



# Holy Family Catholic Primary School, Blackpool

URN: 119600

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Lancaster

24–25 January 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

1

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

## What the school does well

- The efforts that are taken to provide the highest levels of pastoral care for children and their families, especially those with the greatest need.
- The physical environment that is a faithful expression of the Catholic character and mission of the school.
- The commitment of all staff in the implementation of school policies, their contributions to the Catholic life of the school and the relationships they demonstrate with each other and children.
- The immersive pattern of prayer and liturgy that includes daily prayer, reaction to current affairs, holy days, founder days and the regular celebration of Mass in school.
- The manner in which it engages with the Bishop's vision for Catholic education and places itself at the service of the diocese, through support for other schools.

## What the school needs to improve

- The extent to which pupils, in all year groups, understand and can talk about the theology that underpins their actions as Catholics.
- The quality and depth of monitoring, self-evaluation and analysis offered by the governors to challenge leaders and assure ongoing school improvement.
- Consistent strategies that ensure children know how well they are doing in their religious education work and how to improve further.

## 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

2

**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

2

2

Holy Family is a welcoming and inclusive school that highly values its Catholic life and mission. Throughout the inspection, pupils demonstrated very good behaviour and could clearly articulate that they treat others as they would like to be treated – equally and with kindness. Pupils spoke about the school's commitment to Fairtrade and charitable giving, including weekly donations to Mary's Meals, showing a growing awareness of Catholic social teaching. In addition Lenten walks for Cafod raised an impressive sum. Year 6 children from the current cohort and last academic year were instrumental in helping Holy Family achieve the Live Simply Award; a commitment that demonstrates the school living simply, sustainably and in solidarity with the world's poorest communities. Providing pupils with a greater understanding of Catholic theology and the works of mercy that underpin Catholic social teaching will strengthen this aspect of school life further. Year 6 pupils willingly take on the responsibility of Monday morning worship, sharing scripture and leading their peers in celebration of the word. Pupils in all classes value the school's chaplaincy provision and take an active part during class worships, class Masses and the monthly family Mass that the school has worked hard to establish in the parish.

The school's provision for the Catholic life of the school is very strong and is summarised wonderfully in the mission statement motto, 'In all things love.' The school environment effectively witnesses to this mission as well, leaving visitors, pupil and staff in no doubt that Christ is at the heart of the school. Pupils and staff participate enthusiastically in well planned opportunities and a great commitment is shown to all to those served by the school community. Staff are passionate about supporting children and families through highly effective pastoral care and benefit from high levels of morale that drive them to seek the best

outcomes for all. The parental questionnaire, which represented twenty-three families, was in full agreement that Holy Family guides and extends their children's faith as well as providing an exceptionally supportive environment for the most vulnerable. One parent commented, 'God bless you for this school...' whilst another mentioned the active encouragement parents are given to join class and school Masses. Provision for relationships, sex and health education meet both statutory and diocesan requirements and pupils are able to articulate what they have learned in these lessons.

Leaders and governors perform well in all their duties to maintain and further develop the Catholic life and mission. This is evidenced through governor meeting minutes and information shared by the head teacher and parish priest, who work collegiately to plan out the liturgical year and chaplaincy provision. Holy Family has embraced the bishop's vision for the diocese and will soon join the Blessed Edward Bamber, Catholic Multi Academy Trust. Governors must be commended for their willingness to support another school, by releasing the head teacher for two days per week, at the behest of the diocese. Leaders and governors have also worked hard to engage with parents and have been successful in promoting attendance at parish Masses, especially the monthly school Mass, led by pupils. The determination to build parish links is ongoing and has led to increased participation already. Staff are highly valued at Holy Family and effective training is given to ensure subject knowledge and spiritual formation is supported. Teaching staff, who are new to the school, receive effective induction to help them participate and contribute to the Catholic life of the school. The role of governors in the self-evaluation of Catholic life, and that of pupils in actively planning improvements to it, is a logical next step for the school.

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

### Religious education key judgement grade

**Pupil outcomes**

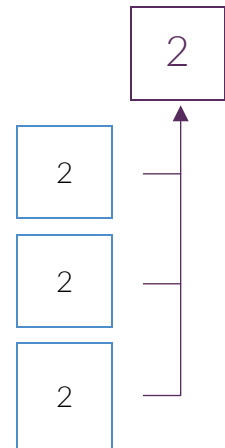
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

**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 at Holy Family enjoy religious education lessons and consequently make good progress that is comparable to other core subjects in school. A wide variety of tasks and activities can be seen in pupils' books, such as letters, animations and pictorial representations of scripture, some of which are uploaded to the school's Seesaw app for parents to view. Books are well-presented and show an increasing knowledge and understanding of religious literacy. For example, one child talked about the liturgy of the word and others were able to talk about the Holy Trinity and the magi, in contexts different to those being studied. As a result of their enjoyable and engaging lessons, pupils show excellent behaviour for learning, responding well to the challenges they are given. A clearer understanding of how they are doing and what they need to do to improve would increase standards further. Religious education in the Early Years and Key Stage 1 is effectively delivered through a blend of direct teaching and continuous provision. Children in reception class were inspired to share gifts and bread rolls through the feeding of the five thousand, whilst pupils in Year 2 acted out their understanding of Jesus being found teaching in the temple, through small world play initially demonstrated by the teacher.

