



# St John Southworth Roman Catholic Primary School

URN: 149849

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Salford

16–17 January 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

1

#### 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

1

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

Fully

2

## 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 any additional requirements of the diocesan bishop.
- The school has responded fully to the areas for improvement from the last inspection.

## What the school does well

- All staff are exemplary role models, not just for the pupils but for the whole community. They consistently go above and beyond to provide excellent care and support.
- The behaviour of all pupils is exemplary. They positively live the school values of love, kindness, honesty, justice, and faith.
- Leaders at all levels have a true passion for the Catholic life and mission within the school which ensures all staff and pupils are fully supported on their journey of faith.
- Pupil leadership is exceptionally strong. The pupils are dedicated to their roles and are passionate about the improvements and impact they are having.

## What the school needs to improve

- Feedback given to pupils in religious education needs to be more relevant and constructive to ensure pupils clearly understand how to make progress.
- To improve pupil's religious literacy by embracing the hermeneutics approach to understanding scripture and its impact on their lives.
- Embrace Catholic social teaching to ensure it is central to the religious education curriculum of the whole school.

## 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

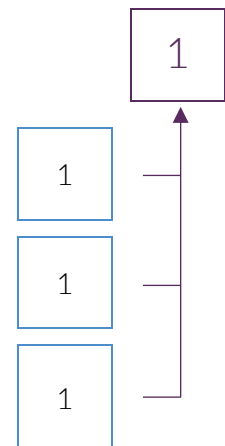
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

#### 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 of all faiths and none embrace the distinctive identity and mission of this Catholic school. They speak highly of its welcome, warmth, and feel active participants within its mission. All the children who spoke to inspectors are very happy, speak with great love for the school and are extremely proud that they are part of its uniqueness. Values from the gospels are central to the school community and the children speak very passionately of the school values; love, kindness, honesty, justice, and faith. When asked by inspectors where they would see the values, one pupil told them they would see them everywhere because people are so kind and loving to each other. All pupils are warmly welcomed to this school and they all show immense respect for each other and each other's faiths and religions. Behaviour with inspectors, in and around school, in classes, and at social times was exemplary. The pupils were visibly shocked when asked whether their school had any bad behaviour. The pupils are particularly proud of their leadership roles within school. They talk passionately about how they are making a difference to the school, whether as a member of the School Council, the Growing in Faith Together (GIFT) Team, the Eco Team or Caritas. There are many examples of their impact, one being *Free Time Friday*.

The school's mission statement, 'We are together in the family of God', is fully embraced and lived by every member of the school community. The school is central to the community and the parents are very appreciative of the school; the parents talk about the amazing and understanding staff and how welcoming and loving the school is. One new parent told inspectors they felt very welcomed to 'their new family'. The school goes above and beyond to provide real support for each member of its community. They value all without exception and whilst they serve a community of many different faiths, everybody is included in a genuinely open spirit of welcome. Relationships between all staff are extremely strong and as a result they are all positive

role models for the children and all members of the community. There is a high level of pastoral care for pupils in school, an area invested in by leaders and governors, with the appointment of high quality school based staff, including a parent support officer, the external school counsellor and play therapist. The school environment has an abundance of resources that reflect the Catholic character and nature of the school. The provision for relationships, sex, and health education (RSHE) is fully compliant with diocesan requirements.

Leaders and governors have a wide and varied skill set which ensures they are clear on how to develop the Catholic life and mission of the school. All aspects of this area are central to the school and the most important leadership responsibility. As a result, leaders and governors ensure policy and procedure reflect the mission of the school. They fully engage with the Diocese of Salford and often lead on training and initiatives for the diocese within the area. Parents in the community are fully supportive of and understand the school's mission, and parents of all faiths and none, speak highly of the quality of Catholic life and mission their children receive. Leaders at all levels are very passionate about their community and ensure all aspects of their work contributes to the highest possible levels of pastoral support for staff. Staff feel highly supported and speak openly about the opportunities they have to develop. Staff said that Christ is at the centre and underpins everything that they do. Governors are fully involved in the evaluation of the school offering challenge and support where necessary. They believe that all children live and breathe the faith life of the school.

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

### Religious education key judgement grade

**Pupil outcomes**

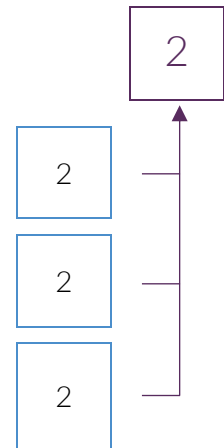
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

**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



Throughout the school, it is evident that pupils are developing secure knowledge, understanding and skills in their religious education learning. Pupils in Years five and six could articulate their learning to inspectors with great confidence. They made particular reference to check in and check out tasks which they said helped them to understand what they did not know and gave them a very good measure of what they had learned in their topics. They had great pride in their work and they were very happy to showcase their achievements. All pupils are well supported by all staff in school and are therefore making progress appropriate to their starting points. Pupils can articulate a good understanding of religious education and its impact on their everyday lives. They are reflective thinkers and can relate curriculum experiences to what is happening in their community and the wider world. Children engage well in lessons and are able to work independently with high levels of concentration. The quality of work in the children's books was good. Behaviour in all lessons was excellent with all children engaged in their learning with a willingness to participate and improve.

