

St Martin of Porres Catholic Primary School

URN: 102150

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Archbishop of Westminster

27–28 March 2025

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

1

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

Fully

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

Yes

Compliance statement

- The school is fully compliant with the general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishops' Conference.
- The school is fully compliant with the additional requirements of the diocesan bishop.
- All areas for improvement outlined in the previous diocesan inspection have been addressed in full.

What the school does well

- Pupils have a clear understanding of the principles of Catholic social teaching and how this relates to their lives and the lives of others.
- The religious education coordinator is an inspiring model of good practice to other staff and pupils.
- The behaviour of pupils is exemplary, showing politeness and kindness towards all they meet.
- The chaplaincy team and mini Vinnies are excellent ambassadors for the school and wonderful role models for younger pupils.
- The leadership team, including governors, have a strong understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development; any areas for improvement are addressed through appropriate training opportunities.

What the school needs to improve

- Ensure feedback in religious education is consistent throughout the school so that pupils know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.
- Provide more enrichment activities which will enhance creativity in lessons.
- Present a wider variety of prayer opportunities to enrich pupils' spiritual experience across the school.

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

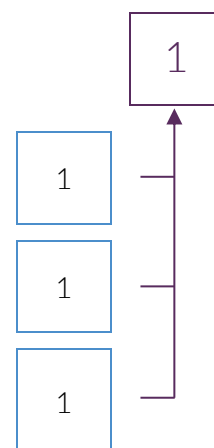
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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



The Catholic life and mission at St. Martin of Porres school is outstanding. Pupils demonstrate a real love for the school and fully understand the part they play in living out the school mission, 'Growing in the knowledge and in the love of Jesus'. All the staff surveyed strongly agreed that Christ is at the heart of the school. Pupils show a joy for learning and their behaviour in lessons, at worship and all around the school is exemplary. Their relationships with each other and staff confirm that they are all made in the image and likeness of God. A pupil summed it up perfectly when she said, 'No one is ever left out, if someone is on the bench, they are asked if they want to join in the game'. The Catholic ethos greets you the moment you enter the building with the statue of St Martin of Porres. The spirit of welcome and inclusion he demonstrated throughout his life is alive and well in the school. This was reinforced by a parent who stated, 'St Martin of Porres is a lovely welcoming, supportive and friendly school. My child often talks about God in terms of love and knowing to do the right thing'. The mini Vinnies and Eco group spoke enthusiastically about the responsibilities they have in school and how they enjoy helping people. A pupil put it very succinctly when he said, 'We try to make the world a better place'. Consequently, pupils at the school flourish as they seek opportunities to grow in virtue. The Eco group zealously ensures that energy is not wasted by switching off unnecessary lighting around the school and have campaigned successfully to remove plastic bottles and plastic ketchup sachets from the premises. Pupils, relative to their age and capacity, can articulate the principles of Catholic social teaching and how they relate to their lives and the lives of others. They explained that they were called to serve those less fortunate than themselves.

The small, close-knit staff enthusiastically participate and contribute to the mission of the school. They feel privileged to be a part of the school community and this is evident through the high level of pastoral care they show for both the pupils and one another. This was reinforced by a teacher who said, 'Visiting teachers often comment on how the staff room and teachers are so welcoming. Not all schools are like this'. St Martin of Porres is a very inclusive school and a significant number of pupils with additional needs are given regular opportunities to engage in all aspects of school life. Staff are exemplary role models. On several occasions pupils stressed that a real strength of the school is the relationship between pupils and staff: 'What makes this school so special is the teachers because they always come and help us'. Displays around the school are vibrant and engaging, reflecting the distinctive Catholic nature of the school. Presentations include the life and influence of St Martin of Porres, Catholic social teaching, the history of the school, a liturgical calendar and a mental health wall of positive messages. The provision of RSHE is strong and meets all the statutory and diocesan requirements.

Leaders and governors are fastidious in exercising their duty as guardians. The Catholic life of the school committee strategically plan and hold the senior leadership team to account. The parish priest of St Paul the Apostle is also the school chaplain. His involvement and spiritual guidance to all within the school is a real strength. Consequently, the links between school, home and parish have improved to the extent that more and more Year 3 pupils are making their First Holy Communion and children's work is regularly on display in the parish church. The weekly newsletter provides parents with a wealth of information including the recipients of the Good Shepherd Award for kindness and the Wednesday Word which helps parents in their role as first educators. The strong links were confirmed by the survey which revealed that all parents agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, 'I am invited to be involved in the prayer life of the school'.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

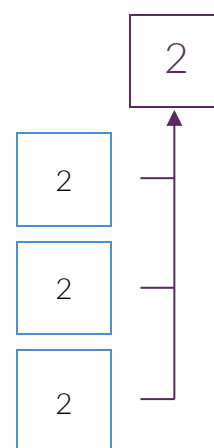
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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 generally make good progress across the school from their starting points in religious education and this progress is clearly evident in books. They enjoy learning, and are reflective and engaged in lessons. In the strongest lessons pupils are encouraged to work collaboratively and they enjoy learning with and from each other. In an excellent Year 4 lesson pupils were using their bibles to understand the betrayal of Jesus. The teacher brought the class outside to the garden which added to the atmosphere. They listened to the sounds of the birds before listening to scripture being read aloud. Pupils were able to explain that Jesus was disappointed but not angry with Judas. They were then asked to reflect about times they let someone down and when someone let them down. The presentation of work is excellent across all age-phases. Pupils are totally engaged and highly motivated in lessons. Consequently, behaviour for learning in all lessons observed was outstanding. This was confirmed by a parent who said, 'My son loves learning religious education at school. He finds it very engaging and has become more confident with reading at Mass because of the teaching at school.' Attainment in RE is comparable to the rest of the core subjects which implies that pupils are doing well in religious education. Pupils were proud to show us pieces of work that had received acknowledgement from the teacher.

