



# St Charles' Catholic Primary School

URN: 104646

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Archbishop of Liverpool

18–19 September 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

2

#### 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 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

## Compliance statement

- The school is fully compliant in relation to the general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishops' Conference.
- The school is fully compliant with all requirements of the archdiocesan bishop.
- The school has fully responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection.

## What the school does well

- At every level, relationships throughout St Charles' bear witness to the teachings of Jesus.
- Pastoral care is a strength. All members of the school community benefit from this and there is a particular focus on the most vulnerable.
- Pupils' behaviour is excellent. They respond well to high expectations and are happy and confident learners.
- Pupils are enthusiastic and engaged during religious education lessons, leading to high levels of religious literacy for most pupils.

## What the school needs to improve

- Leaders should ensure that there is a rigorous and systematic self-evaluation cycle in place so that they have a very clear understanding of the impact of their work and can appropriately plan next step actions.
- Enable all pupils to become engaged throughout religious education lessons by using more active listening and participation strategies.
- Ensure greater consistency in the quality of prayer and worship experiences across the school by the sharing of the very best practice and the development of more creative approaches.

## 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

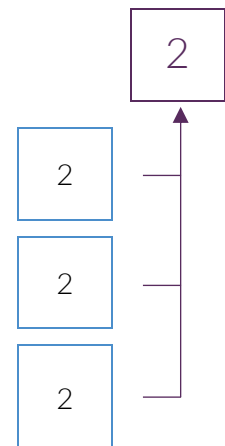
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

#### 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 at St Charles' are happy, confident and caring young people. They understand the school's mission to 'Love, Learn, Grow Together', and they live out the HEART values of honesty, empathy, achievement, respect and togetherness which underpin this statement. Consequently, the behaviour of pupils in lessons and throughout school is excellent. Pupils understand that their school community is committed to following the teachings of the Gospels and there exists a strong culture of inclusivity and welcome for newcomers to the school, including families from other faiths. The head teacher explains that all pupils 'feel heard'. Pupils are actively engaged in serving those in need and there are many opportunities for the school to come together to support others. They have recently begun their Live Simply journey and they talk enthusiastically about the charitable works they have carried out so far, for example raising funds to donate for Cafod World Gifts. Pupils are ready to take the next step and become leaders of their mission by taking on roles in pupil chaplaincy groups.

The staff community at St Charles' understands the mission and how to support pupils to live this out through the school values. Some staff have served the school and community for many years and, as a result, they know the families well and offer effective support. They support the work of the senior leaders in a range of charitable works both locally and globally. Pastoral support in many forms including counselling, uniform, toiletries, furnishing and help with housing is readily available to pupils and families. There is a tangible sense of community where differences are actively celebrated, and all are made to feel welcome. Staff are positive role-models for pupils, bearing witness to the school's mission through the love and care they show for the pupils and for the wider staff team. Signs of the school's Catholic character and mission are present in the environment around school, contributing positively to the formation of the

pupils. Chaplaincy provision is not yet fully embedded in the life of the school. A well-planned programme would ensure high quality opportunities for the spiritual and moral development of pupils. Statutory requirements for the relationships, sex and health education curriculum are met. Pupils have access to the archdiocesan recommended programme, Journey in Love.

Leaders and governors ensure that Christ is at the heart of St Charles'. Led by the head teacher, they share a passion and genuine care for the families that they serve. They are committed in their pursuit of the common good and are particularly proud of pastoral work that they do which has a significantly positive impact on pupils and their families. Staff benefit from and appreciate the informal support offered by the subject lead who has responded well to archdiocesan policies including the new *Religious Education Directory* and the Live Simply award. Parents and carers feel supported as first educators of their children and they fully understand and are supportive of the school's mission. One parent commented, 'I feel that the school has given my children a strong sense of moralistic and empathic behaviour through their encouragement of the religious teachings of the Catholic life and mission.' Policies and structures are in place that provide supportive pastoral care for staff and there is a strong commitment to staff physical and mental wellbeing. Through school improvement structures, leaders should now consider their next steps in the effective evaluation of the Catholic life and mission of the school, that includes the consideration of how pupils can be meaningfully involved in evaluation and planning processes.

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

### Religious education key judgement grade

**Pupil outcomes**

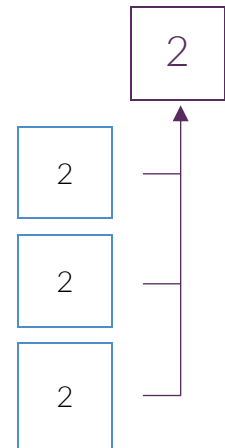
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

**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 are developing secure knowledge, understanding and skills that reflect the learning required by the *Religious Education Directory*. Teachers are skilled in enabling pupils to explore and understand scripture through purposeful discussion. Pupils observed related the scripture stories to religious commitment in everyday life. Pupils enjoy their learning and approach their lessons with interest and enthusiasm. The pace of lessons observed was very good. Consequently, behaviour in lessons is excellent. Pupils are given opportunities at the start of lessons to recall prior learning, enabling them to know and remember more as they progress through the school. Most pupils are religiously literate, with many being eager to share their understanding during lessons due to the positive encouragement they receive from their teachers. They debate and ask good questions of adults and their peers, enhancing their understanding and retention of knowledge. Pupils are religiously literate using subject specific vocabulary very well. Attainment in religious education is in line with other core subjects and work in books is consistently well-presented, reflecting the high regard with which religious education is held in the school.

