and worship. Staff and parents comment appreciatively on Tuesday morning prayer sessions led by the parish priest in the prayer room. The school community works hard to recognise the wider Church

family and, through its prayer life, helps pupils to develop a deeper understanding of the Gospel message and the call to serve. The religious education subject leader prepares Advent prayer packs to be shared at home, as well as prayers inspired by class saints and those linked to the principles of Catholic Social Teaching. Each class has a prayer and liturgy box containing resources to support daily class prayer. These sessions focus on embedding the message from the Sunday Gospel. The school works very well with the local parish to ensure that pupils participate in the breadth and richness of Catholic tradition. The parish priest is a regular visitor to the school. One parent commented, 'Our children especially enjoy his visits to class' as they tend to be 'very interactive'. A staff member stated, 'We are proud of the links we have with the Church.'

Leaders and governors ensure that pupils in the school are offered a wide range of high-quality, meaningful experiences of prayer and worship. Leaders support staff to lead appropriate prayer and worship through clear guidance, using diocesan resources to plan and prepare liturgies. Leaders and governors ensure that the school calendar reflects significant dates in the liturgical calendar, resulting in a wealth of opportunities for pupils to celebrate the Eucharist. Parents are invited to attend assemblies, school Masses and other liturgical events, such as the Lenten Stations of the Cross liturgy. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is offered at key times in the liturgical year. Governors allocate a generous budget for resources, for developing prayer areas, and for providing professional development for all staff. As a result, staff are competent in supporting prayer and liturgy in the classroom and in whole-school worship. Staff state that they 'work hard to promote our Catholic values and ethos and for everyone to feel part of the school family,' They are aided by a policy for prayer and liturgy which is thorough and ensures progression. Leaders, including governors, regularly monitor and review the quality of prayer and worship as part of the school's self-evaluation, which includes the views of pupils. Monitoring and review are then used for strategic improvement planning for worship throughout the school.

Information about the school

Full name of school	Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	101331
Full postal address of the school	Bow Lane, Finchley, London N12 0J
School phone number	0208 346 1681
Name of head teacher or principal	Barbara Costa (Executive Headteacher)
Chair of governing board	Seamus McKenna
School Website	http://www.olol.barnetschool.org.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	Westminster Diocese
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	September 2016
Previous denominational inspection grade	Good

The inspection team

Norah Flatley	Lead inspector
Jennifer O'Prey	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