



Our Lady of Perpetual Succour Roman Catholic Primary School

URN: 119512

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Salford

06–07 February 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

- Our Lady of Perpetual Succour RC Primary 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 fully responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection.

What the school does well

- Pupils at Our Lady of Perpetual Succour thrive and feel safe in a calm atmosphere, where they are valued and cared for as God's children.
- The school has an effective whole-family approach to the pastoral support of its pupils.
- The school's teaching staff have a high level of expertise based on an authentic understanding of religious education.
- Prayer and liturgy are meaningful to pupils, which results in engagement from all: pupil-led prayer and liturgy is highly valued by their peers and has inspired others to increase their involvement.
- The strong leadership of the headteacher and deputy headteacher means that its strengths are celebrated and next steps in development are swiftly addressed.

What the school needs to improve

- To ensure that learning objectives in religious education are more tightly focused.
- Teachers to provide pupils with more opportunities in lessons to broaden their religious vocabulary.

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 school's mission statement states that 'Our Lady's school is a caring family'. Pupils understand and value this distinctive Catholic mission and actively participate in opportunities to enhance the Catholic life and mission of the school. A pupil described the school as a, 'kind and caring family where we have Mary as our mascot'. Pupils articulate that they are cared for and valued, and one said that the school, 'values everyone and makes sure we all feel safe.' The school's core values of friendship, honesty, kindness, forgiveness, fairness and reconciliation, referenced in the school's behaviour policy, were evident. Within this policy, praise is a fundamental aspect of the school culture and was seen during lessons, collective worship and at other times. The school states in its behaviour principles that it has 'consistently high expectations of our pupil's behaviour without exception.' Pupils show a deep respect for their own personal dignity and that of others, who are made in the image and likeness of God. The behaviour of pupils is exemplary in lessons and throughout the school. These high expectations of behaviour make for a calm, caring atmosphere in a school environment where love flourishes. As a result, pupils flourish as they seek opportunities to grow in virtue.

The life and mission of the school are deeply rooted in the Word of God. Conscious that Christ is at the heart of the school, there is a lived sense of community, evident in the quality of relationships and the strong culture of welcome. Pupils are taught to understand, accept, respect and celebrate diversity and this was evident when, during lesson observations, they accepted all of their peers regardless of the needs that they displayed. Pupils and staff enthusiastically participate in and contribute to those activities which reflect the life and mission of the school and the service it offers to the community. They have a clear understanding that the school community is committed to following the teaching and example of Jesus which is demonstrated by pupil leadership through the school council, eco-warriors, prayer leaders, Caritas ambassadors and their online protection squad. Each group has written

their own mission statement, action plan, processes and have evidenced their positive impact on the school community. The pupils have raised awareness and funds for Cafod, St Joseph's Penny and Blackburn foodbank. The school's R(S)HE and Catholic social teaching provision seeks to give pupils the opportunity to use a range of social skills to participate in the local community and beyond. This includes focussed help for those children who benefit from teaching on how to improve their social interactions. The chaplaincy provision witnesses to the school's commitment to the flourishing of every member of the school community. Pupils are welcomed onto the playground and teachers make themselves available to parents, leading to a calm start to the day for pupils. Additional and appropriate pastoral support is provided for those who require it.

Our Lady of Perpetual Succour is led by an inspirational headteacher who is well supported by a dedicated deputy headteacher, fastidious in exercising their duty as guardians of the Catholic life and mission of the school. The school's self-evaluation is an honest and accurate one, reflecting rigorous monitoring, searching analysis and honest self-challenge, and is clearly and explicitly focused on the Catholic life and mission of the school. Leaders and governors embrace and actively promote the bishop's vision of service in the diocese. This can be seen throughout the environment, and through application of the school's policies in practice. The R(S)HE leader is effective in ensuring the Catholic tradition is prioritised. There is a clear culture of dignity and respect towards each other in the school community, which permeates through from the governors and leadership of the school, with a concrete commitment to mental health and well-being. School staff have regularly attended diocesan training and this inspires staff to contribute to the Catholic life and mission of the school. Staff are exemplary role models for pupils in their relationships with others in school. Parents agree that the school works with them to deliver the Church's Mission. One said, 'The school carries us along with everything they are doing.' Parent questionnaires and parent meetings show an overwhelming support for the school and the service that it provides. Governors are actively involved in the evaluation of the school and regularly meet with staff and pupils. Pupils contribute to school development in a planned and systematic way with pupil voice represented in pupil groups and questionnaires, of which the results are acted upon.

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

2

Provision

The quality of teaching, learning, and assessment in religious education

2

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for religious education

1

2

Pupils are developing secure knowledge, understanding and skills that reflect the learning required by the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*. They speak with confidence about what they have learned in religious education, showing an awareness of key concepts and using some subject-specific vocabulary. As a consequence, they are able to ask good questions of adults and peers, which enhance learning. The school's aims to stimulate pupils' imagination and provoke a desire for personal meaning as revealed in the truth of the Catholic faith. This was observed in lessons when pupils started with an exercise of previous learning which revealed how much they had remembered. Pupils enjoy their learning and approach their lessons with interest and enthusiasm. As a consequence, behaviour in lessons is good because most pupils enjoy religious education and are usually engaged. Pupils produce good work that is presented well and shows signs of emerging individuality and creativity. Through the modelling and displaying of this work, other pupils are encouraged to strive to improve. The school aims to present a comprehensive content which engages pupils and is the basis of knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith. This was seen during the inspection with a focus in some lessons on the Mass. All lessons included sacred scripture to support the learning objective of the lesson, for example, in a lesson on the Last Supper, the scripture drove the lesson. The school's religious education policy states that the subject is planned, taught, assessed and monitored with the same rigour as other core curriculum subjects. Scrutiny of pupils' learning agreed with this statement, with pupils achieving at least as well as they do in reading and writing.

