

St William of York Catholic Primary School

URN: 100737

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Archbishop of Southwark

08–09 May 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

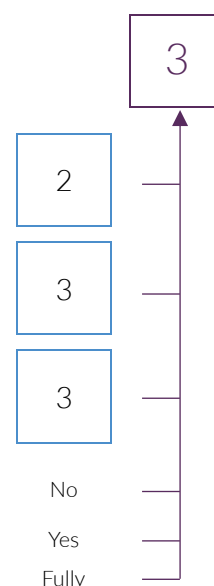
Collective worship (p.7)

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

- It is not clear from evidence of planning and in books that religious education is taught for 10% curriculum time in every year group, as directed by the Bishops' Conference.
- The school is fully compliant with the additional requirements of the diocesan bishop.
- The school has worked on the area for development for last time, offering staff training and making some improvement to consistency of prayer focus areas and religious education boards.

What the school does well

- St William of York Catholic Primary School is a community rooted in the parish, where pupils and their families feel supported and welcomed.
- The new headteacher has a clear vision for the school's educational mission.
- Pupils behave very well – good manners and unprompted kindness are the norm.
- Effective questioning enables pupils to develop their thinking in religious education.
- The school enriches the parish with mutually beneficial relationships; staff members are role models in the parish community.

What the school needs to improve

- Religious education must have parity with other core subjects, including 10% curriculum time taught in all classes.
- Revisit the school mission statement using scripture to ensure it is a clear expression of the educational mission of the Catholic Church and that it is known and lived by the whole school community in policy as well as practice.
- Engage pupils and staff in formation to prepare high quality experiences of prayer and liturgy, so that pupils can plan and lead a variety of prayer experiences with confidence.

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

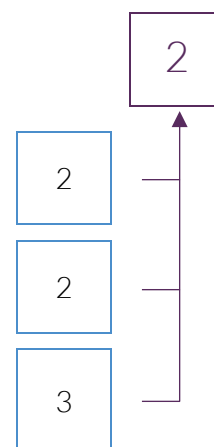
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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 William of York Catholic Primary School is a happy community where pupils and their families feel welcomed and supported. One parent described, "It feels more like home than school." Parents overwhelmingly report that their child is safe and happy at school and some relate that their child teaches them about the Catholic faith. Pupils are taught to "follow in Jesus' footsteps" and they are developing an understanding of Catholic social teaching as "doing good stuff for the world." Pupils do not only collect food but also have experience of delivering food to the Hope Centre foodbank. One pupil related her understanding that those using the foodbank might like to know that "there are so many of us helping and we are side by side together." Pupils are not sure about the school's mission statement or what the school wants to teach them to be like, but they do have a well-developed sense of respect for other cultures and religions, with one pupil expressing that, "God created everyone so no-one is less than anyone else." Peer mediators are well established and pupils say they contribute to school life by "helping us resolve our problems."

Relationships are central to this welcoming school and staff model positive interactions with each other and with pupils. Pastoral support is evident in all areas of the school and families who are most vulnerable benefit from financial support through the Parish Crisis Fund and via the provision of enrichment through trips and extra-curricular activities. This inclusive school knows its families well and values the range of cultures, languages and belief traditions this community encompasses. The International Festival is identified by parents, governors and staff as a focal point for the whole community and pupils have the opportunity to engage with other cultural practices such as learning the Our Father prayer in Swahili. A significant minority of staff identify that they would value further formation for their own spiritual development. The school's Catholic character is evident in prayer focus spaces in each classroom and the school has worked hard to provide training and develop greater consistency with these since the last inspection. Relationships and sex education uses the

diocesan approved scheme *TenTen: Life To The Full* to present a holistic view of the human person. One pupil expressed that RSE helps them to respect their bodies.

The new headteacher has a clear vision for the educational mission of the school and she articulates this clearly with reference to Church teaching. She aims to help pupils to become “socially conscious adults who can do good in the world.” However, the school’s Catholic character is not explicitly made central to the improvement plans and policies, which can undermine the centrality of the message and priorities. Catholic self-evaluation lacks accuracy, focussing on vision more than practice and the impact of limited pupil evaluation is unclear. Governors place great value on the Catholic ethos of the school and are keen to support the headteacher to fulfil her inspiring vision. Leaders and governors respond well to diocesan initiatives, for example Key Stage 2 pupils visited St George’s Cathedral in a Jubilee Pilgrimage to walk through the Holy Door and participate in Mass there. School leaders work hard to develop partnerships with parents, so that the school, together with the parish, can support parents as the first educators of their children. The relationship with the local parish is strengthened by links with staff and governors who are parishioners and both school and parish demonstrate commitment to the mission of the global Church. The school has recently been awarded the Oscar Romero Award at Participator Level.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

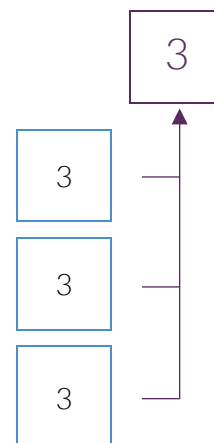
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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



Behaviour in religious education lessons is generally calm and respectful. Pupils engage well with the work set for them and say that they enjoy religious education because, "It makes sense and we enjoy hearing stories about God." Pupil attainment in religious education is assessed as broadly in line with or better than outcomes for English and mathematics, but assessment data trends are unreliable as inconsistent systems have been used over time, driving discrepancies. Progress in books and in lessons is inconsistent, with some repetition of outcomes seen across different key stages. Pupils are encouraged to give their opinions in follow-up work but are not routinely challenged to support this with links to Scripture or examples from their life experience. As a result, pupils' work does not always demonstrate evidence of deeper thinking and there is limited use of subject-specific vocabulary. Pupils understand how well they are doing, following the whole school marking system of coloured stickers, but they are unsure how to make their work better in religious education. Most pupils can confidently identify how their work in religious education might help to inform their choices in everyday life.

