

St Basil's Catholic Primary School

URN: 111390

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Archbishop of Liverpool

26–27 March 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

Religious education (p.5)

The quality of curriculum religious education

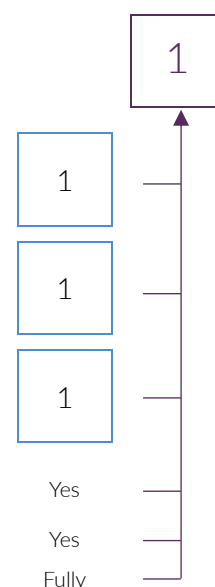
Collective worship (p.7)

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

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 to the areas for improvement from the last inspection



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 the additional requirements of the Archdiocese of Liverpool.
- The school has addressed all areas for improvement identified in the last inspection.

What the school does well

- The headteacher is an exceptional Catholic leader who ensures that the school's mission is truly lived out daily by the whole community.
- The pupils are exemplary ambassadors for the school and live to serve others by being the face of Christ to all.
- The religious education lead has an inspiring vision for her subject. She is generous in sharing her expertise and this is recognised and appreciated by the staff of St Basil's, the archdiocese and nationally.
- Relationships are nurtured and valued so that all members of the school community feel safe, loved and trusted.
- The whole school environment reflects the school's unique Catholic character with quality displays, prayer spaces and the celebration of scripture.

What the school needs to improve

- Continue to enrich Catholic social teaching by enabling pupils to develop an understanding of the school's patron St Basil and his mission to minister to the most vulnerable in society.
- Increase the confidence of teachers in their application of creative arts within religious education lessons to enhance the curriculum further.
- Further deepen the prayer life of the school by introducing the pupils to a wider variety of approaches to prayer.

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



St Basil's is a place of genuine welcome and inclusion. Its community is proud to belong to the school family. Pupils actively live out the mission, 'We Love, Learn and Succeed following Jesus with commitment and enthusiasm'. It is evident that the school is at the heart of the home, school and parish community and provides a place of sanctuary for its pupils. Pupils respond well to the demands of Catholic social teaching, and some can articulate aspects of the theology underpinning the associated actions. Pupil leaders who take part in projects such as the RE Ambassadors group undertake a range of responsibilities with skill and determination. Excellent relationships result in outstanding behaviour both in class and around school. Pupils support several charities and organisations including the local foodbank. They undertake these actions with a joy and kindness that demonstrates their faith commitment. During the inspection, the whole school put their heart and soul into an exciting, outdoor fundraising afternoon for Mary's Meals during which the pupils learnt about the different countries they were supporting.

Christ is at the heart of this school and all who enter encounter him. St Basil's staff know their pupils and families well and as a result their needs are acutely met through excellent pastoral care. The school environment provides a shining witness to its unique mission and charism. Collaborations with a local artist has enhanced this further. There is thoughtful and planned care in the school surroundings both internally and externally that provide constant reminders of the Catholic character of the school. This reflects the parish priest's vision of the school being a missionary outreach for the church community. There are many foci for prayer and reflection inside the school building which are of the highest standard and express the changing liturgical seasons. The imaginatively planned and themed school years that highlight school values, provide the community with many opportunities to grow in virtue. The school has worked

closely with external agencies to develop restorative systems. The Peer Mediators who have been trained by the Society of Friends (Quakers), work across the school. One member commented, "As a peer mediator I feel proud – I used to have problems but now I'm the one sorting them out for others, it makes me feel good and helps others." The school is highly inclusive. The Rainbow Unit is a resourced provision that ensures children with complex learning needs are welcomed, loved and nurtured alongside their peers. The provision for relationships, sex, and health education meets archdiocesan and statutory requirements.

Taking the lead from the headteacher, leaders and governors recognise that they have a vocational call to serve the community. This in turn inspires the staff to fully embrace the mission of the school. The school and parish work hard to ensure that pupils experience Church as an important part of their lives. The regular attendance of year groups at the Monday parish Mass is key to this. Driven and determined leadership ensures that the whole community is empowered to improve the lives of others and care for our common home. The curriculum is enhanced greatly by the enrichment activities and trips planned for all pupils. They spoke highly of these joyful experiences that include visits to the local parks and museum. Staff in need of professional development are effectively supported and value the ways in which they are nurtured. The governance of the school is strong because members embrace their role as committed guardians of the faith. They know the school incredibly well and are aware of what the school does well and the challenges it faces.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

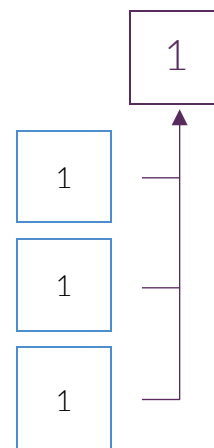
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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 display a high level of religious literacy and can make insightful links to scripture and prior learning. Pupils are articulate in how they apply the messages from scripture to their own lives. During the inspection pupils demonstrated excellent learning behaviour. They were focussed and eager to learn, whilst sustaining high levels of independence and concentration. Presentation in books is consistently strong. This indicates the pride pupils show in their work. Pupils are engaged, enthusiastic, curious, and independent learners because their teachers and support staff have consistently high expectations of them and provide a range of engaging activities. Pupils work independently, openly sharing ideas and listening sensitively to others. They relate their work to their daily lives and see the relevance of the scripture they have engaged with. Pupils experience awe and wonder in their religious education lessons because of the high-quality resources that are engaging and exciting. This was particularly noticeable in a Year One lesson when the story of the Widow's Mite was unpacked from the 'golden box'. Pupils use their imagination well, for example Year 3 pupils used matzo bread to recreate the last supper, using Jesus' words. All pupils, including disadvantaged and those with special educational needs and disabilities are making good progress.