Teaching of religious education (RE) at Holy Family is enhanced by the deeply committed staff, showing authentic subject knowledge and teaching expertise. They ensure that pupils' prior learning is consolidated through questioning and the adaption of tasks to suit learning styles. *Hot seating* was used to good effect in one class to provide children with insights into Jesus' and Mary's feelings when separated in Jerusalem at Passover. The resulting diary entries were detailed and showed they had developed good empathetic and scriptural understanding. Feedback, including the school's 'green for grow' questions, also helps children to develop deeper understanding of specific concepts through written responses.

Curriculum religious education at Holy Family reflects diocesan implementation of the new *Religious Education Directory*, whilst remaining faithful to the established curriculum in classes not yet working within the new scheme of work. Religious education has at least full parity with other core subjects and is taught for the prescribed time across all key stages. The subject leader is knowledgeable and has a clear vision to further develop and improve pupil outcomes, prioritising professional development for teachers in the school's calendar, both internally and with partner schools. This is welcomed by staff who feel it supports them in their subject knowledge and spiritual formation. Assessment of pupils' work is an area the school wishes to work on, especially for classes working within the new Directory. At Holy Family, pupils benefit from a well thought out and systematic approach to Catholic social teaching. Leaders have developed opportunities within the taught curriculum that link to the seven themes of Catholic social teaching, helping children to put their faith into action. Engaging enrichment activities, such as visits from Cafod to deliver workshops on these themes, further serve to develop pupil voice. Leaders ensure that all pupils can access the curriculum, meeting the needs of all through adaptations to learning or the support of additional adults in the classroom. Monitoring and self-evaluation of religious education is the basis of strategic action taken by the school but now needs to be more rigorous in its analysis and challenge, involving governors actively in the process.

## 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

1

**Leadership**

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for collective worship

1

1

Pupils at Holy Family respond very well to the rich and varied opportunities for prayer and liturgy provided by the school. They understand and demonstrate a high level of reverence during class worship sessions as well as during class Masses. The Year 4 class Mass, which was observed on the feast day of the conversion of St Paul, was an example of this. The children greeted the Gospel in song, read from scripture with care and showed a good level of understanding of the gestures and responses used in the Mass. Pupils have an understanding of the parts of the liturgical year and are able to talk about the changing colours that are associated with Ordinary Time, Advent, Lent, and feast days. Pupils lead and participate in prayer and liturgy regularly, showing increasing independence when planning it, linking scripture and their role in living out Jesus' good news through their actions. Evaluating the quality of the prayer and liturgy they have planned is a next step towards improving its quality and delivery.

There is a fully immersive pattern of prayer and liturgy at Holy Family that includes daily prayer and reaction to current affairs, holy days, founder days, the liturgical calendar, and the celebration of Mass. A thorough programme of class Masses, whole school Masses, and parish Masses are planned to ensure pupils attend as regularly as possible. Engagement with parents has been excellent in this respect, ensuring that they are invited to take part in prayerful events in school and in church. The active participation of the parish priest in school, who is also the nominated governor for RE, is highly beneficial to the quality of prayer and liturgy that the school provides. Scripture is central to times of worship in school and is carefully chosen, alongside traditional prayer, artwork and singing when praising God. The school's specialist music teacher works with all classes to enhance the breadth and quality of singing in school and the choir's skill is employed to great effect during monthly parish Masses. Staff model

exemplary practice to pupils and help them to plan and deliver meaningful prayer and liturgy as well as leading this themselves. Prayer spaces in each classroom, and elsewhere in school, are well-maintained, are conducive to prayer and correctly display liturgical colours.

Leaders, including governors, have worked hard to ensure that the prayer and liturgy policy is detailed and promotes age-appropriate skills for pupils, including those related to responses and gestures at Mass. As a result, the oldest pupils in school are able to independently plan and lead collective acts of worship in their classes and for the whole school, an event that begins each week with the Wednesday Word, led by Year 6 pupils. Demonstrating excellent practice, the subject leader and parish priest meet on a weekly basis to review the school's prayer and liturgy calendar, arranging class Masses and planning holy days and other key events in the school's year. Reconciliation services during Lent and opportunities for exposition of the Blessed Sacrament are actively being planned to extend children's understanding of the richness of the Catholic tradition. Strong leadership of prayer and liturgy ensures that the school is well resourced, staff and pupils are confident in their knowledge, and professional development is in place to improve outcomes further. The subject leader monitors the school's provision and delivery of prayer and liturgy on a regular basis. To develop this further, leaders and governors should act on their self-evaluation, and that of other stakeholders, to assess the impact prayer and liturgy has within the school community.



## Information about the school

Full name of school	Holy Family Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	119600
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8903629
Full postal address of the school	Holy Family Catholic Primary School, Seacrest Avenue, Blackpool, FY1 2SD
School phone number	01253354496
Headteacher	Emma Allonby
Chair of Governors	Ian Hunter
School Website	<a href="http://www.holy-family.blackpool.sch.uk/">www.holy-family.blackpool.sch.uk/</a>
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	N/A
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Voluntary Aided School
Admissions policy	N/A
Age-range of pupils	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	November 2017
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

## The inspection team

Mark FitzGibbon  
Alan Parry

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