

# St Bridget's Catholic Primary School, Egremont

URN: 112348

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Lancaster

12–13 March 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

1

#### 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

Yes

The school is fully compliant with all requirements of the diocesan bishop

Yes

The school has responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection

Fully

1

## What the school does well

- A happy, welcoming, and inclusive school that has a strong, embedded Catholic identity.
- A safe and nurturing school for all, that is at the heart of the community with strong links with parishioners and families.
- A strong and inspirational headteacher, who leads a dedicated and hardworking senior leadership team; together being aspirational for all staff and pupils.
- A committed subject leader who is knowledgeable and passionate about Catholic education, driving excellence in teaching and learning in line with the *Religious Education Directory*.
- A committed and caring governing body who recognise, as guardians of the faith at St Bridget's, their responsibilities to uphold the highest Catholic standards for all.

## What the school needs to improve

- To develop the oracy skills of pupils to enable them to articulate the theology underpinning their actions around Catholic social teaching.
- To develop pupils as independent learners, giving them more ownership for their knowledge and understanding in lessons.
- To provide opportunities for pupils to have a deeper understanding of how the Church's liturgical year is expressed in the prayer life of the school.

## 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

Pupils have a clear understanding about the distinctive Catholic nature of St Bridget's, and they can articulate how the school's mission statement helps them with their choices in life. They shared with inspectors, 'we follow in Jesus' footsteps to help us to be like Him'. Pupils know they can build on their knowledge about Jesus from reading the Bible and in their lessons. Pupils feel valued, safe, and cared about and are extremely proud to be part of the St Bridget's school family. They know they can talk to any adult in school about concerns or worries with the confidence that they will be listened to. Pupils spoke passionately about their responsibilities to help those in need, stating, 'Jesus wants us to help those in need, because that is what He did.' The school's *Ethos Group* shared examples of charities they have helped and now would further benefit from opportunities to deepen their understanding about the theology underpinning their actions. The school council take their roles very seriously and spoke of the importance of upholding the school values, the current one being the value honesty. Pupils at St Bridget's are deeply respectful to each other and their behaviour throughout school is exemplary. They spoke about how the parish priest helps them with their faith and they enjoy celebrating Mass and learning about God.

The mission statement is at the heart of St Bridget's and is clearly embedded and lived out by all. It is articulated clearly by pupils with many lessons beginning with the mission statement recited and acted out. Staff are fully committed to St Bridget's and go above and beyond to fulfil their vocation in helping pupils and their families. The school has a very welcoming environment and is a safe haven in the community, with Christ very much the beating heart of everything at St Bridget's. The school embraces all its members, including those from different

cultures, enabling everyone to live and pray respectfully together. Staff are excellent role models, and they feel happy and valued working in this school. They provide the highest levels of pastoral care for pupils and their families, including the most vulnerable. The environment is absolutely outstanding, beautifully cared for and depicts the distinct nature of a Catholic school, with artistic gifts used to enhance the school displays. Spiritual support is provided by the parish priest, who visits school on a regular basis. He is always willing to support leaders and governors and pupils speak highly about him. The provision for relationships, (sex) and health education meets diocesan requirements and is clearly embedded in the curriculum.

Governors and leaders are committed and passionate about St Bridget's. They are extremely proactive in contributing and promoting the Catholic life and mission of the school. Governors recognise their responsibilities as guardians of the school and ensure that Christ remains at the centre of everything at St Bridget's. Governors engage with the diocese and work effectively with the senior leaders. There is evidence of meticulous monitoring and challenge. Governors shared many examples of how school has reached out to families and parishioners; for example, how pupils made thoughtful gifts for the community on St Bridget's day. Leaders and governors are committed to Catholic social teaching and worked together effectively to help the most vulnerable in society. The governors are kept informed by senior leaders and there is a clear development plan for Catholic life and mission, which is regularly reviewed and evaluated. Staff feel valued and looked after and there are procedures and systems in place to provide the highest level of pastoral care for all. Parents and carers are highly supportive of everything that takes place at St Bridget's and embrace the Catholic life and mission. They were willing to share the positive impact school has on the wellbeing and integrity of their children.

## 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

1

#### Provision

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

1

#### Leadership

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

1

1

Pupils at St Bridget's thoroughly enjoy their learning experiences, particularly in religious education. They develop excellent knowledge and understanding over time, confidently recalling key teachings such as the parables. Pupils engage actively with their lessons, and there is a clear focus on improvement. They are well aware of their progress and are given opportunities to make improvements when necessary. The school fosters religious literacy, encouraging pupils to use appropriate religious terminology throughout lessons. This approach was particularly evident during a lesson on the Crucifixion, where pupils displayed deep engagement and the potential for further learning, especially through the integration of art. Across all year groups, pupils consistently produce high-quality work in their religious education books, which reflects the structured tasks provided. The *Religious Education Directory*, still in the process of being fully integrated, will help pupils develop greater curiosity, empowering them to take more ownership of their learning. Attainment in religious education is strong, with high outcomes for all pupils, including those with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND). As the revised curriculum is further developed, there will be more opportunities for pupils to work independently, fostering a sense of responsibility for their own knowledge and understanding. This practice needs to be consolidated and evidenced.

