



**DIOCESE OF LANCASTER EDUCATION SERVICE**

**DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION  
REPORT (Section 48)**

**St Bernadette's Catholic Primary  
School,  
Blackpool**

**DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION  
REPORT (Section 48)**

on

**THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL  
AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

**School:**

**St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School**

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**School URN:**

**119691**

**Headteacher:**

**Mrs Alexis Satterthwaite**

**Chair of Governors:**

**Mr John Ismay**

**Lead Inspector:**

**Mrs Adrienne Delaney**

**Team Inspector:**

**Mrs Sharon Barnett**

**Date of Inspection:**

**24<sup>th</sup> June 2022**

## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St Bernadette's is a Catholic voluntary aided primary school in the Blackpool area of Bispham in the Diocese of Lancaster. It is a below average-sized primary school with currently 203 pupils on roll, of which approximately 63% are baptised Catholics. Other pupils come from no faith or other Christian backgrounds. Most pupils are of white British heritage (WBR) with a small minority of pupils from other cultural backgrounds.

Approximately 14.8% of pupils are on the SEND register.

The school is of a modern design with a good deal of surrounding land which contains large play areas and a school garden with a vegetable patch. It is also utilised as a forest school and has a well-planted and maintained prayer garden. It works very closely with the local cluster.

## INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

**OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS**

1

**CATHOLIC LIFE**

1

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

1

### OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

St Bernadette's is an outstanding Catholic school. It is very welcoming and its vision to be caring and inclusive is shared by governors and leaders, teachers and pupils alike. Pupils enjoy attending and they have positive attitudes to learning. One Year 6 pupil described St Bernadette's as a place where 'children are very friendly and kind to each other'. Pupils deepen the knowledge of their faith throughout their time in St Bernadette's and gain a firm understanding of Catholic practice. The school lives out its mission to encourage all by 'Doing our best for God'. The parish priest and governors play a significant part in leading the strategic direction of the school in the community that it serves. They have enabled recommendations since the last inspection to be addressed successfully. The headteacher who is also the RE leader has been tireless in her efforts to ensure that the Catholic life of the school and curriculum RE are outstanding. The work of the governors, parish priest, headteacher, teachers and support staff in raising standards and putting the Catholic life of the school at the forefront of their plans for the school is a strength of the school.

The Catholic life of the school is outstanding and the commitment from the governors, leaders, staff, together with the parish priest and lay faithful, to support pupils in their prayer life and grow in faith has remained a priority; this has been evident during times of challenge such as the pandemic. Staff set good examples, are proud of their school and work well together. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is excellent and has an impact on everyday life at St Bernadette's. This can be seen through pupils' responses to each other and to the notion of the common good. The pupils actively and willingly become involved in a variety of activities supporting their own and the wider community. This contributes to pupils' social, emotional and moral development. Gospel values permeate school life and pupils are helped to grow in faith, make the most of their abilities and become the best they can be.

Opportunities for prayer and liturgy are outstanding; pupils act with reverence, join in prayers confidently and sing joyfully. They make full use of resources available to them and appreciate the opportunities offered to them, for example, Masses and liturgies.

The quality of curriculum RE is outstanding and pupils are provided with an excellent range of learning opportunities to deepen their faith, to understand

Catholic traditions and practices, and to make progress in their learning. Pupils enjoy RE lessons and many aspects of the curriculum are outstanding. The clear action plans that are in place to continue to raise attainment and progress from low starting points are very good.

Teachers' subject knowledge is outstanding and has a positive impact on the delivery of curriculum RE. They are well supported in terms of professional development. The curriculum meets the needs of all learners in line with diocesan and national recommendations.

Governors and leaders take full account of the '*Fit for Mission? Schools*' guidance and the requirements of the teaching of health, relationships and sex education (RHSE). They may now wish to consider the new inspection framework when it is published and start to prepare the new self-evaluation document.

### **WHAT THE SCHOOL NEEDS TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER**

To improve further the school needs to:

- Improve outcomes for all pupils by:
  - Ensuring that the quality of teaching and learning across school remains high when the new curriculum directives become embedded.
  - Preparing for self-evaluation in line with to the new Catholic inspection schedule.
- Celebrate successes by:
  - Continuing to involve parents, governors, staff and pupils in evaluating the impact of good prayer and liturgy opportunities that are impacting positively on the Catholic Life of the school.
  - Sharing the good practice that exists in the teaching and learning of other faiths and cultures with schools across the cluster.

