



# St John Fisher Catholic Primary School

URN: 140025

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Hallam

13–14 March 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

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

2

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 commitment of the head teacher and governors in promoting Catholic life is evident in all aspects of this school, and the vision, ambition and commitment of this leadership team is shared by all. The school is central to this vibrant Catholic community and makes St John Fisher a unique place to be.
- Pupils are true ambassadors of the school and act out the school's mission. Their sense of belonging and commitment to the school community is valued by all and is truly distinctive to the school.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitude to learning is outstanding and teaching is consistently good or better across the school.
- Pupils take an immense pride in the presentation of their work resulting in work that is exemplary.

- Scripture is central in prayer and liturgy, and in religious education, to spread God's word. Pupils are confident in using it.

## What the school needs to improve

- Enable pupils to take ever- increasing responsibility for planning, leading and evaluating the range of liturgy and prayer on offer at the school.
- Further embed the agreed teaching strategies across the school so that:
  - teachers are more explicit about what pupils need to do next in order to make greater progress in religious education
  - pupils can more easily and independently take greater ownership of their learning, relative to their age and development
- Review the school's prayer and liturgy policy so that all relevant staff can use this as a reference point in supporting high quality collective 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

**Pupil outcomes**

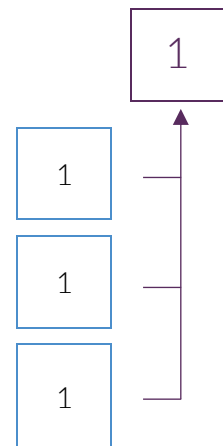
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

**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 school's mission is lived out by all on a daily basis. Pupils understand it exceptionally well, and even the youngest pupils can confidently explain what it means to them in their daily lives. This extremely positive response from pupils is because of the example of leaders and staff who embrace the mission and are dedicated to securing it. Pupils know that they are loved and valued in all of their God-given uniqueness due to the strong relationships between staff and pupils. Through the various pupil-led leadership groups in school, the local and national community is supported by prayer, fundraising activities, and care for our common home. Pupils highly value the school's chaplaincy provision and willingly take leadership roles within it. They actively participate in and contribute to opportunities provided by the school. There is a strong sense of vocation and belonging amongst the staff and as a result the staff make an exceptional contribution to the school's Catholic life and mission. St John Fisher is a very welcoming community that actively includes everyone, and staff go the extra mile to understand the pupils' needs and enable them to love and pray in fidelity to their own commitments. Parents, governors, carers, pupils, and staff are united through this welcoming culture and share a deep sense of commitment to the school's mission. This is evident in the parent responses where they say, 'that children feeling happy, safe and loved is at the heart of everything the school does'. Staff offer supportive pastoral care for each other and the children; knowing them very well this then contributes to pupils' happiness and well-being. Pupils are trained to be healthy minds champions who are there to listen and help others when any problems arise. Pupils are supportive of each other: for example, in the year 5 classroom, a child felt able to share personal temptation in a supportive atmosphere.

The use of sacred spaces is utilised well and pupils show a deep respect for the wonderful environment the school has to offer. This reflects its mission and identity through displays which promote the school's Catholic character, Provision for relationships, sex, and health education meets all statutory and diocesan requirements. There is strong evidence in the quality of relationships at all levels. Everybody is acknowledged as a creation of God, meaning families and visitors are greeted with a warm welcome from the moment they arrive.

Leaders and governors are deeply committed to ensuring the school's Catholic character is upheld and continually developed. They ensure that Christ is always at the heart of the school. Leaders are inspired by the example of St John Fisher, and they are exemplary role models in the way they share their love and joy in following Jesus. Leaders and governors actively promote the principle that Catholic education is at the service of the local Church. The head teacher is inspirational in his role as the leader of this faith community and is exceptionally well supported by his staff and governors. Their faith-filled example is palpable and is willingly embraced by the staff and pupils. Governors care deeply about the pupils and their families and are diligent in the way they hold leaders to account for the Catholic life and mission of the school. They provide challenge and support to ensure it continues to thrive. Governors are highly ambitious for the Catholic life and mission of the school and lead by example in ensuring it is central in school improvement planning. The school actively involves parents and carers and takes care to communicate effectively and extend the culture of welcome to all.

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

### Religious education key judgement grade

#### Pupil outcomes

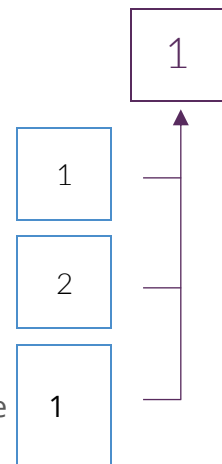
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

#### 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 achieve very well in religious education, making very good progress as they journey through the school by knowing more and remembering more. They are developing into religiously literate young people as is clearly evidenced in their discussions in class and in their written work. Pupils produce work that is of a consistently high standard. They take great pride in their work as is evidenced in its excellent presentation and the depth of their responses. Pupils speak fluently and confidently about what they have learned in religious education, using key concepts and subject specific vocabulary. Pupils make links between their written work and scripture through the use of 'scripture detectives' that supports pupils to remember more. Pupils' attitudes to all aspects of learning in religious education are consistently positive and make a significant contribution to the progress they make. Pupils produce work of a consistently high quality, demonstrating excellent presentation, individuality and creativity. For example, Year 6 pupils could draw upon previous learning to support creative newspaper headlines for their work during Lent. These attitudes ensure that there is no significant variation of progress between groups of learners. Pupils enjoy their lessons; engage fully; participate with enthusiasm; demonstrate a real commitment to learning; and a desire not only to deepen their knowledge and understanding, but also to link their learning with their daily lives. Pupils across all year groups made links to their own lives and faith in action.

