Our Lady & St Gerard's Roman Catholic Primary School

URN: 119639

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Salford

22–23 May 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

2

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

Compliance statement

- Our Lady & St Gerard's Roman Catholic Primary School is fully compliant with the general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishops' Conference in its timetabling of curriculum religious education.
- There are no additional requirements of the diocesan bishop.
- The school has fully responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection.

This Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection was carried out under canons 804 & 806 of the code of canon law. For maintained schools and academies in England it fulfils the statutory requirements of s.48 of the Education Act 2005. For maintained schools and academies in Wales it fulfils the statutory requirements of s.50 of the Education Act 2005.

What the school does well

- Leadership is strong, inspired by the passionate headteacher. Everyone is focussed in their drive for school improvement.
- Scripture is at the heart of all school activity, including in the prayer life of the school.
- Inclusion, welcome and promotion of mutual respect for every person is a strength, with the school going the extra mile for all pupils.
- The pastoral care provided to all members of the school community is excellent and a clear demonstration of the school's mission. Behaviour of pupils meets the school's high expectations. This has contributed to happy, articulate and confident pupils who feel safe and show care and respect for one another.
- The school's mission statement is lived out in religious education lessons where children work together collaboratively and successfully.

What the school needs to improve

- To consolidate and share good practice across the school so that all pupils have opportunities to be proactive in their learning of religious education.
- To continue to develop pupils' skills so that independently, they can plan, lead and evaluate high quality collective worship.

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

1

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

Catholic life and mission is a strength of the school. It is clear that all pupils feel valued and cared for. One parent said that pupils 'feel safe and happy and want to attend school in the morning.' The school's document on Catholic social teaching highlights their culture of solidarity and promotion of the common good; a community where everyone can thrive. Pupils spoke to inspectors about the learning of friendships and how they can work together as people of peace. There is much evidence of this, including work that pupils have undertaken on the study of other faiths such as Sikhism, Islam and Judaism. The school's mission statement, 'United in love and the light of Jesus, we inspire one another to learn, grow and shine.' has recently been rewritten, and all stakeholders have been involved in this, including pupils. It is clear, known and lived. The school feels that pupils recognise the links between the mission statement and the Word of God. One pupil described the school as 'united as a school,' and another said the school was a 'family'. The school feels that they have been able to guide their pupils to explore how they can put their faith into action. Pupils understand the distinctive Catholic identity of the school: they value each other and their community. Pupils have been involved in charity work, raising money for a local food bank and for Caritas.

The manner in which all pupils and families are included in school life ensures the highest level of pastoral care and is a strength of the school. Relationships are built on love and deep respect for individual dignity. Catholic social teaching is woven into the curriculum, and pupils have opportunities to discuss the principles in different contexts, such as in celebration of the Word, in lessons and meetings with pupil leaders. Catholic social teaching at the school, according to the school's documentation, includes learning about being stewards of God's creation where pupils learn 'about nature, animal habitats and our duty to care for these'. They are able to

articulate how they have undertaken litter picking for the benefit of the local environment and community. The school feels that visitors and new families always comment on how welcoming school is. Parents spoke very positively about the welcome they receive by the school and stated that Our Lady and St Gerard's provides a range of support to families, particularly those who are in some way vulnerable. The Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) curriculum is well planned and meets statutory requirements.

The Catholic life and mission of the school is extremely well led by the inspirational headteacher, who is well supported by the dedicated deputy headteacher. A parent stated, 'the headteacher has a clear passion and vision for the school'. The school plans support for its community and initiatives, such as donating pre-loved uniform to families, and the investment in the school peace garden and allotments, are examples that show their tireless work in the pursuit of the common good. Leaders and governors bear witness to the Gospel and to Catholic social teaching at every level. They put into practice the Church's care for the poor by ensuring that resources are used effectively to support those in greatest need, both materially and educationally. This is evidenced by the employment of a pupil and family support officer and a learning mentor. Leaders and governors recognise the principle that Catholic schools are at the service of the local church. A strong relationship with the parish priest has led to closer working ties with the church community, which has included joint parish and school services.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

2

Pupil outcomes

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

2

Provision

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

2

Leadership

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

2

The school's behaviour policy encourages positive behaviour recognition as the key strategy to adopt high expectations of behaviour and to develop quality relationships. These high expectations were observed during inspection both around school and during lessons. In religious education lessons children work together collaboratively, supporting each other. Pupils make good progress in knowing more, remembering more, and doing more when measured against the planned curriculum for each year. This was evidenced when, at the start of each lesson, children recapped on previous knowledge from recent learning and past learning. Children are challenged to respond to feedback by not only correcting errors but also by extending their explanations. In the best lessons teachers used questioning to extend pupils responses. In most year groups pupils' work in books showed responses to feedback and marking. This needs to be replicated for all pupils across the school. Pupils are improving in their religious literacy and increasingly engaged in religious education lessons. This was seen in the best lessons where vocabulary was promoted through the use of a vocabulary board, and in a lesson in Key Stage 2 where children were challenged to find the key vocabulary . To improve, all children, in all classes, should have opportunities to be proactive in their learning of religious education.

