



St Richard's Roman Catholic Primary School

URN: 105544

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Salford

01–02 October 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

Religious education (p.5)

The quality of curriculum religious education

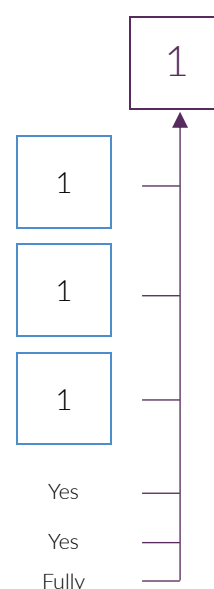
Collective worship (p.7)

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

The school is fully compliant with the general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishops' Conference

The school is fully compliant with any additional requirements of the diocesan bishop

The school has responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection



Compliance statement

- School leaders, including governors have ensured that a minimum of 10% of curriculum time is devoted to religious education in full compliance with the general norms laid down by the bishops' conference.
- There are currently no additional primary school requirements issued by Bishop John Arnold, Bishop of the Diocese of Salford.
- At the last inspection leaders were asked to develop learning by encouraging greater opportunity to be creative and independent learners. School leaders, including governors have fully addressed this previous area for improvement by; providing extensive training to teachers, the introduction of detailed learning journeys and investment in new teaching resources.

What the school does well

- St Richard's is a harmonious and diverse multi-faith community. Leaders have worked effectively over many years to make St Richard's a truly inclusive school where all faiths are respected and celebrated. Catholic and non-Catholic children learn together in mutual respect and harmony learning from each other.
- St. Richard's is a school that truly lives out its mission statement. This is authentically expressed in the warm and mutually supportive relationships between staff and children. All are valued and cared for in this Catholic community.
- Children love learning about their Catholic faith. They approach lessons with great interest, passion and enthusiasm. Children are highly engaged in lessons and respond eagerly to expertly selected scripture. They relish opportunities in lessons to discuss their impressive and deepening religious understanding. Their behaviour is impeccable.
- Christ is at the centre of this worshipping community. Daily prayer and liturgical celebrations provide opportunities for children to deepen their relationship with God.
- All children, including non-Catholic children relish the multiple opportunities afforded to them to take practical actions to support the most vulnerable in their community and to care for God's creation.

What the school needs to improve

- Refine further classroom strategies to make religious education lessons fully accessible to children with special educational needs, including making better use of available support staff.

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

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

1

The children who attend St Richard's fully embrace and live out the mission of the school, 'That we know, love and follow Christ by looking after each other and trying our best every day' which reflects the school's distinctive Catholic identity. It is clearly defined, regularly expressed, and deeply understood by all. The school celebrates the rich diversity of their community and ensures that everyone feels valued, respected and cherished. Children demonstrate a clear sense of worth because they know they are unique beings made in God's image. The numerous opportunities for children to undertake leadership roles lead to a palpable sense of community and collective responsibility. The understanding of Catholic social teaching is secure as the children are immersed in their duty as missionary disciples. The Caritas team are committed to serve their local community, raising thousands of pounds each year in a variety of carefully planned fundraising events for charities both near and far. The Caritas Ambassadors and eco-council are inspired by St Francis of Assisi. One child said, 'We are caretakers of the world, and it is our job to look after it'. Children in the 'Growing in Faith Together' team work effectively together to plan, lead, and evaluate prayer and liturgy. The overwhelming majority of parents express that their children are happy and feel safe at St Richard's with one saying, 'I drive past many schools and travel further so my child can attend this school'.

Staff wholeheartedly support the mission and speak passionately about their love of the school. They are impeccable role models and are highly valued by children and parents alike. The highest levels of pastoral care are provided to those who need it most and staff regularly go the extra mile to ensure all needs are met. Parishioners and parents receive a warm welcome to class Masses and 'stay and pray' sessions. The physical environment fully reflects the Catholic character of St Richard's; the prayer room is used by the growing in faith together team who lead special prayer sessions such as the Rosary group in the months of May and October. Class prayer focus areas and displays are given due care and attention reflecting the liturgical year. Children speak enthusiastically about how they live out the gospel values by supporting the community

through an abundance of charitable initiatives. Relationships, sex and health education is carefully planned to fully reflect Catholic teaching and principles. A parent thanked the school for 'preparing my child for the wider world'.

Leaders demonstrate an exceptional commitment to the Church's educational mission, ensuring that Christ is at the heart of all the school does. The headteacher and senior leadership team are instrumental in ensuring the mission of the school is lived, loved, and known. They conduct learning walks, book scrutiny, pupil and curriculum discussions that are always shared at governors' meetings. The highly experienced governing board, know the school well and are equipped to both support and challenge the headteacher. The religious education governor meets regularly with the senior leadership team and religious education lead to discuss the teaching, learning and assessment of curriculum religious education and witness the prayer life of the school. Leaders ensure all policies and practices are rooted in the teachings of the gospel. New members of staff receive a full induction from school leaders and receive quality training in Catholic social teaching from the diocese. Parents feel well informed through parents' evenings, book looks and reports. One said, 'The door is always open for us'.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

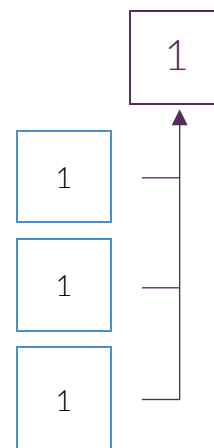
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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



Children's knowledge and understanding of the religious education curriculum is deeply impressive. Lesson by lesson all children, including those with special educational needs make exceptional progress and build knowledge cumulatively. For example, in a lesson in upper Key Stage 2, pupils were able to use their existing knowledge to enable them to analyse with precision and insight pictorial representations of forgiveness, for example using Rembrandt's painting of *The Prodigal Son*. This growing body of religious knowledge is clearly apparent when speaking to children. They are increasingly able to reflect spiritually on this learning and how it might inform and shape their ethical choices in the real world. Children can fluently and confidently recall key concepts and use religious terminology correctly. For example, children in lower Key Stage 2 could explain the concept of 'pilgrimage'. Inspectors visited all classes and were deeply impressed by children's attitudes to learning and their sheer capacity for concentrated hard work. As a result, children consistently produce work of an exceptionally high standard. Behaviour in lessons is excellent, and children are keen to help one another. They have a clear understanding of their own progress and next steps in learning.

