



# St John Bosco Catholic Primary School

URN: 148535

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Archbishop of Birmingham

24–25 January 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

#### Religious education (p.5)

The quality of curriculum religious education

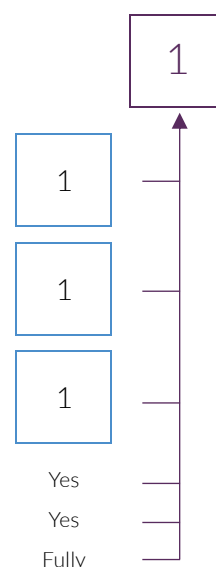
#### Collective worship (p.7)

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

The school is fully compliant with the curriculum requirements laid down by the Bishops' Conference

The school is fully compliant with all requirements of the diocesan bishop

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



## What the school does well

- Leaders, staff, and governors ensure that the school's Catholic life and mission have the highest priorities and demonstrate outstanding concern for all, particularly the needs of the most vulnerable.
- Leaders, staff, and governors place Catholic social teaching at the heart of every aspect of school life.
- The recently appointed religious education subject leader, supported by senior leaders, has an inspiring vision for the subject, which includes developing the highest quality teaching and learning.
- Pupils are confident in their reflections on prayer and liturgy and are enthusiastic in sharing the ways in which these have inspired them in their wider lives.

## What the school needs to improve

- Consistently use feedback to sufficiently challenge individual pupils' thinking and move their religious education learning forward.

## 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

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



The whole school community fully embraces and lives out the school's mission, 'Living, learning and growing in God's love.' This means pupils understand its meaning and show deep respect and care for others, including those of other religions. The mission underpins the school community's determination to support the needs of others through the principles of Catholic social teaching. This can be seen in pupils' determined efforts to support charities such as Cafod, Brushstrokes, the school community food bank, and the purchase of a school defibrillator. Pupils feel highly valued and cared for, expressing that, 'Teachers are compassionate; they listen to us and support everything we do.' Consequently, pupils are happy and confidently communicate how they follow Jesus' example and seek opportunities to demonstrate their personal responsibility in caring for the wider world and those in need. Behaviour in lessons and across the school is exemplary because pupils appreciate that they belong to a genuine Catholic school community and the attitudes and responsibilities this entails. Liturgy leads across the school take great pride in their responsibility, proactively participating in and contributing to the school's Catholic life. They are confident in demonstrating and articulating how we can live out the gospels' virtues and values.

Staff set an inspiring example and eagerly engage in activities which reflect the school's life and mission. They strive to build strong relationships, as seen in the warm welcome extended to all those in the school community and beyond. The pastoral care and nurture for pupils and their families is exceptional, and staff are committed to ensuring that individuals' dignity as a creation of God is safeguarded. One parent commented, 'We have absolute trust and confidence in the school providing a safe and supportive space for our children, which shows the school is diverse, inclusive, and looks after the vulnerable. These are Catholic values in action.' Staff plan creative

experiences, such as those on 'Faith-filled Fridays', to provide for all pupils, whatever their needs. The school environment is very attractive and reflects the school's unique identity and mission, offering nurturing spaces, such as 'The Rainbow Room' and a central prayer reflection area, which contribute positively to pupils' faith formation. Chaplaincy provision is central to ensuring that every member of the school community can respond to their individual vocation and develop well, morally and spiritually.

Leaders and governors clearly articulate the school's mission in serving the Church and show determination in promoting and developing its Catholic life. Religious education is firmly at the core of the curriculum and leaders ensure that the spiritual and moral development of pupils is woven throughout pupils' diet of learning; they have carefully planned its teaching within various subject areas. The school works hard to strengthen links with the local parish and parents. This has seen an increase in attendance at school and church-based school Masses and other liturgical services. Clear school policies and procedures, rooted in the school's Catholic mission, ensure that strategic priorities permeate all areas of school development. Leaders' and governors' ambitious vision ensures that Catholic life and mission are continually improving. Exercises such as regular pupil and parent surveys contribute to the accurate and precise identification of areas of school improvement. Governors are passionate, experienced, and thorough in contributing to the monitoring and evaluation of Catholic life and mission, validating the accuracy of leaders' self-evaluation judgements. The school caters very well for staff training, and also make use of opportunities provided by the multi-academy company (MAC), the Catholic Primary Partnership and the archdiocese. These are very beneficial for all staff, particularly those in the early stages of their career.

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

### Religious education key judgement grade

#### Pupil outcomes

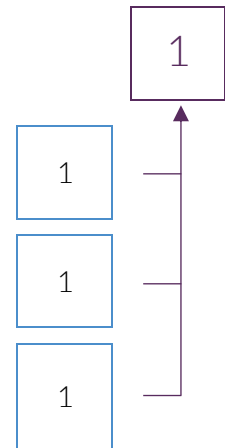
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

#### 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



A clear and consistent approach to religious education teaching ensures that pupils achieve high standards and make very good progress in knowing and remembering more. Analysis of data over time shows standards are in line with, and sometimes better, than national outcomes in other subjects. Pupils speak eloquently about how much they enjoy learning about religious education because they are provided with creative opportunities and are empowered to think deeply for themselves. One pupil commented, 'Our teachers guide us in lessons, but we know that religious education comes from the heart and what Jesus teaches us.' Pupils are highly motivated and readily engage in the range of well-planned lessons provided, with opportunities in lessons to respond to staff's skilled questioning. They are critical thinkers, confident and adept at translating the learning in lessons to make links with their lives. One example of this was Year 5 pupils' interpretation of how parables, such as *The Good Samaritan*, can influence the way they go forth and share the underlying message with others. Pupils' work is of a consistently high standard of presentation and content; they take great pride in it. Whilst there is some evidence that pupils know what to do to improve their work, this is inconsistent throughout the school, and sometimes limited. Pupils are religiously literate and incorporate religious language and concepts effectively in their verbal and written responses.