The school's consistent approach to behaviour management was observed throughout the school with all staff adopting the same strategies. This has resulted in pupils' behaviour in lessons being respectful and compliant. The religious education curriculum aims to ensure children are religiously literate, deepening their religious and theological understanding. This was evidenced in the pupils' work and in data which shows that achievement in the subject is at least as good and in line with English and maths. Observations and scrutiny of work showed consistency across year groups with staff working together to prepare lessons. This ensures

pupils across year groups receive the same teaching content. In the best lessons, teachers use questioning during lessons to identify where pupils are in their understanding, with pupils giving feedback. Some lesson observations showed that questioning formed a significant part of learning in religious education. There were times when this was at the expense of allowing pupils to be more actively engaged and reflective in lessons. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum has been tightly planned to start at the child's point in time; recognising they are unique individuals. This could be seen in the Nursery and Reception classes where quality teaching challenged the children's thinking.

The subject leader is passionate and knowledgeable about religious education and has brought about a direction of travel for further improving outcomes. During inspection, Catholic social teaching formed a cornerstone of lessons observed and was evident in both religious education and English books. Religious education lessons allow pupils to review previous scripture referenced in their verbal and written responses so that this knowledge becomes embedded. This practice was observed to be part of the teaching routine showing that leaders and governors ensure that professional development of styles and methods of teaching is a priority. Monitoring of lessons and books ensures consistency of approaches across the school so that every child has access to quality religious education teaching where teaching is at least good. The school invites governors to view pupil books and other evidence in order to ensure the high quality of religious education and its parity with other core subjects. This allows governors to be well informed about the standards of the children's work in class and to quality assure the headteacher and religious education leader's evaluation of the subject. The subject is well resourced and has parity with other core subjects.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade

2

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

The school's mission statement says, 'We inspire one another to learn, grow and shine'. This was seen through the children who are on a journey in developing their skills in planning and leading collective worship. Pupils work well with other pupils and staff to prepare increasingly engaging experiences of prayerfulness. Through introducing a wider range of experiences, consistent approaches and with the commitment of leaders, pupils from a young age are able to respond to the experiences of prayer and liturgy provided by the school. Inspectors observed pupils respond and join in with community prayer. The school encourages older pupils to make links between prayer and liturgy, the curriculum, the wider life of the school and beyond. This was seen when pupils were making links between Sikhism, Christianity and service to others. Children are able to resource scripture for various themes as part of the support offered to them by the school, and use this to plan and lead collective worship for their peers. Moving forward, the school is aware of the need to develop all pupils' capacity to plan quality prayer and liturgy sessions and to evaluate their work. . Alongside this is the school's journey to enable its pupils to plan and lead prayer and worship completely independently. The School Charter is, 'Be safe, be a learner, be kind and respectful'. This was observed in prayer and worship when pupils were reverent and engaged in the collective worship that their classmates had planned and provided for them. To improve, the children need to be able to lead and plan collective worship independently.

The school hall has been adapted to ensure the space is appropriate for acts of worship. This, together with effective reorganisation of the classroom, has resulted in sacred spaces all around the school. Time and attention is given to ensure that these spaces are used appropriately and are conducive to prayer. Our Lady and St Gerard's has developed the staff to improve their skills in helping pupils plan and lead collective worship. The school provides a range of prayer and

liturgy experiences which allow pupils to celebrate, reflect and respond to moments of joy and sorrow. Observations during the inspection showed that an increasing number of both staff and children are equipped to do this, however all pupils need to be reflective and responsive. Scripture passages, informed by the liturgical season, form the heart of prayer and liturgy. This was observed to be the case and meant that children were able to participate in appropriate reflections.

Prayer and Liturgy is given the highest priority by the headteacher, and all leaders are continuing to develop the skillset of the whole community. A range of events, for example Celebration of the Eucharist and assemblies around feast days and events, are carefully planned. The liturgical year links with the content of religious education lessons and Celebration of the Word which take place each week. These services are shared with parents and the community, showing that the schools' policy and approach to prayer and liturgy is well formulated and fit for purpose. The children can articulate their understanding of participation and responsibilities. Leaders offer regular opportunities for the professional development of all staff that incorporate liturgical formation and the planning of prayer and liturgy. Leaders and governors understand different levels and skills of participation of staff and pupils and have a clear strategy for building these skills up. All staff understand the importance of prayer and liturgy. Leaders and governors' evaluation of collective worship is accurate. They review the quality and impact of prayer and liturgy as part of the school's cycle of self-evaluation and plan improvements. As a result of this, leaders know the strengths of collective worship and have planned how improvements can be achieved.

Information about the school

Full name of school	Our Lady & St Gerard's Roman Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	119639
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8883736
Full postal address of the school	Our Lady & St Gerard's Roman Catholic Primary School, Lourdes Avenue, Lostock Hall, Preston, PR5 5TB
School phone number	01772335025
Headteacher	Kerry Harvey
Chair of governors	Mr J Kingswood
School Website	www.ourlady-st-gerards.lancs.sch.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	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	21st March 2017
Previous denominational inspection grade	1

The inspection team

Jim Graves	Lead
Marie Kwiatkowski	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