



## Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection report for St. Gregory's Catholic Primary School, Chorley

URN: 119673

Carried out on behalf of the Most Rev. Malcolm McMahon, Archbishop of Liverpool on:

Date: 23-24 March 2023

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The school is fully compliant with the curriculum requirements laid down by the Bishops' Conference	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The school is fully compliant with all requirements of the diocesan bishop	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The school has responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection	Fully

### Summary of key findings

#### What the school does well

- The Catholic identity of the school is valued, celebrated and lived-out by all. Pupils, families, staff and governors are proud of St. Gregory's. It is a family which is held dear by all.
- The school environment bears witness to the school's mission.
- The pupils have good knowledge of religious education, particularly the youngest pupils, who are a beacon of hope and encouragement for the learning journey they will take through the school.
- There is an embedded culture of working in partnerships and evidence of highly successful support and engagement of all families.

- The liturgical year is used very effectively to support all areas of school life, giving pupils a developing understanding of how scripture can guide them.

What the school needs to improve:

- In Catholic Life and Mission, the school must ensure it is fully compliant in its provision for Relationships, Social, Health & Education.
- In Religious Education diagnostic marking, skilled questioning and adapted learning strategies to challenge pupils, all require more consistency in their use across the school.
- In all three areas of Catholic life, religious education and collective worship, provide staff with clear and systematic approaches to self-evaluation and monitoring, so ensuring purpose, support and impact.

## Catholic life and mission

How faithfully the school responds to the call to live as a Catholic community at the service of the

Catholic life and mission key judgement grade:.....

2

### Pupil outcomes

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

2

### 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

Everyone is clearly proud of their school. Pupils are happy, confident and feel secure. They will tell you that the best thing about St. Gregory's is 'people look after you'. The mission statement is a clear declaration of the school's identity. It can, however, have less of an impact when confused with other statements of school life that are not directly informed by the Word of God. Some pupils are more confident using the motto or the 'We are...' statements of 'Curious, Reflective, Responsible and Resilient'. However, the weekly school values are highly effective in giving life, relevance and a basis for a sound understanding of scripture to all. Pupils are committed to their roles and to living out the school mission. They have an understanding that the school community should be faithful to following the teaching examples of Jesus. They are active participants in school events and do so with purpose. Pupils respect for themselves and each other is exemplary. They care about and for each other. They enthusiastically recall supporting each other in a variety of ways including Buddies and Playground PALS. The Well-being Warriors led inspectors through a thoughtful and reflective meditation session. School Council talked passionately about their fundraising and the charities they support. They share that their role is to 'look after our school' and that they are 'kind to the planet'. School is passionate about making links with other communities and other cultures especially the Ruben International School in Kenya.

The mission statement is an expression of the school's charism. It has a visible impact on school life and staff are committed to implementing it. One meeting with staff brought about some emotional and powerful messages regarding their mission statement, expressing that it is 'what we are all about'. Staff embrace its content and implement it across the curriculum and whole school life. Everyone is welcome at St. Gregory's and staff feel that for the pupils,

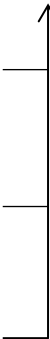
especially those most vulnerable, they are 'their world'. This is evident around school. It is celebrated in the range of displays that illustrate the areas they have committed to. The website, seesaw and twitter accounts are also used to inform and to celebrate. The school environment supports pupils' ministry, including how they use the outside resources and develop the prayer garden. Staff provide pastoral care for all pupils and their families, which comes in many forms, including staff personnel and the warm links with the parish. A range of supportive programmes were observed or discussed during the inspection. The addition of a fulltime family support worker, which the headteacher states was essential following the traumatic experience of the pandemic, is highly effective. The provision for Relationships, Social, Health & Education is evident but inconsistent. It is not following the recommended termly structure. How it works with the Personal Health Social & Education curriculum and the additional supporting programmes is currently fragmentary, but staff are confident the materials are effective.

Christ is at the heart of this school and partnerships are strong. Governors provide many examples of their involvement and understand their role as guardians of the school's identity. They are conscientious in their work and offer strategic support to staff and pupils. Governors know and live the reviewed mission statement, which is highlighted within their reports. One governor is especially involved in school life delivering the Change 4 Life programmes as well as planned gardening and many sports and competitive events in the town. Governors are ambitious for the school. They are proud of how it supports the local community, no less witnessed in the harvest packages they supply and the work with Chorley Christmas Toy Appeal. School works in partnerships with its families. Cited in recent questionnaires, parents share the view that St. Gregory's is helping pupils to be 'thoughtful and caring people ready for new challenges.' One parent speaks about how their child enjoys the teaching and mission of the school so much, she has now made a commitment to her faith by attending Mass. The closeness of the school and parish is almost tangible and certainly valued.

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade:.....	2
<b>Pupil outcomes</b> How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education.....	2
<b>Provision</b> The quality of teaching, learning, and assessment in religious education.....	2
<b>Leadership</b> How well leaders and governors promote, monitor, and evaluate the provision for religious education.....	2



Evidence from lesson observations, discussions and work scrutiny show that pupils are developing a secure knowledge, understanding and skills. The majority are making progress, and in some classes good progress is evident. School is confident that moderated data shows the pupils are achieving well. However, in some year groups, work in books does not support this and does not inform the pupils how they can improve. There is limited evidence in books that pupils' achievement is in-line with other core subjects. However, verbal attainment is good. In lessons, pupils engage well, are enthusiastic, interested and speak with quiet confidence about their learning. Most understand the expectations of the lessons. Re-visiting prior learning has a positive impact on their ability to link that content to new learning. Most pupils work independently. In-class support is engaging and ensures pupils who have special educational needs or disability are effectively supported at their level. Pupils work with respect for each other, ensuring their enthusiasm for learning has a positive impact on their peers. They use most subject-specific vocabulary accurately and naturally. Resources are used effectively. In one class pupils were observed re-telling the story of Palm Sunday using small figures and palms. Learning observed during the inspection included effective use of technology, individual, paired and group work. Other interactive learning opportunities including singing, which was joyful to hear!

