

St Ignatius Catholic Primary School, Preston

URN: 151562

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Lancaster

25–26 September 2025

Summary of key findings

Overall effectiveness

The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school

3

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

3

Collective worship (p.7)

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

3

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

Compliance statement

- 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 laid down by the Bishop of Lancaster.

The school has responded fully to the areas for improvement from the previous Catholic school inspection

What the school does well

- St Ignatius Catholic Primary School reaches out to all faiths and cultures, and inclusion is a strength of the school.
- Parents and carers are supported very effectively; parents in turn feel their children are well supported and cared for.
- In religious education lessons there is good questioning from teachers and the recall of prior learning.
- Pupils show reverence and respect during prayer and liturgy.

What the school needs to improve

- Leaders and governors need to further develop pupils' understanding of their role in, and their commitment to, the principles of Catholic social teaching, ensuring they have opportunities to put these into practice for the service of others.
- Monitor all aspects of the teaching and learning of religious education as part of the school's monitoring programme.
- Continue to develop class prayer and liturgy so that these sessions are of a consistently high quality and include opportunities for leadership and participation by all pupils.

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

3

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

2

2

Pupils at St Ignatius Catholic Primary School know they are valued, loved and cared for. They are proud of their school's mission statement "we love, we respect, we care, and we work hard" which is displayed on the badge of their school uniform and around school. Parents commented that their children are happy coming to school. The pupils who belong to the "Happiness Heroes" group explained how their role is to ensure every child has a smile and they actively look out for children who need help. Pupils, however, struggle to articulate what makes their school distinctively Catholic, although they can express a sense of love and care for each other. They have a respect for pupils of other faiths and religions in their school. There are some opportunities for pupils to take on leadership roles, including being members of the school council but opportunities for these pupils to flourish and contribute greatly to the life of the school is underdeveloped. The school is engaged in charity work, but pupils are only passively involved. Further work and opportunities need to be undertaken with all pupils, so they are more knowledgeable about their responsibility to care for our common home. They need to understand the importance of Catholic social teaching and know why they are called to serve others.

The school's mission statement is actively lived out by pupils and staff, who all show love, care and respect for each other. Pupils of all backgrounds, cultures and beliefs are welcomed to St Ignatius School. Staff are excellent role models for pupils, providing love and care for all, through positive relationships. They show a commitment to supporting the most vulnerable, recognising Christ's presence in everyone. The full-time family support worker is instrumental in ensuring families are able to access many services and has built strong links with outreach agencies to support those in need. Children's wellbeing is clearly a priority, with pastoral

support extending to families through access to school uniform and a food bank. The “smile room” is a safe space, provided by the school, for those pupils needing extra support. Parents feel welcomed into school and are invited to a variety of school events. Many parents attended the Macmillan coffee morning, prepared by staff, on the day of inspection. School have recently achieved the *Food for Life* bronze certificate through the after-school gardening club. However, membership of this club is limited, and the importance and impact of this work is not known and understood by all pupils. The relationships, sex and health curriculum meets diocesan requirements.

Leaders and governors are committed to the school’s Catholic mission, ensuring policies and procedures reflect its identity. There are close working relationships with the diocese, and all staff are encouraged to attend training, participating in the services they offer. The school has recently joined the Mater Ecclesiae Catholic Multi Academy Trust, whose leaders are committed to ensuring the school receives strong support and guidance, with plans to work closely with the interim leadership team. The parish priest is a regular and welcomed visitor to school and plays an active role in the formation of the children. Staff are positive about the support and care they receive from leaders and governors and believe their well-being and workload is a priority. This was evident in the event to celebrate teaching assistants, which took place during inspection. Leaders and governors need to promote a practice of faith in action in line with the church’s Catholic social teaching. This should enable all pupils to understand scriptural and traditional teachings of issues such as poverty and caring for creation and love and care for all. Governors need to be more involved in the self-evaluation of the Catholic life and mission of the school. They are supportive of the leadership but need to challenge when necessary.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

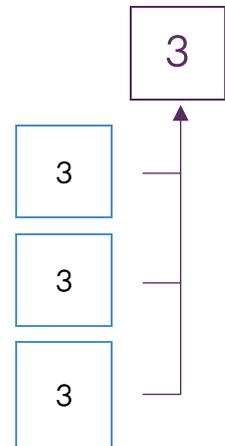
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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 state that they enjoy their religious education lessons with the majority listening with interest and responding well to questions asked of them. Behaviour in lessons and around school is generally good. Pupils observed during inspection were able to work independently, were willing to learn and mostly concentrate well. This is a strength of the pupils' learning in Upper Key Stage 2. Pupils have a good knowledge of other faiths, and can recall, with ease, their learning in this area. Pupils are encouraged, in most lessons, to reflect on previous learning and some can recall and demonstrate acquisition of knowledge. However, this is not consistent across the school. The development of religious literacy for all pupils needs to be enhanced so they can reflect spiritually and ethically and have opportunities to discuss how this can be demonstrated in their everyday life. Pupils understand the marking system used in school, but they have a limited understanding of how well they are doing, how to improve their work and the progress they have made. The religious education data provided during inspection demonstrates that pupils' achievement is average when compared with other core curriculum subjects. It is unclear how leadership arrived at this conclusion. Progress of pupils is difficult to track as the assessment systems for religious education are not yet fully developed.