## PART A: CATHOLIC LIFE

### THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

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- The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school
- How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school
- The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school

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All leaders, the parish priest and staff members at St Bernadette's are wholly committed to supporting the Catholic ethos of the school and its mission and this culture is embedded in the life of the school family.

The pupil's knowledge and understanding of the Catholic life of school is greatly enhanced by their participation in and contribution to all aspects of school life. Pupils know that they belong to St Bernadette's Catholic parish and are proud to be part of the school and parish. For example a Year 2 pupil stated that 'We are one big family'. Pupils' leadership of prayer and liturgy is outstanding. From the Foundation Stage onwards pupils develop their ability to share their own faith through whole class prayer and liturgy. This ability is developed throughout Key Stage 2. Pupils plan and share their own prayer and liturgy with increasing skill as they progress through school, with some pupils running their own prayer group after school, inviting adults and fellow pupils to take part. They tend the beautiful prayer garden and have selected their own affirming signs with quotes from scripture and from saints to help its prayerful atmosphere.

Pupils understand that their Catholic faith is different from other faiths and share this distinctiveness with other Catholic schools. Activities that have enabled this understanding have included the celebration of Mass with the parish, fundraising with the parish and collecting money for CAFOD and other local charities.

Pupils at St Bernadette's appreciate their prayerful environment, from the outside areas that affirm and celebrate their beliefs to the peaceful rooms within school where they can pray. Parents and parish members attend regular Masses in school and pupils are always welcome at the family Masses in church. The parish priest is a regular visitor to school. This encourages best behaviour and focused learning at all times. Catholic principles and values underpin behaviour and relationship policies resulting in a strong, shared vision for the Catholic life of the school.

The parish priest, lay helpers in school, governors, school leaders, teachers and support staff are fully committed to fulfilling their role in ensuring outstanding provision for the Catholic life of the school. They have high expectations and are actively working together to implement the Catholic philosophy of education and

Gospel values which permeate all aspects of the school. An example of this is the outstanding collaborative art and design work displayed outside and inside the school that demonstrates liturgical understanding, scriptural knowledge and a deep appreciation of the Catholic faith. The head teacher provides a clear direction for the Catholic Life of the school which is given the highest priority, along with the spiritual and moral development of pupils. Senior leaders, teachers and staff have a strong vision for the school which is seen through their commitment and actions.

The governors, leaders and managers are fully dedicated to encouraging partnerships with the diocesan family of parishes and schools. The school has excellent links with the primary and secondary schools in the local Catholic cluster; they work as a wider family of schools to provide opportunities to celebrate their faith collectively.

The quality of provision for the Catholic life of the school is outstanding. St Bernadette's is a welcoming, inclusive, friendly community with a strong family ethos where everyone is valued and pupils and staff flourish. Governors, managers and staff have high expectations and a shared vision with regard to the Catholic mission and ethos. There is a tangible sense of family and community in all aspects of school life which is evident in the quality of relationships that exist between all stakeholders.

The school is a prayerful community that provides a stimulating learning environment to reflect the school's mission and Catholic character. Staff and governors work hard to develop and enhance the school for the benefit of everyone at St. Bernadette's. Older pupils take part in, lead and prepare prayer and liturgies with enthusiasm and confidence; they sing hymns joyfully. Younger pupils are responsive to prayer and liturgies. On the day of inspection two Year 2 pupils spontaneously sang and signed the Gloria when discussing prayer. The parish priest and leaders have been instrumental in the development of teachers' knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith through effective professional development.

## PART B: RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

### THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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- How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education
- How well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education
- The quality of provision in Religious Education

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All pupils at St Bernadette's enjoy RE, are religiously literate and engaged in their learning. Through active participation in prayer and liturgies, together with outstanding curriculum coverage, pupils show excellent knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith. They understand that Christ is at the centre of all school life and are aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life. The vast majority of pupils make rapid and sustained progress in RE after starting school from a very low baseline in Foundation Stage. They develop and apply a range of skills throughout Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 including independence, creativity and imagination. This progress is built upon in KS2 where pupils reflect upon their own gifts and talents that enable them to forgive, love and respect. They are able to reflect on the notion of justice and the common good. This is demonstrated in their understanding of the Pope's message about stewardship of the earth in *Laudato Si* and their involvement in CAFOD and other worthy charities.

