



CATHOLIC SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

THE NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE INSPECTION OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS, COLLEGES AND ACADEMIES



Holy Family RC Primary School

URN: 106491

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Salford

04 March 2026 – 05 March 2026

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 RE

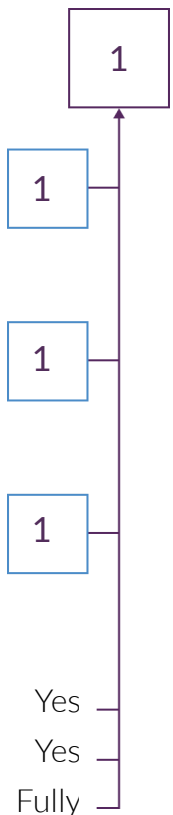
Collective worship (p.7)

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



What the school does well

- There is a clear commitment to developing effective relationships at all levels which results in children thriving in a safe, happy and welcoming environment.
- The development of Catholic social teaching and its integration into the wider school curriculum as well as the mission of the school is inspirational.
- The carefully planned implementation and evaluation of the new religious education curriculum ensure a commitment to the best possible outcomes.
- The breadth and variety of prayer and liturgy opportunities ensure pupils, staff, parents and the wider school and parish community are welcomed to the mission of the church with Christ at the centre.
- The successful leadership of the school, including the inspirational headteacher, effectively distributed leadership at all levels, and the commitment of governors, ensures this is a school which is a beacon to others.

What the school needs to improve

- Leaders should explore further opportunities to contribute to diocesan initiatives and partnerships that support the development of Catholic education within and beyond the school.
- Develop the use of assessment, alongside the implementation of the new religious education curriculum, ensuring feedback is consistently used to deepen and broaden the knowledge and understanding of all 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

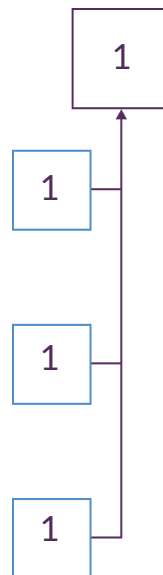
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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 are rightly proud of their school; they understand and can clearly articulate the distinctive ethos and mission and are keen, enthusiastic and active members of this mission, wanting to make a difference to their school, the parish, the community and the wider world. Pupil leaders talk with passion about how they 'don't just grow taller but grow in faith as well', giving examples of how important this is to them personally but also to their school family. They are happy and engaged in all aspects of school life and have an excellent and comprehensive understanding of the principles of Catholic social teaching and what this means to them and their school. They show a deep respect and understanding for other faiths and are keen to know and understand more about them. They are keen to be involved in chaplaincy and leadership opportunities and the pupil groups including the Growing in Faith Together team, Laudato Si' team, Peacemakers, and Caritas Ambassadors, have a profound impact on the success of this special school with many examples of how they have worked together to support those in need.

The mission statement clearly reflects the educational mission of the church and is known, understood and witnessed by all throughout all aspects of school life. There is a lived sense of community with staff and parents alike referring to the school as a family. There is a commitment to welcoming and supporting all members of the community. Relationships and the commitment to nurturing these is a clear strength of this school and central to its success. The school environment has been developed to reflect the distinctive nature of this school and its commitment to the Catholic life and formation of pupils. There are several opportunities planned and welcomed for the spiritual and moral development of pupils and

staff which have a significant impact on the school community, including making links regularly to the principles of Catholic social teaching to their behaviour, actions and relationships across school and beyond. They work closely with the parish priest who enthusiastically supports pupils, staff and the parish in their commitment to be closer to Jesus. The flourishing relationship between the school and parish built on trust, compassion and understanding is to be celebrated.

