



Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection report for Holy Infant and St Anthony RC Primary School

URN: 105219

Carried out on behalf of the Title. **Right Reverend John Arnold, Bishop of Diocese** on:

Date: 21st and 22nd June 2023

Overall effectiveness The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school.....	2
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.....	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 curriculum requirements laid down by the Bishops' Conference	yes
The school is fully compliant with all requirements of the diocesan bishop	yes
The school has responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection	Fully

Summary of key findings

What the school does well

- Through its mission statement the school bears witness to its Catholic life and mission, welcoming all into their loving, happy and caring community.
- There are very effective and strong links between the school and parish.
- Pupils take a leading role in many aspects of leadership in the school, ensuring they are heard and fully included in all parts of school life.
- The school supports parents and carers very effectively, who in return feel their children are well supported, guided and cared for.

What the school needs to improve:

- The school needs to ensure that the curriculum and physical environment is reflective of other faiths and cultures that are welcomed into school.
- Provide training and opportunities for all staff to enable them to teach religious education with more creativity, through a variety of expressions including the arts and technology.
- The self-evaluation process requires further development so that it becomes an evidence based document reflecting current practice with clear areas for improvement included.

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:.....

2

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

2

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school

2



At Holy Infant and St Anthony’s school, pupils are extremely positive about all aspects of school life and the many opportunities afforded to them. They feel safe and valued, knowing that their voices will be heard through a number of student leadership roles and initiatives. The pupils can express clearly the mission of the school through their work, and, whether it be the school council, Faith in Action, ECO or Growing in Faith Together (GIFT) teams, they are confident explaining and evaluating the impact of their work; improving school, looking after the environment, helping local charities or leading prayer and liturgy. They talk passionately and proudly about their work and the impact it genuinely has. They are fully empowered by all the school community to be true stewards and leaders. The GIFT team are enthusiastic and committed ambassadors, undertaking their role with pride, knowing that they are having a real impact on the prayer life of the school. Their roles in school are so embedded in school life and the timetable of events runs seamlessly throughout school; hymn club, meditation and various prayer and liturgical opportunities. Behaviour in prayer and liturgy particularly is exemplary.

The mission statement is lived by all members of the school community as everyone is welcomed into this loving, happy and caring environment. There is a real sense of community which is clearly evident in all the strong relationships which exist between all staff, families and the wider parish and community. All parents and carers are extremely appreciative of all the staff who are a constant and visible presence around school and always approachable and helpful. On the rare occasions when there are issues, families feel listened to, valued and everything is dealt with quickly and positively. Parents feel that staff look at each child as individuals and take time to get to know them and their children. All staff are fully committed to the school and as a result pastoral care is a real strength. All staff, including the leadership, special educational needs and/or disabilities co-

ordinator and pastoral lead are confident in the school procedures and work tirelessly to ensure that the most vulnerable are welcomed and supported. The chaplaincy provision in the school is very strong and central to school life and the mission of the school. There are many and varied opportunities for all staff and pupils to be supported in their spiritual and moral development. Whilst all are welcomed in the school community, the school needs to develop more explicit signs of inclusion of welcome and inclusivity for different cultures and belief traditions.

Leaders at all levels are united in their shared mission and are fully committed to the catholic life and mission of the school. Governors are fully aware of their core responsibilities and are clear in their roles which they execute well with Christ at the centre of their policies, work and decisions. The newly appointed headteacher has made a significant impact on school in the short time since her appointment and staff, parents and the wider community talk of her dedication and commitment to the school and its mission. Together with governors and the relatively new, enthusiastic and proactive parish priest the links between parish and school are flourishing. The links are seamless and a real strength of the community. New staff to the school feel warmly welcomed and supported and the early career teacher spoke very positively about the support she has received from all staff in the school; 'nothing is too much trouble, everyone wants to help.' The headteacher, together with the very recently appointed deputy headteacher, know the school very well and can articulate ways in which they want to drive forward improvements in the school. However, some elements of the school's written evaluations are not accurate and missing next steps and areas for development.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade:.....

2

Pupil outcomes

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education.....

2

Provision

The quality of teaching, learning, and assessment in religious education.....

2

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor, and evaluate the provision for religious education.....

2



Pupils at Holy Infant and St Anthony's clearly enjoy their learning in religious education and are developing secure knowledge as they move through the school. The majority are making good progress, however the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/ or disabilities needs to be more carefully planned so all the children are included fully in their religious education lessons. The pupils always speak confidently about what they have learnt in religious education and demonstrate a good understanding of the key concepts and relevant vocabulary. As one pupil shared, 'do not just say sorry, you have to mean it – you have to examine your conscience.' When discussing their work with inspectors they showed a clear understanding of how well they were doing, what they needed to do to improve, and they could show how they have made progress. In the majority of lessons behaviour was good and the pupils were on task but at times the learning was passive. The lessons are well structured and focus on prior knowledge and acquired skills but the pupils would benefit from more creative approaches to lessons and more opportunities to work independently so they can take the initiative in their learning.

