



Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection report for St Filumena's Catholic Primary School

URN: 138723

Carried out on behalf of the Most Rev. Bernard Longley, Archbishop of Birmingham on:

Date: 23-24 November 2022

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| Overall effectiveness The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school..... | 1 |
| 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 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 | Fully |

Summary of key findings

What the school does well

- Pupils are reverent and respectful; they actively participate in the school mission and are happy, confident, and eager to apply what they learn about the Catholic faith in their lives.
- Christ is at the heart of the school and community, which goes the extra mile to build a foundation of spiritual learning and formation in Him.
- High-quality teaching and learning ensure that all pupils make exceptional progress and achieve an excellent depth of understanding in religious education.
- Worship captivates all pupils' interest and is central to school life. A natural rhythm and routine of outstanding prayer and liturgy permeate all school activities.

- Leaders and governors have an inspiring vision for the school and a firm understanding of the community's needs relating to prayer and liturgy.

What the school needs to improve:

- Deeply embed Catholic Social Teaching throughout the school community, enabling pupils to clearly articulate the theology underpinning the school's full range of activities and curriculum.
- Increase the confidence of new staff in the skilful leadership of worship.

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:.....

1

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



St Filumena's is a warm and welcoming community from the first moment of contact, and where everybody embraces its motto, 'I am loved'. Pupils fully understand the school's distinctive Catholic identity, with a love of God at its centre, and are proud to belong to it; they describe the school as 'one big family, where everyone is our neighbour'. Behaviour in class and across the school is exemplary because they understand the genuine Catholic family they belong to. Pupils highly value their leadership roles and speak confidently about their ideas on how to live out the school's mission actively; consequently, they can talk positively about how this changes how they live their lives. The Minnie Vinnies group inspires the community with their contributions to the local, national, and global communities; for example, the recent prayer garden was opened in response to pupil and parish suggestions, and the whole school community has actively participated in Cafod's Live Simply award. Pupils proactively seek opportunities to help those in their local area and further afield; Cafod representatives told inspectors, 'The children are making their cry heard with regards to Catholic Social Teaching'.

Staff are exemplary role models and are fully committed to the school's mission. This is reflected throughout the school, its curriculum and how they consistently value and respect pupils. Staff also support one another and model the values inherent in the mission statement. A strong sense of community and culture runs through the school at all levels. Staff, parents, and parishioners are overwhelmingly proud and supportive of the school. As one staff member said, 'There is a strong Catholic community within the school which is encouraged by the staff; virtues are often spoken about and celebrated within learning.' The school provides excellent pastoral care for pupils who know they are known and loved by God. Pupils are welcomed in a beautiful school environment through religious images, displays, prayer areas and a prayer garden, which contributes to their

spiritual formation. Pupils speak warmly about their relationships with the lay chaplain; she is highly effective in her work and positively impacts the school community. Christ is at the heart of St Filumena's school and community.

St Filumena's is deeply rooted in the local community; there are strong links with parents, the parish, and the local area. Leaders, governors, and directors are wholly committed, inspiring and successful in achieving excellence in the provision of Catholic education. The school also works closely and successfully with parents as the first educators of the faith to their children. Leaders and governors are dedicated to shaping and supporting the development of the school's Catholic life. They ensure that staff receive regular, high-quality training and induction so that the school's mission remains an important, key strength of its work. Staff speak very positively about the school community; they feel supported and valued. Governors have high expectations, which help to shape and support the continuous development of the school's faith life. Catholic Social Teaching is a strength, with leaders demonstrating an extraordinary commitment to it thus far; they have planned to embed it further into the curriculum so that its presence is natural in all areas.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade:.....

1

Pupil outcomes

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

1

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.....

1



Pupils achieve high standards in religious education; by the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils make good progress in knowing more, remembering more, and doing more, with many also attaining highly. Pupils' religious literacy is strong; they speak confidently and use specialist vocabulary accurately. Pupils work fantastically well when working independently; they seek to learn more by thinking for themselves and are skilled at asking questions about the contents of the curriculum. For example, during a lesson about vocations, Year 6 pupils freely discussed diversity within the media, using subject-specific vocabulary correctly and showing high levels of understanding. Pupils also respond well to opportunities for critical thinking and inquisitive questioning, which allow them to deepen their learning and understanding further. Pupils speak eloquently about their lessons, which they enjoy and actively engage in. Pupils approach their learning in religious education with great interest, enthusiasm, and enjoyment, as evident in the work they complete to a consistently high standard. Pupils clearly know how well they are doing in the subject and respond promptly to teachers' feedback.

Teachers' subject knowledge is strong, enabling them to deliver religious education confidently. Because teachers plan lessons to meet each child's specific needs, pupils in all classes learn exceptionally well. Staff members are good role models to pupils; they skilfully elicit spiritual responses to challenging questions. The lay chaplain provides many additional opportunities for pupils to reflect upon their learning and deepen their relationship with God. Effective questioning encourages pupils to reflect upon and share their knowledge. Relationships between pupils and staff are excellent, resulting in high expectations and exemplary behaviour; these high expectations are reinforced through the provision of learning activities which challenge and support all. Pupils are taught to work confidentially as independent and collaborative learners.

