



# St Francis' Catholic Primary School

URN: 119633

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Lancaster

Click to enter start date. – 29 February 2024

## Summary of key findings

### Overall effectiveness

The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school

1

#### 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

1

#### 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

## What the school does well

- Positive relationships across the school reflect the strong Catholic life and mission that is evident. The mission statement is clearly lived out by all with everyone "following Jesus' footsteps."
- Creativity in the religious education curriculum enables children to flourish in their learning and achieve.
- Staff commitment is exemplary. Staff members are proud of their school and senior leaders are inspirational and excellent role models.
- The school is at the heart of the community helping to lead parents, pupils, and staff in their faith journey.

## What the school needs to improve

- To continue to develop the curriculum in line with the *Religious Education Directory*, taking into consideration the Catholic Education Service guidance for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- To develop consistency in children's leadership of prayer and liturgy, ensuring that it is carefully matched to the age and ability of the children.
- To fully embed the new prayer and liturgy directory *To Love You More Dearly*.

## 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

1

**Provision**

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

1

**Leadership**

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

1

1

St. Francis' is an outstanding Catholic school. Self-evaluation of the Catholic life of the school by governors and staff is rigorous and an accurate reflection of this.

The mission statement is understood and referred to by all. The children speak about living, feeling, and dreaming as they follow in Jesus' footsteps trying to do the right thing. They are passionate about helping others and reported proudly how they have supported foodbanks and collected clothes for the homeless and have supported other charities such as Macmillan's and Fairtrade.

The behaviour of the children is exemplary. They show respect for each other through simple mannerly actions. The prefects award 'Big Heart Certificates' in assembly for children who they see demonstrating Gospel values and the CAFOD group give out footprints to children who undertake little acts of kindness.

The children value the school's chaplaincy provision enjoying opportunities to engage in prayer throughout the day, including during break-times, using the prayer polytunnel. Children from Year 5 have taken on roles as Bible Buddies, teaching the younger pupils Bible stories. They have created their own prayer space within the hall where resources, some made by the group, are available.

Staff commitment to the school's mission is high as they follow the head teacher's lead. Her ability to enthuse and inspire permeates the school as she works tirelessly to ensure that Christ is at the centre of this joyful school. Staff report that they are "very proud to be a part of this wonderful school family – we are supportive of each other and work together to create a

happy, nurturing environment for both our staff and pupils.” This can be clearly seen in the caring relationships evident between children and staff.

The whole school environment, both inside and out, reflects the Catholic identity of the school with the *Land of Pure Imagination* and prayer polytunnel. Displays are inclusive, representing a multi-cultural, diverse community that is sensitive to disability. The children enjoy their connection with their partner school, The Shalom Academy in Kenya, and report being happy and proud to teach them a song through video.

The provision for relationships, health and sex education is carefully planned and meets all statutory and diocesan requirements. Leaders, including governors, liaise with parents to ensure they, as the first educators of the children, are fully aware of the content of the curriculum.

Leaders and governors engage well with the diocese. Governors have supported the head teacher and deputy head teacher to take on associate roles at a local school, working in collaboration to serve the distinct communities. They facilitate staff attending diocese training and embrace initiatives such as the diocesan *Year of Prayer*.

Links with the parish are strong with a family Mass being held each month, when the children present artwork and contribute to the music of the Mass. Many parishioners enjoy attending class Masses that are held each Tuesday. School information is shared monthly in the parish newsletter with parishioners invited to events in school, such as concerts and fund-raisers.

Parents value the Catholic life and mission provided by the school. One parent reported “I feel that my child’s spiritual, moral and emotional development are a priority.”

On the curriculum overviews, religious education comes first with many cross-curricular links working to make connections and develop the whole person. It includes ‘big thinking ethical questions’ that serve to develop children’s wider understanding.

Governors and senior leaders are effective in monitoring the Catholic life and mission of the school and embrace working in partnership with key partners to enhance the school’s mission.

## 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

1

#### Provision

The quality of teaching, learning, and assessment in religious education

1

#### Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for religious education

1

1

Pupils are developing excellent knowledge, understanding and skills in religious education. Work in their books is of a high standard in line with other subjects. It shows good coverage of the learning required by the *Religious Education Directory*. Work is well presented and shows a range of creative approaches and consistent progression across all year groups.

Pupils can speak with confidence about what they have learned in religious education, using good religious vocabulary from the early years. Year 3/4 pupils spoke about learning from the Psalms and scripture is readily used across the religious education curriculum. In lessons, pupils' behaviour is excellent; they are fully engaged and participate with enthusiasm. They are religiously literate and able to reflect spiritually. A Year 2 pupil reported that "Jesus is in your heart, and you feel it."

Baseline assessment is completed as pupils enter school. Pupils make rapid progress in the early years and continue to make good progress across Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. The standard of work produced is in-line and sometimes exceeds progress made in other areas of the curriculum, for example, in writing.

Teaching in religious education is at least good and mostly outstanding; this is reflected in the pupils' books and the progress seen across school. Staff subject knowledge is strong and expectation for pupils is high. The bronze, silver and gold steps in lessons enthuse and inspire the pupils to push themselves and challenge their own learning. Staff use questioning skilfully to extend the children's learning, deepen their understanding and stimulate their religious curiosity. A parent commented about their child, "I have been amazed by the depth of questions she asks and the fantastic discussions we can have around faith and spirituality."

