

St Teresa's Catholic Primary School

URN: 138311

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Brentwood

13–14 November 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

1

Collective worship (p.7)

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

1

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

1

Compliance statement

- The school is fully compliant with the general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishops' 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 implementation of the *Religious Education Directory* is developing well across the school and having a positive impact on outcomes.
- Pupil and staff know they are loved and cherished and made in the unique likeness of God.
- The highest level of pastoral care in a nurturing environment ensures all pupils, including the most vulnerable, flourish and achieve their full potential.
- The school's mission is actively lived out in daily practice, with pupils and staff consistently demonstrating the core values of the school.
- The leaders and governors are highly effective, and their strategic vision and collaborative approach empower the whole community to embrace its Catholic identity.

What the school needs to improve

- Increase the variety and experience of prayer in school by using, for example, Litany, Visio Divina, and meditation.
- Upskill all staff by sharing models of exemplary practice in prayer and liturgy.

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 Teresa's are able to clearly articulate the school's mission, which is known and lived throughout the school. They understand that they are deeply cherished and loved. This warmth is extended outwards to parish groups such as the 'Friendship Group' and the wider community. Pupils have a profound understanding that they are learning to follow in the footsteps of Jesus. One pupil shared : 'Since we are only little we know we can build up our strength and knowledge about our Catholic life to maybe become like missionaries ourselves, just like St Teresa'. Active pupil voice enables pupils to contribute fully to school life and take ownership of responding to need and therefore living their faith in action. Pupils love coming to school and speak eloquently about how important it is to understand and remember those in need and to care for them. The Mini Vinnies are a wonderful example of this in action. They have raised funds in school and work alongside the parish's St Vincent De Paul Society (SVP) in charitable outreach. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They support each other in all areas of school life. The 'Little Way of St Teresa' is applied to all aspects of school life but is so deeply embedded that it is the natural pattern of life at St Teresa's. Parents reported, 'the focus on values such as compassion, respect and service helps the children to grow spiritually' and 'Catholic life and mission runs through the veins of St Teresa's.'

The school's Catholic ethos is the golden thread that runs through all the school does. From the moment visitors enter the building a warm welcome is received. 'Our faith is at the heart of everything we do'. Staff ensure that the mission and values are prominent and are known by all across the school. Early career teachers spoke positively about the school's Catholic life and mission and the positive impact it has had on them : 'Everyone is inherently good and kind.' A strong collegiate bond binds the staff so that the school is a calm, joyful, place where all are

invited to flourish. The HIVE is a wonderful example of how the school's most vulnerable pupils are cared for. Staff know families very well and parents unanimously appreciate this. They speak highly of the school being 'encompassing, tailoring to individual needs and being very welcoming'. The school environment is testament to this with inspiring scripture quotations strategically placed in the beautiful displays and prayer spaces. The school's excellent relationships with the parish priest enables the school to have a vibrant liturgy and a host of opportunities for greater formation. The new parish priest is keen to emulate this. The provision for relationships, sex and health education (RSHE) fully meets diocesan requirements and is firmly rooted in Catholic teaching. 'St Teresa's is a wonderful school with the dedication of an amazing staff team,' a parent reported.

Leaders and governors lead the team extremely well. Their vision is clear and they are determined to provide an outstanding education and experience for all. All policies reflect the school's Catholic character and it is abundantly clear that the school's Catholic identity is at the heart of all they do. The school works in partnership with the diocese and follows its expectations whilst also supporting other colleagues within the diocese. The strong link between the school, church and parish is outstanding. For example, the church raised funds for the school after their recent flood. The leader for religious education is outstanding in her work and in supporting her colleagues. She is extremely highly regarded for the commitment she makes to the school and to the wider community. The inspirational and dedicated headteacher who, 'notices the gifts and talents of staff', is passionate about Catholic education. Her work, alongside her team, ensures that St Teresa's is an exceptional school.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

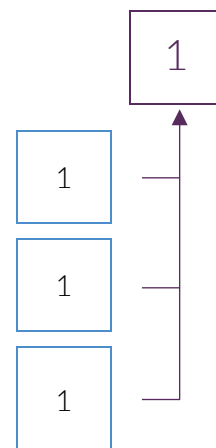
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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 wonderfully rich and creative religious education as a result of the school's fidelity to the *Religious Education Directory*. Pupils are curious, actively engaged and focus on tasks and learning swiftly. They are encouraged to think deeply to clarify their understanding. Questioning allows embedded and deeper learning outcomes to be achieved. This is driven by the very well-planned lessons which 'hook' pupils in. This was evident in drama and the use of story bags. Pupils are given the opportunity to record their work in a variety of ways, for example through the excellent utilisation of the 'See Saw' app. Religious education books are outstanding examples of the excellent work the children do. They are extremely well presented. The work within books is of a consistently high standard, demonstrating strong progress across the whole school through an impressive range of tasks such as art, pamphlets, storyboards, diary entries as well as opportunities for sustained writing. Younger pupils are encouraged to find their own voice. Verbal feedback is given appropriately, helping children to identify what they do well and what they can do better. As they move through the school, marking allows pupils to know how and what they need to do next. Pupils are invited by staff within the marking of work to answer deeper questions, and pupils respond to this. Pupils make very good progress year on year in religious education.

