

The Blessed Sacrament Catholic Primary School, Preston

URN: 149414

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Lancaster

11–12 June 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

2

Collective worship (p.7)

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

2

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

2

What the school does well

- The school is very inclusive and provides excellent pastoral support for pupils and is quick to respond to the changing needs of families and the wider community.
- Pupils' pride in belonging to the school, their commitment to making a positive difference, and the joy they show in their participation in school life is a strength of the school. Behaviour is good and pupils show respect for each other and for adults in school following 'the Blessed Sacrament Way'.
- The school has developed a bespoke curriculum based on getting to know the person of Jesus and how his actions shape their lives.

- The addition of a prayer room and specialist teaching assistant has had a significant impact on the prayer lives of all the children in school.
- The school reaches out to welcome all families, including those who are vulnerable or new to the area, demonstrating its Catholic character.

What the school needs to improve

- To involve staff, governors, parents and pupils collaboratively in the self-evaluation process.
- To continue with staff training in order to introduce the *Religious Education Directory* throughout the school in line with diocesan guidelines and national timescales.
- Introduce progression in skills to enable pupil leadership of prayer and liturgy throughout 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

The Blessed Sacrament School provides a high level of care for all pupils, which allows them to flourish and feel a valuable part of this happy school family. It reaches out to welcome all families, including those who are vulnerable or new to the area, demonstrating its Catholic character. This excellent pastoral support is well structured and enhanced by the strong leadership of the head teacher, senior leaders and all the inclusion team, together with governors.

The culture of welcome and reaching out to all is rooted in the teachings of Christ and evident in the interactions that take place around the school. Gospel values are visibly displayed around the school together with school's unique practice of 'the Blessed Sacrament Way' and are referred to and lived out by staff and pupils. Pupils demonstrate respect for each other and for those of other faiths, cultures and backgrounds. Staff are positive role models in all school activities, reflecting the school's motto: *'Feeding Hearts and Minds'*. The pupils appreciate the work of staff and the opportunities they provide and comment on how safe and cared for they feel in school. Pupils understand that the school community is committed to following Jesus, and that they have personal responsibility to serve those in need. They support many charities both locally and globally, including local foodbanks, Emmaus, Mission Together, WaterAid and Cafod. In Year 6 one pupil stated that 'we raise money for charities that support social justice and make a difference because that's what Jesus wants us to do.' Discussions with parents in the playground and responses to the parental questionnaire show that the work of the school is valued. On the day of inspection parents stated, *'This is a lovely school, my children are happy here, the staff care'. 'Morals and values are high in school, and I appreciate that my children benefit from this.'*

Directors, governors and leaders are deeply committed to the school, ensuring Christ is at the centre of everything they do. They promote the bishop's vision for education and respond well to diocesan and trust policies and initiatives; The Blessed Sacrament School was a founding member of the Mater Ecclesiae Catholic Multi Academy Trust set up in Preston. Leaders support parents as first educators and staff actively welcome the children and families every morning. The specialist religious education teaching assistant is a welcome addition. She inspires, supports and encourages everyone in school on their faith journey. Pupils reflect on the mission statement at stations around the school and comments at these stations illustrate this. Statements such as *'Our school is special because we follow Jesus'*, *'Everyone is kind-hearted'* and other acknowledgements of hope and thanks testify to their deep faith.

The provision for relationships sex and health education meets both the statutory and diocesan requirements.

The school environment reflects its mission and identity through good quality resources and displays that reflect the school's Catholic mission, including Jubilee and diocesan centenary displays. In the 2025 Jubilee year of Hope, every class is going on a jubilee journey as a pilgrim of hope. These include a residential to Castlerigg retreat centre and a visit to Ladyewell. Pupils were represented at a recent Mission Together Mass with schools across the city and also at the Mater Ecclesiae (Patron of the Trust) Mass with the bishop and other schools in the trust.

The school provides effective opportunities for the spiritual and moral development of pupils and staff. Leaders demonstrate respect for the dignity of workers and ensure that their decisions for school reflect this. Wellbeing is a priority. When interviewed, staff stated *'we support each other as a team'*. Leaders know and serve their school very well. New staff are supported well in their induction and stated that they valued the input on the Catholic Life of the school. Staff have attended the diocesan training for teachers new to Catholic Education that is followed up by support in school. Some have been supported in gaining their Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies (CCRS).

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

2

Provision

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

2

Leadership

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

2

2

The bespoke curriculum, in line with the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*, it allows pupils to develop secure knowledge and fully know and understand the person of Jesus. They make good progress from baseline and progress could be seen throughout lessons. Disadvantaged and pupils with special educational needs and disabilities are supported to do well through a fully inclusive and tailored approach. They are religiously literate and engaged in their learning. In Year 6 pupils could explain key vocabulary and link this to the gospel and catechism. Children reflected spiritually and ethically in lessons using the 'Blessed Sacrament Way' to guide decisions.

Pupils could talk confidently about key gospel stories. An early years pupil talked about waving palms and shouting 'Hosanna!' In a Year 6 class pupils discussed the mystery of transubstantiation. They work independently and concentrate well in lessons. Work is well presented, and children are proud of this. Examples of high-quality religious education work are displayed throughout the school. Teachers ensure pupils are engaged in lessons. A box from Jesus' birthplace was used as a creative tool to capture interest for younger pupils and a range of creative styles was seen throughout. Pupils enjoy learning and behaviour in lessons is good. Pupils have some understanding of how well they are doing but this needs to be more consistent across year groups and phases so they can articulate progress made.