Teachers are confident in their subject knowledge and the programmes used in school adhere to the *Religious Education Directory*. Questioning is used effectively in lessons across all key stages, reinforcing previous teaching and learning. The recap and recall strategies are used most effectively in Upper Key Stage 2. The development of religious literacy, and the use of key vocabulary, needs a greater focus in every year group so that pupils can talk with confidence of what they have learnt using age-appropriate vocabulary. In a Year 2 lesson pupils had the opportunity to share their ideas of how to be stewards of God's world and there was some evidence of reflection to aid pupils' moral and spiritual development, but this is not consistent

across the school. Teachers' planning was not available during inspection and as assessment strategies are weak it is unclear how overall judgements have been reached. Staff should now plan a variety of creative activities to support the religious education programme. This would further enhance pupils' learning. Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities are supported through the use of teaching assistants in the classroom. This resource needs to be used more effectively in lessons.

Leaders and governors ensure that the curriculum for religious education is faithful to the aims of the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory* through the use of the Come and See and Vine and Branches programme used across all key stages. Religious education is comparable with other core subjects in terms of resourcing, staffing and timetabling. Since September, it has been given the 10% curriculum time required since checks have been undertaken by the newly appointed interim leadership team. Policies for this subject are in place. External moderation of the pupils' religious education work has taken place over recent years with the local Catholic schools' cluster group but there is little evidence of internal monitoring and moderation of pupils' work. Improvements to teaching and learning in this subject have not been planned and this has impacted on securing consistently good levels of expertise and standards across the school. All leaders and governors need to ensure they have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the standards expected in the religious education of their pupils. They need to plan regular monitoring of this subject as part of the school's overall monitoring programme. A religious education action plan has recently been put in place by the interim leadership team identifying key areas for action.

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

3

Provision

The quality of collective worship provided by the school

3

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for collective worship

3

3

The majority of pupils respond to the experiences of prayer and liturgy provided by the school, showing reverence and respect in the services observed during inspection. A prayer area is established in each classroom. There is a daily pattern of prayer and pupils know and are able to recite traditional Catholic prayers. At school Masses pupils have the opportunity to participate through being involved with the readings and prayers of intercession. The class prayer and liturgy services observed during inspection, however, were teacher planned and led with little opportunity for pupils to read from scripture, use their own prayers or sing self-chosen hymns. The majority of pupils did not experience a variety of forms of praying such as silence, reflection and meditation. Pupils have few, if any, opportunities to prepare prayer and liturgy. Pupils need to be helped to develop in their roles, to support each other in undertaking the planning and delivery of class prayer and liturgy so that all can undertake liturgical ministries with confidence. They need to learn how to evaluate and reflect upon the impact of these prayer and liturgy services and how they can be improved

Pupils at St Ignatius school have the opportunity to regularly attend Mass both in school and at other churches within the parish of St John XXIII. Mass is celebrated on key feast days of the year. In recent years pupils have engaged in pilgrimages to the diocesan shrine of Our Lady at Fernyhalgh to support their spiritual development. Weekly Celebration of the Word takes place, and a weekly hymn practice, so that pupils can engage in singing in their own class prayer and liturgy. An area for prayer is established in each classroom and the outside "peace garden", is a designated area for peaceful prayer and contemplation, decorated with children's prayers. However, these areas are under utilised. Pupils state that they and their peers do not use the areas in the classroom and very few have been involved in a prayer service in the peace garden. Leaders and staff need to plan for these areas to be used to enhance the quality of

the prayer life of the children and allow for pupils to undertake spontaneous prayer. The pupils would benefit from further prayer spaces in school so that they can go to places that are conducive to prayer. Some aspects of prayer and liturgy observed during inspection contained elements of a lesson, with question-and-answer sessions. The opportunity for the pupils to be immersed in a prayerful time was lost.

Leaders and governors recognise the importance of prayer and liturgy for the faith development of the school community. There is a school policy for prayer and liturgy that needs to contain a clear strategy for building up the skills of participation. This would support pupils as they progress through the school. A liturgical calendar, that is relevant to St Ignatius School, needs to be developed so that significant days, including saints' days, are planned and celebrated. Professional development has been planned for relevant staff by the interim leadership team to ensure that quality prayer and liturgy plan is delivered for all age groups. Governors and leaders should ensure that a monitoring programme and evaluation of prayer and liturgy in school is in place so that opportunities are offered to all pupils that are engaging and of a consistently high quality. Further development would be to include the views of pupils as part of their own reflection and evaluation of the services they prepare. Governors have ensured that they have allowed appropriate funding to resource prayer and liturgy.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Ignatius Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	151562
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8883647
Full postal address of the school	St Ignatius Catholic Primary School, St Ignatius Square, Preston, PR1 1TT
School phone number	01772 555252
Headteacher	Interim Headteacher - Vicki Berry Acting Headteacher - Sarah Evans
Chair of Governors	Jennifer Mein
School Website	www.saint-ignatius.com
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Mater Ecclesiae Catholic Multi-Academy Trust
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Academy
Admissions policy	N/A
Age-range of pupils	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	June 2019
Previous denominational inspection grade	2 Good

The inspection team

Fiona Robinson
Clare Evans

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