



CATHOLIC SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

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



St Boniface RC Primary School

URN: 105962

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Salford

29 April 2026 – 30 April 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

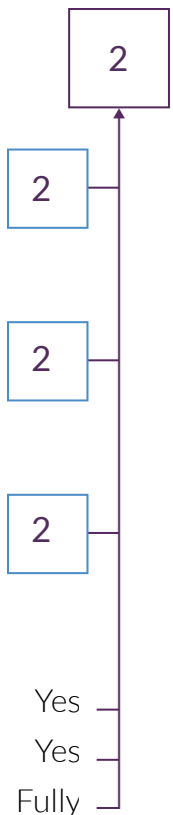
Collective worship (p.7)

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

- Catholic identity is deeply embedded and lived out in the daily life of the school, with pupils and staff demonstrating Gospel values consistently through relationships, behaviour and community engagement.
- Pastoral care is exceptional, with highly effective support for pupils and families, particularly the most vulnerable, resulting in a strong sense of belonging and wellbeing.
- Pupils engage positively with religious education and demonstrate secure knowledge and understanding of scripture and key aspects of the Catholic faith through discussion and participation.
- Prayer and liturgy are central to school life, with pupils participating actively and increasingly taking leadership roles in planning and delivering celebrations of the word.
- Leadership is reflective and committed to improving practice, with leaders accurately identifying areas for development.

What the school needs to improve

- Ensure that pupils' written work in religious education consistently reflects the depth of knowledge, understanding and theological thinking they demonstrate verbally.
- Embed the assessment systems in religious education so that teachers' assessments are accurate and consistent and pupils can clearly explain how they improve their work over time.
- Ensure that, with increasing independence, pupils routinely plan, lead and evaluate celebrations of the word.

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

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Pupils benefit significantly from the Catholic life and mission of the school and contribute to it with confidence and authenticity. They demonstrate a secure understanding of the school's mission and values, which are reflected consistently in their behaviour and relationships. Pupils speak clearly about how these values influence their daily lives and make meaningful links between faith and action, particularly through involvement in Caritas and Laudato Si' movement initiatives. Pupils explained their involvement in environmental and charitable work, describing how they 'vote and make an action plan' linked to 'looking after God's creation'. This demonstrates an emerging understanding of Catholic social teaching in action. Pupils engage well in prayer and liturgy and show respect and reverence, contributing positively to the spiritual life of the school. They value opportunities to participate in leadership roles, including planning and leading aspects of worship, although this is not yet fully embedded for all pupils. Overall, pupils experience a strong sense of belonging and are developing well as individuals formed in faith and Gospel values.

Provision for Catholic life and mission is strong and ensures that the school's ethos is experienced consistently by the community. The mission is visible throughout the environment and reflected in the positive interactions between staff and pupils. Parents describe the school as 'supportive and joyful' and state that 'the Catholic life and mission of the school is absolutely clear as soon as you enter'. Pastoral care is a particular strength and, in many cases, exceptional. Families, including those facing challenging circumstances, speak highly of the support they receive. One parent described staff as 'so supportive and exceptional in care... always there for us in time of need'. Staff are strong role models who

demonstrate Gospel values consistently, although there is some variability in confidence when leading aspects of Catholic life beyond established routines. Opportunities for pupils to engage in chaplaincy and leadership are well developed, and the school provides a range of experiences that support pupils' spiritual and moral development. Prayer spaces and scripture references contribute positively to the Catholic character of the learning environment.

Leadership of Catholic life and mission is effective and ensures that the school's mission remains central to its work. Leaders have established clear expectations and embedded the mission within policies, curriculum and daily practice. There is strong engagement with the diocese, and the school reflects diocesan priorities, including implementation of the *Religious Education Directory*. Partnerships with parents and the parish are well developed, with opportunities such as Mass and shared prayer experiences supporting the spiritual life of the community. Leaders demonstrate an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development through self-evaluation processes. However, systems for the systematic evaluation of Catholic life by pupils are not yet fully embedded. Monitoring processes support ongoing improvement, although there is some variability in how consistently these are applied across the school. Staff speak positively about the support they receive and feel that the Catholic ethos is promoted effectively. Governors support leaders in sustaining the school's strong sense of community, inclusion and Catholic identity.

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

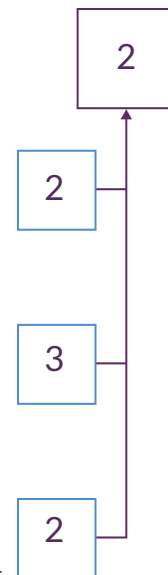
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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



Pupils achieve well in religious education and engage positively with their learning. Across the school, pupils demonstrate secure knowledge and understanding of scripture and key aspects of the Catholic faith, particularly through discussion and oral responses. Pupils confidently recalled biblical events and theological concepts, including parables, the Trinity and links between scripture and the Mass. In lessons and discussions, pupils showed increasing confidence in using religious vocabulary and applying their understanding to everyday life. Pupils speak positively about religious education and value opportunities for discussion, role play and reflection. One pupil explained how lessons help them 'understand what Jesus wants us to do', while others linked scripture to Catholic social teaching and their actions within the community. However, written outcomes are not consistently strong across all classes. Some books show thoughtful responses and developing knowledge over time, although this is variable and does not always reflect the depth of understanding pupils demonstrate verbally. Pupils are not yet consistently clear about how marking and feedback help them improve. Despite these inconsistencies, pupils enjoy religious education and are developing secure knowledge and understanding over time.