Teachers are confident with their subject knowledge and understand how pupils learn. They value the professional development on offer to support staff new to the school. However, they do not always plan sufficient opportunities for challenge. Where teachers actively involve pupils in their learning through short, focused activities, their engagement and motivation are high. However, learning opportunities are lost when there is too much teacher talk. Pupils' effort is

celebrated, which leads to good levels of motivation but the environment within the classrooms does not celebrate pupils' work well enough. Pupils say their view point is valued. Effective open-ended questions helped pupils recall facts and they did this well. Teachers did not provide feedback opportunities for pupils to inform them on how to improve their work. Deepening questions were evident in books but the needs of higher-attaining pupils are not always sufficiently met. Questioning is generally good in lessons, in terms of assessing pupils' knowledge and understanding, but some opportunities were missed for some pupils to extend their learning.

Leaders and governors ensure that the school fully meets the requirements of the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory (2012)*. The content of religious education is carefully mapped so that learning is effectively sequenced to build on prior learning. The resourcing of religious education is comparable with that of other core subjects in terms of time and accommodation. Leaders ensure that all staff have access to regular and effective training to improve their practice. The new subject leader for religious education has made swift and necessary changes since taking up post and readily shares knowledge and expertise with colleagues, enabling them to continue to develop best practice. They value this support. There is clear professional development in place for teachers who are at an early stage in their careers. This ensures that they are well supported and so gain in confidence when teaching religious education. Leaders are taking effective action to secure improvement using monitoring and evaluation systems. Leaders now need to systematically track and monitor the delivery of religious education through, incisive, regular lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' work to ensure all pupils, especially high-attaining pupils, are able to know more, remember more and do more.

## 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 are reverent and respond well to experiences of prayer and liturgy offered by the school, showing their ability to reflect in silence and join in community prayer. They readily participate in prayers with their peers and listen attentively during class liturgies. Pupils understand that there are different ways of praying, including responding to scripture, praying traditional prayers and singing. Prayer and liturgy opportunities encourage pupils to reflect on their own lives and lead them to action, putting the needs of others first. Pupils' knowledge of the Church's liturgical year is good, and they can articulate how these seasons influence the school's prayer life and help them grow deeper in their faith and closer to God. Pupils enjoy opportunities to prepare and lead acts of worship through the use of the Let Us Pray resources and related TEN TEN prayer and liturgy materials. The chaplaincy team were able to articulate their role and how they contribute to the prayer life of the school. There is some evidence of pupil-led class liturgies but this is not yet fully embedded. Despite pupils being willing to take on ministries across the school and church, opportunities for all pupils to work with others, such as other staff and pupils, to prepare prayer and liturgy are limited.

Prayer and liturgy are central to the day-to-day life of the school. Pupils value and recognise prayer as a fundamental part of every day at St John Fisher. Pupils appreciate and enjoy the creative range of prayer and liturgy that is provided by staff. Relevant scripture is chosen well by the staff, who are skilled at helping pupils to interpret the meaning behind readings. Leaders are strong role models to everyone in the community. All of these opportunities combine to embed prayer and liturgy in the daily life of the school, with a positive impact on the entire community. Staff have thoughtfully planned how to work with families to include them in supporting the developing prayer life of pupils. Opportunities to engage families and the wider community as seen through the school's website are exemplary. Parents are welcomed into school for

assemblies, class Masses and liturgies and these are very well attended. Parents' voice is actively sought and is a valued part of the school's evaluation of prayer and liturgy.

The school's policy on collective worship has been recently revisited. However, it is not comprehensive in its expectations of pupils as they move through the age groups, particularly in how pupils develop independence in planning, preparing and leading prayer. Therefore, the understanding of the different levels and skills of participation that are reflective of the age and capacity of pupils is not yet widely embedded. A clear plan is in place to celebrate significant liturgical times, such as holy days of obligation and key significant traditions, including praying the Rosary during October, and Marian prayers during May. The school provides a daily pattern of prayer that follows the Church's liturgical seasons. Leaders, including governors recognise the importance of prayer and liturgy and ensure that time and resources are allocated appropriately. The entire school site, indoors and outdoors, is an extremely attractive and well-maintained space that is conducive to prayer. This is because of consistent investment to create a school environment that values the dignity of every individual and provides attractive, inviting spaces in which to pray, reflect and spend time with Jesus.



## Information about the school

Full name of school	St John Fisher Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	140025
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	3732017
Full postal address of the school	Spring Water Avenue, Hackenthorpe, Sheffield, S12 4HJ
School phone number	01142485009
Headteacher	Frank Barratt
Chair of Local Governing Body	Daniel Beever
School Website	<a href="http://www.st-johnfisher.org">www.st-johnfisher.org</a>
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	St Clare Catholic Multi Academy Trust
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Academy
Admissions policy	N/A
Age-range of pupils	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	December 2016
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

## The inspection team

Bernadette Nesbit

Emmeline Janvier

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