Teaching across school is good and it is clearly valued. Teachers are confident in their subject knowledge. In some classes it permeates into skilful questioning. Pupils' responses to questioning can be basic. It is expanded upon by the class teacher rather than the pupils. Where there is evidence of strong questioning it is often adapted, re-focussed and challenges pupils to further explanation. Planning is well-structured. It meets the needs of pupils but

could benefit from more adapted learning strategies to challenge further and alleviate unnecessary pre-planned 'differentiation'. The range of ways in which work is presented engages pupils. Effort is celebrated during lessons and pupils are motivated. This celebration of effort is not as evident in books. During discussions, pupils shared how their learning in school is useful in their lives. Pupils have time to reflect on their learning and share how they have developed their ideas. They enthusiastically recount how they learn about Jesus, follow in his footsteps and learn from Bible stories. This is something to be proud of. There is time for reflection at the start and end of some lessons.

The content of religious education is a faithful expression of the *Religious Education Directory*. Religious Education as the core subject shares parity with other core subjects in terms of resourcing and staffing. The subject leader for religious education has a passionate vision and a good level of expertise. How this is used needs clarity. Professional development of staff is offered to all and is accessed by most. To become more effective, leaders need to monitor and upskill teachers further. Leaders and all staff need to consider the value of their attendance at all professional development opportunities offered by the Archdiocese. Leaders plan the curriculum well. There is clear evidence that there are sufficient opportunities for pupils to make progress. Overall, the needs of the different groups of pupils are met. This was both sensitively and enthusiastically observed during the inspection. The school decision to use seesaw for the learning journals is not currently effective. Self-evaluation of religious education could be better supported by monitoring and analysis that focuses upon impact. The current processes are having a limited impact in some areas and provide little evidence of purpose.

## Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade:.....

2

### Pupil outcomes

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

2

### Provision

The quality of collective worship provided by the school .....

2

### Leadership

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

2



The experiences of prayer and liturgy provided by the school engage pupils and leads them to active participation. Children reflect in silence and prayer. The quality of this, their attentiveness or engagement, is not always evident. Pupils understand and value the ways that praying is part of their Catholic tradition. Pupils were observed joining in community prayer as well as the school prayer. Pupils' planning for and leading of prayer and liturgy was evident throughout the inspection. All pupils, regardless of their age, understood and valued their roles. They are confident in leading prayer. They use scripture, symbol and reflection well. They can describe how parts of the liturgical year affect and influence the prayer life of school. They talk about God's creation and value the calm, class-time that prayer affords them. Pupils are respectful and thoughtful in prayer. They share their reflections, if they want to, often via raising their hands. They match their responses to the value focus for that day's worship. Children need further guidance in how to develop and demonstrate a confidence in why they pray or how they can evaluate its quality. The prayer planning area outside of the Year 5 and 6 classrooms gives pupils a positive space to plan and celebrate when they have led prayer and liturgy. It guides them in their role during prayer and worship.

Prayer and liturgy are appropriately planned and central to the life of the school. Collective worship forms a valuable part of any gathering. It is seasonally and liturgically appropriate and linked to the school value for the week. This is known and shared throughout school and cherished by all. Teachers give pupils opportunities to plan prayer and liturgy. As a result, pupils enjoy and value the opportunities to take a lead. They are developing an understanding of how Catholic liturgies should be constructed and how to engage other pupils in these experiences. Staff should model good practice here to develop both other staff and children's

understanding. Some collective worship observed had the sense of a lesson, with hands raised or formalised responses. St. Gregory's home/school special relationship is evident, with the invitation to parents to join the class prayer and liturgy, and school assemblies. There are opportunities in classrooms and around school for pupils to pray and the school makes good use of the spaces available. These are both inside and outside of the school building. The school strives to secure flourishing partnerships with the parish. The weekly morning Mass before school has seen an increase in families attending.

The school has a prayer and liturgy policy in place, which is accessible for all. It would benefit from additional detail to become a useful resource and guide to staff who could then use it when preparing their own prayer and liturgy. It would also provide a useful strategy for developing skills in preparing, leading and participating in prayer and liturgy. The prayer and liturgy leader is confident that this is partly addressed by any necessary support that is given following observations. School has a highly effective planned calendar and timetable to celebrate key events in the liturgical year. The prayer and liturgy lead has shared training resources. Staff understand the importance of prayer and liturgy. However, they would benefit from further professional development opportunities. School allocates the budget accordingly to provide good quality resources. The recently purchased prayer and liturgy class boxes have been a success. Leaders understand and value how prayer is part of their Catholic tradition and is certainly used to inform planning. A review of how school evaluates its prayer and liturgy so that improvements can be made would be beneficial.



## Information about the school

Full name of school	St. Gregory's Catholic Primary School, Chorley
School unique reference number (URN)	119673
Full postal address of the school	Eaves Green Road, Chorley, Lancashire, PR7 3QG
School phone number	01257 263865
Name of head teacher or principal	Mr D Darbyshire
Chair of governing board	Mrs M Scard
School Website	<a href="http://www.stgregoryschorley.co.uk">www.stgregoryschorley.co.uk</a>
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Not applicable
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age-range of pupils	3-11
Trustees	Governors
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	29 September 2015
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

## The inspection team

Mrs J M Farrimond	Lead inspector
Mrs D Albon	Team inspector

## 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

