

St Edward's Catholic Primary School

URN: 142371

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Middlesbrough

19–20 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

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

- St. Edward's Catholic Primary School is compliant in relation to the general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishops' Conference.
- The school is compliant with the additional requirements of the diocesan bishop.
- The school has responded fully to the areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection, undertaken in June 2019.

What the school does well

- Because the mission statement is a lived expression of the culture of the school, and because of the dedication of all staff, pupils know that they are loved and valued, as evidenced through exemplary pastoral care.
- The priority given to Catholic social teaching ensures that pupils, from their earliest years, have a deep respect for each other and for our common home.
- Pupils are highly enthusiastic about contributing to the wider life of the school and fulfil their leadership responsibilities with great pride.
- Staff provide meaningful, aspirational, and well-sequenced lessons that promote the religious literacy and deep knowledge of all learners.
- As a result of high-quality professional development, the prayer life of the school impacts significantly on the spiritual development of all.

What the school needs to improve

- Address the gaps in learning which are arising as the consequence of the transition to a new curriculum.
- Plan for opportunities in lessons, collective worship, and the wider life of the school for pupils to secure a coherent understanding of the sequence and structure of the Bible.

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



The Catholic life and mission of St Edward's is at the heart of all school actions. A strong, welcoming, and inclusive Catholic culture pervades. The school mission statement: 'Live, Love, and Serve,' is well known and understood by all. Consequently, pupils are able to comprehensively articulate how the mission is informed by scripture and lived out by the whole school community, and they confidently make links between their actions and those of Christ. Their contribution to school and the wider community enriches the Catholic charism. The behaviour of pupils is exemplary because they are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions, and to take care of others. They have a deep understanding of Catholic social teaching, recognising the underpinning theology, and are rightly proud of their charitable acts. They highly respect those of other faiths and cultures. Pupils know that they are valued and that their opinions are listened and responded to. As a result, they are proud to take up leadership responsibilities: Mini Vinnies; chaplains; Laudato Si Group members; school councillors. Pupils commented, 'All pupils have a voice here,' and 'When we all work together, it makes a huge difference to all of us.'

Staff are exemplary role models and provide the highest quality pastoral care. As a result, pupils know that their uniqueness is celebrated and that they are made in the image of God. A member of staff reflected, 'We try to ensure that ... the love of God shines from every person and every brick in this school.' Staff create a rich environment which exemplifies the Catholic character of the school, and they provide enriching opportunities for the spiritual development of all pupils. Thought provoking displays celebrate the school's ethos and sensitive use of space ensures that pupils are treated with dignity. Care and attention are given to ensure that all are welcomed, and

the rich variety of beliefs and cultures of the community are shared joyously. Staff willingly give their time to enable pupils to explore and share their own talents, and therefore every member of the school family is enabled to flourish because of the chaplaincy provision. Staff ensure that they facilitate opportunities, in collaboration with the parish and wider community, including the *Genesis Project*, to ensure that pupils actively respond to the needs of others. A well-sequenced Catholic RHSE programme has been carefully implemented to fulfil diocesan requirements.

Leaders are inspirational in the ways they promote, monitor, and evaluate the Catholic life and mission of St Edward's. They are authentic witnesses of the Gospel and are dedicated to ensuring that pupils experience an enriching Catholic education that provides excellent formation. Because leaders meticulously keep Christ at the centre of school life and have a deep commitment to care for the vulnerable, they successfully support the church's mission. Leaders ensure that staff are treated with respect and dignity, and this results in a highly motivated and committed team. They diligently ensure that all staff receive high quality induction and training so that the Catholic life and mission is consistently strong. They share their vision with clarity and enthusiasm and, as a result, all staff are highly committed to contribute to and benefit from the Catholic ethos. Governors are highly involved in the life of the school and prioritise the Catholic charism. They ensure that there are strong partnerships with the local parish, Trust and diocese. Catholic social teaching is at the root of all strategic decisions. Consequently, there is a lived sense of justice and respect, which is reflected in school policies and procedures.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

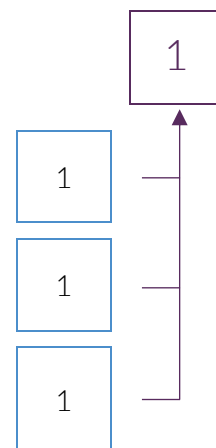
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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



Expectations in religious education lessons are high, and no learning time is lost, as behaviour is excellent in classes. Lessons are interesting and therefore pupils engage well and enjoy learning. They make insightful comments and reflect thoughtfully on challenging questions. They have a deep knowledge of religious beliefs and traditions because lessons are well-planned and progressive. Pupils are eager to learn and deepen their understanding, making links and reflecting on the actions of believers, as is appropriate to their age. They use religious vocabulary confidently because this is taught explicitly, and because there are frequent opportunities to use and apply subject-specific words in context. Because lessons are consistently well structured, pupils are able to build on prior learning and therefore make sustained progress from their starting points. They produce work of a high standard and are able to respond to clear feedback, linking directly to the learning intentions of lessons. They demonstrate pride in their work and present it well. Pupils are able to analyse scripture passages and apply them to their own lives. However, their knowledge of the sequencing of the story of the people of God is underdeveloped.

