



# Holy Trinity Catholic Primary School

URN: 141150

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Archbishop of Birmingham

22–23 May 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

1

#### 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

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

- Leaders' self-evaluation is accurate because it is regular and validated by internal and external stakeholders. They have a firm grasp of the school's strengths and areas for development.
- Holy Trinity is a fully inclusive community because Christ's presence is celebrated by all.
- Pupils make outstanding progress in religious education, at least in line with other core subjects.
- Governors and multi-academy company (MAC) directors invest heavily in staff training, which significantly improves standards.
- Pupils confidently undertake liturgical ministries because staff prepare them well.

## What the school needs to improve

- Provide feedback in religious education, enabling pupils to understand what they have done well and what they need to do to improve their work.
- Ensure that the proclamation of God's Word is central and explicit in all extended prayer times.
- Enable pupils to articulate how the Church's cycle of seasons and feasts is expressed in the school's prayer 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**

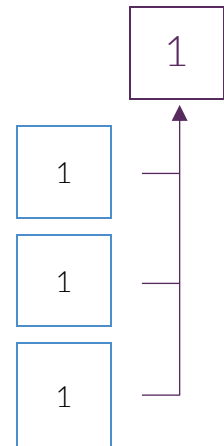
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

**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 firmly understand that Holy Trinity is a school where pupils and staff work together through the love of God. They know the importance of being active disciples and showing God's compassion to everyone they encounter. They significantly enhance the school's mission by participating in activities such as harvest appeals for the local food bank, a Mardi Gras festival before Lent, Ukraine Day, and planting bulbs whilst making pledges in Jubilee Wood. Pupils clearly understand that everyone is made in God's image and likeness. This means their behaviour is exemplary throughout the school. Subsequently, pupils treat one another with deep respect, warmly embracing people experiencing vulnerability known to them and those they will never meet. For example, they compile Christmas gift shoeboxes for Teams 4 U, raise funds for Cafod's *Big Lenten Walk* and have twinned with a library in Uganda. When speaking about the importance of such initiatives, they refer to Jesus' teachings with certainty but are less confident in articulating the principles of Catholic social teaching. 'World Faith Week' significantly enriches pupils' respect for those of other faiths and religions; they enjoy learning about various belief systems and value their visits to places of worship. Chaplaincy team members relish the weekly opportunity to work with their classmates to plan and lead prayer. They also meet regularly with senior leaders to identify further opportunities to nurture the community's relationship with God, such as increasing the community's use of its prayer garden.

The school's mission is regularly explored. Staff, including those new to Catholic education, have a secure understanding of it and keenly lead its implementation, ensuring it is made tangible to the whole community. All staff are excellent role models, and there is an organic buzz of excitement within the school as they work on enacting the mission they are passionate about. The highest quality of pastoral care is provided to pupils, securely founded upon gospel values.

In particular, the work of the emotional literacy support assistant (ELSA) and an 'art and mental health' well-being pack have resulted in pupils feeling happy and safe at school. Vibrant displays, which are always seasonally relevant, decorate the site. Pupils confidently speak about their contents and the various religious artefacts around school. Relationships, sex, and health education (RSHE) is well planned and firmly rooted in Church teaching. Pupils confidently recall the issues they learn about in these lessons, such as online safety, appropriate relationships, and acts of kindness.

Leaders are passionate in exercising their duty as guardians of the mission. They view this as their prime responsibility and take great care to provide Christ-centred leadership. Governors, too, are passionate and highly ambitious for the school's Catholic life and mission; they view themselves as 'ambassadors of faith'. The chair is a frequent visitor to the school and is valued by staff for her commitment to their well-being. There is a flourishing link with the parish. The school serves it well particularly through the ministry of altar serving; the parish priest speaks with great fondness of the excellent relationship the school has with the parish. The whole curriculum is delivered through a Catholic lens. Staff are enthusiastic about enriching it by drawing out matters of faith wherever possible. For example, the science subject leader collaborated with colleagues to teach environmental science from the perspective of stewardship for God's creation, and pupils learnt about Christ being the Alpha and Omega when studying ancient Greek culture in history. Leaders' self-evaluation is accurate because they regularly monitor and corroborate their findings with governors, staff, parents, and pupils before making judgements and planning strategic development work. Open and honest dialogue ensures well-targeted improvements are made.

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

### Religious education key judgement grade

**Pupil outcomes**

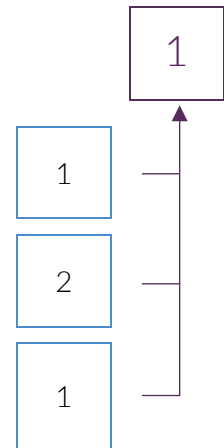
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

**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 make excellent progress in knowing and remembering more as they progress through Holy Trinity. This is because most recall prior learning before acquiring new knowledge. Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND), achieve very strong outcomes. Because there is an explicit focus on introducing, using, and reinforcing keywords, pupils are religiously literate and speak confidently about how religion influences their everyday lives and choices. For example, pupils in Year 3 explored how the events of Pentecost changed people whilst discerning the difference between a ‘disciple’ and an ‘apostle’. Pupils’ work is consistently of the highest quality; always complete and beautifully presented. Their excellent work is celebrated by staff, which motivates pupils well. There are plenty of opportunities for pupils to show their learning creatively whilst expressing their individuality, such as producing sketches and paintings of Jesus in the desert whilst learning about Lent. All pupils are actively engaged in their lessons, reflective, and approach religious education with great interest; they simply ‘love it’. Pupils achieve above-average attainment in religious education when compared to other core subjects taught at the school.

