

# Holy Cross Catholic Primary School

URN: 138812

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Nottingham

27–28 November 2024

## 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

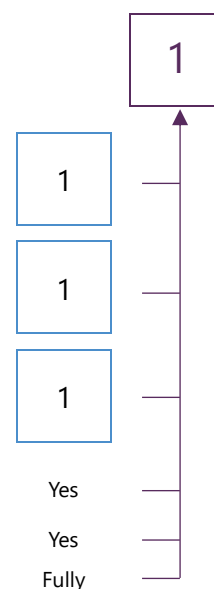
#### Collective worship (p.7)

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

- The school is fully compliant with the general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishops' conference.
- The school is fully compliant with the requirements of the diocesan bishop.
- The school has fully responded to the areas of development set out in the previous inspection report.

## What the school does well

- Leaders are passionate in their vision for Catholic life and mission and actively support pupils to live out their faith in practical ways.
- The learning environment of the school is vibrant and inspiring, which significantly enhances pupils' appreciation of their own faith.
- The drive of the headteacher to plan and deliver the new religious education curriculum is admirable. It is well planned and sequenced, ensuring pupils reach the highest standards of attainment.
- Pupils are able to recall religious knowledge and make links between different areas, whilst demonstrating high levels of religious literacy.
- Well planned and rigorous systems for monitoring and evaluation are in place, leading to improvements over time in Catholic life and mission, religious education and collective worship.

## What the school needs to improve

- Use school behavioural strategies to engage pupils fully in lessons to maximise the progress and understanding of all pupils.
- Ensure that the variety of prayer and liturgy includes a range of opportunities for creativity, meditation and spontaneous prayer.
- Incorporate effective questioning in religious education lessons to challenge, support and deepen understanding for pupils.

## 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

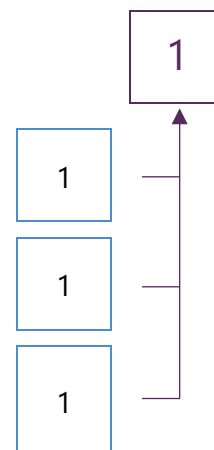
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

#### 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 from the earliest age have an excellent understanding of 'The Holy Cross Way' and confidently articulate the ethos at Holy Cross because the clear sense of mission at this school is so well embedded. At the end of each year, pupils are chosen to receive an award in recognition of embodying each element of the mission statement. Pupils actively participate in all aspects of school life and relish the wide range of pupil leadership roles on offer. Able pupil chaplains cherish their positions: 'I like being a good role model, it makes me feel part of this school'. Pupils take initiative to support those in need by raising money for Macmillan Cancer Support and the Emmanuel House foodbank. They are beginning to take this work beyond the school into the wider community. Pupils understand the key Catholic social teaching principles and discuss how 'stewardship is looking after God's creation, being selfless and thinking about other people'. Pupils show respect to those of all faiths and the school is fully inclusive. Pupils leading the Bible group use shells to discuss how everyone is different and unique but 'God loves us all'. Although behaviour in all lessons is not consistently exemplary, it is at least good and sometimes even better. Pupils act as parish ambassadors to share the work of the school with parishioners.

The mission statement forms an integral part of school life and is rooted in the word of God. Everyone understands the motto 'Loved, Valued, Challenged', and what this means, making connections to Jesus and their own lives. The Catholic curriculum has been designed with Christ at the centre and is woven with the school's values and virtues. Staff are exemplary role models and nurture relationships with pupils and parents. They go 'the extra mile' to support families and parents are deeply appreciative: 'It is like a family, supporting each other in prayer, financially and mentally, with no fear of being rejected or feeling alone'. Chaplaincy provision is prioritised

in school and carefully planned, including a calendar of events to promote high quality opportunities such as Mass, retreats and project work with the Cathedral of St Barnabas in Nottingham. High quality displays permeate the school environment, enhancing pupils' faith. Relationships, sex and health education is carefully planned using the Ten:Ten scheme and decisions have been made around the content of the curriculum in consultation with parents.

