

Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection report for **St John Rigby Catholic Primary School**

URN: 139515

Carried out on behalf of the Right Rev. David Oakley, Bishop of Northampton on:

Date: 4-5 May 2023

Overall effectiveness The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school.....	2
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.....	2
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 curriculum requirements laid down by the Bishops' Conference	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The school is fully compliant with all requirements of the diocesan bishop	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The school has responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection	Fully

Summary of key findings

What the school does well

- Leadership of Catholic education is transformative. Working collaboratively with governors and Our Lady Immaculate Catholic Academies Trust, leaders have successfully raised standards in this inclusive Catholic community.
- The religious education lead ensures staff have good subject knowledge, plan thoroughly and implement a mastery pedagogy so that pupils remember more and make good progress.
- The role of the junior chaplaincy team in enhancing the richness of prayer and liturgy.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons, in liturgies and around the school is exemplary; joyful, motivated, and engaged.
- Development of strong links with local parishes and the wider community.

What the school needs to improve:

- Review the way in which more able pupils are challenged in religious education so that time pressures do not limit these opportunities.
- The development of more openings for pupils to respond to the demands of Catholic social teaching.
- Further development of pupils' ability to critically evaluate aspects of Catholic life, prayer and liturgy and make helpful suggestions for change.

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:.....

2

Pupil outcomes

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

2

Provision

The quality of provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school

2

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school

1



St John Rigby is a strongly inclusive and welcoming Catholic school where all value the unique nature of each person, made in the image of God. Pupils are happy and talk confidently about the way they support each other, including the vulnerable and those from other faiths and cultures. The mission statement: 'God's will be done through work and play, as we follow Jesus day by day,' drives pupils to engage in charitable activities such as fundraising for Cafod, Ukraine, and ACACIA Zimbabwe. However, other opportunities to respond to Catholic social teaching are limited.

School values are taught explicitly as 'Virtues to live by.' Pupils love to be rewarded in assemblies as 'Golden Pupils' who impressed their teachers by demonstrating a particular virtue and are genuinely delighted to congratulate other recipients. Most parents believe that school enables pupils to behave respectfully, and that staff are positive role models, so pupils feel valued, well cared for and behaviour is exemplary. They say that if they make mistakes they are helped to change. Chaplaincy provision is very well regarded and membership of the junior chaplaincy team extensive. Members are rightly proud of its contribution and can explain how it helps them to follow God's plan.

The physical environment has been transformed by large murals that are a colourful, vibrant celebration of the school's mission and core purpose. The FLAME concept of faith formation promotes lifelong learners, a positive contribution, masters of learning and excellence for all, as key drivers for the whole curriculum. It is clearly understood by staff and pupils and has a positive impact on teaching and learning. Staff at all levels are inspired by the charism of the school and ensure that pupils know that God is with them and loves them. One member of staff said: 'I love working here - our Catholic life and mission is at the heart of who we are as a school community.' Consequently, this is a joyful and welcoming community and parents comment positively about the school's impact on their children: '... we are a family of faith and the values and behaviours that the

school instils in our children is fantastic.' Chaplaincy and pastoral care are dynamic, well planned and strongly influence both the Catholic character of the school and the spiritual and moral development of the community. Relationship and health education meets diocesan and statutory requirements but will be replaced with the more vibrant Ten: Ten programme in September.

The headteacher, in collaboration with governors and the trust, has embraced development of Catholic life so that it guides all decisions on curriculum, resourcing, behaviour management and the inclusive nature of the school. Leaders are ambitious and have secured huge improvements through high expectations, rigorous monitoring, and support. Excellent senior appointments have revived the school. Their partnership with the diocese is strong and staff training is frequent so that a clear commitment to the bishop's vision for education is evident. The school has worked hard to establish an exceptionally supportive and welcoming community through the centrality of chaplaincy provision and successful partnerships with parishes and parents. One commented: 'There are lots of lovely events to be part of as parents - Advent and Christmas services, Easter assemblies, class assemblies and recently a gospel choir assembly. Last week there was a family mass that was very well attended, and the children sang alongside other local Catholic schools. It was a lovely evening.' Governors take their role as guardians of the mission of the school very seriously. Their involvement in self-evaluation and robust monitoring holds senior staff to account and has affected change.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade:.....

2

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



Pupils are taught the knowledge, understanding and skills required by the *Religious Education Directory* and the religious education lead has introduced a mastery pedagogy that is followed consistently across all year groups. This structure promotes an interactive approach to learning and ensures pupils make good progress in committing knowledge and skills to long term memory. In lessons pupils demonstrate a good understanding of the specific learning question and can recall key facts from work covered in previous months and years. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported by additional adults and sometimes by scaffolded work so they can access the lesson. As a result, they are achieving in line with their peers. There is a planned 'Star Challenge' in all lessons, but it is presented as an extension activity, so time pressures often prevent access, a missed opportunity for challenging the more able. Pupils are enthusiastic about their religious education lessons and behave very well. Every child questioned said they enjoyed the lessons with one commenting, 'I really do!!' and another saying, 'It is pretty fun, and the teacher makes it interesting. You learn about your faith and what God has done for you.' They ask incisive questions indicating a true engagement with the subject and books show a good quantity and quality of work. Pupils are also developing religious literacy, using the key vocabulary provided to consider events ethically and morally.