Parents are welcomed and encouraged to be part of all aspects of school life. They are overwhelmingly positive in their praise of the efforts of staff to ensure the success of this school as a Catholic community. Catholic social teaching is a very clear strength, underpinning the curriculum, pupil leadership groups and policies across school. Staff feel valued and cared for and this is evident in all interactions witnessed across school. Governors are highly ambitious for the school, providing incisive support and challenge for leaders. They make a significant contribution to the school and recognise and value the inspirational leadership of senior leaders. There is a continuous cycle of self-evaluation with evidence and feedback gathered systematically involving staff, governors, pupils and parents. They act swiftly to address areas they identify as needing to be further developed and are committed to improving school at every level. Professional development has been carefully planned and delivered, including formal training opportunities as well as coaching and mentoring by senior leaders. The headteacher's commitment to developing leadership at every level results in a comprehensive and active participation of all staff and governors to the mission of the school.

Religious education

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 key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

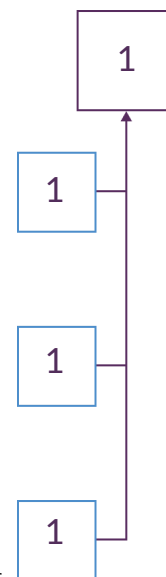
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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



Pupil outcomes are significantly above national average and are in line with the school's outcomes for English and mathematics, reflecting the school's commitment to ensure religious education is at the 'core of the core'. Pupils across school are developing excellent knowledge and understanding and have thrived with the challenge of the new *Religious Education Directory*. All pupils make excellent progress, including vulnerable learners. Pupils are religiously literate and engage with enthusiasm and confidence with scripture; they know, understand and clearly articulate the impact this has on their lives. The commitment to developing strong and meaningful links to Catholic social teaching provides the pupils with rich opportunities to reflect spiritually and think ethically and theologically within their own lives. There is continued commitment, as the school adopts a new curriculum, to share their individual ideas in different and creative ways which engages the pupils across school. All pupils are enthusiastic about their learning, and they want to know and do more. Behaviour is outstanding across all classes and in all contexts due to their enthusiasm and pride in their work and being part of Holy Family. Assessment and feedback is being developed to deepen and broaden pupils' understanding of the more challenging aspects of the new curriculum.

Teachers have been well supported to build a high level of expertise as they adopt the new curriculum. Their enthusiasm for religious education inspires and motivates children. Questioning is used effectively throughout lessons but is also highly effective in checking prior learning through the 'flashback four' strategy which is used consistently and confidently by all staff. Teachers provide feedback which helps pupils to consider how to further develop their

thinking. They understand the impact religious education has on the spiritual and moral development of pupils with reflection time and activities planned to enable pupils to make links to their own experiences as well as meaningful opportunities for them to take what they are learning out in their own 'mission'. There is confidence in staff when planning activities which allow pupils to present their learning using a wide variety of forms of expression, including role play, artwork, analysis of scripture and artwork and narrative opportunities. All members of staff are actively involved in supporting pupils to gain a deeper understanding with adaptations made for pupils to ensure there is no 'glass ceiling' in expectations.

Leaders have planned and developed a comprehensive strategy for the implementation of the new *Religious Education Directory*. They have planned regular review and evaluative opportunities with staff and pupils to inform next steps and this has resulted in them making sometimes subtle but incisive changes to tasks to get the best possible outcomes. There is a clear commitment to religious education and it is seen as 'the core of the core' through timetables, expectations, training and resources. Professional development, including coaching and mentoring is carefully planned to support teachers to provide the highest quality provision. Leaders' skills, enthusiasm and commitment are valued by staff, governors and parents; the successful development and implementation of the *Religious Education Directory* is directly attributed by all stakeholders to the inspirational leadership and passion of senior leaders. Leaders work closely together to ensure a clear commitment to this across the school which is reported to governors regularly and in detail. As a result, governors and leaders all have a clear understanding of what is working well and what they wish to further develop. Pupils are involved in 'auditing' and reviewing provision regularly, feeding back their ideas for further developments.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

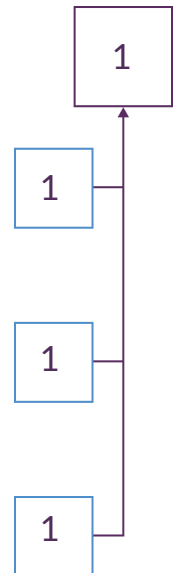
How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

