



St Michael's Catholic Primary School

URN: 150664

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Brentwood

26–27 September 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

2

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 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

- St Michael's is fully compliant with the general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishops' conference.
- St Michael's is fully compliant with any additional requirements of the diocesan bishop.
- St Michael's has fully completed all areas for improvement from the last inspection.

What the school does well

- St Michael's is a welcoming school where staff, pupils and families feel valued and there is a strong sense of community and inclusivity.
- Staff provide the highest level of care for all pupils and are excellent role models embodying their mission statement.
- Pupils clearly articulate the St Michael's Way and endeavour to live out its mission.
- There is a flourishing partnership between the school and the local parish and the parish priest has a visible presence in the life and mission of the school.
- Pupils' religious literacy is well developed and this enables pupils to engage fully in lessons.

What the school needs to improve

- Ensure staff and pupils know and understand their role in responding to the principles of Catholic social teaching to enhance their faith in action.
- Provide staff with professional development opportunities so that they can enable all pupils to independently prepare, lead and evaluate prayer and liturgy.
- Ensure that effective governor monitoring and self-evaluation holds all fully accountable.

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

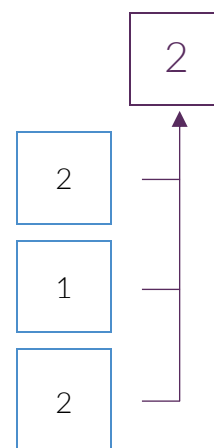
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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



All members of St Michael's community understand and value the Catholic nature of the school. They fully embrace the St Michael's Way mission statement, 'in the footsteps of Jesus, we strive to achieve excellence in everything we do'. One parent commented, 'how the school was like a family unit where staff take the time to know each child individually'. The St Michael's Way mural beautifully reminds every one of their mission and how to fulfil it. A pupil stated that, 'it helps them to grow as people they want to be, helping others, like Jesus did'. Pupils readily engage in fundraising activities and have helped a number of charities including a local food bank, the Salvation Army and Cafod. Pupils now need to link these activities specifically to the principles of Catholic social teaching and understand how their actions can impact on and change other people's lives. Pupils are deeply respectful of themselves and of others and because of this, behaviour is exemplary throughout the school. They are very proud to be part of their school. Pupils are beginning to take a lead in putting their faith into action and the Mini-Vinnies take their responsibilities seriously; they now need to consider what actions they need to undertake and the difference it will make to their community.

The mission statement is firmly rooted in Gospel values and drives the daily life of school. The friendly nature of St Michael's ensures all are valued without exception. Appreciation of families of all cultures and faiths is woven into the fabric of the school and the annual international evening celebrating this is always well attended. Pastoral care is strong, and as a result, pupils know that they are appreciated and feel safe. There is a strong commitment to the most vulnerable. Staff are caring role models and, through their relationships with each other, and the support they offered to the school community, they bear witness to the St Michael's Way. The parish priest is an active member of the school community, enabling pupils to develop a sense

of spirituality and belonging to Christ's family. Pupils speak with enthusiasm of his visits. The physical school environment of St Michael's is witness to the Catholic character of the school. The provision for relationships, sex and health education meets the statutory and diocesan requirements, has been effectively shared with parents and is on the website. This curriculum is adapted well to meet the needs of pupils and surveys have offered valuable feedback.

The executive headteacher and her leadership team have a clear vision and are committed to ensuring that the mission of the school is at the heart of what they do. Leaders and governors are dedicated and passionate about pupils experiencing an enriched Catholic education that allows them to grow as active citizens. The citizenship fortnight celebration ensures that pupils understand their role in society. Staff have received training and come together to support each other and there is an effective induction process in place for those new to the school and for those new to Catholic education. School policies reflect the Catholic identity and charism of the school. The school engages positively with the diocese, and staff attend meetings and training. Leaders have worked hard to develop a strong and thriving partnership with parents and the other schools in the OLOG Trust. Parents are kept well informed of school events and are always invited to join the school community for liturgical events and celebrations. The school's self-evaluation is leading to effective improvements to further enhance the life and mission of the school. This evaluation now needs to include more challenge from governors as well as pupil voice.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

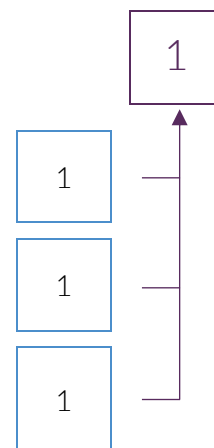
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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



Religious education permeates the whole curriculum of the school. Pupils achieve well, making very good progress as they move throughout the school, and developing excellent knowledge and understanding of their faith. The religious literacy of pupils is well embedded and evidenced in their discussions in class, the depth of their responses and written work. Pupils take pride in their work and it is of a consistently high standard. Pupils enjoy their lessons, engage fully, participate with enthusiasm and have a passion to learn, often linking their learning to the actions needed in their daily lives to make a difference. One pupil stated that, 'we enjoy our lessons as it brings us peace and we know it helps us know who we are.' Pupils' attitude to all aspects of learning in religious education is consistently positive and makes a significant contribution to the progress they make. Pupils deepen their knowledge about what they have learned by asking meaningful questions, which allows them to reflect upon their faith. Pupils have a clear understanding of how well they are doing in their lessons and can clearly explain what they need to do to improve their work through the use of effective and targeted teacher marking.

