



St Cecilia's Roman Catholic Technology College

URN: 119800

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Salford

21–22 November 2024

Summary of key findings

Overall effectiveness

The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school

1

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

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

Compliance statement

- St Cecilia's is fully compliant with the general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishops' Conference.
- The school is fully compliant with additional requirements of the diocesan bishop.
- The school has fully responded to areas for improvement identified at the last inspection.

What the school does well

- Leaders at all levels bear witness to the school's mission statement which ensures that St Cecilia's is a truly authentic Catholic school.
- The exemplary quality of relationships between all members of the community has created a family atmosphere in which every person is highly valued.
- The pastoral care and well-being for all students, especially those who are most vulnerable, is of a very high standard. The St Cecilia's community is a place of inclusion and hope.
- The quality of teaching in religious education, as evidenced in lesson visits, work scrutiny and student voice, is excellent.
- The range, quality and creativity of prayer and worship opportunities ensures strong levels of engagement from students

What the school needs to improve

- To sustain the trend in attainment outcomes in religious education at the end of Key Stage 4
- To implement the new modern day saints to follow the pattern of the new Year 7 form Oscar Romero

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

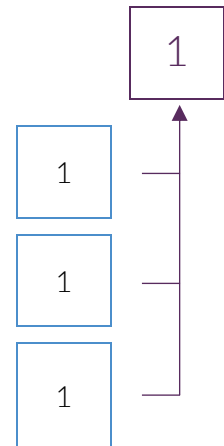
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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



St Cecilia's is a strong, united and proud Catholic community. The mission, *'Discover, Develop and Rejoice'* permeates all aspects of the school. The mission statement, unique school hymn, school prayer and the school patron saint are all linked, bringing a real togetherness to the community. Students feel known and loved and are grateful for opportunities to enhance their faith. Moral development of students is exceptional and is woven into curriculum areas. The Cafod group is an excellent example of putting faith into action and the Eco group educates on care for the common home. Student ideas, for example, the introduction of recycling bins is supported to enhance the environment. There is a concerted effort to ensure Catholic social teaching is lived out through daily actions. A well formulated approach to embed Catholic social teaching across the curriculum is embraced. Stakeholders speak enthusiastically about preferential option for the poor. This desire to serve is deep seated in the identity of St Cecilia's. The school's ethos is based on respect and excellent behaviour is underpinned by a strong sense of reconciliation. 'Forgive and forget' is authentic. Students can articulate they are all created by God and so are loved and benefit from extensive chaplaincy provision. An anti-bullying group raises awareness of bullying, and the Digital Disciples educate students on disinformation and an inclusive programme ensures all students experience retreats.

A Catholic Life and Mission team meet regularly to plan, promote and evaluate provision. Minutes from meetings show clear actions to enhance quality and participation. Staff are overwhelmingly positive about the school. They actively embrace serving this community with unbridled joy and this is felt deeply by the students. One parent said, 'staff support values we have for our children at home'. St Cecilia's is an authentic Catholic community rooted in the belief all children are created equally and in the dignity of the individual. It is palpable. The Eden room, providing a safe and nurturing space, is an excellent example of a student-centred inclusive approach. Staff are role models to the mission and relationships with students is exemplary. Pastoral care is a strength. The Damascus room exemplifies this by allowing space for reflection, learning from mistakes, making the right choices, all underpinned by forgiveness. The

environment is a living sign of its identity; the new Carlo Acutis building illustrates vibrant artwork. The Catholic Heart group provides ministry at the school. It is active in leading liturgies, raising awareness of the environment and fundraising. One member of staff said, *'Catholic heart is at the centre of everything that is promoted, modelled and imparted'*. The relationships, sex and health education uses Ten:Ten resources and all staff have been trained to deliver.

