

St Elizabeth's Catholic Primary School

URN: 140758

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Shrewsbury

19–20 November 2025

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

N/A

Compliance statement

- The school is compliant with the general norms for religious education and the additional requirements of the diocesan bishop.

What the school does well

- St Elizabeth's is a 'beacon of Catholic faith', lived out every day through nurturing relationships in the school community. The school is acutely aware of its responsibilities to support the needs of the wider community.
- The embedded culture of welcome for all pupils and their families makes St Elizabeth's a happy and inclusive school.
- Expertise and the high expectations of senior leaders ensures staff are confidently implementing the *Religious Education Directory* so pupils make good progress.
- Dedicated teaching staff, supported by experienced teaching assistants, provide challenging and engaging lessons so that pupils enjoy religious education and develop a deeper understanding of scripture.
- The response from pupils during the opportunities for prayer and liturgy and their willingness to put faith into action is helping them to recognise the power of prayer in their lives.

What the school needs to improve

- Develop a robust schedule of monitoring and evaluation of religious education to ensure that teacher assessments inform planning for all learners.
- Develop creativity in prayer and liturgy by ensuring there are effective procedures in place to measure the impact of the high-quality professional development and formation of staff.
- Further promote links between parents, parish and school so the community have regular opportunities to come together to pray and celebrate liturgy.

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

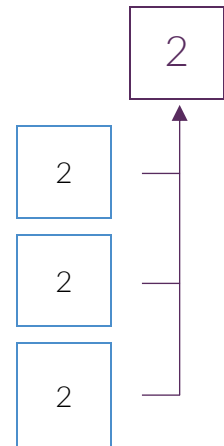
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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 St Elizabeth’s know their mission statement and confidently articulate how it guides their lives. ‘Let your light shine’ means ‘use your talents and qualities to help others’. They describe their school as a ‘loving, happy place where teachers are’ fair to all’ and ‘everyone’s voice is heard’. They know times of prayer, ‘Our time with God’, and religious education lessons help them to ‘trust in God and be the best version’ of themselves’. Pupils have opportunities to look after the environment and support those less fortunate than themselves, however they are not confident when explaining why this is a shared responsibility. Through activities with the St Vincent de Paul Society, Cafod, Caritas and the local food bank, they know they can make a positive difference. Leadership responsibilities, including roles for head boy and girl, eco leaders, Rights respecting champions, Mini Vinnies and prayer leaders provide some opportunities for pupils to take the initiative in planning activities. For example, the Rights respecting champions suggest ways to improve playtimes for pupils with special needs. This demonstrates their respect for all, recognising differences, but understanding they are all special. ‘I feel like I belong and my friends get it’ is how one pupil with particular needs describes her time at school. Links with local community projects to promote inter-faith initiatives also raise awareness of the uniqueness of each individual.

St Elizabeth’s staff are relatively new to the school and, as each new member joins the team, they feel welcomed and supported, because staff are guided by the Catholic mission of the school. Through their daily prayer, interactions with pupils, and commitment to religious education, they recognise ‘Jesus is at the heart of all they do’. Staff talk enthusiastically about positive relationships that exist between themselves and pupils, who feel staff are fair when helping them to sort out difficulties. They take their responsibility to be good role models seriously, and

therefore they create respectful and trustworthy relationships based on Gospel values, which permeate everyday life. One pupil in Upper Key Stage 2 explains this as 'treating everyone fairly, regardless of religion or differences'. There is dedicated nurture provision to support academic, social and emotional needs of any pupils who may need a calm space to reflect. There are a number of opportunities for staff and pupils to grow spiritually, however chaplaincy is an area identified for development in the school's own self-evaluation.

Through times of change in leadership the governing board, supported by the Corpus Christi Trust, have ensured that the recently appointed senior leadership team is able to continue their commitment to Catholic education. As a consequence, the Catholic life and mission of the school continue to be at the heart of policies and procedures that guide the school day. One governor believes the school to be a 'beacon of Catholic faith', welcoming all. The United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund Gold Rights Respecting Award is an acknowledgement of this. Leaders and governors understand the importance of promoting the partnership between school, families and parish, and they are actively seeking ways to strengthen these links. For example, the weekly newsletter for parents now contains the Sunday Gospel message. Leaders encourage pupils to become aware of their responsibility to look after the planet and those in greatest need. However, because of recent changes in staff and leadership this is not fully implemented in the curriculum. Although governors visit the school regularly there is no formal monitoring of the Catholic life and mission of St Elizabeth's. Now though, there is a link governor for this important area.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

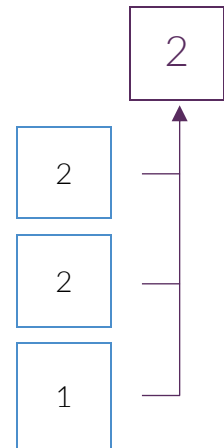
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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' responses in lessons, in written work and in assessment tasks demonstrate they are developing their understanding of religious education being taught through the *Vine and the Branches* scheme. Teachers set challenging tasks and this is one reason pupils make good progress from their starting points. However, some independent and group tasks are not always structured to allow all individuals to respond at their own level. This means some groups of pupils do not always remember what they have learned in previous topics. Adult support in every year group is a strength and their interactions and support enable pupils with special educational needs to access the curriculum. Those pupils who use religious vocabulary to express their views confidently evidence their knowledge and understanding. Pupils in Early Years speak of being 'stewards' and know 'a prophet is someone chosen by God'. In Upper Key Stage 2 pupils reflect on the Annunciation: 'If Mary hadn't said yes, the New Testament wouldn't have happened, and we wouldn't have all these blessings'. Because teachers use a variety of creative strategies, pupils engage with and enjoy religious education lessons, which promotes good behaviour. Pupils understand that some pupils are given extra support during lessons, so learning is rarely disrupted and attainment is similar to other core subjects.