Teachers have a high level of confidence due to strong subject knowledge and teaching expertise. An example of this was when exploring the greatest commandment of all, the teacher skilfully facilitated a discussion that challenged and enhanced pupil responses. Opportunities for retrieval of prior knowledge are clearly embedded and pupils can actively recall previous learning which then supports them in building upon what they already know. The explicit teaching of vocabulary is evident in most lessons and is accurately explained so that pupils understood key concepts. Lessons also demonstrate that teachers have high expectations of their pupils and are proficient at checking understanding and addressing misconceptions. Planning is informed by pupil assessments, leading to a consolidation of learning, and staff know their pupils and their

individual needs and adapt their teaching accordingly. Across all lessons, questioning is used effectively, enabling pupils to demonstrate their understanding. Pupils are given opportunities to present their learning in a variety of ways, including role-play, responding to religious art, and writing for a range of purposes such as scripture analysis, letter writing and witness statements. Staff also celebrate pupils' work, motivating and enthusing them; pupils enjoy the homework that is set for them to complete with their families. Committed teaching assistants are deployed well to support vulnerable pupils or those with additional needs so that every pupil can be a successful learner.

Leaders and governors are proud and supportive of the school. The executive headteacher and subject leader present reports and training during governor meetings and there is a link governor. Leaders and governors ensure that the school fully meets the requirements of the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*. There is a plan for the implementation of the *Religious Education Directory*, which is now being executed across the Early Years and Key Stage 1 classes. Religious education has parity with other core subjects in terms of time allocation, resourcing and accommodation. The subject leader is passionate about her role and has a desire to further grow staff and pupil knowledge and skills. She shares her expertise with colleagues, enabling them to develop best practice and because of this, staff feel supported. The subject leader, with support from the leadership team, monitors and evaluates through learning walks, lesson observations, and work and planning scrutinies, and staff are given helpful advice which contributes to the outcomes of pupils. Governors know they need to be more actively involved in evaluating and challenging leaders to ensure sustained strategic improvement and a rigour to self-evaluation that leads to school improvement.

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

The experiences of prayer and liturgy provided by the school engage pupils of all ages and they respond well to these experiences including the celebration of the patron saint of their school where they showed great commitment to worship. Pupils are able to describe parts of the liturgical year, including time to reflect during Advent and Lent. Pupils enjoy opportunities to pray traditional prayers and show great reverence. Their uplifting singing enhances the prayer life of the school and all pupils respond positively to opportunities to pause, reflect and pray as a faith community. Pupils willingly undertake the role of altar servers during school Masses and within the parish. The Mini-Vinnies have opportunities to create prayers on specific chosen themes and in some classes; there are experiences of spontaneous prayer and pupil-created prayers. Pupils can articulate the importance of prayer and the impact it has on their daily lives. One pupil expressed that praying was a way of speaking to God, making them feel important. They also spoke about the fact that not all of their prayers could always be answered by God as there were other people who needed more help than them.

The daily pattern of prayer and understanding of prayer in the Catholic tradition is part of the pupils' experiences at St Michael's and is central to the life of the school. Prayer is used at different times of the school day to bring them closer to God and pupils know many traditional prayers. Scripture passages that are used are relevant to the liturgical season. Staff are strong role models in creating dedicated focal areas in the classroom and providing experience of prayer within religious education lessons. Pupils act as 'Mass Buddies' for younger pupils during whole-school Masses, helping their peers to know the structure of the Mass and to pray respectfully. The Wednesday Word is available to families and through the addition of reflective questions it helps pupils to understand the power of prayer and participate more fully in liturgies. There is a flourishing partnership between the school and the parish which enables

pupils, staff and parents to celebrate special events together. Although the school environment contains signs of the school's Catholic nature and there is evidence of prayer spaces in classrooms, additional attention needs to be given to ensure there are dedicated places for reflection both inside and on the school grounds.

Leaders and governors value prayer and liturgy in the school and allocate appropriate resources. They also guarantee the school calendar, including holy days of obligation, provides opportunities for pupils to attend Mass so that they can receive the Eucharist. Leaders ensure pupils know the traditional prayers of the Church and provide time for reflection. The school's policy on prayer and liturgy is available to all staff, governors and families. This now needs to be further developed to ensure that it is useful to staff to use consistently as a reference point when planning prayer and liturgy. Staff skills also now need to be developed to enable them to effectively lead their own prayer and liturgy as well as empowering pupils to increase their abilities to plan, lead and evaluate prayer and liturgy experiences. Governors are committed and enthusiastic about the development of prayer and liturgy. Leaders and governors are developing systems to monitor and evaluate the quality of prayer and liturgy. To further improve outcomes for pupils in this area, leaders and governors must now ensure that there is a strategic cycle of monitoring that focuses on concise planning, evidences practice and reviews systemically progress linked to school improvement plans.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Michael's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	150664
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	3163507
Full postal address of the school	St Michael's Catholic Primary School, Howard Road, East Ham, London, E6 6EE
School phone number	002084723964
Headteacher	Natasha Scott
Chair of local governing body	Justin Placid
School Website	www.st-michaels.newham.sch.uk/
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Our Lady Of Grace Catholic Academy Trust
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Academy
Admissions policy	Non-selective
Age-range of pupils	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	21 March 2018
Previous denominational inspection grade	1

The inspection team

Miss Isabel Quinn
Mrs Katherine Parker

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