Teachers are deeply committed to religious education because leaders clearly communicate its importance. Subsequently, all teachers have high expectations for all pupils, which bears fruit in the quality of work pupils produce and their eagerness to join in with classroom discussions. Teachers know pupils’ current assessments, so they plan lessons which consolidate and extend pupils’ knowledge so that they learn well. Pupils’ achievements are celebrated and rewarded by teachers, leading to their further motivation. However, many pupils cannot articulate how to improve their learning because teachers’ feedback does not always make this explicit. Through well-timed moments of reflection, teachers create opportunities for spiritual development in their lessons, such as writing prayers to the Holy Spirit in Year 1. Teachers are usually confident

in their subject knowledge, and more experienced teachers use their expertise to help further refine other teachers' knowledge and understanding of how pupils learn. Teachers use resources, including other adults, to optimise most pupils' learning. In the best instances, all adults have a detailed knowledge of the direction learning is taking within a lesson, so they can ask questions and re-shape explanations to make the curriculum fully accessible to all pupils in the classroom.

Leaders and governors ensure that religious education is given the highest priority within the curriculum, as demonstrated by purchasing new age-appropriate Bibles and other resources to enhance learning further. Governors invest significantly in staff training, fostering a professional working relationship with the diocese, which means all staff members are up to date with current developments in teaching and learning. The subject leadership team wants to empower teachers to 'deliver lessons in creative and motivating ways, leading to new knowledge and social action'. This vision has been successfully realised because it has inspired subject improvement planning, which can be clearly seen in the standard of outcomes in pupils' exercise books. Because of the inclusive culture throughout the school, leaders ensure that the religious education curriculum is made accessible to all pupils, including those with acute additional needs; this is a real strength of Holy Trinity's provision. Leaders identify gaps in pupils' knowledge by analysing assessment data and reviewing this with classroom teachers to ensure outstanding progress. External moderation of data within the MAC supports teachers' judgements and provides confidence in their accuracy. Leaders' monitoring is targeted to focus on key issues identified in classes, and this feeds into subject improvement work, which is actively and forensically monitored through a wide range of strategies.

## 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 are reverent when praying because of the importance all staff place on it. They respond immediately to invitations to pray by stilling themselves and adopting postures conducive to prayer. Pupils sing beautifully and gently, adding a sense of peace whilst worshipping. During prayer, they comfortably hold silence very well because they are routinely exposed to it, and staff have cultivated a safe space where pupils can be alone with God. Pupils' understanding of the Church's cycle of seasons and feasts is secure; they readily identify them, the associated liturgical colours, and can discuss their meaning. While some pupils can talk about their influence on prayer, many cannot yet articulate how liturgical seasons shape the school's prayer life and how they are expressed beyond colours. Pupils routinely lead prayer at Holy Trinity. With the help of the chaplaincy team, they collaborate to structure prayer around the 'gather, listen, respond, go forth' model. These prayer services inspire their peers in heartfelt responses. For example, pupils in Year 5 engaged well in a prayer service because of the care taken by their teacher to develop their spiritual growth and this was presented creatively to them. There are good systems for pupils' evaluation of prayer, the outcomes of which are shared with the whole class so that, over time, all pupils build up a secure repertoire of prayer skills.

Prayer is central to school life; all routine gatherings and key points of the day are marked with it. Numerous themes are identified and celebrated in prayer. Staff are aware of the Pope's monthly intentions and reference these with pupils, helping them understand the school's role within the universal Church. The school day is built around prayer, reflecting the natural rhythm present within the Catholic Church. Staff are confident in using traditional prayers, using a bespoke booklet to support pupils in choosing which prayers they'd like to use in the classroom. Leaders have provided staff with various age and stage-appropriate contemporary styles, such as bubble prayers, pebble prayers, and praying with Creation; all of which provide breadth to

the range of ways of praying in school. More opportunities for spontaneous prayer are needed so pupils can routinely be exposed to a creative balance of routine and innovative acts of worship. Staff are highly committed to prayer; they understand the importance of pupils' spiritual development and provide prayer time during their delivery of the broader curriculum and a weekly extended prayer time in each classroom. The primary focus during these services is not always on prayer, as much time is spent discussing religious themes or asking questions about them, leaving only a small amount of time for pupils to raise their hearts and minds to God. Scripture, whilst cherished by the whole community, is not consistently made explicit within prayer times, meaning the proclamation of God's Word is not always a central feature. In their provision, staff are especially confident in providing moments of thanksgiving and pupils respond well. Well-crafted prayer focus areas are used in all classrooms. Liturgically current, they are well looked after and contribute to pupils' formation. However, they are not always used to optimal effect during extended prayer times because some pupils sit with their backs to them, meaning they are often asked to reflect silently on themes without a visual focal point to support them.

By joining in with responses, gestures, and singing, all staff are good role models to pupils, whom they aspire towards. Governors invest significantly in leaders' training; due to a sustained commitment to the head teacher's ongoing formation, pupils believe they can make a difference in the world. Catholic social teaching themes are introduced through prayer so staff and pupils can reflect on its impact on their lives. Leaders model prayer superbly; they are inspirational in implementing the school's prayer policy in highly engaging ways, eliciting enjoyment from pupils. Training is frequent and the school's next step is to focus on consistently securing the prominence of scripture in prayer.



## Information about the school

Full name of school	Holy Trinity Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	141150
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	931 3420
Full postal address of the school	London Road, Chipping Norton, OX7 5AX
School phone number	01608 643487
Headteacher	Lorna Buchanan
Chair of governing board	Paul Concannon
School Website	<a href="http://www.holy-trinity.oxon.sch.uk">www.holy-trinity.oxon.sch.uk</a>
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	The Pope Francis Catholic Multi Academy Company
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Academy
Admissions policy	Non-selective
Age-range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	June 2017
Previous denominational inspection grade	2

## The inspection team

Ben McArdle

Wendell Gopaul

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