



## Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection report for **Blessed Sacrament Primary School**

URN: 100451

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

Date: 7 December 2023

Overall effectiveness The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school.....	<b>2</b>
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	✓
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

- Leaders including governors have put in place effective systems of school improvement which have led to sustained good progress over time.
- The mission statement is lived by all members of the community and effectively influences decision making at all levels.
- Teacher subject knowledge is strong.
- Pupil behaviour is good in lessons and throughout the school.
- Governors work strategically and challenge robustly to ensure good outcomes.

What the school needs to improve:

- Embed Catholic Social Teaching so that it permeates the whole curriculum.
- Adapt teaching to meet the needs of the most able in each phase.
- Empower all pupils and all staff to prepare and lead 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:.....

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 in Blessed Sacrament Catholic Primary School understand that their mission statement ‘with Christ’s love at the centre of our living and learning, together we aim for excellence’ is a powerful daily reminder to live in accordance with Gospel values. They are adept at recalling scripture to explain their understanding of how Jesus expected followers to live. Pupils love coming to this school, feeling happy, confident and secure. They are very eager to demonstrate their learning about Catholic Social Teaching. Pupils can link what they are doing to raise funds locally for ‘Wrap up London’, nationally for Cafod and globally for a charity in India to their learning about the options for the poor and vulnerable. In this school pupils of other faiths, religions and none are welcomed and valued. Pupils of other faiths explained that they felt their faith was respected and all pupils enjoyed their lessons learning about other faiths. Pupils are eager and engaged and as a result behaviour is good throughout the school. The chaplaincy team work well with the leader for religious education to plan their work. They contribute effectively to the Catholic life and mission of the school and actively participate in opportunities provided.

The mission statement is a living statement of intent. It informs the behavioural choices for pupils and decision making for leaders and governors. Staff from various cultures and belief traditions are valued and respected. Pupils know they can speak to any staff member if they have a worry or concern. Strong parish school links are forged. The parish priest, curate, parish sister and school leaders work strategically to share and develop their vision for this school. They have begun to work in the community by having lunchtime Masses in the church during Advent. They provide pupils with opportunities to work in the parish food bank further strengthening pupils’ understanding of

Catholic Social Teaching. Their joint contribution is highly valued by staff as they begin to embed this teaching. Leaders have chosen a scheme 'Rooted in Love' to deliver Catholic Social Teaching and are delivering themes on a half termly basis. This is beginning to have an impact; however these themes now need to be considered in other curriculum areas. The provision for relationships, sex and health education (RSHE) meets both statutory and diocesan requirements and pupils can articulate what they have learnt in these lessons.

Leaders and governors are thorough in exercising their duty as guardians of the Catholic life and mission of the school. Their decisions around collaboration with other schools and joining the Cardinal Hume Academy Trust (CHAT) are testament to their ambition to ensure that Christ is always at the heart of the school. The school has developed purposeful relationships with other diocesan Catholic schools and as a result have availed of high-quality training experiences. The school actively participates in the services offered by the diocese. Leaders and governors ensure that pupils recognise the strong links between parish and church. The parish priest offers his time to ensure staff are confident with topics taught and pupils also avail of question-and-answer sessions. Parents are very supportive of the school. One parent commented that they were delighted to see their child encouraging them to pray as a family before meals at home. Comments received from parents were overwhelmingly positive. Governors are astute and acutely aware of the challenges facing this small school. They are responding robustly and ensuring that in doing so, staff subject knowledge is strong, induction effective and leaders are fully supported. Governors challenge where necessary, and their work has a strong impact.

## 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

Teachers questioning about prior learning is effective and pupils remember what they have learned. In a Year 5 and 6 lesson, pupils were keen to discuss their previous learning about the prophets, and they demonstrated good secure knowledge of the learning required by the *Religious Education Directory*. In all lessons observed, most pupils made good progress against the planned curriculum for each phase. Teaching is adapted for those with additional needs however it is not always adapted to further challenge the most able in every phase. Pupils' religious vocabulary is strong, they enjoy asking questions of staff and of each other. They show maturity when doing so. One pupil remarked to another 'that's a good answer but not quite what I was looking for'. In an Early Years Foundation Stage, lesson pupils were provided with opportunities to develop independence and demonstrate initiative in their learning. Consequently, they concentrate well, and respond well to the challenge of learning. Work in books is good and shows signs of emerging individuality and creativity. Feedback is effective. Pupils are very engaged in lessons. Lessons are structured to ensure that activities permeate learning, and this reduces didactic teaching. Pupils achieve at least average attainment when compared with other core curriculum subjects.