All teachers are fully committed to the value of religious education and they demonstrate good subject knowledge. Pupils respond well to all staff who consistently communicate the importance of religious education to all the pupils in their care. The majority of teachers use questioning effectively in lessons which in turn gives the opportunity for the pupils to share good subject knowledge and their own personal thoughts. There is very good and consistent use of assessing pupil's learning in their books through check in and out tasks, which are used to inform the staff and the subject leader as to how well all the pupils are progressing. The pupils themselves were able to articulate how the assessments work in practice and they benefit from seeing their acquired knowledge. However, teacher marking across different year groups was inconsistent and the schools marking policy was not being fully and effectively applied. All staff in the school are fully

committed to providing quality experiences for the children in their care but more training and guidance is required for them to fully respond to all the needs in their classes. The support staff are a valued part of the community but this resource needs to be used more effectively in lessons and when supporting children with special educational needs.

Leaders and governors have ensured that the school uses a scheme of work that reflects the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*, however as staff are using the scheme in isolation it is not a full and complete expression of the Directory. Teachers deliver the curriculum well but do not deviate often enough from the scheme to supplement with other resources so that religious education fully follows the seasons of the liturgical year. The school has adopted the '*Life to the Full*' programme which meets both the statutory and diocesan requirements and is faithful to the teachings of the Church. Religious education is well resourced in school and fully comparable to the other core subjects being taught. All staff have undertaken training in religious education and the subject leader regularly engages with the Diocese of Salford to ensure the school are compliant and up to date with all relevant policy and procedures. Staff show a deep commitment to the education of all pupils in the school however leaders need to ensure that the future planning of religious education fully meets the needs of the different groups in school particularly special educational needs pupils. The subject leader undertakes a timetable of monitoring the school's religious education and prayer and liturgy provision, however, the school's self- evaluation document needs to ensure it accurately reflects the monitoring observed and informs the challenges needed, including the next steps and areas for development.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade:.....

2

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



Pupils at Holy Infant and St Anthony's are very enthusiastic participants and leaders in all prayer and liturgy opportunities that are afforded to them in school. The Growing in Faith Together (GIFT) team are very well established and they are very articulate when explaining their roles and the impact they have in school. They talk with pride regarding the sessions they lead and prepare in school which are many and varied. They take turns to deliver meditation, the hymn club and various prayer and liturgy sessions from assemblies to class and small groups. The GIFT team are very well supported by the subject leader for religious education and together they prepare well planned and creative experiences of prayer that are reflective of the Church's liturgical year. The behaviour and reverence of the pupils in all prayer and liturgy sessions, class and assembly, was always exemplary. All the pupils are given the opportunity to share and be part of the prayer and liturgy sessions and often shared their personal thoughts, feelings and experiences, confident that they are in a safe and sacred space. As a result they have developed the skills and confidence to understand how their experiences influence how they think and react.

The cycle of prayer is well planned throughout school and is a central part of school life, forming part of routine gatherings of pupils, staff and the whole community. There is a daily pattern of prayer that clearly links to the priorities of the school and the liturgical calendar. Staff are skilled at planning and delivering quality acts of prayer and liturgy and it is clear from the pupils that these sessions are fully embedded in the routine of school life. However, there was a lack of consistency between classes; staff would benefit from observing best practice in the school to ensure all sessions are of a high standard. All staff are exceptional role models to all the pupils, who as a result have great confidence to participate in and lead prayer and liturgy. The new headteacher and parish priest are working very hard together to ensure links between school and parish are re-established and this commitment is already having a very positive impact within the community. As a result the

pupils are able to fully participate in the liturgy and activities with the local parish, enthused by the parish priest and the enthusiasm and joy he brings to the school community.

The school policy and procedures for prayer and liturgy are well planned, fit for purpose and ensure there is a clear strategy for enhancing the skills of the pupils in their participation in prayer and liturgy. Leaders have ensured there are regular professional development opportunities for all staff who are fully invested in this area and understand the importance of prayer and liturgy in school life. Staff are very committed but leaders need to be clear that there is consistency across school, particularly in the quality of class led prayer and liturgy sessions. Classroom prayer is calm, reflective, and engaging but ways of using classroom prayer spaces more effectively could be explored. Leaders and governors ensure that high quality resources, including staff, help to provide engaging experiences of prayer and reflection for the school community. The quality and impact of the school's prayer and liturgy now needs to be more robustly evaluated and reviewed in the school's self- evaluation which should also include seeking the views of pupils, to inform their future planning and to include next steps and areas for development.

Information about the school

Full name of school	Holy Infant and St Anthony's RC Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	105219
Full postal address of the school	Mitre Street, Astley Bridge, Bolton, Lancashire, BL1 6QJ
School phone number	01204333111
Name of head teacher or principal	Mrs Diane Furlong
Chair of governing board	Dr Marguerita Leyden
School Website	https://www.holy-infants.bolton.sch.uk/
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age-range of pupils	4-11
Trustees	Diocese of Salford
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	Wednesday 1 st July 2015
Previous denominational inspection grade	Good

The inspection team

Mark Mountcastle	Lead inspector
Fiona Robinson	Team inspector
Mylene McGuire	Trainee inspector
Name of inspector	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

