



St Francis de Sales Catholic Junior School

URN: 102143

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Archbishop of Westminster

17–18 October 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

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 general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishops' Conference

Yes

The school is fully compliant with any additional requirements of the diocesan bishop

Yes

The school has responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection

Fully

Compliance statement

- This school is compliant with the general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishops' conference.
- This school is compliant with any additional requirements of the diocesan bishop.
- The school has responded to previous areas for improvement.

What the school does well

- There is a joyful, inclusive and welcoming ethos at St Francis de Sales which is celebrated by the whole school community as they strive to follow the school motto 'Be who you are and be that well.'
- The school's work with the local parish is exemplary and the impact on outcomes for the pupils is evident in lessons, in worship and in Catholic life and mission.
- Pastoral care for pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils are religiously literate and confident in sharing their knowledge and understanding in religious education.
- Pupils confidently use scripture to understand how they should live their lives in support of their faith journey.

What the school needs to improve

- Pupils to be given more ownership of their learning enabling them to increase independence and to take the initiative in lessons.
- Leaders and governors to review the school's self-evaluation processes to ensure clearly defined priorities and goals for Catholic life and mission, religious education and collective worship.
- Leaders to review the school mission statement so it is a living document which permeates all aspects of school life.

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

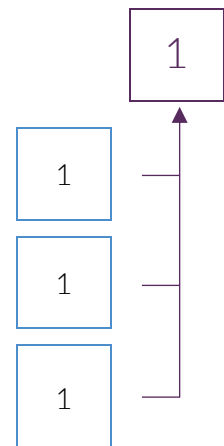
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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



Pupils are proud to be members of St Francis de Sales and want to follow the school motto which is based on St Francis' own words, 'Be who you are and be that well'. Pupils show a deep respect for each other and state confidently that they feel valued and safe and know where to go to for support, if needed. Behaviour around the school is exemplary. Pupils show a deep respect for their own personal dignity and that of other faiths and religions. One pupil remarked, 'At our school, everyone is included and welcomed'. Pupils are keen to take on leadership roles and enjoy the associated responsibilities. Faith Ambassadors and School Councillors are sought after positions; pupils relish these roles and understand the powerful impact their work has on others. Faith Ambassadors help fundraise for various charities across the year including Cafod, The Passage and Tottenham Food Bank and help all year groups to lead worship. Pupils were proud to tell inspectors how they contribute to the Catholic life and mission and are keen to be able to do more, independently. One parent stated, 'My child takes their Faith Ambassador role seriously and it is what they are most proud of'. Pupils would benefit from further support in gaining a deeper understanding and articulation of the principles of Catholic social teaching, which underpin their actions. St Francis de Sales is equipping its pupils to become responsible, respectful and active citizens ready to play an important part in our future society. The many, varied opportunities afforded to pupils clearly makes them flourish.

There is a clear sense of community evident in the quality of relationships and welcome received by visitors. The school invites a range of speakers and guests to inspire their pupils. Photographs of visits by news presenters, authors, musicians and sports personalities line the walls and are appreciated by all. A successful artist and past pupil, Kelvin Okafar, is highly thought of and pupils' work based on his workshops decorates the corridors. Staff are positive role models for

pupils. A high level of pastoral care and support for the most vulnerable pupils is provided. As a result, all pupils feel valued and are encouraged to thrive and be successful in their learning. The school is starting to embed the principles of Catholic social teaching into religious education lessons, and pupils can relate their studies to these concepts. However, it is still too early to see the impact of this across the broader school curriculum. The programme for relationships, sex and health education meets diocesan requirements and contributes to the school's commitment to their pupils' human flourishing in faith.

Leaders and governors rightly see the school as a source of inspiration to the whole community and are ambitious about its contribution to the lives of the people it serves. They ensure that pupils have a range of opportunities, including being part of 'Tottenham University', which exposes children to exciting cultural experiences, encouraging pupils to aspire to be the best. Leaders are justifiably proud of the school's strong links with the parish. These links have led to several families being received into the Catholic Church. The parish priest visits at least weekly and is a much valued and respected member of the school community. There was a very positive response to the parent survey with many comments supporting the school/parish partnership. Leaders and governors are inspirational witnesses to the preferential option for the poor, providing practical family support as required. In the words of one parent, 'You helped us when we didn't have a place to call home, when I couldn't pay dinner fees. God bless you'. The leadership team are committed to the principles of Catholic social teaching; the executive headteacher has supported many local schools in a variety of ways and is a key member of the diocesan racial justice working party. Staff speak unwaveringly about the high levels of pastoral care offered to all. One staff member stated, 'I am part of a family here' and another said 'I don't think I ever want to leave; we are listened to and valued'. The school should promote their Catholic life and mission more via their newsletters and website. It is something to be shared and known by all.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

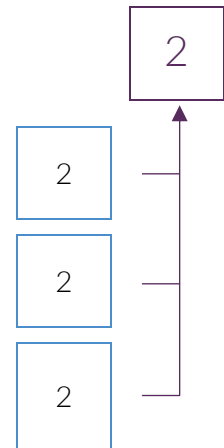
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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, including those with SEND, generally make good progress across the school from their starting points in religious education and this progress is evident in books. They enjoy learning and are engaged in lessons. Pupils are religiously literate and can speak confidently about key concepts using subject specific vocabulary. There are inconsistencies, however, in achievement and in feedback in some year groups. In the strongest learning, focused activities support pupils in meeting the learning intention. Pupils are encouraged to work collaboratively and they enjoy learning with and from one another. More opportunities to take ownership of their learning by taking the initiative and working independently will support pupils in becoming more curious, deeper thinkers. Pupils across the school use scripture to help them make links to their lives today; for example, in a Year 5 lesson pupils referred to St Paul’s Letters to the Thessalonians to ‘encourage and help one another’ to be a good friend. Most pupils can use prior knowledge when making links between religious ideas, and they use Bibles effectively to support them in this. Whilst pupils speak confidently about how their work is assessed, they often struggled to articulate what they need to do to improve their understanding of a concept, although it is clear that they have a desire to do well in religious education and value this subject.

