

St Augustine's Catholic Primary School

URN: 102842

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Brentwood

22–23 May 2025

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

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

2

Compliance statement

- The school is fully compliant with the general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishop's Conference.
- The school is fully compliant with any additional requirements of the diocesan bishop.
- The school has responded fully to the areas for improvements from the last inspection.

What the school does well

- The school environment is well maintained and its Catholic charism is clearly evident throughout.
- Pupils build on prior learning year on year and make good progress in religious education.
- Staff are positive role models through their relationships with all and fully bear witness to the school's mission statement.
- Relationships with parents are particularly strong and foster a deep sense of belonging to the whole of the St Augustine's community.
- Pupils are a credit to the school. Their behaviour and politeness towards each other is exemplary.

What the school needs to improve

- Optimise learning in religious education by using more varied, imaginative and creative tasks.
- Provide regular professional development opportunities for all staff to support pupils to plan, lead and evaluate age-appropriate prayer and liturgy experiences.
- Develop and implement effective systems of monitoring to inform rigorous self-evaluation for Catholic life and mission and Prayer and Liturgy across the school.

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 fully embrace and pray the school mission statement: 'following Jesus, our school family shows love and respect for one another and the world around us.' Younger pupils join in with the actions and older pupils can explain that 'we are trying to do this in our school community and the world.' One pupil explained, 'it is about how we treat our neighbours, that is everyone, not just the people who live next door.' Pupils know they are cared for. They are all happy and secure at St Augustine's. Parents recognise that their children are very happy at school. One parent said, 'I want them to stay here forever.' Through their knowledge of the school's mission statement, values and the teaching in religious education, pupils demonstrate good moral development. Pupils are kind and respectful to everyone. They have a good understanding of Catholic social teaching and are proactive in choosing and organising fundraising events through their Enterprise4charity initiative. During the year pupils sing at a local residential home and have raised money for cancer charities and the Myanmar Earthquake appeal. They know their actions result from the example of Jesus. Pupils have a profound respect for each other, regardless of their needs. They celebrate each other's success from an early age. Their behaviour and politeness towards each other are exemplary. Pupils respond positively to the school's chaplaincy provision.

One member of staff attested that 'the ethos of the school matches the mission statement. This school has a welcoming and supportive culture.' Staff commitment and sense of community are exceptionally strong. Staff actions reflect the school mission through service to the community and charity work; twenty staff undertook the Race for Life. Parents are overwhelmingly positive regarding the approachability of all staff, who listen and support them regardless of need. Parents illustrate the school's inclusivity with numerous examples where staff have gone the

extra mile as advocates at hospital appointments, weekly meetings with families in need and support at times of bereavement. One parent explained: 'This school is highly inclusive and aims to impact the Catholic life and mission of fellowship and love to all.' Staff are exemplary role models, including the headteacher, who is universally appreciated as an inspiration, through his Gospel assemblies, open-door policy to all and his weekly prayers in newsletters. The pastoral care for pupils is the highest level. Vulnerable pupils are tracked by senior staff, ensuring appropriate support and interventions are offered. Throughout the school the Catholic identity is evident with attractive altars in the school halls. Reflective children's prayers for the Jubilee Year are displayed in the entrance. Beautiful displays and artefacts adorn the school sites. The relationship, sex and education policy meets diocesan requirements.

Leaders and governors can clearly articulate how Christ and the school's mission are at the heart of their work. Leaders attend training and governors access professional development organised by the diocese. There is a strong commitment to Catholic social teaching evident in their ensuring the preferential option for the poor through the school's pastoral work, support for a variety of charities and additional services to families. Pupils can access counselling and wrap-around care. School leaders give thoughtful consideration to the wellbeing of staff, which develops a culture of appreciation and kindness. Governors are ambitious for the Catholic life and mission of the school. They have a very good knowledge of the strategies to support families and build the school community through their regular visits. Governors should consider evidencing systematic and robust self-evaluation processes in the minutes of their meetings. Through the work of the school council pupils can make suggestions for school improvements. They requested space for reflection in the playground, and this has been provided. Induction is given to new members of staff to support them in their understanding of the life and mission of a Catholic school.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

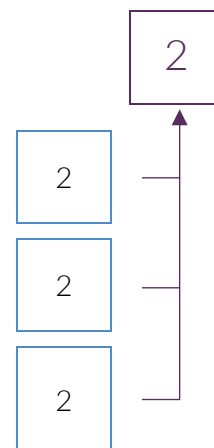
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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 receive a secure religious education. They are responding positively to the new religious education provision. Pupils reported that it makes them study in more depth and detail. They appreciate the way the curriculum builds and the opportunities it gives to recap and embed learning. They told inspectors that they enjoy using their Bibles and feel they are becoming more religiously literate. Evidence gathered supports this. Pupils can share their learning and link it to scripture. Pupils attest that their religious education has impacted and changed them. They report that they became more respectful, open and loving. Pupils speak comfortably and with increasing confidence about their learning. They posed thoughtful questions to clarify understanding. Learning is enhanced when pupils respond regularly to marking and when they are given time to evaluate their own learning. The adoption of this practice would benefit all teaching and learning in religious education in Key Stage 2. Pupils remain focused and respond well in lessons. Support staff, in most cases, are utilised effectively. Work produced by pupils is mainly well presented and has parity with English work. However, there is inconsistency and opportunities to transfer learning skills are missed. Pupils understand how marking and feedback helps them make progress. They feel comfortable to share if there is something that they do not understand. Younger children record their work in a variety of ways. Older pupils predominantly record via written activities. They need to be given a wider variety of creative activities and tasks. Parents shared that their children make good progress in religious education: "My child is being enriched in their religious education."