Provision in religious education requires improvement because strengths in curriculum and teaching are not yet matched by consistently effective assessment, challenge and impact over time. The curriculum is well sequenced and supports pupils in building knowledge progressively. Teachers increasingly use scripture, questioning and oracy effectively to deepen pupils' understanding, and pupils are encouraged to explain and justify their thinking

through prompts such as 'tell me why' and 'tell me more'. Adaptive teaching for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities is a strength. Scaffolding, visual supports, sentence starters and adult support enable pupils to access the same curriculum as their peers. However, these strengths are not consistently reflected in pupils' written work across the school. Leaders have introduced approaches such as cold and hot tasks to support assessment and demonstrate progress over time. However, these systems are relatively new and are not yet fully embedded or consistently understood by pupils. As a result, assessment information is not yet fully secure or reliable. Challenge for the most able pupils is also not consistently evident in books or observed outcomes. Consequently, provision is not yet consistently good.

Leadership of religious education is effective overall and demonstrates a clear commitment to improvement. Leaders have accurately identified key areas for development, particularly in relation to assessment, consistency of outcomes and challenge for the most able pupils, and have begun to take appropriate action to address these priorities. Monitoring processes, including book scrutiny and professional discussion, have contributed to changes in classroom practice and curriculum implementation. Leaders have introduced more structured approaches to assessment, including cold and hot tasks and topic pages which identify prior and new learning. Staff are increasingly aware of expectations and are developing greater confidence in teaching religious education. One member of staff commented that 'Jesus really is at the centre of everything that St Boniface does', reflecting the school's strong commitment to the subject and its place within the wider life of the school. Leaders have ensured that religious education is enriched through scripture, worship and Catholic social teaching, enabling pupils to make meaningful connections between faith and daily life. However, assessment systems are not yet fully embedded and the impact of recent improvements is not consistently evident over time.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

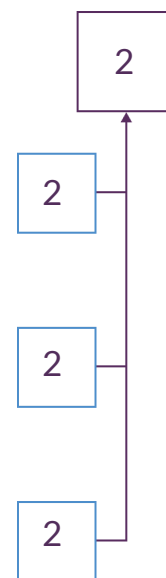
How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

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 respond positively to prayer and liturgy and participate with respect, confidence and increasing independence. Prayer and liturgy are clearly valued by pupils and form an important part of daily school life. Pupils engage thoughtfully in prayer, reflection and scripture and demonstrate a secure understanding of the purpose and structure of prayer and liturgy. Across the school, pupils participate reverently and contribute well during class prayer and liturgy, assemblies and Mass. Increasingly, pupils are involved in planning and leading prayer and liturgy, particularly through class liturgy and pupil leadership groups. Pupils spoke positively about these opportunities and explained how prayer and liturgy help them 'think about how Jesus wants us to live'. Staff also noted that pupils enjoy planning and delivering prayer and liturgy and are fully engaged in these experiences. Prayer and liturgy contribute effectively to pupils' spiritual and moral development and help them make meaningful links between scripture, Catholic values and everyday life. However, opportunities for pupil leadership are not yet consistently embedded across all classes and year groups, and pupils are not routinely involved in evaluating the quality and impact of prayer and liturgy.

Prayer and liturgy are central to the life of the school and reflect the traditions and liturgical life of the Catholic Church. Prayer and liturgy are rooted in scripture and follow a clear and consistent structure across the school. Pupils experience a range of opportunities for prayer and liturgy, including class liturgy, assemblies, Mass and shared prayer experiences with families and the parish community. Parents value these opportunities highly, with one parent describing worship as 'beautiful' and recognising the positive contribution it makes to the spiritual life of the school community. Staff and pupils demonstrate commitment to the

prayer life of the school, and prayer and liturgy are characterised by a calm and respectful atmosphere. Scripture is used effectively to support reflection and moral understanding, and pupils engage actively through music, discussion and response. The environment supports prayer and liturgy effectively through displays, focal points and prayer spaces which reinforce Catholic identity. However, there remains some variability in staff confidence when leading high-quality prayer and liturgy independently, and opportunities for more creative and pupil-led approaches are not yet fully developed across all classes.

Leadership has ensured that prayer and liturgy remain central to the mission and daily life of the school. Leaders provide clear structures and expectations and have established a consistent approach to prayer and liturgy across the school. Staff are supported in delivering prayer and liturgy and understand its importance within the Catholic life of the school. Pupils benefit from regular opportunities to participate in liturgy and prayer, and leaders have developed increasing opportunities for pupils to contribute to planning and delivery. Parents and staff recognise the positive impact of prayer and liturgy, with one member of staff commenting that 'it is a joy to experience'. Leaders have ensured that prayer and liturgy are linked effectively to the liturgical year, scripture and wider Catholic values. However, systems for monitoring and evaluating the quality and impact of prayer and liturgy are not yet fully systematic or embedded, particularly in relation to pupil evaluation and leadership. In addition, there is some reliance on key individuals to maintain the current quality of provision, meaning that leadership capacity and succession planning require further development.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Boniface RC Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	105962
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	3553602
Full postal address of the school	Yew Street, Salford, M7 2HL
School phone number	0161 566 7612
Headteacher or Head of School	Mrs Stella Groarke
Chair of Governors	Mrs Victoria Davies
School Website	stbonifacesalford.com
Trusteeship	Diocesan
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	15 March 2018
Previous denominational inspection grade	Good

The Inspection Team

Carl McIver Lead

Laura Orr

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