



# St Philip's Roman Catholic Primary School

URN: 105968

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Salford

08–09 October 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

#### Religious education (p.5)

The quality of curriculum religious education

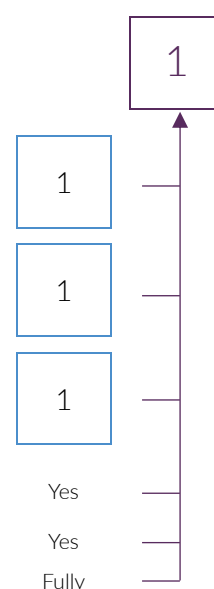
#### Collective worship (p.7)

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

- School has clear plans in place to implement the Religious Education Directory by the Diocesan required timeline.
- Religious Education provision meets the required 10% curriculum time in all key stages.
- School has fully addressed the previous area for improvement from the last Catholic school inspection.

## What the school does well

- There is exemplary pastoral care evident for the children of St Philip's.
- Catholic social teaching is embedded securely in the heart of school.
- All pupils know and live School's mission and consistently demonstrate Servite values.
- The teaching of religious education, including questioning, progress and work in books is exemplary. As a result, outcomes are strong.
- A collective responsibility of faith leadership is evident at all levels.

## What the school needs to improve

- Share good practice, including outstanding teaching, to gain greater consistency and therefore impact of religious education in all classes.
- To evaluate staff opportunities for spiritual growth, to secure ongoing staff formation journeys for all.

## 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

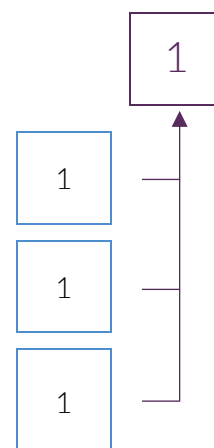
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

#### 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 at St Philip's embrace the Catholic identity and Servite charism of their school. Their participation in opportunities such as the mission team and completion of the St Philip's ambassadors' programme, significantly enhances the Catholic life of the school. Pupils state that they feel cared for. They are happy and confident. Pupils have a clear understanding that the school community is committed to following the teaching and example of Jesus. They state, 'Jesus shines through us every day. We are the hands through which he works. In St Philip's, we all truly believe this, and we live it every day.' Pupils embrace their responsibility to serve those in need via opportunities including supporting the *Salford Loaves and Fishes* charity through donations from the St Philip's allotment, visiting ex-veterans in *Broughton House* and supporting Cafod collections. They can clearly articulate the theology underpinning their actions, linking for example, parables taught in religious education to stewardship. Pupils demonstrate a deep sense of respect for others. Parents and carers talk of the highest expectations of respect and inclusion, including families of other or no faith. The behaviour of pupils is exemplary in lessons and throughout the school. Pupils highly value the school's chaplaincy provision. Ideas from pupil leaders such as prayer bears, and mission team awards are welcomed and adopted by leaders.

The mission statement is known throughout the school. Staff state, 'St Philip's isn't just a place to work, it is a faith community where staff, children and families journey together, grow in love, faith and service.' There is an overwhelming sense of staff pride in their school and a lived sense of community. St Philip's goes the extra mile to provide an exceptionally supportive and joyful community. Parents state, 'St Philip's is and always has been a great example of how the church and school work together with families to promote not only how to be a good Catholic, but a

good person. The school has taught my children the be kind and respectful of others, regardless of their faith.' Staff are exemplary role models for pupils. They consistently bear witness to the school's Catholic life and mission. Staff provide the highest levels of pastoral care for pupils. School has used the disadvantaged fund extremely effectively to employ a member of staff to support children via emotional literacy support and bereavement support. The school environment effectively witnesses to its identity, mission and charism. The provision for relationships, sex and health education (RSHE) fully meets diocesan requirements. Consequently, pupils can confidently articulate what they have learned.