Attendance at Diocesan and Trust training means teachers are confident about teaching to the *Religious Education Directory*. They also value the internal training and support they receive from the experienced subject leader. Lessons are well planned because teachers recognise the importance of religious education and have high expectations of themselves and their pupils. They use effective strategies to engage learners, and the most recent pupil voice shows a significant increase in the number of pupils saying they enjoy religious education lessons because they have creative ways of learning, including drama, art, annotating scripture and debates. Another strategy teachers use to promote deeper understanding is effective

questioning during the introduction of new topics as well as drawing on links from previous learning. Highly skilled teaching assistants continue these strategies when supporting group work. Teachers write 'challenge' questions when feeding back their comments to pupils' written work in books and pupils are given time to reflect on these questions to make individual responses. However, teachers provide little opportunity for pupils to assess how they could improve their own work.

Leaders and governors prioritise the training that teachers need to deliver the *Religious Education Directory*. This is supported by The Vine and the Branches scheme, which is now used in school from Year 1 to Year 6. Religious education is recognised as a core subject and is given the same priority in terms of funding, training, monitoring and high expectations as in English and maths. The current senior leadership team ensures all teachers have access to relevant Diocesan training for their year group and are now providing opportunities for them to attend specialist training for creativity in religious education. They also work closely with the Trust to develop planning and assessment strategies to further improve teaching and learning for all. As a result of this support, and the expertise of the senior leadership team this year, staff confidence and understanding is high. Consequently, lessons are at least good with some outstanding practice seen across the school. The recently introduced religious education document gives clear expectations of what is expected at St Elizabeth's. Monitoring and evaluation during the past year indicate where improvements can be made, and details are outlined in an action plan ready for the new headteacher to detail a timeline and success criteria.

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

1

2

Celebrations of the word are appropriately planned for each age group, which means pupils engage and participate fully in the times they call 'Our time with God'. Because of the respectful relationships between pupils and staff, all pupils are able to deepen their experience of prayer according to their emotional and conceptual understanding. Pupils listen attentively, reflect in silence and share their responses to what they hear in the scripture readings. For example, when reflecting on trust in God during difficult times, Key Stage 1 pupils relate this to their own personal experiences. Through religious artwork based on Isaiah, pupils are able to share their interpretations and reflect that God 'will take care of you'. They know these times of prayer help them to 'not think about yourself but think about others' giving practical ways of doing this. Pupils enjoy praying in song and sometimes use signs to enhance this enjoyment. Although pupils take part in a variety of prayer and celebrations of liturgy throughout the year, they do not have an understanding of the Church's liturgical year. Pupils do have opportunities to take an active part in whole school and class worship, however there are limited opportunities for them to develop skills needed to plan and undertake a particular ministry.

The importance of prayer and celebration of liturgy is an integral part of daily life at St Elizabeth's. Teachers use a structured format to plan celebrations of the word in class, so they now have confidence and understanding to enable them to develop more creative ways of praying. Teachers know that hearing and reflecting on scripture is an important way of developing pupils' understanding of how much God loves them. They use passages that are appropriate to the time of year and relate them to religious education lessons or whole school celebrations of the word. Staff commitment is a strength, and they are willing to engage in any opportunities given to them to develop their own skills. Sharing their own expertise as well as attending external training is one way to further harness this commitment. Most classrooms have space for pupils to gather

in a different way to lesson times, however this is not possible in some rooms and space could be better used. There are prayer tables in every classroom, but they are not always conducive to offering a meaningful focus for personal reflection.

The new senior leadership team has a clear strategy for building staff confidence and skills to ensure that pupils can engage fully in their 'time with God'. The policy for prayer and liturgy offers guidance and expectations for prayer at St Elizabeth's so it is a useful document for staff and includes practical expectations as well as prayers pupils learn as they move through the school. Senior leaders have the skills to further develop prayer and liturgy in school and their work this year means teachers confidently lead celebrations of the word with their classes. Professional development is given a high priority when allocating budgets for training and resources. As a result, the staff understand the importance of developing their own skills in order to help pupils deepen their experiences of prayer. Professional development now includes plans for attendance at training for creative ways to pray, elements of which are already becoming part of prayer times in school. There is an annual plan which ensures the school community can celebrate key feasts during the year as well as regular Masses in school and church. However, governors are keen to develop these opportunities with families and the parish further.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Elizabeth's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	140758
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	3523474
Full postal address of the school	Calve Croft Road, Peel Hall, Wythenshawe, Manchester, M22 5EU
School phone number	01614373890
Executive headteacher	N/A
Headteacher	Claire Sherry
Chair of governors	Bernadette Hayward
School Website	www.st-elizabeths.manchester.sch.uk/
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Corpus Christi 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	26 June 2018
Previous denominational inspection grade	1

The inspection team

Susan Lyonette
Julie Littler-Shire

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