Leaders are ambitious and have a clear vision for pupils to live out the mission of the school, recognising they are the future of the Catholic Church. They are passionate that Christ should be at the heart of the school and the curriculum is built around this principle. The bishop's vision for the diocese has been embraced fully by leaders and governors as reflected in implementation of activities to mark the Year of Prayer. Leaders work tirelessly with the parish to ensure links are made and strengthened. Leaders are welcoming of parents and develop strong relationships, inviting families to celebrations and into the prayer life of the school. Leaders demonstrate their passion to serve the most vulnerable through reaching out to charities such as Under one Roof and Emmanuel House. Governors provide appropriate challenge and support for leaders, showing a continual drive for improvement. Systems for self-evaluation are rigorous and accurate, and these feed into comprehensive overviews. Leaders and governors have an accurate picture of the school including strengths and areas for development. There is a wide professional development offer for staff within school and through the Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi-Academy Trust and the diocese. Staff have a clear induction process and are further supported through instructional coaching strategies.

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

### Religious education key judgement grade

#### Pupil outcomes

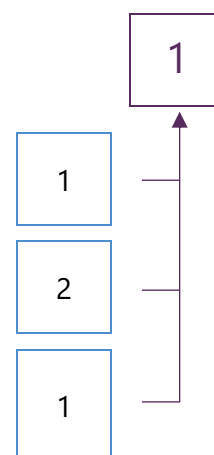
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

#### 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 develop excellent knowledge and skills, gained from the carefully planned religious education curriculum. Pupils demonstrate this, for example, in their knowledge of prophecy and prophets, as Year 4 pupils recall extensive knowledge of Elijah and how he encouraged the worship of only one God. Systems in place for retrieval, along with the precisely sequenced curriculum, ensure pupils build knowledge over time to know and remember more. Religious literacy is a strength across the school: pupils confidently articulate their knowledge, drawing on a range of religious vocabulary. This includes Nursery children using vocabulary relating to the Christmas story and pupils in Year 2 discussing Pope Francis' words in 'Laudato Si'. Most pupils work independently and concentrate well, although there are some occasions of low-level disruption which impact on progress within lessons. Written work is presented well and pupils are proud of their work. Year 6 pupils discuss how they enjoy research tasks and are given freedom to set out their work on double page spreads, enabling them to show their knowledge fully. Pupils show passion in their religious education lessons; they are interested and want to find out more. There are many opportunities and strategies embedded for self-assessment which means that pupils confidently discuss what they know and what they need to do next. Pupils' attainment in religious education is high because pupils show deep levels of religious knowledge.

Teachers demonstrate consistently high levels of subject knowledge as a result of the training leaders have put in place to introduce the new religious education curriculum. Lessons follow a specific pedagogical approach, which ensures consistency of teaching. Religious education lessons are prioritised and given high significance, starting with a prayer, soft music and lighting a candle. Teachers follow detailed planning which outlines key religious knowledge and endpoints, closely linked to prior assessment and use of 'big questions'. On occasions, tasks are

not closely matched to assessed knowledge. Teachers use 'habits of discussion' to aid explanations and understanding for pupils. Questioning is not always used as effectively as it could to move pupils' knowledge and further accelerate learning. Systems for providing feedback are well-embedded across the school through a whole class feedback model, which addresses misconceptions from previous lessons. Written feedback is skilful and moves learning forwards, and responses from pupils to teachers' marking are good. Resources such as 'widgets' support pupils with special educational needs, and scaffolding enables pupils to access tasks at their own levels.

Religious leaders have been instrumental in designing the new curriculum based on the religious education directory (RED), for their school and other schools within the diocese. The curriculum is ambitious, carefully planned and progressively sequenced. Religious education has parity with other core subjects and sometimes goes beyond this, showing its high profile. Leaders ensure all staff attend training through the diocese such as 'New to Catholic schools' and 'Catholic Foundation Stones'. In addition, the headteacher provides bespoke training to staff in order to deliver the religious education directory and new curriculum to the highest standard. The headteacher and religious education subject leader have an inspiring drive to improve educational standards for religious education across the school, as shown by curriculum development. Religious education meets the needs of learners; in the strongest lessons, further adaptations are made to accelerate learning for all pupils. A robust and regular monitoring calendar is in place which includes an overview to set next steps and actions which are followed up within specific timelines and contribute to improving religious educational standards.