Leaders have wisely invested in the professional development of all teachers which has equipped them with authentic subject knowledge. As a result, all teachers, including non-Catholic teachers and early career teachers deliver religious education lessons with confidence and skill. Teachers make clear they expect nothing but the very best from children. They plan lessons that are highly engaging that really motivate these young learners to connect seemingly disparate learning experiences into a coherent Catholic centred whole curriculum. For example, a child in the upper Key Stage 2 recalled a trip to Quarry Bank Mill where they dropped apples in a river that made ripples in the water. She later recalled this in a religion lesson: 'The ripples in the river are like God's love for us.' Teachers questioning probes skilfully the level of children's

understanding and supports them to deepen this further. Teacher praise is used judiciously to celebrate the efforts to children in lessons. Lesson planning builds in regular reflection time facilitating the moral development of children. High quality and varied resources enhance lessons. However, occasionally in some lessons the deployment of support staff needs further refinement.

School leaders have successfully ensured that the curriculum for religious education is a faithful expression of the *Religious Education Directory*. Leaders, including governors have made certain that religious education is the 'core of the core' and at least on a par with English and Maths in terms of resources, professional development, timetabling and resourcing. Leaders careful oversight means staff regularly benefit from high quality training provided by the diocese. The religious education subject leader is highly experienced, deeply knowledgeable and passionate about her subject. This inspiring vision for religious education is fully realised in lessons that are often outstanding and never less than good. Leaders have in place a coherent curriculum design that is sequential and progressive and enables pupils to build on prior learning. Regular monitoring and feedback by the curriculum leader and leadership team facilitates a virtuous cycle of searching analysis and self-challenge leading to outstanding outcomes.

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

Children in St Richard's are deeply engaged in and responsive to the school's varied prayer life. All children display high levels of reverence, respect and understanding, showing an exceptional understanding of the church's liturgical year and can confidently link this to a range of appropriate prayers. Fully reflecting the Catholic tradition, under the guidance of the headteacher and staff, the older children are increasingly confident to plan their own collective worship and deliver meaningful prayer and liturgy experiences. The children work together exceptionally well and can skillfully select appropriate hymns, symbols and prayers closely linked to the chosen Gospel. They are increasingly able to evaluate their own celebrations of the word, highlighting points for improvement and then subsequently using them to improve. Joyful and passionate singing is a defining characteristic of St Richard's, embraced wholeheartedly by every child and members of staff of all faiths. This vibrant singing significantly enriches the atmosphere during all prayer gatherings, whether they are celebratory or reflective. Children respond with great attention and display high levels of maturity when led in meditation. A poignant example of this was demonstrated during a Key Stage 2 collective worship where the meditation and sacred silence was upheld outstandingly. As a result of the importance placed on collective worship and prayer and growing confidence in the children in leading it, all children undertake liturgical ministries with great confidence and increasing skill. Due to the centrality of prayer, children readily and confidently talk about how it impacts their own lives.

St Richard's is a prayerful community, with scripture and the word of God at its heart. All staff actively participate in the prayer life of the school. The policy on prayer and liturgy is well formulated and sets clear expectations. It is fit for purpose because staff know it and are well supported by leaders to ensure that all in the school community experience high quality prayer and liturgy. A detailed annual plan of provision clearly details the significant moments of tradition, celebration and experiences based on the liturgical calendar. Consistency of approach is a defining characteristic of St Richard's, and because of the clear expectations set by leaders, all children thrive in their prayer lives. There is an impressive progression plan of prayers, Mass

responses and skills document which is the template used to ensure that all children build in their abilities and confidence in age appropriate and meaningful ways. Recent continued professional development has enabled teachers to support pupils to more effectively plan and deliver collective worship as well as building upon their own knowledge and skills.

Leaders, including governors, fully understand the importance of prayer and liturgy in the spiritual development of pupils and staff. The governing body is active in its commitment to the school's prayer life and staff formation and are active in joining the school for collective worship and other celebrations. The senior leadership team and governors have a deep and genuine commitment to ensuring prayer and liturgy are given the highest priority which has transcended throughout the staff. One teacher of another faith expressed, 'Working in St Richard's has helped my own faith deepen and to become closer to God.' The collective and inspiring vision of the leadership has ensured children continually nourish their relationship with God through prayer during their school journey at St Richard's.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Richard's Roman Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	105544
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	3523482
Full postal address of the school	Wilpshire Avenue, Longsight, Manchester, M12 5TL
School phone number	01612245552
Executive headteacher	N/A
Headteacher	Mr Jonathan Murray
Chair of Governors	Mr Timothy Ferguson
School Website	www.st-richards.manchester.sch.uk
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	N/A
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Voluntary Aided School
Admissions policy	Non-selective
Age-range of pupils	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	30 th January 2018
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

The inspection team

David Deane OBE

Robert Tanti

Laura Orr

Lead

Team

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