



# Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School

URN: 106499

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Archbishop of Liverpool

24–25 January 2024

## Summary of key findings

### Overall effectiveness

The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school

#### 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 curriculum requirements laid down by the Bishops' Conference

Yes

The school is fully compliant with all requirements of the diocesan bishop

Yes

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

Fully

2

## What the school does well

- The beautiful calm, school environment celebrates the Catholic mission throughout all areas of learning and creates an ethos wherein everyone can thrive.
- Teachers have very strong subject knowledge of religious education for the year group in which they teach.
- Adaptations to learning enable pupils with additional needs to succeed well in religious education.
- The subject leader is highly skilled, knowledgeable and fastidious in her determination to achieve the best outcomes for pupils.
- Teachers support pupils exceptionally well in planning, participating and leading aspects of prayer and liturgy, so that pupils are skilful and confident.

## What the school needs to improve

- Provide effective feedback in religious education, so that pupils clearly understand their next steps in learning.
- Deepen learning in religious education through the use of effective questioning.
- Make explicit links to prior learning in religious education, so that pupils systematically build up their knowledge and skills and make maximum 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

**Pupil outcomes**

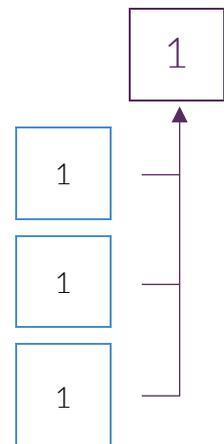
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

**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 actively involved in the development of the Catholic life and mission of Sacred Heart. They have a clear understanding and are totally committed to living out their faith for the benefit of all. They have a deep sense of respect for themselves and for others, including those who are vulnerable and those from other cultures and faiths. They are serious about their personal responsibility to provide support for anyone who needs help. Pupils know that they have been, 'Called by name, by Jesus', so they flourish in their charitable work. Older pupils visit Chanter's Care Home, to sing, pray and carry out craft activities. Younger pupils are proud of their responsibilities in keeping the school tidy. One pupil said, "Our world is a clean place and should not be disturbed by pollution." The Faith in Action Group explained, "We held a Santa dash to raise money for Cafod, which will provide fresh water for people in need." Pupils like to visit the peace garden for quiet and calm reflection, away from the busy playground. They like to plan out their work for the term and focus on what is important to them. As a result, their work significantly enhances the Catholic life of Sacred Heart.

The recently reviewed mission statement is a clear and inspiring expression of the Catholic life of Sacred Heart. Soon to be officially celebrated, the Catholic mission has a significant impact on the lives of all members of the school community. It is firmly rooted in the word of God, evidenced through religious education lessons, in displays, through prayer and liturgy and in the strong relationships at all levels. There is an open culture of welcome for those who are vulnerable and staff provide the highest level of pastoral care. One staff member said, "I believe that the Catholic ethos is what makes our school the school it is. It is a place where children and staff feel nurtured and loved, and is at the heart of everything we do." The exceptionally well-presented environment celebrates the word of God throughout, for example, inviting prayer

spaces and subject displays which include scripture quotes. The carefully planned and sequenced programme for Relationships, Sex and Health Education is well embedded and woven skilfully throughout the curriculum. Parents are kept well-informed about this important area, through the detailed and attractive website. The programme meets statutory and archdiocesan guidelines.

Leaders and governors are passionate, hard working, highly skilled and totally committed to the work of Sacred Heart. A recent review enabled all members of the community to shape a new mission statement and deepen their understanding of how they live and serve as witnesses to God's word. The new mission statement, 'With Christ as our guide, we inspire and thrive,' will be launched soon. Governors ensure that all policies, decisions and procedures reflect Catholic life. They thoroughly self-evaluate and challenge. They understand that this is their core responsibility. One governor said, "It is paramount, that pupils receive the very best in learning so that they have an impact on others through their Catholic faith." Leaders actively embrace and support the work of the archdiocese, for example, the Headteacher supported the Liverpool Youth Pilgrimage to Lourdes and the subject leader shares her skills with the archdiocesan core curriculum development team. Parents are welcomed and kept very well informed about all aspects of Catholic education, for example through the excellent website, through sharing of activities and celebrations on social media and through detailed weekly newsletters. Parish links are strong, well established, and growing further through the close relationship with the new parish priest. As a result, Christ is always at the centre of this school.

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

### Religious education key judgement grade

**Pupil outcomes**

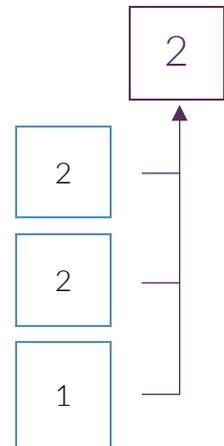
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

**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 at Sacred Heart are developing secure knowledge, skills and understanding in religious education. They achieve standards that are in line with other core subjects. They make good progress, including those pupils with special educational needs and disabilities. Pupils however, are not always clear about how they can improve their work further. They use their knowledge to reflect morally and spiritually and they enjoy discussing how scripture informs their own lives. A year six pupil said that the scripture had helped him not to be selfless, stating, “In the future, I will not waste money, I will think about others’ needs.” Children in early years explore how they can show love through their words and actions, as Jesus did. Other pupils are knowledgeable about the different books used in Mass. Older pupils write insightful letters thanking key people for their ministries in the Church. Behaviour in religious education lessons is very good because pupils concentrate well, work independently and enjoy their learning. One parent said, “My child is very happy at the school. Even at such a young age she is able to come home and tell me about Bible stories, that she has heard in school.” Pupils’ work is presented well and celebrated through beautiful displays around the school.