Pupils achieve above average attainment when compared to other core subjects and this has been sustained over time. Their progress will need consistent monitoring as the use of the directory is fully implemented.

The subject leader and other staff are confident in their subject knowledge and support one another to plan lessons consistently across year groups. They use the Blessed Sacrament Way

to communicate the value of religious education effectively. Staff recognise the profound impact this has on helping children to flourish. This practice supports the moral and spiritual development of pupils and is a real-life reflection of the gospel spreading throughout the school and putting faith into action. The lesson structure allows ongoing assessment to take place, and questioning is clear and allows children to express key knowledge. Verbal feedback is provided to support learning and staff provide pupils with a range of creative opportunities so that additional learning needs are addressed.

Leaders ensure that religious education is in line with the directory and is unique to the needs of the pupils. Religious education is given high priority alongside core subjects and the importance can be seen in the bespoke curriculum where religious education underpins the whole structure, enabling other subjects to work alongside and link to it. Leaders and governors are continuing to prioritise professional development to support staff with national timescales for implementation of the *Religious Education Directory* and its expectations. This practice needs to be continued so that all staff are confident in their delivery of the expectations set out in the directory.

The subject leader for religious education has a clear vision for teaching, learning and the directives of the curriculum. Expertise has been seen in lessons and is modelled to staff. Leaders have carefully planned and appropriate sequential curriculum in a systematic way so that pupils can know and understand the person of Jesus. Learners build on this knowledge year on year. Groups such as those with additional needs, those with English as an additional language, and the disadvantaged are planned for with imagination and thought. This level of planning would also support higher ability children. The lesson structure is clear and allows children to build in prior learning with the regular checking of key skills throughout the term.

Good quality resources are used to provide a high-quality provision, and school is well resourced and enrichment activities such as visits to Castlerigg and Ladywell Shrine and pilgrimages enhance learning.

Self-evaluation of religious education is informed by monitoring. This practice needs development by governors and leaders to facilitate further self-challenge, making sure that all stakeholders are involved in self-evaluation. This will ensure that monitoring and evaluation are fully in line with the directives advised in the *Religious Education Directory*.

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

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

2

Prayer and liturgy is central to the life at The Blessed Sacrament School and is valued by all. From a young age, pupils respond well to experience of prayer and liturgy. They participate through respectful reflection, joining in prayer and singing enthusiastically, as witnessed throughout the inspection. Prayer and liturgy is appropriate to pupil's age and stage of learning. Pupils have a rich variety of ways of praying that are part of the Catholic tradition. In the early years, for example, pupils could set the space for a liturgy. They knew what cloth and artefacts to include as well as the Bible and placed a candle to show that 'Jesus is the light of the world'. In another class children chose objects to focus and support spiritual reflection. Pupils are able to recognise and talk about the ways in which prayer and liturgy influence the wider life of the school. For example, they spoke of praying a novena when the Holy Father, Pope Francis died.

Prayer is routinely planned and is a central part of every school day, forming routine gatherings of pupils, staff and leaders. Interviews with pupils and observations show that this daily pattern of prayer reflects the rhythm and prayer life of the church. Seasonally appropriate scripture is shared across liturgical year with the Sunday gospel of the week shared and reflected on throughout the week. During the inspection liturgies were observed on Pentecost, the Trinity, The Sacred Heart and Mary, mother of the church.

Older pupils were seen leading a well-structured prayer in the prayer room centred on the feast of Mary, the Mother of the Church. All the pupils responded well and were comfortable and familiar with taking part in prayer and liturgy. Pupils demonstrated reverence and respect when reading scripture and reflecting on the impact in their lives. One pupil reflected on a charity they support by stating that 'Mission Together go out of their way to bring the gospel

message to others in need'. Pupils wrote the school prayer and had input into setting up the new prayer room. They have also identified an area to develop outside to enable them to pray outdoors.

All prayer and liturgy observed during the inspection was seasonally appropriate and started in a calm manner with music to gather to and reflect, which enabled everyone present to fully participate. The pupils sang well and enthusiastically during prayer and liturgy. Pupils interviewed said they enjoy prayer and liturgy and are able to discuss what they have learned. One said that prayer was a focus to think of those in need, 'we take for granted that we have a home, food and water'. Parents, parishioners and governors are welcomed to share in the spiritual life of the school through various services, including weekly celebration assemblies, liturgies and Masses throughout the year. For example, they attend Harvest service, the Nativity play and the May procession.

Leaders understand the liturgical year and are role models to both staff and pupils. Priority is given to high quality professional development for staff and governors that is provided by the diocese. Progression in skills with formation now needs to be planned in line with the *Prayer and Liturgy Directory*. They have planned the school year and timetable carefully to ensure that opportunities to celebrate the Eucharist, particularly at key times in the liturgical year and at significant moments within the life of the school. The whole school attended Mass during the inspection for Pentecost, the birthday of the Church, and participated in ministries of serving, reading and singing.

Good use is made of the indoor spaces available for prayer and all classes have dedicated prayer tables. The displays in classes and around school are of a high standard, these include displays on the centenary of the diocese as well as being pilgrims of hope in the Jubilee year.

Information about the school

Full name of school	The Blessed Sacrament Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	149414
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8883638
Full postal address of the school	The Blessed Sacrament Catholic Primary School, Farrington Lane, Ribbleton, Preston, PR2 6LX
School phone number	01772792572
Headteacher	Kelly Hannah
Chair of Local Governing Body	Gerard McKevitt
School Website	https://www.blessedsacrament.lancs.sch.uk/
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	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	November 2018
Previous denominational inspection grade	2 - Good

The inspection team

Fran Wygladala
Claire O'Donnell

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