The prayer and liturgy policy outlines the aims and expectations of the rhythm of prayer. A governor, who is also a Catholic headteacher, has a remit to evaluate the quality of provision and provides a detailed report that is scrutinised by governors. There are established links with the Diocese and the headteacher is a member of the Diocesan education Synod. Strong parish links are evidenced through school Masses, often celebrated at the local church and weekly visits by the parish priest. The priests are well known to the children. Parents feel part of this community and appreciate the support and exceptional care shown. A Catholic Life Newsletter is shared with parents. Leaders witness to Catholic social teaching is beyond reproach, demonstrated by their commitment to the more vulnerable or the comprehensive staff well-being policy. Each form is named after a saint, enhancing the Catholic identity. Students could readily recall information about these saints. The headteachers report always starts with the mission of the school. Governors' ambitions are demonstrated through investing in a chapel. Leaders know the strengths of the school but are not complacent and always seek ways to improve. A Catholic Handbook has been created which supports staff to uphold the schools' mission and a comprehensive induction program includes a prominent focus on mission, prayer and Catholic social teaching. New staff speak highly of the support received.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

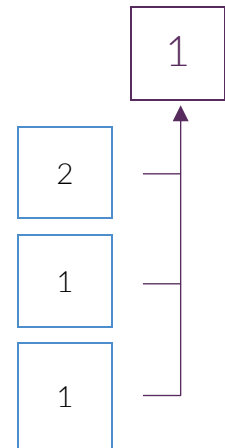
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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



At both key stages, students show a good level of subject knowledge in lessons visited. Scrutiny of work shows good use of religious literacy and coverage of the *Religious Education Directory*. Phrases such as Imago Dei, reconciliation or prejudice were understood by students. At Key Stage Four, students are developing skills in line with examination standards. Students speak readily about their faith and how they put it into action, enthusiastically citing how they are aware of the everyday acts of forgiveness, love and respect for the community. Lessons are crafted in such a way as to allow the students to ground the learning in their lived experience but also to reflect on what they have learned to put into practice in their lives. Their love of learning was evident and used the 'REvisit' technique to connect previous learning. There was evidence of high-level thinking in many classes. Students work is well presented, demonstrating the high regard in which students hold their learning. Behaviour in lessons is exemplary, attitudes to learning strong and routines are well established. Schools' assessment procedures were fully adhered to, with students using 'green pens' to reflect on feedback given. Outcomes in GCSE religious education are comparable with most core subjects.

All religious education teachers are specialists, ensuring strong subject knowledge that enables effective planning and adaptations of lessons. In discussions with teachers, work scrutiny and lessons visited, it was obvious high expectations were the norm. Lessons started with revisiting previous learning, introduction of the new topic, and contained well-chosen scripture. Sufficient scaffolding ensured progress without it being stifling. High quality questioning was observed in lessons and is a real strength. Techniques included cold calling and probing students' responses which facilitated deeper learning to take place. Feedback in the books is effective, evidenced by students responding to their feedback using a 'green pen'. Positive feedback in lessons was natural, facilitated high levels of engagement and was conducive to an effective learning environment. The religious education department is central to the life of the school and supports other departments as appropriate. Teachers from other subjects spoke of the value they place on RE. Resources in religious education are exemplary. Revision guides include QR codes which links to videos, enabling all learners to readily access content. The books reflected the well-

crafted, carefully chosen activities the students are presented with. The use of imagery, scripture, and task allows students to understand the deeper nature of the subject.

The implementation of the new *Religious Education Directory* was extremely well thought out and focused on the learning outcomes: understand, discern and respond. Religious education is on parity with other core subjects. The subject leader has a clear vision for the department, and he is to be commended for his determination in ensuring religious education is the core of the core. Curriculum design reflects strong collaboration between the religious education team. It builds upon prior learning and is coherently sequenced to ensure all students make progress. Leaders partake in diocesan activities. To enrich the taught curriculum, there are visits to mosques and synagogues. A trip to Ladywell, a local shrine to Our Lady, enhances the formal curriculum as relics can be brought to life. Parents spoke about the importance of a recent trip to Walsingham, one saying 'their child was deeply touched by the experience, and it enriched their faith'. Students and staff spoke with equal regard of the retreat to Castlerigg and the impact it has had on building this community. The religious education team can articulate the journey of sustained improvement and are extremely proud of the impact of their work.