Teachers create a positive climate for learning and as a result, pupils enjoy lessons and are eager to participate. Behaviour in religious education lessons is very good. Inspectors noted, in lessons and in books, that teachers can sometimes offer too much scaffolding, limiting opportunities for more independent or creative outcomes. Most additional adults are used effectively to support identified pupils and groups of pupils during lessons. Teachers are confident in their subject knowledge and use Rosenshine’s Principles of Instruction consistently across the curriculum. All staff value the influence religious education has on pupils’ moral and spiritual development as well as on their religious education. Teachers support pupils to align their scripture knowledge

with their everyday lives and when more open questioning was used, it elicited a deeper understanding of the text. Staff are well supported by the religious education lead, appreciating her passion and commitment. One staff member said, 'The religious education lead is generous with her time and works hard to bring our faith and learning together.' The religious education lead and senior leaders have accurately identified areas for development including clarifying learning objectives in lessons and reviewing the monitoring and assessment systems to ensure the best possible outcomes for all pupils.

Leaders and governors ensure that the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory* is covered effectively. They have also ensured that religious education enjoys a parity with other core subjects in terms of staff training and resources. Senior leaders work hard to ensure that pupils are provided with creative activities which enhance learning in the subject, and these are kept in a separate religious education class floor book. Staff feel well-supported by the subject leader. They regularly draw upon her expertise to improve standards in religious education. Teachers new to the school feel that they are offered an effective induction programme which supports their well-being and promotes their subject knowledge. Although the subject leader works closely with senior leaders and governors to evaluate provision, they now need to ensure that thorough monitoring, analysis and self-challenge result in all pupils reaching their full potential in religious education.

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 well to their experiences of daily prayer, child led worship and assemblies by confidently participating. Older pupils see their role as one which promotes God's message of love to younger pupils, to help them grow in their relationship with God and to help them 'love God, with all their heart, mind and strength'. The Year 5 pupils, who had prepared and led their class liturgy, wrote their own prayer for patience when looking at the fruits of the Spirit in Galatians 5 and invited children to reflect on times of impatience. Faith Ambassadors recognised the importance of prayer in their lives with one pupil saying that when they are worried, God says to their heart 'I can take it from you, I can feel you'. During moments of quiet reflection, pupils behave reverently. Pupils are given opportunities to use scripture and reflect on its meaning. In Key Stage 2, pupils are beginning to prepare more engaging and varied experiences of prayer and liturgy independently and to evaluate its impact. Faith Ambassadors and other pupils should now be given further opportunities to take the lead in the planning and implementation of prayer and liturgy across the school.

Prayer is central to the daily life of the school. Traditional prayers are displayed in classes so that pupils can pray as part of the routine of the day. Seasonally appropriate scripture passages are used during assemblies and class liturgies. There are members of staff who understand the liturgical norms of the Church and have the skills to facilitate meaningful child led prayer and liturgy. Each classroom has a liturgically accurate prayer space and there are high quality displays throughout the school that reflect its Catholic identity as well as an attractive outdoor prayer garden with Stations of the Cross artwork and a statue of Our Lady. The school works closely with the parish priest who celebrates prayer and liturgy regularly in school and invites families to attend. The variety of opportunities to pray together is widely valued by the staff, governors,

priest, families and pupils. As the parish priest said, 'They want to be part of this family – to belong to this vibrant, prayerful and inclusive community'.

Leaders, including governors, have worked to ensure pupils participate reverently during prayer and liturgy and it is a central part of school life. Leaders have created a good plan for prayer and liturgy in the school that reflects the Church's liturgical year. At the start of this year, there was an opportunity for staff and governor formation on prayer and liturgy, led by an external consultant. This was valued by staff, saying they 'found it really useful', 'a time to reflect' and 'very encouraging'. Parents are welcome to attend assemblies, liturgies and Masses and many families joined in the Harvest celebrations taking place during the inspection. The parish priest is a key member of the leadership team at St Francis de Sales. With the religious education lead he has recently introduced a prayer progression book demonstrating the commitment of the school to help pupils learn key prayers in a sequential way. Leaders now need to ensure all pupils have more opportunities to lead prayer throughout the school and to include a wider richness of prayer in the Catholic tradition. Following discussions with leaders, governors and the parish priest, it is evident that they are all very proud to be part of this joyful and committed worshipping community.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Francis de Sales Catholic Junior School
School unique reference number (URN)	102143
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	3093501
Full postal address of the school	St Francis de Sales Catholic Junior School, Church Road, Tottenham, London, N17 8AZ
School phone number	002088082923
Headteacher	James Lane
Chair of governors	Cassandra DaCosta Patel
School Website	www.sfds.haringey.sch.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	7-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	January 2018
Previous denominational inspection grade	Good

The inspection team

Mo O'Donoghue	Lead
Tracey Peters	Team
Deirdre Finan	Team
Tim Hallett	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