Teachers have a strong subject knowledge as a consequence of high-quality professional development. They are therefore confident and competent in delivering ambitious learning opportunities. They rigorously plan progressive lessons, adapting tasks and teaching to support inclusion. All pupils are therefore supported to know and remember more. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to learn about other faiths and cultures, so that pupils are prepared for life in a diverse world. Lessons are enriched by visits to places of worship, and by visitors who share their faith story authentically. Staff include opportunities for reflection and discussion, so that pupils are able to discern and express personal opinion. Teachers are skillful in asking

questions that provoke deep thinking and give clear explanations and feedback to promote progress. Pupils are given encouragement that motivates them to work well, and additional adults are skilled and deployed effectively to ensure pupils keep up with the curriculum. Resources to support the delivery of the *Religious Education Directory (2023)* are currently being used in Year 1 to Year 4 classes. These are ambitious and creative and provide opportunities to reflect spiritually and theologically. However, transition to the new curriculum has revealed gaps in prior learning.

Leaders have empowered staff through a shared vision and strategic direction which is aspirational. They are systematically managing the phased changeover from the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory (2012)* to the *Religious Education Directory (2023)*. In doing so, leaders are ensuring that staff have the appropriate knowledge and understanding to provide lessons that have fidelity to the relevant curriculum. Leaders are building expertise across the school so that standards are maintained until all classes are taught the new curriculum. Careful and systematic monitoring by leaders is fundamental to the success of this and is underpinned by their astute understanding of curriculum expectations and standards. Leaders have embedded clear policies and procedures, including the Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust teaching and learning model, to ensure that teaching is effective and supports pupil progress. Governors are regular visitors, and they are well informed when making decisions. They invest in meaningful professional development and resources so that staff have the knowledge and skills to provide high quality learning opportunities. This is highly valued by staff, who commented: 'The support, depth of knowledge and understanding, as well as resources and updates around religious education have been incredibly insightful and useful throughout the year.'

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

Prayer is central to the life of the school and pupils participate with enthusiasm and reverence. They sing joyfully and join in well with communal prayers. Pupils reflect thoughtfully on the impact that prayer has on them, with one pupil commenting: 'When I pray in school I feel close to God. I am calm and I know I can talk to Jesus.' Pupils undertake ministries confidently and, appropriate to their age, plan competently and lead a breadth of prayer experiences, including 'prayerful playtimes.' They have an understanding of the liturgical year and therefore are able to plan appropriate celebrations, using what they have learned in lessons to support this. They evaluate prayer experiences with maturity and use their reflections to inform future planning. Pupils are able to respond to the range of creative prayer opportunities offered to them and pupil chaplains eagerly support the spiritual development of others. Prayer journalling allows pupils to reflect personally, and, for some, this is a deep and profound opportunity. Meditation, breath prayers, Lectio Divina, Visio Divina and liturgical music are some of the regular ways in which pupils are encouraged to explore prayer. Consequently, they are able to find ways to pray that are personally meaningful.

Adults create prayerful spaces in classrooms and shared areas that signify the Church's seasons. These enable pupils to respond and reflect, and support pupils' understanding of the liturgical year. Thoughtful and well-constructed prayer and liturgy is at the heart of school life, and well-chosen scripture passages enhance celebrations. Prayer punctuates the day and is given the highest priority. Staff are inspiring role models because they have a depth of understanding of the liturgical norms of the Church. This is as a result of meaningful professional development. They ensure that a sense of reverence pervades, with a range of traditional, spontaneous, and contemporary prayers offered to support the spiritual development of all pupils. Staff enable pupils to reflect and respond to the scripture messages in their everyday life. Pupils are

encouraged to be creative, using music, dance, drama and art to enrich prayer and liturgy. As a result, pupils are enthusiastic and uplifted by the experiences. Pupils join the parish community for Mass regularly, and the parish priest is a welcome, frequent visitor. Staff generously involve parents in the prayer life of the school and, consequently, there is a flourishing partnership with the parish.

Because leaders rigorously monitor provision for collective worship, they ensure that pupils have rich, varied opportunities to pray and develop spiritually. They prioritise professional development to ensure that staff are able to provide prayer experiences that are meaningful and engaging. They have a secure understanding of the capacity of pupils and have therefore developed a progressive strategy to support the participation and leadership of pupils. However, the story of the people of God is not yet secure. The breadth of prayer experiences and liturgical celebrations is exemplary. Consequently, the school community is inspired to celebrate feast days, holy days of obligation and global initiatives, including the Jubilee Year, with joy and enthusiasm. Whole school retreat days are highly valued and reflect the priority leaders give to the formation of every member of the school community. Leaders are excellent role models and they ensure that the school's prayer and liturgy policy is relevant and applied well. Their support for staff in school and across the Trust is highly valued and, as a result, all are confident in their role as faith leaders. They regularly consult with parents and pupils to discern the impact of the prayer life offered in school. Consequently, they reflect the needs of the community when planning the 'Spiritual Sequencing Map.'

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Edward's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	142371
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8063337
Full postal address of the school	St Edward's Catholic Primary School, Eastbourne Road, Linthorpe, Middlesbrough, TS5 6QS
School phone number	01642819507
Headteacher	Mary Brown
Chair of governors	Paul Healy
School Website	https://stedwards.npcat.org.uk
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	June 2019
Previous denominational inspection grade	Grade 1

The inspection team

Barbara Reilly O'Donnell
Alixena Lubomski (Leeds Diocese)

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