Staff are confident in their subject knowledge and pedagogy because the subject lead provides good quality training termly, good quality resources to enhance learning and a systemic approach to coaching. Consequently, standards are consistently good, regardless of teachers' career stage and background. Most staff use questioning well to identify understanding, to follow up with greater challenge and to re-frame explanations when necessary. Questions are planned to meet the needs of pupils and ensure all are involved. Teachers also appoint 'Lead Learners' who note down good questions, spot new vocabulary and make links to other topics. They are skilled in this technique

which enhances understanding and is clearly an embedded routine. Reflection time is also strongly impacting on pupils' spiritual and moral development. Teachers value and praise pupils' efforts in lessons and assemblies, motivating them to do their best. They mark books regularly and provide feedback that pupils say is helpful. Pupils' ability to recall knowledge is strengthened systematically through re-cap starters that quiz them about what was learnt in the last lesson and earlier in the academic year. Live marking in lessons provides on the spot feedback and summative assessments are challenging and moderated internally and across the trust for accuracy.

The subject lead is very highly regarded for the transformation that she has brought to teaching and learning and her readiness to support staff. One teacher wrote that: 'Our religious education lead has been central to pushing these changes and is always available to support staff in any way (often with biscuits!).' Her own practice is outstanding, and she uses this expertise to deliver regular, high-quality inset, resulting in teaching that is consistently good or better. The curriculum is monitored regularly through activities such as book scrutiny, learning walks, planning checks and data analysis; all are supportive but hold staff to account to secure high standards. Religious education has more than full parity with other core subjects in this school with clear priority given by leaders to professional development and resourcing. The successful approach to pedagogy is seen as a model for securing improvements across the curriculum. Self-evaluation outcomes are shared with governors and link clearly to priorities for action in the school development plan.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade:.....

1

Pupil outcomes

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

2

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



Pupils respond reverently when praying together and appreciate the range of experiences available, such as classroom prayers, assemblies, reflections, reconciliation, Masses, involvement in the Gospel choir and hymn singing. They talk sincerely about the importance to them of traditional Catholic prayers and their own personal prayers and most pupils demonstrate a good understanding of how the liturgical year influences the cycle of prayers. Pupils in this school are kind, accepting and tolerant of differences because of the school's practical application of faith formation and virtues education. Liturgies are produced collaboratively resulting in good quality experiences and conscious participation. Pupils are not distracted from their prayers even if a child with special educational needs calls out. The Bible explorers programme and regular use of Bibles in lessons and assemblies, ensures pupils understand links to scripture and engage deeply. The rosary group was formed following requests from pupils and one boy was inspired to create a website on how to pray the rosary. The junior chaplaincy team is extremely popular, and every tutor group is represented. They are impressive and skilled at preparing classroom prayer tables, planning, and delivering assemblies and classroom prayers. They speak of their pleasure at being involved and understand the link between their connection with chaplaincy and commitment to supporting the vulnerable: 'It is important for us to show Jesus' love and our school virtues.'

This is clearly a Catholic school, with prayer and liturgy at its heart. Pupils, staff, and parents talk enthusiastically about the variety of provision and its positive impact on their lives. One parent wrote about the prayer group at St John Rigby: 'It helped me immensely to have a relationship with other parents that share my faith.' Staff leading worship are highly skilled and help pupils to engage by the involvement of the junior chaplaincy team and by making clear links to the scripture readings of the day. Considerable attention is given to setting the mood for the liturgy through use of

reflective music, hymn singing, religious artefacts and good quality presentations. Parents strongly endorse the impact this has on their child's spiritual and moral development. The lay chaplain has formed strong connections between the school, parishes, and local community. Local priests interact regularly with the pupils and meet staff regularly as part of the chaplaincy team. Staff are incredibly positive about chaplaincy support in the development of creative reflections and the use of the Hosanna room for specialist groups like Rainbows and the social needs group. The lay chaplain also monitors prayer spaces across the school ensuring they are well cared for and respected.

Leaders are skilled and inspirational role models, and it is through their hard work and resilience that prayer and liturgy are so well regarded by their community. Governors ensure the allocation of resources, including staffing, to prayer and liturgy is a clear priority. The decision to budget for a non-teaching lay chaplain has made a deep impact, as does the close collaboration between the lay chaplain, parish priests, the religious education lead and headteacher. A prayer and liturgy policy is in place that outlines the comprehensive calendar of dates for liturgical celebrations planned over the school year. Opportunities to celebrate the Eucharist at significant times of the year, including class saints' feast days and Holy Days of Obligation are a clear priority. Leaders ensure staff receive effective induction training and ongoing support from the lay chaplain resulting in high staff confidence and competence in leading prayer. Many pupils are inspired to take on active roles, planning and delivering liturgies but have not had much opportunity to evaluate practice.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St John Rigby Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	139515
Full postal address of the school	Polhill Avenue, Bedford, MK41 9DQ
School phone number	01234 401900
Name of head teacher or principal	Michele McGettigan
Chair of governing board	Cathy Piotrowski
School Website	https://www.stjohnrigby.org
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Our Lady Immaculate Catholic Academies Trust
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy
Age-range of pupils	4 to 11 years
Trustees	Diocese of Northampton
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	June 2019
Previous denominational inspection grade	Grade 3

The inspection team

Jane Crow	Lead inspector
Mark Holdsworth	Team inspector
Hayley Gallagher	Shadow Inspector

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