In lessons, teachers demonstrate secure subject knowledge, and learning in lessons is supported by effectively deploying teaching assistants. An established routine sees lessons begin with a 'flashback' to prior units and lessons, ensuring that previous learning is consolidated, and misconceptions are avoided. Teachers are skilled at using a range of open questions, enabling pupils to explore ideas together and make links in their learning. They are particularly accomplished in linking the current topic to Catholic social teaching principles, previous learning, and daily life. Pupils' needs are met through highly competent and adapted teaching. An example

of this was seen in Reception, where those children working towards expectations and those with special educational needs were taught in smaller groups and through specialist provision. A range of creative opportunities are planned and recorded in a variety of ways; for example, through diaries, mind mapping, and posters. Relationships between pupils and staff are excellent, resulting in high standards and exemplary behaviour. Staff endeavour to challenge pupils through 'next step' questioning, to which pupils routinely respond. These challenges link to the objective but are often generic and addressed to the whole class, meaning some pupils are not always enabled to make the next step in their learning that is best for them. More bespoke feedback is provided inconsistently, meaning that opportunities to deepen and extend individuals' learning are sometimes missed.

Leaders and governors maintain religious education at the curriculum's heart, ensuring that it meets all requirements of the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*. The curriculum is carefully considered and sequenced to build on previous learning and is supported by the use of high-quality resources. The recently appointed religious education subject leader has the passion and drive to further enhance teaching and learning across the school. She is receiving effective support from and supervision by senior leaders to ensure that standards in religious education are further improved. Other staff new to the school, including teachers in the early stages of their career, are provided with a well-planned programme of quality training. This starts in school with an effective system of support from the head of school, who models and team teaches lessons, demonstrating the expectations defined in the religious education policy. Leaders understand the importance of monitoring and evaluating provision and standards; they are working to ensure that this process is rigorous to maintain the cycle of effective subject 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

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 readily embrace varied opportunities to participate in prayer and liturgy at St John Bosco. They are very respectful and attentive whilst listening to the Word of God, as shown during whole school assemblies and class liturgies. Pupils relish the opportunity to be part of a wide variety of forms of praying, including traditional prayer and song, silent reflection, and spontaneous prayer. Their meaningful responses show their commitment to developing their spirituality and greatly enhance the liturgical experiences provided to them. During a whole school liturgy, led by Year 3, pupils were confident and well-versed in preparing and leading prayers and reflections. Older pupils and liturgy leaders across the school are models of good practice, collaborating to lead by excellent example and encouraging their peers to do the same. Spontaneous prayer is a strength of the school, and prayer and reflection spaces around the school encourage pupils to develop their spirituality further. Staff and pupil-led liturgy consistently follow the 'gather, listen, respond and go forth' model. This enhances their experience of listening to God's Word and thinking about its message for their lives. Consequently, pupils demonstrate growing confidence in planning and delivering liturgy and also in evaluating its quality, meaning they know how to improve upon it.

Prayer and liturgy are at the school's heart and there is a natural daily pattern of prayer for staff and pupils that reflects its mission. A framework for high quality worship, in all its forms, is linked to the liturgical seasons, significant feast days and the weekly gospel. This means liturgical events are regularly celebrated and shared with the school community in a variety of creative and imaginative ways, such as through digital technology and the school's social media. All staff are positive role models and contribute significantly to developing and improving the prayer life of the school, including ensuring that spaces conducive to prayer are well-cared for. They are skilled at leading prayer and liturgy, motivating pupils to participate fully and respond confidently. This

can be seen in the quality of communal singing during liturgical celebrations. Pupils can discuss their experiences of liturgy and how these have called them into action and deepened their faith. Staff use relevant and well-chosen scripture, and they are very skilled in helping pupils interpret the meaning behind readings and making links with them to Catholic social teaching. All these opportunities combine to ensure that prayer and liturgy has a profoundly positive, lived impact on the school community.

Leaders and governors have a clear understanding of how prayer and liturgy underpin the school's mission and subsequently give it the highest priority. The school's policy for prayer and liturgy is clear and accessible, resulting in a continuity of experience for all pupils. Leaders have a well-structured calendar of planned events based on the Church's liturgical year, and a strategy for developing pupils' knowledge and skills progressively across the school. They work hard to ensure that there is an opportunity to receive the Eucharist and the Sacrament of Reconciliation regularly. The highest priority is placed on the training and development of staff, which focuses on the planning of prayer and liturgy and faith formation. Leaders have a clear strategy for monitoring and evaluating prayer and liturgy, including consulting parents. This means that they fully understand the strengths and improvements needed to sustain high quality provision. There is a genuine commitment from all leaders to ensure the school does all it can to inspire, support and develop its community and prepare its pupils for the next stage in their faith journey.



## Information about the school

Full name of school	St John Bosco Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	148535
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	3333303
Full postal address of the school	Monmouth Drive, West Bromwich, B71 2ST
School phone number	0121 556 0228
Head teacher	Mandy Grubham
Chair of governing board	Philip Hancox
School Website	<a href="http://www.st-johnbosco.sandwell.sch.uk">www.st-johnbosco.sandwell.sch.uk</a>
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	St John Bosco Catholic Academy
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Academy
Admissions policy	Non-selective
Age-range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	March 2017
Previous denominational inspection grade	1

## The inspection team

Melanie Elliott  
Andrew Maund

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