Teachers are confident in their subject knowledge and have a good understanding of how pupils learn. In a Key Stage 1 lesson pupils were looking at the nativity story in Luke. The teacher demonstrated strong subject knowledge when a pupil asked about the wise men. The school

teaches in phases and teachers adapt activities and some questions to suit pupils. The most able pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 would benefit from having more analytical questions with opportunities to evaluate their learning and deepen thinking. Pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage are articulate, confident and engaged. They led prayers and songs during meditation. Pupils were responsive and had accurate recall of previous learning. They were able to recall the meaning of the angel's message to Mary and to the shepherds. To deepen learning experiences further the teacher linked the hay in the manger to Jesus being our food for hearts and souls. Independent learning was a focus in Early Years Foundation Stage, and additional adults were well deployed. Teachers plan carefully. Planning is linked to pupils' current assessment so that pupils learn well. Teachers provide pupils with opportunities to present their learning using a variety of forms such as through art and drama.

Leaders and governors use a scheme of work that is a faithful expression of the Directory. Religious education is a priority for the school in terms of professional development, resourcing, timetabling and staffing. The school ensures all staff have an in-depth professional development session every half term. They collaborate with other schools to moderate work. As a result, all staff, including staff new to Catholic education receive high quality input that impacts on their planning. This strategy ensures subject knowledge is secure. The leader of religious education has a clear vision for teaching and learning and a good level of expertise in securing this vision. She is passionate about religious education and ensures pupils have high quality input, so most pupils make good progress. She ensures staff are well prepared to teach lessons and secure good outcomes. Leaders' and governors' self-evaluation of religious education is informed by thorough monitoring, analysis, and self-challenge. The link governor for religious education visits lessons and has carried out reviews alongside the subject leader. Leaders are robust in taking strategic action to ensure the religious education offer is of high quality.

## 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

Pupil chaplains lead prayer and liturgy very well. They enjoy writing their own prayers and praying together. They are at ease praying in silence and meditating. Their liturgies reflect their engagement. However, all pupils do not yet have opportunity to develop their leadership in prayer and liturgy throughout the school. Pupils use scripture appropriately and are at ease using Bible references. Prayer spaces during inspection reflected the season of Advent and lessons were focused on the liturgical year. Pupils work well with the religious education leader to prepare engaging experiences of prayer and liturgy. This work would benefit from being extended to include all pupils and all staff. Pupils recognise and articulate the ways in which prayer and liturgy influence and are influenced by both the curriculum and the wider life of the school. They clearly understand how to reflect on their experience of prayer and liturgy. They can articulate some ways in which these experiences have led to action.

Prayer and liturgy are important in Blessed Sacrament Catholic Primary School. Parents are supportive of the prayer life and appreciate the daily pattern of prayer offered to pupils. Pupils enjoy Christian meditation and have clearly practised this throughout their school life. Silent reflection is a feature of the prayer life of this school. Pupils are adept at using scripture and choose it carefully as the focus of their liturgy. Music is used to enhance liturgy; pupils enjoy singing hymns they have learnt in hymn practice. The school has created a beautiful chapel that pupils enjoy using for quiet reflection. The outdoor areas are carefully considered to afford opportunities for quietness and

reflection as well as class liturgy. Each classroom has a dedicated prayer space reflecting the liturgical year and as a result pupils are knowledgeable about the seasons of the liturgical year. The parish priest is determined in his aspiration to improve links with the local church and further develop a vibrant Catholic community. As a result, pupils take part in Masses in the church at lunchtime during Advent. The curate has focused his visits on developing traditional prayer experiences for pupils who are offered a rich variety of prayers which are part of the Catholic tradition.

The school's policy on prayer and liturgy is well formulated. The religious education leader has attended diocesan training to develop pupil chaplaincy. Pupil chaplains respond well and are enthused to carry out their duties in accordance with the schedule they have created. The religious education leader has ensured that all staff have opportunities for professional development in prayer and liturgy and consequently the spirituality day celebrated in the Autumn term was impactful and a spiritual experience for all. Leaders ably assist others to plan and lead experiences of prayer and liturgy. However, all pupils and all staff now need to be empowered to both prepare and lead worship. As a result, pupil chaplains provide prayer and liturgy opportunities that are engaging, accessible and relevant for their peers. Leaders, including governors, regularly review the quality and impact of prayer and liturgy as part of the school's cycle of self-evaluation and planned improvements. The views of pupils are regularly sought as part of the school's evaluation of prayer and liturgy. Pupils are able to demonstrate the impact of their evaluation on liturgy.



## Information about the school

Full name of school	Blessed Sacrament Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	100451
Full postal address of the school	Boadicea Street London N1 0UF
School phone number	02072782187
Name of head teacher or principal	Alexandra Fernandez- Madden Headteacher Jason Smith Executive Headteacher
Chair of governing board	Alex de Mont
School Website	<a href="https://www.blessedsacrament-islington.co.uk">https://www.blessedsacrament-islington.co.uk</a>
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Cardinal Hume Academy Trust
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	June 2022
Previous denominational inspection grade	Requires Improvement

## The inspection team

Evelyn Ward	Lead inspector
Catherine Bryan	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