Staff work collaboratively, with strong support from senior leaders and the subject leader for religious education, to ensure that teaching consistently remains at a high standard, never falling below good. The approach to scaffolding the learning is both thoughtful and structured, with effective use of scripture that aligns with the planned progression of learning. This progression mirrors the liturgical year, providing pupils with opportunities to make direct connections between the scripture they experience and their learning. The curriculum ensures that pupils can relate their learning to real-life applications, particularly in terms of

understanding the faith and spirituality embedded in their studies. Questioning in lessons is used effectively to help pupils demonstrate their understanding and reflect on deeper theological concepts. For instance, in one lesson, pupils were asked to contemplate the significance of Jesus' words on the cross, "Forgive them, they do not know what they do," promoting reflection on the Christian value of forgiveness. Feedback in lessons provides pupils with opportunities to deepen their learning. Excellent responses are celebrated with praise and encouragement. The practice of 'green writing' in marking ensures that feedback is constructive, helping pupils understand areas for improvement. This approach allows all pupils to make excellent progress in line with their age and academic development, comparable to other core subjects.

Leaders and Governors demonstrate a strong commitment to the outcomes of the pupils and families they serve, fostering an aspirational environment for all. The subject leader is actively developing the religious education program to ensure it fully aligns with the *Religious Education Directory*. The subject leader has engaged with diocesan training, which is subsequently shared with staff to ensure consistent and high-quality curriculum delivery. The shared vision of the senior leaders fosters a culture of continuous improvement in teaching and learning, clearly focusing on enhancing the quality of provision. Leaders and governors actively monitor and evaluate progress, utilising data information to drive further improvements. Religious education is given equal importance alongside other core subjects, ensuring that lessons are well-resourced. This commitment results in a high standard of learning for pupils. The curriculum is thoughtfully planned and well-structured, meeting the individual needs of each pupil, and enriching their learning experiences. The religious education program also contributes significantly to pupils' sense of being valued, promoting both academic and spiritual development. The leadership and governance of religious education is marked by a clear vision, strong support, and ongoing efforts to maintain and improve the quality of teaching and learning. The curriculum is inclusive and aspirational, ensuring all pupils are well-supported in their spiritual and academic journeys.

## 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

Pupils respond reverently and respectfully to prayer and liturgy experiences. They are confident to take part and lead, sharing how much they enjoy this. They have a clear understanding of ways of praying and the use of scripture, meditation, joyful singing, reflection and traditional prayer were observed. Pupils were able to articulate about the Church's year and talk about the colours of the liturgical seasons. This can be developed further by providing opportunities to support pupils' understanding and knowledge of how the liturgical year is expressed in the prayer life of St Bridget's. Pupils enjoy praying and spoke of how it has helped them out of school in difficult situations. Pupils spoke clearly about how the values they had learnt at St Bridget's helped them at home, with one pupil sharing he had stopped an argument at home by asking his brother and his father to forgive each other, which had led to reconciliation. Pupils demonstrated an understanding about the importance of having faith in their lives and how stories from the bible inspire them to action in their daily lives. One pupil said that the gospel story of the feeding of the 5000 reminds her to feed the hungry via the foodbank. Pupils are keen to participate in Mass and are supported by staff to engage with liturgical ministries.

Prayer is central to life at St Bridget's and there is a daily pattern of prayer that staff and pupils can describe. Prayer and liturgy sessions observed demonstrated a variety of ways of praying including scripture reading, joyful singing, traditional and spontaneous prayer, meditation and reflection time. Staff model prayer and liturgy sessions which are purposeful and conducive to prayer. Older year groups have the opportunity to lead prayer in class which they do with reverence and respect. Staff are highly skilled in supporting pupils to plan and deliver prayerful services. Scripture is at the heart of everything at St Bridget's and intrinsic links are made between bible passages and the prayer themes. All the classrooms have dedicated prayer

spaces with seasonally appropriate content and themes. An outdoor peace garden with a statue of Our Lady in the grotto is under construction. School works extremely hard to ensure a flourishing partnership with families, inviting them to school Masses, assemblies and liturgical services. The Year 6 Stations of the Cross artwork is proudly displayed in the hall with many pupils making reference to this event during Holy Week.

St Bridget's has an up-to-date prayer and liturgy policy, and staff are aware of how this is used across school. Leaders and governors have a clear understanding of how to develop pupils' participation skills in the delivery of prayer and liturgy across school. A whole school calendar is in place to provide opportunities for class and whole school Masses, Holy Days of Obligation and important saint days. Leaders offer regular opportunities for professional development and the subject leader attends diocesan training when required. The subject leader has a secure knowledge about Catholic traditions and supports all staff in developing Catholic knowledge. She has been instrumental in introducing the *Directory* and staff feel supported by her. Prayer and liturgy is monitored regularly by the subject leader and constructive feedback shared with staff. External support has been bought in to develop further the staff skills in supporting pupils in prayer and liturgy. Governors and leaders recognise the priority of prayer and liturgy, and this is reflected in the variety of resources available for staff and pupils when delivering prayer sessions. The development and quality of prayer and liturgy is shared with governors and there is evidence of challenge and scrutiny.



## Information about the school

Full name of school	St Bridget's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	112348
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	9423506
Full postal address of the school	St Bridget's Catholic Primary School, St Bridget's Lane, Egremont, CA22 2BD
School phone number	01946820320
Headteacher	Suzanne Smith
Chair of Governors	Paul Farran
School Website	<a href="http://www.st-bridgets-pri.cumbria.sch.uk/">www.st-bridgets-pri.cumbria.sch.uk/</a>
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	N/A
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Voluntary Aided School
Admissions policy	N/A
Age-range of pupils	2-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	October 2018
Previous denominational inspection grade	1 – Outstanding

## The inspection team

Michelle Holden  
Anne Charnley

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