



# Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School

URN: 142365

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Middlesbrough

16–17 October 2024

## Summary of key findings

### 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 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

## Compliance statement

- The school is compliant to the general norms for religious education laid down by the bishop's conference  
The school is compliant with all the additional requirements of the diocesan bishop.
- The school has complied with all the previous areas for improvement.

## What the school does well

- The school actively supports social cohesion within the local community.
- Pupils are given autonomy to take the lead on events relating to the Catholic life of the school.
- Strong teaching and learning takes place in the early years to ensure that pupils make a strong start to their religious education.

## What the school needs to improve

- Share the strong practice that takes place within the school to ensure that all religious education lessons are engaging and challenging for pupils.
- An ambitious vision must be developed for what all pupils can achieve in religious education lessons, particularly the most able.
- Ensure that the progress of pupils with high prior attainment is carefully tracked to ensure that they make the best progress possible through their school journey.

## 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**

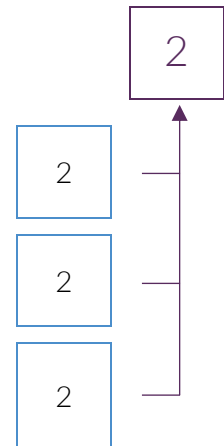
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

**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 Sacred Heart are proud of their school mission statement and recognise the importance of belonging to a Catholic community. Pupils understand that we are all made in the image and likeness of God and they celebrate and champion the diversity within their locality. One pupil said proudly, 'I am a Muslim and the school has welcomed me and allowed me to become a part of the family'. Behaviour across the school is good. Pupils enthusiastically shared their home languages. Pupils recently worked alongside a prominent artist to design pictures based on their chosen theme of 'stronger together' after the summer riots and their artwork is proudly displayed within the school grounds. A group of pupils have set up a chaplaincy team which is entirely pupil led. As a result of this, pupils can confidently take a leadership role in all areas relating to Catholic life. The chaplaincy team organised a 3-day event for parents and families that celebrated Catholic social teaching across the school. Pupils shared information about the key elements of Catholic social teaching on prayer stations that they had designed. Parents responded strongly to this invitation and relished the opportunity to spend time praying with their children.

Staff within the school are kind and caring, they are role models for pupils and provide them with a safe environment. Staff ensure that pupils know that they are valued members of God's family. 'At Sacred Heart, teachers make sure we are close to God and have a relationship with him through prayer' (Member of the chaplaincy team). Diversity is celebrated within their school. A brilliant example of this is a display which shows the variety of countries of origin for members of the school community. Parents responded positively about the school in their feedback. Parents feel very welcomed, and part of a strong Catholic community. One parent commented that, 'The school does so much for inclusion and celebrates diversity. We had a 'Mother Tongue

day' where we celebrated our home languages and dress. Everyone was so happy!' The school communicates well with parents and involves them in the Catholic life, recognising their rightful place as first educators of their children. Sacred spaces are a focus in each classroom. The school environment is very well cared for, and its Catholic identity is openly celebrated particularly internally. Relationships, sex, and health education (RSHE) is taught throughout the school and is rooted in the teaching of the Church.

Governors are enthusiastic about the Catholic Life of the school and have the Bishop's vision at the centre of what they do, they are keen to ensure pupils have a genuine encounter with Christ during their time at Sacred Heart. Governors regularly visit the school to obtain an overview of the school's work on Catholic life. Career progression and development, focusing on the Catholic life of the school, is well catered for. Several staff members have taken part in the Bishop's Certificate in Catholic Education, they explained how this had positively impacted upon their understanding of working in a Catholic school and helped them to develop their own faith. School leaders have planned for new members of staff to be inducted into the Catholic life of the school using a well-planned induction program. However, there is no clear evaluation of the impact of training. Senior leaders responded strongly to recent riots that had taken place within the area and worked diligently to support the community and to take a strong stand against any form of racism. The new parish priest is a popular visitor, and the school is developing links with him with regular Masses planned for each year group.

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

### Religious education key judgement grade

**Pupil outcomes**

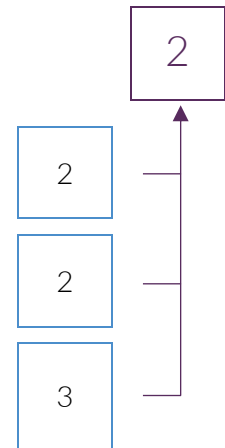
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

**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 generally work well in lessons to achieve the outcomes that are set for them. Pupils concentrate well within their lessons, engaging with the planned tasks but, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils with higher ability to work independently and on more challenging and creative tasks. A good example, however, was seen during a lesson in early years where the children re-enacted the sacrament of Baptism and were exposed to a range of vocabulary relating to the sacrament. The children could explain that they were proud to be ‘confident communicators’. They had the opportunity to write their own invitations to a Baptism and plan a party to celebrate afterwards, showing a real sense of enjoyment and engagement. Most pupils generally achieve well, particularly those with low prior attainment, because work is well scaffolded to allow them to meet the objectives set. However, opportunities for extension, particularly of language and independent tasks were also limited. Pupils report that they enjoy their RE lessons and have the opportunities to take part in a range of different tasks. ‘We get the chance to do drama activities and art during lessons and this is fun and makes us more creative’.