Lessons are carefully creatively planned, they build on prior learning using a range of ambitious vocabulary and resources, including artwork and music that support the children's learning. Moral development is embedded within the curriculum and children are given time to reflect. During a lesson on temptation, Year 1/2 pupils reflected on their choices and spoke about "making God happy by listening to their mum." An Early Years Foundation Stage pupil spoke about picking up litter and said, "It makes Jesus' world so nice."

Celebration of effort is evident across school with staff giving positive praise and encouragement within lessons and awards given in the Golden Assembly each Friday. A Year 2 boy proudly spoke about being able to show his work to the older children. The pupils are well supported by all staff in a caring and sensitive manner. Support staff contribute well to lessons reinforcing the religious teaching and enabling children with additional needs to achieve in their learning.

The religious education subject leader has a high level of expertise and supports other staff well. She has provided training and guidance to other staff, both at St. Francis and a local school as the Directory is introduced across the schools this academic year. The curriculum has been carefully and creatively planned starting with Nursery Year and moving sequentially throughout school. This enables learners to make good progress as they move through school building on prior learning. The curriculum is a faithful expression of the Directory.

Leaders take every opportunity to enrich the religious education curriculum through engaging with a range of partners, for example, links with Kenya school, CAFOD, NSPCC, Street Pastors, and high schools. Rigorous self-evaluation of religious education and strategic planning by leaders and governors has resulted in the school implementing the new curriculum this academic year, following considerable training and spending on necessary resources to support learning.

## 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

Prayer and liturgy are central to the life of the school and are valued by staff and pupils. Children participate enthusiastically and show reverence and respect during prayer and liturgy. They stand to welcome the gospel, maintain a prayerful silence, and recite traditional prayers confidently. Children in the Reception Class used actions to help them pray the Our Father and sing The Servant King. Children in all classes sang well as part of their liturgies and also used their musical talents playing a range of instruments.

Children demonstrated understanding of the liturgical year, speaking about Lent and Easter and all prayer and liturgy observed during the inspection was appropriate for the season of Lent. Pupil leadership of prayer and liturgy progresses through school. In Reception Class, children contribute to the liturgy choosing items for the prayer table, reading prayers, and choosing hymns, supported by their teachers. In Key Stage 1 pupils help their teachers to plan the liturgy and are supported to lead the worship. In Key Stage 2 pupils plan and deliver prayer and liturgy for their class. In addition, Year 5/6 children lead the worship within the Golden Assembly for the whole school each Friday. Class big books record and evaluate prayer and liturgy and include any resulting actions and responses. During the inspection, the children spoke a lot about wanting to follow in Jesus' footsteps and help others. Whilst discussing prayer one pupil reported, "You feel close to God when you pray."

School provides a wide range of traditions for pupils, staff, and families. Families and parishioners are invited to attend class and school Masses and assemblies. The Monday assembly that reinforces the Sunday gospel starts with a Visio Divina. This is displayed again at the Friday Golden Assembly and pupils; staff and visitors are asked to contribute their responses to the Visio which are recorded in a big book. The school community have

celebrated together at May processions, palm liturgies, St. Francis' feast, Benediction and have the opportunity to partake in the Sacrament of Reconciliation and Stations of the Cross.

In addition to the daily school prayer and liturgy, staff commitment shines out with the school leading a monthly family Mass. Parents appreciate the help they receive to support their children's faith journey, they praised the prayer bags that the children bring home and value the head teacher's blog and other resources available on the school's website, Wednesday Word and Ten Ten resources. A parent reported, "My child enjoys prayer time and has great empathy because of the way he is supported and nurtured."

The school has a wide range of creative displays and spaces that enhance the prayer life of the school, from displays throughout the classes and shared areas to the polytunnel prayer space outside. Each class has a prayer space with a range of resources that are creatively used. In Year 1/2 class a basket of sand and stones with a figure represented Jesus praying in the wilderness, the children then added their own temptation stones as they prayed with Jesus to have courage to do the right thing.

Leaders and governors have ensured that quality resources and training is available to enable staff to provide high quality opportunities for prayer and liturgy. Ten Ten resources are used, and training accessed from the diocese, enabling staff to utilise different ways of praying in the Catholic tradition.

Governors are invited to all assemblies and Masses and the religious education governor is a regular visitor into school. Alongside the senior leaders, the religious education governor monitors the provision of prayer and liturgy and feeds back to the wider governing body ensuring that they are well informed.



## Information about the school

Full name of school	St Francis' Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	119633
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8883725
Full postal address of the school	St Francis' Catholic Primary School, The Hill, Horns Lane, Goosnargh, Preston, PR3 2FJ
School phone number	01772865369
Headteacher	Sarah Deakin
Chair of Governors	Michael Blair
School Website	<a href="http://www.stfranciscatholicprimaryschool.co.uk">www.stfranciscatholicprimaryschool.co.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	2-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	November 2017
Previous denominational inspection grade	1 - Outstanding

## The inspection team

Jane Barnes  
Liz Kendall

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