Teachers are confident in their subject knowledge and are committed to the value of religious education, communicating this effectively to the pupils. The subject leader is proactive in supporting staff when necessary. Lessons are planned and in line with the requirements of the new *Religious Education Directory* and through the Come and See programme. Pupils benefit from effective questioning and in some class groups this deepens pupils' learning very well. In the best lessons observed, teachers used pupils' responses to adapt and extend explanations, enabling progress to be made from the pupils' various starting points. In some lessons observed, a small number of pupils were passive and did not contribute to the discussions. The consistent implementation of active engagement strategies would allow all pupils to be involved in each

part of the lesson, thus improving the participation of pupils who do not put their hands up to share ideas. Pupil effort is celebrated by teachers with positive, verbal feedback. As a result, most pupils are confident to share their thoughts.

Leaders and governors ensure that the school curriculum for religious education is a faithful expression of the *Religious Education Directory*. The subject leader has a clear vision for teaching and learning in religious education. As a result, teaching is at least good. The leader for religious education provides effective support for staff, including those new to school. New staff access appropriate professional development and training from the archdiocese. Leaders ensure the curriculum is sequenced so that pupils progress through subject content appropriately and she has worked hard to support the planning for the new *Religious Education Directory*. Leaders agree that they would benefit from the opportunity to moderate assessments with other schools. Leaders and governors ensure that religious education is comparable to other core subjects in terms of professional development, resourcing, and timetabling. Leaders and governors should review the self-evaluation document to analyse the impact of actions taken so that more searching analysis can lead to well-planned strategic actions and outstanding outcomes in the future.

## 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 positively to the experiences of prayer and liturgy provided by the school. During the worship experiences observed, they reflected in silence, joined in with community prayer and sang. They are given opportunities when they can reflect on the scripture that has been used and then 'go forth' with the message of challenge. Older pupils are developing their skills of ministry supported by leaders to prepare worship spaces. At school Masses in church, pupils participate through the reading of scripture and the prayers of the faithful. Appropriate to their age and capacity, pupils understand a variety of ways of praying that are part of the Catholic tradition. They can describe parts of the liturgical year, and they enjoy the seasonal events and celebrations. While pupils take part in all they are asked to do, they are not yet planning their own prayer and liturgy. Many would relish the opportunity to lead acts of worship and, alongside this, plan and evaluate their work.

Prayer and liturgy are central to the life of the school and form part of routine gatherings of pupils and staff. Staff are role models for pupils in leading and participating in prayers. Prayer spaces exist in classrooms and are reflective of the liturgical year. There is a daily pattern of prayer and seasonally appropriate scripture passages are used, taken from the suite of Ten Ten resources purchased recently by the school to support the delivery of prayer and liturgy. However, in some instances the resource would have served participants better if a more creative approach had been taken. This would have ensured that the experiences of the participants were more meaningful, so reflecting the richness of the Church's tradition. Families are included in the prayer life of the school; they are welcomed at weekly Mass and to the end of topic rejoice celebrations. One parent commented, 'The school fully practises daily prayer and welcomes parents to the class visits to the parish. It is an integral part of the school.' Staff say

that the subject lead is a source of guidance, and they value her support in their skills development.

The school's policy on prayer and liturgy is well formulated and fit for purpose. Leaders, including governors, plan opportunities throughout the year to celebrate the Eucharist on holy days of obligation and other significant feasts and memorials. St Charles' school works well with the parish catechists to provide quality sacramental preparation for its pupils using the With You Always resource. The weekly Mass times have been changed so that the school can attend. Leaders need to evaluate the quality and impact of prayer and liturgy so that strategic planning and support can be offered to all staff to ensure high quality experiences of worship are consistently delivered for all pupils. Staff have had opportunities to develop their skills through training offered by the archdiocese and they feel that this has been beneficial. Staff would benefit from further training so that they understand the wide variety and richness of Church tradition and all it has to offer. The impact of this training should be shared with governors so that they are clear of the school's strengths and areas for development .



## Information about the school

Full name of school	St Charles' Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	104646
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	3413548
Full postal address of the school	St Charles' Catholic Primary School, Tramway Road, Aigburth, Liverpool, L17 7JA
School phone number	0151 727 5830
Headteacher	Rebecca Dean
Chair of Governors/Trustees	Hans Broekman
School Website	stcharlescatholicprimary.com
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	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	23 <sup>rd</sup> January 2018
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

## The inspection team

Fiona Brownsey  
Annemarie Webb

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