Teaching in early years is strong, and children benefit from the well-planned continuous provision provided. Teaching continues to be effective across Key Stage 1 and teachers ensure that well planned tasks and activities meet the needs of their pupils. However, the quality of teaching is more varied across the upper school, where teachers do not always provide enough opportunities that challenge pupils to strengthen and deepen their theological understanding, particularly the more able pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by their class teachers and teaching assistants who ask questions at an appropriate level and help develop pupils’ knowledge and understanding, resulting in their good progress. There is a high degree of scaffolding for pupils, across the school, leading to a general lack of independence in pupil learning. Data across the school shows that attainment is generally good, but this is not

consistent. In some lessons class teachers did not have a clear sense of how learning was to progress within the lesson and opportunities for pupils were limited. In the best lessons teachers deliver engaging lessons that allow pupils to make good progress from their starting points and use questioning well to elicit strong pupil responses.

Leaders and governors ensure that religious education has parity with other core subjects with respect to timetabling, staffing and funding. The 'Come and See' programme of work is followed with fidelity. Regular moderation of workbooks takes place with other local Catholic schools but the impact of this is not recorded or evaluated. The implementation of the school's feedback policy is monitored by senior leaders' but not recorded, so not all pupils knew what they needed to do to improve their work. Leaders do not ensure that teachers' planning meets the needs of all pupils, especially those with higher prior attainment; demonstrated by the fact that assessment and monitoring has not identified that more challenging learning objectives, extension and challenge tasks are being provided for in all classrooms. Therefore, pupil progress is not as strong or consistent as it could be. This is shown in the school's own data analysis where in some cases the percentage of pupils exceeding expectations, drops across the school year. The good practice taking place in areas of the school is not shared. Staff training occurs and is historically, frequent and accessible to all, but no evaluation of staff training or training needs had been made.

## 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

Pupils develop their prayer life and spirituality whilst at Sacred Heart. Pupils can clearly articulate how their prayer life has led to action that has positively impacted those around them. An example of this is that the school has a junior chaplaincy team and a Mini-Vinnies group, both of which contribute significantly to the school's provision for prayer and liturgy and are pupil led. These pupils bring a sense of joy and enthusiasm to all that they do, as a member of the chaplaincy team said, 'I read the Gospel every day so I knew that Simon Peter would become a leader, and I want to be like him too'. Pupils within these groups are articulate and confident to lead prayer and liturgy, they are a credit to the school. Pupils are aware of the rhythms and timings of the Church's liturgical year. Pupils sing hymns with great joy. In a whole school celebration of liturgy, the headteacher was well supported by members of the chaplaincy team who led responsorial prayers and responses with joy and enthusiasm. 'At Sacred Heart, teachers make sure we are close to God and have a relationship with him through prayers (and hymns). (Member of the chaplaincy team).

The school's provision for prayer and liturgy is good, and pupils benefit greatly from this. Pupils are given regular opportunities to pray and develop their spirituality. The school ensures that pupils have the opportunity to take part in a range of prayer types, for example to reflect on a psalm and given quiet time to develop their own thoughts about God. In another class, teachers gave the pupils an opportunity to reflect on the words of the psalm whilst focusing upon their breathing. This level of engagement from pupils is possible due to the established structure for prayer and liturgy within the school and the confidence of staff who lead. Teachers ensure that prayer is a key part of the school day and punctuates daily life within the school and ensure that pupils are introduced to traditional prayers. Clear development and spiritual sequencing could be seen where pupils were given more time to reflect upon what they were thankful in their local

environment. Teachers lead prayer with confidence and ensure that pupils are given time to reflect in silence, pupils respond respectfully to these opportunities and act in a reverent manner. Pupils have some opportunities to evaluate their experiences.

The school makes good use of space to provide opportunities for indoor prayer stations and displays that are linked to the liturgical season. The school works with the parish priest to provide opportunities for year groups to participate in the liturgy and eucharist. All stakeholders clearly value opportunities to come together in celebration, as was seen in a whole-school prayer and liturgy led by the head teacher and very well supported by the chaplaincy group. The school has a clear policy for prayer and liturgy that takes into consideration the age and stage of pupils and aims to develop their spirituality. Staff use this policy well. Governors ensure that the provision for prayer and liturgy is well resourced. School leaders and governors offer staff the opportunity to take part in spiritual formation and training linked to the planning and delivery of prayer and liturgy. Staff members report that they feel well supported in providing a range of opportunities and have a good understanding of the richness and tradition of Catholic prayer.

## Information about the school

Full name of school	Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	142365
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8063385
Full postal address of the school	Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School, Ayresome Street, Middlesbrough, TS1 4NP
School phone number	001642816083
Headteacher	Vicky White
Chair of governors	Ian Walker
School Website	<a href="https://sacredheartcp.npcat.org.uk">https://sacredheartcp.npcat.org.uk</a>
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Nicholas Postgate 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	March 2019
Previous denominational inspection grade	2

## The inspection team

Andrew Krlic	Lead
Bernadette Nesbitt	Team
Pippa Donnelly (Shadow Inspector)	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