The subject knowledge of teachers is good, which in turn has a positive impact on pupils learning. All staff see the importance of religious education and are fully committed when delivering this area to their pupils. Staff are well supported by the leadership and each other, telling inspectors, 'There is always someone there for you.' Planning is well structured and follows appropriate schemes recommended by the diocese. The level of questioning from teachers is good but there is capacity to develop this area which will in turn encourage the children to deepen their understanding and responses. Standards of work in religious education are at least equal to standards of work in other areas of the curriculum, however marking and feedback in religious education needs to be developed to reflect the standards in other areas. Across the school, the use of other adults has a positive impact on the outcomes for all children. Within lessons,

teachers and support staff work seamlessly together to ensure learning is fast-paced and constructive. Support staff are greatly valued within school by other staff, parents, and children. In all lessons observed by inspectors, the focus on recapping learning, religious vocabulary, and checking pupils' understanding was good and consistently embedded.

Leaders and governors have a good knowledge of the expectations for religious education and as a result the school curriculum is true to the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*. The religious education curriculum is at the core of the school curriculum and is fully resourced and timetabled accurately. As a result, there is a parity with other core subjects within the school. All staff have access to high quality professional development as all leaders and governors are committed to develop all staff. Leaders and governors ensure they are abreast of all recent developments regarding religious education and as a result they are continually looking to improve in this area. The school are currently embracing the changes to the religious education scheme recommended by the diocese, and as with all other areas of the religious education curriculum they will ensure it is fit for purpose and serves their demographic and needs of learners well. Religious education in school is led by a dynamic team which ensures there is a wide and varied skillset contributing to the development of the area. The religious education subject leader is supported by another teacher and teaching assistant in school ensuring there is always someone available to support staff.

## 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

All pupils observed or spoken to are extremely confident when talking about their experiences of prayer that are afforded to them by all the staff, and their peers, in the school. They show a dedicated reverence in all prayer sessions and consistently respond appropriately. Regardless of their own personal faith they have a genuine respect and reference for the prayer life of their school. All pupils, appropriate to their age, understand and can articulate a variety of ways of praying which includes scripture, symbols, moments of silence and reflection. Pupils are confident when working collaboratively with others and consistently plan and deliver prayer sessions in groups or for the whole class. The school have ensured that there is adequate time within the timetabled week of the school so that children can work collaboratively with others and with staff to plan creative and well-constructed experiences for their peers. Pupils could demonstrate to inspectors the impact of their prayers, not just within school but on the wider community and the wider world. They spoke passionately and compassionately about issues in the world where they have offered their prayers. One pupil gave the example that, 'it doesn't matter where you pray or who you pray for, God is always listening.'

There is a plethora of activities in school to support prayer. The pupils speak passionately about '10 minutes with God' and the Lectio Divina sessions they plan weekly for the other pupils. In addition, all pupils have the opportunity to be part of leading collective worship with their peers in class. The scripture central to these sessions is fully reflective of the liturgical season and the pattern of the wider church. All the staff are inspiring role models in all aspects of prayer and worship. Staff speak about the 'open door' of support they receive from leaders which ensures staff at all levels have the confidence to be involved in the prayer life of the school. There are also many opportunities for creativity in the prayer life of the school, for example, Mardi Gras day, Pentecost day, and Bible dress up. There are many resources inside and outside of the

school building that provide opportunities for the children to pray, the prayer hub being a particularly good example of the imaginative use of space. Regardless of faith, the school involves the whole community in their prayer experiences and activities. As one parent said, the school is reinforcing the same message for all religions.

The leaders in school have written their own policy for prayer and liturgy and they have ensured it is regularly reviewed and fit for purpose, making sure all key stakeholders have been part of the evaluation. All leaders including governors know their school, and therefore the children and their needs, extremely well. As a result, pupils are confident to participate in all prayer and liturgy activities which are well planned and show clear progression across the school. The professional development of all staff, newly appointed and experienced, is an ongoing priority for the leadership of the school. As a result, all staff feel confident to seek support, as they know they will be supported and developed. The religious education leadership team, which includes the head of school, a teacher and a teaching assistant, work together seamlessly in helping children and staff to plan and lead experiences of prayer and liturgy and they provide a culture of continuous improvement that is ingrained in support. They have ensured that all policy and procedures for prayer and liturgy are fully embedded and consistent throughout school and all prayer activities. Governors ensure the provision for prayer and liturgy is prioritised when setting budgets and allocating resources.



## Information about the school

Full name of school	St John Southworth Roman Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	149849
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8883759
Full postal address of the school	St John Southworth Roman Catholic Primary School, Lomeshaye Road, Nelson, BB9 0DQ
School phone number	01282613906
Headteacher	Jemma Stuttard
Chair of governors	Elizabeth Lloyd
School Website	<a href="http://www.st-johnsouthworth.lancs.sch.uk">http://www.st-johnsouthworth.lancs.sch.uk</a>
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Romero Catholic Academy Trust
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Academy
Admissions policy	Non-selective
Age-range of pupils	5-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	14/12/2016
Previous denominational inspection grade	Good

## The inspection team

Mark Mountcastle

Lead

Marie Kwiatkowski

Team

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## 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