Teachers have very good subject knowledge. This drives up standards and allows pupils to make excellent progress. Teachers have fully embraced the adoption of the *Religious Education Directory*. The excellent professional development and training the staff have received has enabled them to deliver high quality teaching. Strategic planning has hugely benefitted the pupils. Its impact is seen within the school's assessment procedures. Children in the Nursery receive an inspirational and creative immersion into religious education. Excellent teacher-pupil relationships help pupils feel secure to ask and answer probing questions. Techniques used

within school such as 'think a little bit further' and 'would you like to bounce that idea?' help pupils to clarify their thinking. Staff listen to pupil voice and adapt teaching to be creative and engaging. As a result, pupils apply themselves fully to their learning. All staff understand and regard religious education as the 'core of the curriculum' and that pupils are holistically transformed by the education they receive. This has been noticed by parents. Resources are available and used to great effect to support and enhance learning. The HIVE is a credit to the school. It is a wonderful example of how adaptive teaching, highly trained staff and excellent resources enable all learners to succeed.

Leaders and governors ensure that religious education is at the heart of the curriculum. It is delivered to a very high standard. Religious education is given a higher status than other core subjects and the books are acknowledged as 'precious'. The subject is well resourced with professional development a key focus. The subject lead has a clear and strategic vision which is fully supported by the headteacher. This has allowed for the successful implementation and transition to the *Religious Education Directory* by the whole school. The subject leader supports planning and teaching by modelling and delivering ongoing targeted training. Her support is hugely appreciated by staff. Detailed monitoring and evaluation ensures that priorities for improvement are swiftly identified, regularly discussed and reviewed so that gaps are addressed. Leaders make sure that pupils receive a robust, creative and imaginative religious curriculum. Governors are fully committed to the school and fully supportive of its vision. They visit the school regularly, offering support and challenge. They know the school very well and have benefitted from *Religious Education Directory* training. This has enabled them to be strategic in their actions and planning and has resulted in outstanding outcomes in religious education.

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

1

Provision

The quality of collective worship provided by the school

1

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for collective worship

1

1

Pupils engage respectfully in a full, active and joyous prayer life at St Teresa's. The youngest pupils take part in preparing liturgies with enthusiasm and care, whilst the oldest pupils confidently plan, lead and evaluate worship at a deep and reflective level. Parents share that their children particularly enjoy being invited to lead prayer, recognising how it strengthens their confidence and faith. There are consistently strong links to scripture, which is central to worship and used meaningfully to deepen pupils' experience of prayer and worship. Appropriate liturgical music is thoughtfully chosen to create a calm, reverent atmosphere, as well as offering opportunities for pupils to pray to God through song. Pupils clearly articulate the ways in which prayer and liturgy shape their lives, influence their thinking about the world, and inspire their actions. One child shared : *"Prayer takes a key part in my life; sharing prayer and scripture makes my bond strong with God and this continues to grow."*

Prayer and liturgy is a central and cherished part of each school day, nourishing the whole community. Provision in the early years is particularly inspiring; there is a tangible feeling of Christ's presence during class prayer and liturgy, and children's natural reverence creates deeply moving moments of shared faith. There is a highly effective and intentional progression of pupil-led prayer throughout the school. Nursery pupils begin to "dip into" leadership responsibilities in simple yet meaningful ways, while Reception children immerse themselves fully in the prayer experience, confidently participating and beginning to shape worship. As pupils move through the school, they progressively take on greater responsibility for planning, leading and evaluating class prayer and worship, culminating in highly skilled and spiritually mature leadership by the oldest pupils. High-quality prayer spaces are created in every classroom and across communal areas, visually uplifting the prayer life of the school. The church is regularly used to enrich pupils' experiences, and Masses are celebrated frequently and attended warmly by families.

Leaders and Governors know the school incredibly well and are deeply committed to ensuring that prayer and liturgy remain a central priority. Staff are provided with many opportunities to

pray together, which they value greatly, strengthening the spiritual life of the whole community. The strategic and passionate headteacher, together with the highly skilled and dedicated subject leader, are experts in nurturing consistently high-quality experiences of prayer and liturgy. Leaders and governors provide meaningful professional development, and staff speak highly of the ongoing guidance and support that further enhances pupils' prayer experiences. It is abundantly clear that pupils are at the heart of every decision made, and that prayer and liturgy remain central to the Catholic life and mission of the school, supported by strong, trusting relationships across the community.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Teresa's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	138311
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8813321
Full postal address of the school	St Teresa's Catholic Primary School, Clairmont Road, Lexden, Colchester, CO3 9BE
School phone number	01206508445
Headteacher	Becky Maguire
Chair of local governing body	Peter Johnson
School Website	http://www.st-teresas.essex.sch.uk
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	The Rosary Trust - A Catholic Multi Academy
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	March 2019
Previous denominational inspection grade	1

The inspection team

Sheila Birtles
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