Teachers in the school are talented and very well led by the subject leader for religious education. Teachers are committed to value of religious education and they communicate this effectively to their pupils. Planning follows a scheme and resources are well used. The next

step is to further ensure learning is more focussed on intended outcomes. The religious education policy states, 'A variety of teaching and learning strategies will be used from across the curriculum, adapted appropriately to the needs and learning styles of pupils.' Several styles of teaching and learning were evidenced during the inspection, including talking partners, games, drama, use of scripture and sequencing. Teachers at Our Lady of Perpetual Succour demonstrate commitment and high expectations in lessons and this is successfully communicated, resulting in a high standard of behaviour for learning. Questioning was used which identified where children had misconceptions which were quickly addressed. Teachers recognise the impact religious education has on the moral and spiritual development of pupils. Therefore, they give pupils space and time for reflection in lessons. The school supports the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

The subject leader for religious education has a clear vision for teaching and learning and a good level of expertise in securing this vision, resulting in teaching that is at least consistently good. They rigorously monitor teaching and learning and evaluate the findings to actively improve the subject, addressing areas of slippage, such as pupils who are in need of extra attention. The school has been able to successfully guide the staff, through effective professional development opportunities, towards successful pupil outcomes. Leaders' and governors' self-evaluation of religious education is informed by thorough monitoring, analysis and self-challenge. This results in strategic action taken by the school which lead to good outcomes. The staff have had development on adaptive practice in religious education, and this was evident in all lessons observed. They have also adopted an approach to use vocabulary quizzes at the start of the religious education lesson. Successful innovations such as these have been cascaded through the curriculum to other subject areas, enshrining the subject's position in the school as 'core of the core.' Timetables show that the religious education curriculum accounts for 10% of teaching time. Pupils' learning is sequential and this is evident from documents on the school website that clearly demonstrate this.

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

The school's prayer and liturgy policy states that prayer and liturgy, in a Catholic school, names and celebrates God's presence in the pupils' lives. This is delivered, as pupils' experiences of prayer and liturgy engage them deeply and lead them to full, active and conscious participation. All pupils and staff participate fully, and pupils are respectful and prayerful. This is demonstrated in the quality of prayerful silence from pupils and their attentiveness and response to prayer which enhances the calming atmosphere that is evident throughout the school. Pupils make connections between prayer, liturgy and the wider life of the school, evidenced when pupils were explaining things they were grateful for. Pupils have a willingness to share their own personal thoughts, prayers and responses during celebrations of the word, and this was seen when pupils were given the freedom to respond to prayer and Scripture. Pupils work collaboratively with other pupils to prepare engaging experiences of prayer and liturgy, and children took their responsibilities in a mature manner. Pupils readily reflect on their experience of prayer and liturgy with confidence and in detail. They can articulate clearly the ways in which these experiences have shaped how they think about themselves and the world and how this has inspired them to action.

The school's Prayer and Liturgy Policy aims to develop pupils' skills that enable them to prepare, organise and lead worship. There is a progression in skills document to equip pupils to do this. The school feels that prayer and liturgy is central to the life of the school, and the evidence from the inspection suggests this centrality is clear across the age ranges with floor books that offer evidence of prayer and liturgy sessions as well as several places around school where children can stop and be silent. Pupils' reaction to prayer shows that this is an area which is embedded. Pupils take part in a programme of prayer and liturgy based on the liturgical year as well as events that are poignant, for example there were several prayer and

liturgy sessions based around Mental Health Week. The prayer and liturgy sessions offered pupils a wide range of experiences that were engaging and creative. Prayer tables were consistent across all classes offering a familiarity to prayer.

Leaders, including governors, have a developed understanding of the different levels and skills of participation that are reflective of the age and capacity of pupils. They have a clear and comprehensive strategy for building up these skills of participation as pupils progress through school. Leaders are highly effective in facilitating others to plan and lead experiences of prayer and liturgy. The effectiveness of this plan is evidenced by the increasing ease with which pupils are able to participate in prayer and liturgy. Older children choose scripture passages and these choices were relevant to the theme of the worship. Leaders, including governors, ensure provision for prayer and liturgy is prioritised when setting budgets and allocating resources, such as time, staffing and facilities. The prayer room is a dedicated place and an endearing environment for Prayer and Liturgy which was used frequently. The school's Prayer and Liturgy Policy states that worship is a quality activity, fundamental to the life of the school and its Catholic character, and this was evidenced from assemblies to class sessions where children had much responsibility. The policy is fit for purpose. The school feels that adults and children are effective in supporting others to plan and lead experiences of prayer and liturgy. The different levels and skills of participation reflective of pupils age is shared and known by teachers to ensure progression. The expectations for each year group are clearly evidenced during prayer and liturgy and these skills build upon those developed in the previous years. The parish priest is a regular visitor to the school and, along with other governors, through participation is aware of the high standard of the opportunities for prayer that the school offers its pupils. The school says that each year leaders request sufficient funds in the budget to ensure prayer and liturgy can remain well resourced. This has supported the high quality of opportunity that the pupils enjoy.

Information about the school

Full name of school	Our Lady Of Perpetual Succour Roman Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	119512
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8893505
Full postal address of the school	Our Lady's Catholic Primary School, Holmbrook Close, Blackburn, BB2 3UG
School phone number	00125459420
Headteacher	Martina Staffa
Chair of governors	Fr G Barry
School Website	www.ourladyprimary.org.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	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	25 th January 2017
Previous denominational inspection grade	1

The inspection team

Jim Graves	Lead
Louise Lavery	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