Leaders and governors are fastidious in exercising their duty as guardians of the Catholic life of the school. The headteacher has worked relentlessly in pursuit of this. Staff state, 'The headteacher is an inspiration and a shining example of faith leadership.' All policies clearly reflect the priority given to the Catholic identity of the school. Leaders work hard to ensure a flourishing partnership between the school and its local parish, Our Lady of Dolours. The school has highly successful strategies for engaging with parents and carers. As a result, they have a thorough understanding of school's mission and are highly supportive of it. They have regular opportunities to attend celebration masses, attend mid-year book looks and support their child's formation through take home prayer bags. Leaders and governors are inspirational witnesses to the Gospel and to Catholic social teaching. They are exemplary in their respect for the dignity of workers. Staff state 'The headteacher values our wellbeing and makes us feel appreciated.' The whole of the taught curriculum is a coherent and compelling expression of the Catholic understanding of reality. The school's self-evaluation is a coherent reflection of rigorous monitoring and self-challenge. Pupils contribute to the school's evaluation of its Catholic life and mission and take a lead in planning improvements. The lead for Catholic life has embraced development opportunities and cascades training effectively to the wider staff, who are vocal in their praise for her support.

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

### Religious education key judgement grade

#### Pupil outcomes

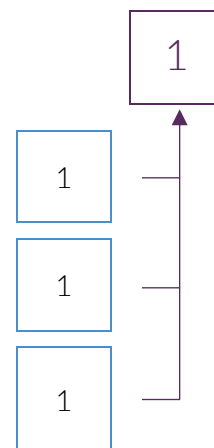
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

#### 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 at St. Philip's develop excellent knowledge and understanding in religious education. They make consistently good progress by knowing, remembering and doing more each year. As a result, all pupils achieve the best possible outcomes. Pupils are actively engaged in lessons. Behaviour in lessons is outstanding. Pupils take care and show creativity in their work, such as making comic strips re-telling the baptism of Jesus with symbolism and impressive artwork. Pupils, relative to their age and capacity, are religiously literate. Consequently, they are particularly aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life. One pupil stated, 'God is happy when we are honest. I can apply this to my daily life by being honest even when it is hard.' Pupils speak confidently about what they learn in religious education, using key concepts and subject-specific vocabulary. Pupils show notable independence, thinking for themselves and using what they have learned in original and creative ways. Children in nursery demonstrated they are unique in God's eyes by creating self-portraits using clay and buttons. Pupils at St. Philip's concentrate exceptionally well, love the challenge of learning and are curious, interested learners who know how to progress.

Teachers at St. Philip's are highly confident, demonstrating strong subject knowledge and high levels of teaching expertise. They demonstrate a deep commitment to and high expectations for religious education. They communicate this highly effectively. Teachers use questioning skilfully to identify precisely where pupils are in their understanding. As a result, they adapt explanations and tasks, increasing engagement and maximising learning for all pupils. For example, Year 6 used the app *Blooket* to review important vocabulary linked to their lesson. Teachers celebrate children's efforts, leading to high levels of motivation from pupils aspiring to achieve badges and stars. Teachers understand how religious education helps children grow morally and spiritually and make sense of the world. One pupil stated, 'We take religion lessons into our lives; in an

argument I am quick to say sorry.' Teachers give pupils space and time for purposeful reflection in lessons and plan carefully to ensure expression of understanding in a variety of ways. Other adults are used effectively to optimise learning. One pupil commented, 'Our teachers help us and give us praise. They spend time on our end-of-year reports which helps us with transition as we know what to focus on next.'

Leaders and governors ensure that the religious education curriculum is a faithful expression of the *Religious Education Directory*. Religious education is given the same importance as other core subjects. School policies, feedback to pupils, and reporting to parents is keenly focussed on religious education. Leaders and governors are committed to securing regular, high quality professional development in religious education for all practitioners, including collaborative opportunities for governors and the teaching team to learn together. The subject leader for religious education has an inspiring vision of outstanding teaching and learning and a drive to secure this. Leaders ensure that religious education is imaginatively and thoughtfully planned to meet the needs of different groups of pupils, and each key stage and phase is creatively structured to build on and enhance prior learning. Excellent links are forged with the parish and the wider community to provide a wide range of enrichment activities to promote pupils' learning and engagement with religious education and to promote community cohesion. Pupils commented on their enjoyment of visiting both *Nazareth House* and *Broughton House* with the school choir to perform for the residents at Christmas. Leaders' and governors' self-evaluation of religious education demonstrates forensic monitoring, searching analysis and honest self-assessment.