The RE curriculum meets all the requirements of the Bishops' Conference and is informed by the Curriculum Directory and the Diocesan document 'Fit for Mission? Schools. RE is at the centre of the school's curriculum and is given priority in the improvement planning where targets are clearly identified and set to continue to maintain outstanding attainment. Governors and leaders have created a culture where a common vision and commitment to high standards have been established. This is largely due to the excellent practice of the headteacher and senior staff, who ensure that pupils continue to make progress in their religious literacy. Professional discussions during staff meetings explore how enthusiastic and imaginative teaching motivates pupils and deepens their understanding of the subject. A rigorous system has been developed to improve standards, including monitoring lesson plans, book scrutiny, lesson drop ins, conversations with pupils, alongside pastoral and behaviour support; these activities have made a significant impact on the improvement of teaching in RE. Teachers now need to prepare for the teaching and assessment of new directives in the soon to be published curriculum so that high standards continue to be achieved.

Teachers' planning is based on *Come and See* scheme of work with teachers confidently enriching the curriculum with other valuable resources, for example, CAFOD's Universal Church topics. Staff subject knowledge is very good due to their own drive for excellence in RE and to the opportunities offered to them through



continued professional development. Governors are informed of the curriculum through reports at meetings and regular visits to school.

Pupils' progress in RE is reported to parents in reports and consultations alongside other core curriculum subjects. Newsletters and Catholic information regarding school and parish are on the school's website. Catholic life and RE matters are regularly updated. An open door policy enables parents to discuss RE matters with parents if required. Parental questionnaires found that parents feel welcomed in their Catholic school and appreciate the Catholic values taught at St Bernadette's.

Pupil attainment and progress in RE is outstanding and is in line with high standards in English and maths. Since the last inspection, leaders have led training for all staff and modelled excellent practice to ensure that standards in teaching are maintained. Analysis of the progress of all groups of learners enables success to be celebrated.

The school serves a mainly white British Catholic Christian/no faith community. Pupils have the utmost respect for each other and can confidently and articulately discuss their own religious beliefs and those of other monotheistic faiths, so as to be prepared for a multi-faith society. It is commendable that they have learnt about black saints and saints from cultures different from their own. Good quality teaching and effective learning are present in RE lessons. Pupils enjoy RE because teachers make their lessons engaging, interesting and relevant.

The quality of provision for RE is outstanding as is the teaching. In lessons observed on the day of inspection pupils' behaviour for learning was excellent, their knowledge of the scripture was good and they could ask and answer questions appropriately. The headteacher, senior leaders, parish priest and dedicated laity have enabled staff meetings and INSET opportunities to reflect on, and enhance the teaching of RE. The impact that they have had on school/parish family is a great strength of the school. Staff regularly seek advice and guidance from them on specific issues related to the teaching of RE. This contributes to excellent subject knowledge and confidence in teaching RE: teachers inspire pupils and make sure that they make exceptional progress as independent and collaborative learners. Resources are used effectively and the family support worker and other adults in school help to optimise learning. As a consequence pupils are highly motivated and enjoy their work.

## SUMMARY OF INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<b>Overall Effectiveness</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Capacity for sustained improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Catholic Life</b>	<b>1</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.</li> </ul>	<b>1</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How well leaders and managers promote and ensure provision for the Catholic Life of the school through monitoring and evaluation.</li> </ul>	<b>1</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school.</li> </ul>	<b>1</b>
<b>Religious Education</b>	<b>1</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.</li> </ul>	<b>1</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.</li> </ul>	<b>1</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The quality of provision in Religious Education.</li> </ul>	<b>1</b>

	<b>Pupil Outcomes</b>	<b>Leadership &amp; Management</b>	<b>Provision</b>	<b>Overall</b>
<b>Catholic Life</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Religious Education</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>