Teachers show deep commitment and have high expectations for all pupils. Their secure subject knowledge ensures that religious education is shared at an age-appropriate level. The curriculum is well-designed, richly resourced and is planned in line with the requirements of the new Religious Education Directory. Spiritual and moral development is given high priority because teachers understand the impact religious education has on the lives of their pupils. Scripture is discussed and explained in detail, enabling the pupils to fully understand its meaning and significance in their lives and how it links to their school mission. All teachers follow the school's marking and feedback policy, so recognising and valuing pupils' efforts. Classroom displays reflect current learning and provide further support and prompts in lessons. In the Year 4-5 lesson, pupils listened intently to the stories of modern-day martyrs and could relate these

to the school's mission and values. Well-presented displays in classrooms and around the school, portfolios and books celebrate learning in religious education. They are attractive and creative, showing that pupils are enabled to work using a wide variety of strategies which in turn enhances their learning. Purposeful reflection and discussion time is given in lessons to ensure pupils make sense of the world around them. During lessons, all members of staff are well deployed to provide maximum support for learning.

Leaders have planned an effective roll out programme for the introduction of the new Religious Education Directory up to Year 3. Staff have witnessed the positive impact of this on the outcomes for pupils and as a result are excited to serve in its implementation across the school. Governors and senior members of staff provide committed support for the religious education leader. Together they are role models because of the provision of quality continued professional development for all staff. Staff are given many opportunities to attend high quality professional development in-house, and through cluster gatherings arranged with other local schools. The highly effective monitoring of teaching and learning contributes to the school's strong outcomes. Leaders and governors participate in and evaluate this feedback. The religious education lead has an inspiring vision for the subject. She is generous in sharing her expertise and this is recognised and appreciated by the staff, the archdiocese and nationally through her work with Mission Together. Early career teachers are well supported by senior and other staff to ensure they develop their confidence and subject knowledge.

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 are joyful in their prayer and liturgy. They sing and pray with great enthusiasm, and this was notable in early years where they did so with great enthusiasm and responded to prayer by each placing a penny in the Mary's Meals mug. Pupils, appropriate to their age and faith, understand that they can experience prayer in a variety of ways for example by praying the rosary or following the stations of the cross. Pupils gather knowing it is a special time. They are respectful and still in God's presence. From the youngest classes, pupils greet the gospel using words and signs correctly. Practice is clearly embedded as pupils naturally and reverently join in with responses and reflect in silence. These reflections include newly adopted elements introduced following the launch of the Prayer and Liturgy Directory. There is a wide variety of elements used, such as the use of scripture, art, silent reflection and carefully selected music. Pupils are confident in their use of the four-part structure for celebrations of the word. They undertake liturgical ministries with equal confidence. During the inspection Year 6 pupils led a celebration of the word to mark and to greatly reverence the solemnity of the Annunciation.

Prayer and liturgy is central to the life of Saint Basil's. There is a daily and weekly routine for prayer together with appropriately planned opportunities for worship. Senior leaders and staff are inspiring models of exemplary practice through their participation and in their planning and delivery of prayer and worship. Consequently, pupils mirror their reverence and respect, praying and responding sensitively. Governors and a local assistant priest spoke highly of the school's participation in the parish Mass each Monday and for special seasonal feasts and occasions. Staff are highly skilled and knowledgeable in creating prayer opportunities for pupils. Scripture is used extremely well, and readings are chosen in accordance with the liturgical seasons. Prayer spaces are inviting, well maintained and accessible to all pupils. The school has recently created a new area with a statue of Our Lady dedicated to a former governor. In this space there are cushions for pupils to use, making the area very inviting for their prayer and reflection. Parents, carers and governors are frequently invited to participate in the prayer life of the school and

refer to them very favourably. During the inspection the early years teacher led a special Mother's Day celebration that was well attended. The school website has extensive galleries of past celebrations which can be accessed by all.

Prayer, liturgy and worship are central to the life of the school. The robust monitoring and evaluation schedule has helped staff further strengthen their delivery. They feel so well supported. Leaders, including governors have a clear vision for building pupils' skills and participation as they progress through the school. There is a clear policy for prayer and liturgy and the structure of the content together with its delivery is planned to be of assistance in helping staff and pupils develop an appreciation of prayer in their lives. Prayer and liturgy is a priority when setting the budget, ensuring that the quality of resources are consistently high. Leaders ensure the liturgical year is followed and seasons and holy days are commemorated and celebrated as appropriate to enable maximum opportunities to bring the school community together. The governors know that times of prayer are ways of sharing God's love through their work in reinforcing the school's overall strength as a Catholic community. Leaders and governors ensure that staff receive high quality training to deliver prayer and liturgy, which results in high levels of confidence, motivation and skill.

.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Basil's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	111390
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8763648
Full postal address of the school	St Basil's Catholic Primary School, Hough Green Road, Hough Green, Widnes, WA8 4SZ
School phone number	0151 424 7887
Headteacher	Mrs Angela Sheppard
Chair of governors	Mr Jim Duffy
School Website	www.stbasilsprimary.halton.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	9 th May 2018
Previous denominational inspection grade	2

The inspection team

David Delaney
Jude Ryan

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