Teachers understand the value of religious education in a Catholic school and communicate this clearly to pupils at St William of York Catholic Primary School, using appropriate examples from pupils' lives to make the learning relevant. A range of engaging activities including drama and artwork are used to enable all pupils to access their learning but expectations are not always high enough to allow appropriate challenge and extension. Pupils' differing learning needs are generally well supported by adults in class. Most teachers use questioning effectively to draw out appropriate learning points in whole class discussion and paired talk is well established. Some teachers enable pupils to make effective links to prior learning. Where teachers are not clear about pupils' learning from previous years, planning outcomes are repeated and learning is very limited. In some year groups, planning and work in books indicate more limited opportunities for learning. Effort and achievement are appropriately celebrated by teachers in religious education which motivates pupils to do their best.

The *Come and See* scheme is well embedded across the school, meeting the requirements of the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory* currently in use in the Archdiocese of Southwark. The subject leader for religious education has delivered training for the new *Religious Education Directory* and trialled some resources as part of a steering group, in order to prepare the school to comply with September 2026 implementation. The current curriculum scheme is intended to progress sequentially, but the repetition of outcomes identified during learning walks and book scrutiny mean that planning and implementation in religious education requires improvement. There is limited evidence of monitoring and evaluation which might have identified this sooner; teachers report that monitoring is usually informal with verbal feedback. In formal monitoring seen, issues arising were not identified or action was not taken to address the issue swiftly, so that pupil outcomes continue to be impacted. The interim religious education governor completed a formal monitoring visit to the school to explore religious education through a learning walk and subject leader discussion. Although there was some awareness of the requirement for 10% curriculum time for religious education in Catholic schools, it was unclear to governors that the subject leader's monitoring had raised a breach in compliance and so this was not followed up further. Although timetables indicate broadly 10%, both pupil books and planning show insufficient evidence that religious education is taught for 10% of the curriculum time in all year groups.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

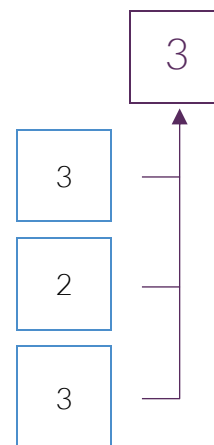
How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

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



Pupils understand that their prayer should lead them to action and they can talk about themselves as Pilgrims of Hope during the Church's Jubilee Year. Key Stage 2 can give general examples of how they can bring hope, such as "when we are loving" or (when prompted by a picture of suffragettes) "bringing hope for the future to be equal and just." Pupils participate quietly in the prayer experiences they are offered at St William of York Catholic Primary School and they generally engage well in signing songs or hymns in Makaton. However, not all pupils participate reverently or enthusiastically and higher expectations of active participation would improve the wider experience for all pupils. In Key Stage 2, some pupils identify that prayer sometimes gives them the opportunity to think more deeply, for example a Year 5 Stations of the Cross liturgy was moving because "it made us see and understand the whole story of Jesus dying a lot more." Two prayer monitors are identified in every class and they work with the deputy head teacher to prepare and lead some class prayers. These pupils show some understanding of the liturgical calendar and Church traditions such as praying the rosary during the month of Mary, but this is not yet widespread. Pupils including those in Year 5 were unable to identify the significance of the altar cloth colour (Eastertide) or why the rosary beads were in the prayer focus area during May. Prayer monitors enjoy leading prayer and would like to contribute more to the prayer life of the school.

Provision for prayer and liturgy is varied across the week. Whole school Gospel assembly is based on the previous Sunday's reading and school leaders consistently use *Ten:Ten* resources to support appropriate structure and content. Pupil-led Scripture-based prayer has recently been introduced in classes and is also linked to the liturgical calendar using planning sheets to support prayer monitors to lead class prayer. Prayer monitors would benefit from a deeper understanding of how and why these texts are used to enhance pupil experience. Formation in liturgical music is led very effectively by the skilled and enthusiastic music teacher who provides joyful and well-prepared experiences for pupils to raise their hearts and minds to God. This provides pupils with an enhanced understanding

of liturgy and liturgical music, as well as with links to the parish celebrations of Mass on Sundays. Families, including non-Catholic families, report that the strong partnership of school, parish and family has a very positive impact on their spiritual life at home.

The school calendar is carefully planned to celebrate key liturgical moments including the feast day of St William of York which pupils and governors alike identify as a highlight. Leaders including governors have close links with the parish church next door and they share a strong understanding of participation in the Church's mission. This vision is not yet fully realised in the wider school community: a clear skill strategy and formation for both staff and pupils is needed to enable more prayerful and inspiring experiences to support pupil engagement. Monitoring and evaluation has not been regular or effective enough for leaders to identify and address the limitations in pupil outcomes during school-led prayer and liturgy. School leaders have a strong base from which to establish this important work going forward. The parish priest values the faith-filled leadership of senior staff who "enrich the parish community as role models for parents and children alike."

Information about the school

Full name of school	St William of York Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	100737
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	2093650
Full postal address of the school	St William of York Catholic Primary School, Brockley Park, Forest Hill, St. William of York School, London, SE23 1PS
School phone number	02086902842
Headteacher	Hayley Mayers
Co-Chairs of governors	Laurence Barber and Sabrina Fernandez
School Website	www.swoy.lewisham.sch.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	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	29 th March 2019
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

The inspection team

Catherine Burnham
Vera Jajechnyk

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