Teachers understand the importance of religious education and the impact it has on the development of each pupil. They feel that religious education is very well organised. Teachers told inspectors that: "they enjoy teaching the new religious education curriculum ... it has re-ignited our enthusiasm for religious education, we have learnt so much." However, staff subject

knowledge is variable. In the best lessons, teachers have a secure subject knowledge. Their confidence enables their teaching, and the learning of pupils, to be secure and reduces misconceptions. Lessons follow a consistent pattern which is well established. Teachers use questioning appropriately to encourage pupils to explain their thoughts and opinions. In the best lessons this maximises learning opportunities. Where teachers provide opportunities for pupils to respond to marking and feedback pupils successfully demonstrate their understanding, and teachers know how well pupils are doing and what they need to do to improve. Moderation undertaken in school is supporting staff in developing their assessment skills and judgements. Leaders should support all staff to build on this.

Leaders and governors have made sure that religious education is central to the curriculum. They have fully embraced the adoption and rolling out of the *Religious Education Directory* across the whole school. They follow it with fidelity. This allows pupils to progress year on year. All pupils' needs are met. Governors and leaders have collaborated with each other to ensure that strong outcomes are being achieved. Leaders are attentive to the needs of resourcing, staffing, and the accommodating of religious education. Leaders readily avail themselves of professional development opportunities to ensure they can keep abreast of the curriculum demands. The subject leader works extremely hard and was hugely instrumental in the successful launch of the *Directory* to the whole school. Her commitment to implementing the *Directory*, and familiarity with it, has resulted in teaching that is mainly good. Leaders' monitoring of the *Directory* has allowed them to understand areas of need to which they have responded in a timely manner. Leaders and governors need to continue to undertake self-evaluation in a robust form so that pupils receive the best outcomes and impact.

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

3

2

Pupils participate respectfully and respond well to prayer and liturgy experiences provided, engaging in silent reflection, joining in prayers and the recitation of the mission statement of the school, which is also animated with signing. They have a very good knowledge of the traditional prayers of the Church and can describe different times of the liturgical year, including Lent and how May is the month dedicated to Mary. They understand that scripture, silence and reflection are all part of how we pray. Pupils are beginning to take an active role when undertaking ministries which involve preparing prayer and liturgy, although these are fairly limited at the present time. Pupils know the significance of prayer and express that it is 'a way of communicating with God.' They are also aware of how prayer can help them, with one pupil stating that it helps them to feel better because 'God gives me the strength to overcome my sadness.' Throughout the school, pupils formulate their own prayers of thanks and petition; some of these are compiled in class prayer books which pupils use when praying.

Prayer and liturgy is central to the life of the school and because of this, significant moments in the school's life and Church's calendar are celebrated, for example the feast day of the school patron and the Mass at the start of the year on the feast of the Holy Cross. All pupils take part in a daily routine of prayer that reflects the prayer life of the Church. Scripture passages, suitable to the season or theme of the liturgy, are appropriately chosen. However, there is a need for further professional development for staff to increase their skill set so that there are more opportunities for creative prayer experiences. Staff demonstrate good levels of commitment to prayer and liturgy and set positive examples as active participants. However, they would welcome the relevant staff training required to be able to support pupils to take a more active role in planning leading and evaluating well-constructed prayer and liturgy. Space is well-used in classrooms, which all have a focal prayer table. Areas around the school, including the halls

and oratory, are well-maintained and provide pupils with a place for quiet reflection. School Masses, celebrated in the parish church, strengthen the links between school and the wider faith community. The parish priest reports that pupils 'feel very at home' in the church and he welcomes the efforts of Key Stage 2 pupils who serve at daily Masses before school.

The school's policy on prayer and liturgy is accessible and available to all staff. This now needs to be further-developed to ensure that it is useful to staff and can be used consistently as a reference point, particularly when planning for pupil-led prayer and liturgy. Whole-school prayer and liturgy is well-planned, reflects the liturgical year and is matched to pupils' ages and experiences. Masses on holy days of obligation and other significant days are prioritised by leaders and governors. There is a planned programme of professional development for staff. However, this now needs to focus on enhancing staff skills, enabling them to confidently plan, lead and evaluate celebrations of the word and consistently support pupils to do the same. Leaders demonstrate a good understanding of the variety of prayer traditions within the Catholic Church but this now needs to be disseminated to all staff to enhance prayer and liturgy experiences. Leaders and governors have ensured resources are prioritised for prayer and liturgy, as seen in the extensive prayer spaces across the school. Governors have a good knowledge of prayer and liturgy through attendance at assemblies and masses. However, there is now a need to ensure that all monitoring activity is part of a more rigorous cycle of self-evaluation and school improvement.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Augustine's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	102842
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	3173500
Full postal address of the school	St Augustine's Catholic Primary School, Cranbrook Road, Gants Hill, Ilford, IG2 6RG
School phone number	02085541919
Headteacher	Pius Olorunfe-Ojo
Chair of governors	Brenda McEwen
School Website	www.staugustinesschool.org.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	October 2018
Previous denominational inspection grade	1

The inspection team

Mrs Sheila Birtles	Lead
Mrs Gael Hicks	Team
Mrs Laura White	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