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



Holy Family provides meaningful, prayerful and deeply engaging acts of prayer and liturgy which pupils take part in with enthusiasm, reverence and respect. Pupils' response to prayer is mature and demonstrates a deep connection and engagement with scripture. All elements of worship are undertaken including silence and singing which pupils undertake with enthusiasm. Prayer in school at all levels follows the liturgical year and the beautiful celebration of the word books show how pupils have engaged and reflected on each season. Pupils work alongside others and lead prayer and worship with confidence and fluency, including opportunities planned and led by the Growing in Faith Together team such as 'Stories with Jesus' and Lenten prayer groups at lunchtimes. In every class, progression in pupil led worship can be witnessed and pupils do this with skill and pride. Pupils are skilled at evaluating their worships and can reflect on what went well and how to improve. Pupils can articulate effectively how connections between prayer, curriculum and their wider school life are all intertwined and pupils reflect well on how these affect their own circumstances. Pupil groups evidence how all pupils across school have been called to action and their work evidences perfectly how they live out their faith life.

The centrality of prayer and liturgy at Holy Family is evident across a wide range of areas. Prayer and liturgy is integral and embedded into the daily rhythm of life and the staff and pupils alike take comfort from this. The balance of creativity alongside traditional routines is found across school and shows the school to be rooted in tradition but also open to exploring new methods and allowing pupils freedom. Pupils are blessed to take part in traditions such as Eucharistic Adoration and their reverence during this was beautiful to witness. Scripture is

a key theme which underpins all at this Catholic school. Pupils engagement with this is exemplary and forms a seminal role not just in the curriculum but in the wider life of school. Pupils see a high standard of modelled techniques and strategies and are able to confidently use this in their own worship, as a result of the high quality professional development. Pupils welcome opportunities to use their individual skills and talents in leading celebrations of the word and these personalise prayerful experiences. The school has created spaces around school for prayer and reflection and pupils use these independently and without prompting. The Sanctuary has been beautifully developed to celebrate a place where Christ is celebrated and honoured. There is a flourishing partnership with both parents and parish and this enhances the prayer life of Holy Family. Relationships between all are overwhelmingly positive and the parish speaks highly of the quality of prayer in school and when at Church. Parents and families attend regular prayerful opportunities in school and take part in praying at home including prayer bags and the 'prayer bear'; the prayer life of school does not end at the school gate.

The school policy for prayer and liturgy is relevant and is lived out in school life. There is a comprehensive strategy for growing progression in pupils' prayer life and this is evident. The well developed annual plan of provision shows how prayer life is planned strategically to offer pupils opportunities for Eucharist and to celebrate other significant days such as class saint feast days. The sacramental programme is well planned and catechists from the parish speak highly of the support and guidance school provides for this. The professional development of staff within prayer and liturgy is exemplary and as a result all staff at all levels are supported to plan and deliver high quality worship. Staff also speak of how support for one another within school is strong. Prayer and liturgy is prioritised within school budgets and this is evident in the high-quality resources which support and enhance prayer experiences. Leaders and governors place a strong emphasis on evaluation and the voice of stakeholders are key to this being authentic. They have responded well to feedback from stakeholders to inform decisions, including providing more opportunities for families and the parish to join celebrations in school.

Information about the school

Full name of school	Holy Family RC Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	106491
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	3593387
Full postal address of the school	Longfield Street, New Springs, Wigan, WN2 1EL
School phone number	01942 246376
Headteacher or Head of School	Mr Stephen Gallagher
Chair of Governors	Mrs Brenda Hart
School Website	www.aspullhollyfamily.co.uk
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Voluntary Aided School
Admissions policy	Non Selective
Age-range of pupils	4 - 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	03 July 2018
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

The Inspection Team

Sinead Colbeck

Lead

Laura Wolstenholme

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