## Collective worship

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

### Collective worship key judgement grade

#### Pupil outcomes

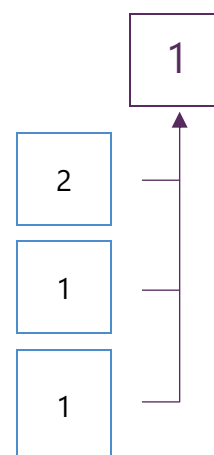
How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

#### Provision

The quality of collective worship provided by the school

#### Leadership

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



Pupils actively participate in class and whole school celebrations of the word. Pupils in the early years show high levels of engagement by making the sign of the cross and listening carefully to scripture; older pupils respond appropriately to the Gospel and join in with prayers. Pupils across the school sing with confidence and enthusiasm, and know well a range of traditional hymns. Pupils know traditional prayers, such as the Lord's Prayer and the Hail Mary. There is a less developed understanding about different ways to pray. Pupils have an excellent understanding of different parts of the liturgical year and link these to the appropriate colours and artefacts used. Moments of reflection are incorporated, but these are not always consistently prayerful in the atmosphere created within every class. Pupils work well, led by the lay chaplain, to plan and prepare prayer and liturgy experiences which follow a four-part structure and use the 'LetUsPray2gether' resources. Pupils in upper Key Stage 2 become increasingly independent and prepare, plan and lead prayer confidently for younger year groups. There are many opportunities for pupil evaluation which directly impact the following celebrations of the word in order to form a continual cycle of improvement.

Daily prayer routines are prioritised and embedded so that pupils are able to confidently recite formal prayers throughout the day. The provision for wider types of prayer or spontaneous prayer is less developed. The school community gathers together to mark moments of importance in the school year, including the emphasis on November as the month of the Holy Souls where staff and pupils remember those who have died, incorporating Remembrance and Armistice Day. Staff and pupils are able to draw on their knowledge of the Bible and choose appropriate scripture passages when considering the theme of Kingdom (Luke 23). Pupils respond with thoughtful reflections: 'Jesus was talking about the Kingdom of Heaven because that's where Jesus and God are'. Carefully considered and vibrant artwork inside and outside

the school building enhance the prayer life of the school. All sacred spaces are regularly used for prayer and liturgy sessions at all times of day, and these are cherished by staff and pupils. Leaders have invested significantly to bring these spaces to life. Families value the invitations they receive into school to celebrate their faith with their children, further enhanced by the strong links with the local parish.

Leaders ensure policies are well formulated and used as a living document to inform practice in school. The use of the 'progression of prayer' document guides practice within the classroom so that pupils develop skills which increase their knowledge and independence. Leaders have developed a detailed school calendar with a wide range of liturgical events such as crowning of Our Blessed Lady, carol services, and stations of the cross. This also includes regular attendance at Mass on feast days and holy days of obligation. Leaders ensure pupils have access to traditional practices of the church such as the Sacrament of Reconciliation and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Opportunities for professional development sessions are prioritised by leaders and governors, and staff attend sessions with the diocese, Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi-Academy Trust and within school. These opportunities upskill leaders and staff to enable them to facilitate more effective and impactful worship. Leaders and lay chaplains have a good understanding of different ways of praying and use this knowledge to facilitate pupil planning. Resources for prayer and liturgy have been prioritised to ensure these are available and of high quality. Systematic and rigorous monitoring timetables are in place to evaluate provision for prayer and liturgy, and these forensically inform future actions and planning.



## Information about the school

Full name of school	Holy Cross Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	138812
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8913730
Full postal address of the school	Holy Cross Catholic Primary School, Leen Mills Lane, Hucknall, Nottingham, NG15 8BZ
School phone number	01159534577
Headteacher	Tammie McNamara
Chair of local governing body	Maria Williams
School Website	<a href="http://www.holycrossschoolhucknall.com">http://www.holycrossschoolhucknall.com</a>
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Our Lady Of Lourdes Catholic Multi-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 March 2018
Previous denominational inspection grade	1

## The inspection team

Ruth Elmore  
Alex Downing

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