Feedback is given to pupils using a tiered-system approach; this enables them to further reflect upon and deepen their understanding and how to improve the quality of their work.

Pupils in all classrooms receive the full entitlement of religious education, as directed by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales; leaders and governors regularly monitor this to ensure the school remains compliant at all times. Leadership across all levels is strong and effective in securing improvements within religious education because they are committed to ensuring that all staff receive frequent, high-quality training throughout the year. Leaders, including the lay chaplain, have an inspiring vision of outstanding teaching and learning; they secure this through high expertise and clear communication of their expectations to all staff. Staff are fully supported by leaders and work together to share their expertise for the benefit of the whole school; they feel confident in asking for support and guidance when necessary. Leaders and governors have a self-evaluation and monitoring schedule for religious education, which is rigorous, challenging, and searching; consequently, the school continually improves its provision. Strengths and areas to improve are regularly monitored and evaluated with support from the link governors. This is then fed back to the governing body and company directors, ensuring they are well-positioned to support and challenge leaders. Governors work tirelessly with the school and are regular visitors to the school. They accurately understand the quality of teaching and learning in religious education and ensure that it is at the heart of the school. Leaders ensure that curriculum content fully meets the requirements of the Religious Education Curriculum Directory.

Collective worship

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

Religious education key judgement grade:.....

1

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

Pupils have many opportunities to engage in acts of worship, individually and as a school community. All pupils are active in prayer and fully participate in it; this reflects the Catholic character of the school and academy. Pupils have a wide variety of age-appropriate prayer opportunities, and all respond well to the opportunities proved by the school in partnership with the parish priest and lay chaplain. Pupils fully understand their role when leading liturgies and undertake these confidently and with skill. Liturgies are carefully planned and prepared with a prayerful atmosphere, enabling pupils to respond with quiet reflection and joyful singing. Reverence and respect permeate all liturgies and captivate pupils' interest; they are inspired to respond with sincerity. Pupils discuss how they use prayer and liturgy to communicate with God. One pupil told inspectors, 'Through prayer, we are God's hands and feet.' Pupils recognise prayer as an essential part of school life; they write thoughtful prayers and reflections in their individual and class books. Pupils can discuss their faith eloquently and articulate their genuine spiritual relationships with God. Pupils evaluate prayer routinely, which helps them to improve their planning of it further.

Prayer and liturgy are integral to the life of the school, as seen in the many forms it takes. Staff and pupils are shaped and inspired into action because of their prayers. Acts of worship are meticulously planned throughout the year; they are engaging and creative, and pupils lead many of them. Different classes attend Mass each week in the parish Church, and there are weekly whole-school assemblies, morning worships and stay and pray liturgies. Daily worship follows a specific theme based upon the liturgical year, which leaders identify and timetable into the school's provision. Pupils and staff can work with the lay chaplain to prepare and share high-quality, creative liturgical experiences. Pupils and staff are familiar with many ways of praying and can discuss the impacts it makes on their lives as followers of God. The school provides

imaginative and creative spaces for prayer and reflection. The recent prayer garden was designed and built by the pupils and provides a permanent sacred space for the school and its community.

Leaders and governors have a clear understanding of prayer and its planning. The school and academy have a structured calendar of planned events based on the themes of the Church's liturgical year. Through strong parish links, the Eucharist is celebrated by the community and further enhanced by a structured sacramental preparation programme led in close partnership with the parish priest. Holy Days of Obligation and feast days are always observed and given high priority. Leaders and governors place the highest regard on accountability and evaluating the impact of prayer and liturgy, which is embedded in a cycle of rigorous self-evaluation. Prayer and liturgy are highly prioritised in the school and are included in school implementation plans. Governors know the school exceptionally well; they monitor and evaluate the provision of prayer and liturgy through regular visits and half-termly reports from leaders. Governors know that leaders' reports are accurate because they witness first-hand the quality of prayer and liturgy at St Filumena's. Relationships between the governors and the school are a strength; consequently, they provide highly effective support mechanisms to pupils, staff, and the community. Leaders place high importance on clearly relating prayer and liturgy to the lived experience of the school community. Pupils witness models of outstanding practice, resulting in consistently high standards of prayer within classrooms and the entire school.

Information about the school

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| Full name of school | St Filumena's Catholic Primary School |
| School unique reference number (URN) | 138723 |
| Full postal address of the school | Blythe Bridge Road, Caverswall, Staffordshire, ST11 9EA |
| School phone number | 01782 392 367 |
| Name of head teacher or principal | Edward Howard |
| Chair of governing board | Kenneth Wilson |
| School Website | www.st-filumenas.staffs.sch.uk |
| Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable) | The Painsley Catholic Academy |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Academy |
| Age-range of pupils | 4 to 11 |
| Trustees | Archdiocese of Birmingham |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Date of last denominational inspection | April 2016 |
| Previous denominational inspection grade | 1 |

The inspection team

Victoria Brickley

Lead inspector

Rebecca McKinney

Team inspector

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 |