Teachers are confident in their subject knowledge, particularly for the age group in which they teach. They are committed to the teaching of religious education and have a good understanding of how pupils learn. Lessons are planned and in line with the requirements of the Religious Education Directory and through the Come and See programme. Teachers demonstrate their creativity through engaging learning activities and a range of ways for pupils to present their work. This includes, beautiful artwork to show how Jesus is the light of all nations, an information leaflet to explain the mission of the archdiocese, as well as through dance and drama. Pupils benefit from effective questioning and in some classes this deepens pupils’ learning very well. Older pupils in particular, learn exceptionally well, because of challenging questions, time for

reflection and reference to previous learning. Not all pupils, however, have this opportunity. Teachers provide pupils with verbal feedback throughout lessons and this could be developed further, so that all pupils have a clearer understanding of their next steps in learning. Skilled support staff, under the guidance of teachers, make adaptations to learning, for example, the use of picture symbols, prompt boards and adapted explanations, which ensures successful outcomes for pupils with additional needs.

The subject leader has an inspiring vision for religious education and works relentlessly to support and guide other staff. She is highly skilled and knowledgeable and able to provide high quality training and development. She provides a curriculum which is systematically introduced, and creatively planned to meet the needs of all pupils. The revised Religious Education Directory has been recently introduced for younger pupils, together with beautiful resources created by the Faith in Action group, which include wooden spoons, painted to show the story of creation and wooden figures for retelling Bible stories. Enrichment activities, for example, visits to the cathedral, to a synogogue, to a Jewish museum, enhance pupils appreciation and understanding of those with other faiths and cultures. One Year Six pupil explained, "Religious Education isn't just about Christianity." Religious education is given full parity with other core curriculum areas, including purposeful homework, marking and reporting to parents. Thorough monitoring and evaluation with the link governor for religious education ensures strategic and targeted actions which have lead to pockets of practice which are outstanding. They are committed to continuing the school's journey towards securing outstanding outcomes for pupils 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

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

1

Pupils are inspired to pray reverently, reflect silently and to join in with traditional prayers. They pray in a variety of ways, for example, through communal daily prayers at special times of the day, including meditations and personal prayer. Pupils sing joyfully together, often signing the words which are based on the word of God. They gather respectfully together for this special time. They undertake liturgical ministries with great confidence because of embedded practice which is in-line with their development. Younger pupils respond to the Gospel readings saying, "I choose to follow Jesus." as they hold a small cross. Older pupils create beautiful focus tables, using drapes, which follow the colours of the liturgical year. They place special objects which reflect the theme and they light candles which support their reflections and prayers. During the gather time, pupils invite others to take time, to be still and to be calm. Pupils read confidently from the Bible and pupils respond sensitively to the well chosen scripture. As their prayer and liturgy concludes, they can clearly articulate how they are inspired into action and how they can go forth to make a difference in their own lives and the lives of others.

Prayer and liturgy is central to the life of Sacred Heart. Prayer is embedded as part of daily life, in routine gatherings and across the liturgical year. Scripture is well-chosen and links exceptionally well with opportunities for personal responses. Pupils are inspired to go forth joyfully. Staff are models of exemplary practice. They create a reflective atmosphere with time and space to enjoy the silence. Appropriate music is used creatively and consistently. It is a key element in creating atmosphere, supporting spiritual development and for praising God. Adults sensitively enable pupils to be excellent leaders in prayer and liturgy. They give time to preparing and planning together. They enhance pupil leadership through reinforcing key themes for those present in worship. The creative use of beautiful prayer spaces around the school, inspires the whole community. This begins in the entrance hall with a lovely mission prayer tree and statue

of the Sacred Heart. Worship takes place outside in the peace garden and in the forest area, where pupils experience the awe and wonder of the natural world. The lovely art work outside reminds everyone of the gospel messages and how we should love one another. One parent said, "The focus the school has on my children's spiritual well-being is second to none." Families enjoy the class assemblies and are invited to the monthly Sunday family Mass in church.

The subject leader has provided staff with clear and comprehensive guidance and effective training to successfully develop high quality prayer and liturgy. This has ensured that pupils have systematically and effectively developed their skills as they progress through the school. Pupils' ideas for developing the prayer life of the school are respected and acted upon. For example the prayer resource boxes created for the peace garden. The subject leader is knowledgeable about the Catholic prayer tradition and the liturgy of the Mass. Together with governors she has ensured that there are appropriate opportunities for the celebration of Mass and the sacraments throughout the year. Once a month, pupils lead the family Mass at church, supported by staff. Parents too, are supported in their understanding of the prayer life of the school through the celebration of learning videos on the school website. This communicates the exceptional practice in the many ways in which Sacred Heart prays together. Leaders and governors regularly evaluate prayer and liturgy, ensuring successful developments and provision of good quality resources, all of which lead to inspiring prayer and liturgy for everyone.

## Information about the school

Full name of school	Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	106499
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	3593397
Full postal address of the school	Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School, Lodge Lane, Hindsford, Atherton, Manchester, M46 9BN
School phone number	01942 883429
Headteacher	Ian McDermott
Chair of Governors	Josephine Carter
School Website	<a href="http://www.athertonsacredheart.wigan.sch.uk">http://www.athertonsacredheart.wigan.sch.uk</a>
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	N/A
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Voluntary Aided School
Admissions policy	N/A
Age-range of pupils	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	17 <sup>th</sup> January 2017
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

## The inspection team

Christine Mason  
Nicola Sayers

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