## 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 experiences of prayer and liturgy provided by the school engages pupils deeply. Pupils demonstrate this to an exemplary level by, for example, their attentiveness and response to prayer and liturgy, their engagement in communal singing and their knowledge of traditional Catholic prayer. Pupils work collaboratively with others to prepare creative experiences of prayer and liturgy. They lead by selecting scripture passages, religious artefacts and reading in school's celebration of the word. Pupils have a developed capacity for evaluating the quality of the prayer and liturgy they have planned and can identify how to improve next time. The mission team, which has a very high participation rate in school, works closely with school leaders to make prayer and liturgy more accessible to those in lower year groups. Pupils can articulate clearly, the ways in which experiences of prayer and liturgy have shaped how they think about themselves and the world and how this has inspired them to action, including the strong links between their faith, Catholic social teaching and the Servite charism. Pupils at St Philip's are shining examples of Catholic faith in action and are a credit to their families and the school.

The centrality of prayer and liturgy to the life of St Philip's is clear across a whole range of evidence sources. A wide range of significant moments of joy and sorrow are identified and celebrated in prayer. There is a naturally embedded daily pattern of prayer, that faithfully reflects the rhythm of the prayer life of the Church. Well-chosen scripture passages that are informed by the liturgical season form the heart of prayer and liturgy. Staff are inspiring models of exemplary practice to pupils by engaging in and leading prayer and liturgy. The mission team staff leader is highly skilled in helping pupils to confidently plan and lead well-constructed prayer and liturgy. Music and other art forms are, when appropriate, included in prayer and liturgy in a way that enhances these experiences for participants. The school has prioritised prayer spaces within classrooms and elsewhere that are owned by the pupils, including a dedicated prayer space that

is cherished and regularly used by staff and students. The inclusion of families in prayer and liturgy and partnerships with Parishes is a real strength of St Philip's. Parents state, 'Daily worship is not simply an activity, it is embedded in school's identity.'

The school's policy on prayer and liturgy is carefully formulated and regularly reviewed. Leaders, including governors have an ambitious and comprehensive strategy for building up pupil skills of participation as they progress through school. Leaders have planned the school calendar and timetable carefully to ensure that opportunities to celebrate the Eucharist are regularly offered to the whole school community, particularly at key times in the liturgical year. All holy days of obligation and other significant days, such as St Philip's Day, are prioritised in the school's calendar. Leaders place the highest priority on inspirational professional development of all staff that focuses on liturgical formation and, for relevant staff, planning of prayer and liturgy. A detailed schedule of opportunities is evident, including visits from the parish priest and a retired missionary to support this. Leaders have a thorough understanding of a broad range of ways of praying that are part of the Catholic tradition. They assist others well to plan and lead experiences of prayer and liturgy. Consequently, pupils and staff can provide prayer and liturgy opportunities that are engaging, of a high quality and accessible and relevant to pupils. This is also supported by development opportunities offered by the diocese.



## Information about the school

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| Full name of school                            | St Philip's Roman Catholic Primary School                                  |
| School unique reference number (URN)           | 105968   |
| School DfE Number (LAESTAB)                    | 3553622  |
| Full postal address of the school              | Cavendish Road, Salford, Greater Manchester, M7 4WP                        |
| School phone number                            | 0161 5052524   |
| Executive headteacher                          | N/A  |
| Headteacher                                    | Miss Ruth McNamara   |
| Chair of governors                             | Mr Peter Riley   |
| School Website                                 | <a href="http://www.stphilipsrcprimary.com">www.stphilipsrcprimary.com</a> |
| 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                            | 3-11   |
| Gender of pupils                               | Mixed  |
| Date of last denominational inspection         | 30 <sup>th</sup> January 2018  |
| Previous denominational inspection grade       | Outstanding  |

## The inspection team

Lisa Corrigan  
Elizabeth Hindley

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 |