Teachers are growing more confident in their subject knowledge and demonstrate enthusiasm for their teaching of religious education. All teachers ensure that pupils with additional needs are fully included in every aspect of the lesson. The best lessons challenged pupils with the use of good questioning which probed pupils' understanding and encouraged them to think more

deeply. Feedback in books provides a lot of praise and encouragement. However, pupils found it difficult to describe their next steps and what they need to do to improve. Teaching assistants are used effectively to optimise learning for pupils. This was exemplified in a lesson on Holy Week when a pupil, with the support of a teaching assistant, was able to contribute to the recap activity by explaining the significance of the garden of Gethsemane. Teachers recognise the impact the subject has on the moral and spiritual development of pupils and therefore provide them the space and time for reflection during lessons.

At Key Stage 1 pupils are developing secure knowledge, understanding and skills that reflect the learning required by the new *Religious Education Directory*. The department is on track to roll out the scheme across the whole school by September 2026. The leadership team is to be commended for ensuring that the religious education curriculum is the core of the core in the school. This is confirmed by the generous funding of the subject in recent years. Religious education is also comparable to other core subjects in terms of training, resourcing, timetabling and staffing. Professional development is prioritised and valued by staff. The school is fortunate to receive significant support from a Trust with links to the local Catholic secondary school. The subject coordinator has an inspiring vision of what excellent religious education should look like. The link governor is also closely involved in the monitoring of the subject and produces regular visit reports to the governing body. Leaders and governors' self-evaluation of religious education is informed by the Catholic life of the school committee which meets regularly with the coordinator. This results in strategic action being taken leading to good outcomes in religious education. The school does provide a range of visits to special places and events. However, more opportunities for enrichment activities linked to religious education will enhance learning and creativity in lessons.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

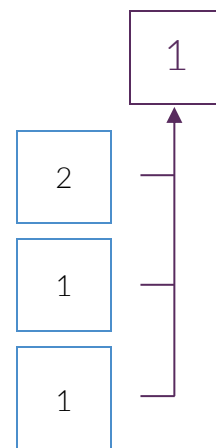
How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

Provision

The quality of collective worship provided by the school

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for collective worship



All pupils, including the youngest, are reverent and engage in prayer with sincerity and respect, particularly during whole school assemblies. Pupils behave well and reflect quietly when appropriate. Hymn singing is enjoyed by pupils and they particularly liked learning their new hymn based on the Jubilee Year. A pupil stated, 'I feel joy when I have been singing about Jesus'. The chaplaincy provision is a central and celebrated aspect of school life. The chaplaincy team is supported and guided by the assistant head and the school chaplain. Pupils are able to articulate how they use prayer in their lives. They lead the celebration of the word, working with adults and peers to plan them appropriately for their age group. Pupils are beginning to evaluate worship but are not confident yet about what they need to do to make it even better. There is a newly produced prayer book with a sequential progression of prayers with separate booklets for each age-phase which pupils are starting to use. They know there are times of the year when specific prayers and services are appropriate such as Stations of the Cross during Lent and the Rosary in May and October. The next step is to increase the focus on awe and wonder, time for silence, contemplation and meditation, for quiet moments with God.

Prayer and liturgy are central to the life of the school with staff providing pupils with many opportunities to deepen their spiritual understanding. Pupils joyfully embrace the daily pattern of prayer and talk confidently about how they respond to it. Scripture and music are chosen to reflect the liturgical season and are integral to all forms of worship in the school. Teachers ensure that prayer and liturgy in their classrooms is age appropriate, centred on themes and messages and accessible to all pupils. In early years children know that lighting a candle at the beginning of the liturgy reminds them that Jesus is the light of the world while older pupils explained that

it is the Holy Spirit present at their worship. There is a planned programme of liturgies and the themes chosen reflect a good understanding of the Church year as well as the Catholic character of the school. Pupil prayer experiences include traditional prayers, prayer requests, Lectio Divina and Visio Divina. Masses are celebrated at the parish church to mark holy days of obligation and on occasion with St Paul's school as part of the federation. The whole school Mass on the feast of St Martin of Porres is a particularly joyful occasion.

Prayer and liturgy is given a high priority by leaders and governors and they have a clear plan of how to develop high quality worship. The Catholic life of the school committee are clear about their role and are able to challenge and support the coordinator at regular meetings. Staff training, led by the assistant head, has enabled prayer to become an integral part of each class with a toolkit of prayer ideas. The strong parish links mean that no opportunity to work together is missed; staff are fully supported by the parish priest as they further develop the prayer life of the school. The special needs coordinator ensures that pupils with special educational and physical needs take a full part in prayer and liturgical activities at an appropriate level. Leaders and governors are committed to the upskilling of staff and ensure appropriate resources are purchased and allocated. As a consequence, staff are able to provide prayer and liturgy that is engaging, meaningful and relevant with numerous artefacts, Bibles and icons for use during prayer in all classrooms. Parents are appreciative of the support their children receive to develop their prayer life. They were particularly delighted to have the prayer bag, which children bring home, reinstated again.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Martin of Porres Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	102150
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	3093508
Full postal address of the school	St Martin of Porres Catholic Primary School, Blake Road, New Southgate, London, N11 2AF
School phone number	02083611445
Headteacher	Andrea Smith
Chair of governors	Susan Bartlett
School Website	www.stmartinofporres.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	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	March 2018
Previous denominational inspection grade	Good

The inspection team

Dermot O'Neill
Christine Curtis

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