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

A planned program of collective worship ensures a wide range of liturgical experiences. During an assembly students bore witness to their faith through reading, singing the school hymn and praying. During form students took a full part in proceedings by writing and reading prayers. A sense of reverence is deeply ingrained in these acts of worship. Retreats are systematically planned. The collective worship calendar follows the liturgical year and links to weekly themes and Catholic social teaching principles. Stakeholders can articulate their understanding of the liturgical seasons with ease. They speak of feast days with an authentic knowledge. An annual mission week, enhanced by external speakers, reaffirms the core purpose of the school. The Catholic Heart Group, made up of various student leadership groups, including Cafod, Caritas Ambassadors, GIFT team and Laudato Si enables collaborative planning and opportunities to lead worship. Sacred spaces in each classroom, provide a holy focal point that enables students to prayer and reflect. Each department has a unique departmental prayer. One form used the sacred space initiative to support students who were sad or lonely, using scripture to raise their spirits.

This is a school founded on high quality prayer that places Christ at the centre of whatever they do. Tutor times start with a well-chosen piece of scripture. One student used the story of the good Samaritans to explain how the school lived out its values. Staff spoke openly with the children about their own faith and their experience of prayer. In a wonderful celebration of the Eucharist giving thanks to the patron saint, St Cecilia, students were respectful, fully participating, reading bidding prayers and the singing of the school hymn was sensational. Form classes are named after saints, allowing students to learn about their sacrifices and devotion to God. Intercessory prayers were well understood. Staff commitment to the mission is absolute and interactions with students demonstrated a deep level of love. Fittingly, as St Cecilia is the patron saint of Music, the school has a unique hymn that was composed by a Music teacher. Departmental prayers and sacred spaces demonstrate great creativity. The school chapel, at the heart of the school is respected by all. The new wall art reinforces the religious and catholic nature of the school. Statues, scripture and the St Cecilia's virtues are proudly and strategically positioned around the school. Parents speak highly of the supportive environment and levels of support offered.

The prayer and liturgy policy has been created collaboratively within the school. This ownership ensures commitment from staff. Plans are in place to incorporate key elements of the new prayer directory, further enhancing practice. A staff wellbeing policy reflects the ethos of the school, which is to provide a safe, secure and supportive environment. Leaders have a clear understanding of the skill set of staff in delivering collective worship. Staff professional development to ensure provision is outstanding is a high priority of leaders. Leaders have a deep understanding of the Church's liturgical year. The celebration of the Eucharist, including Holy Days of Obligation, are appropriately planned. This includes staff, welcome and feast day Masses. The chaplain and the head of RE have a clear understanding of ministry and have developed comprehensive plans to ensure formation for staff and students. Leaders at all levels are role models for the faith. For example, all the RE teachers have completed the *Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies* and are Eucharist ministers. Resources for prayer and liturgy are prioritised. The budget for religious education as an academic subject is comparable with other core subjects and there is an extra budget for the Catholic life and mission. The increase in staffing is testament to the importance of religious education. Self-evaluation is largely accurate.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Cecilia's Roman Catholic Technology College
School unique reference number (URN)	119800
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8884721
Full postal address of the school	St Cecilia's Roman Catholic Technology College, Chapel Hill, Longridge, Preston, PR3 2XA
School phone number	001772783074
Headteacher	Helen Hall
Choose an item.	Mick Flynn
School Website	http://www.st-cecilias.co.uk/
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	N/A
Phase	Secondary
Type of school	Voluntary Aided School
Admissions policy	Non-selective
Age-range of pupils	11-16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	16 th March 2017
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

The inspection team

Sheldon Logue
Edward Allanson

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