



# St Bede's Catholic Primary School

URN: 139876

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Hallam

01–02 May 2025

## Summary of key findings

### Overall effectiveness

The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school

2

#### 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 general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishops' Conference

Yes

The school is fully compliant with any additional requirements of the diocesan bishop

Yes

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

Fully

## Compliance statement

- The school's religious education programme ensures that 10% or more of the timetable is dedicated to teaching and learning in the subject.
- The school follows the guidance of the diocesan bishop in its choice of religious education resource for teaching.
- School leaders have worked hard and effectively to have impact on those areas identified for improvement at the last inspection.

## What the school does well

- The headteacher provides leadership that inspires and unites all staff, pupils and parents in one community of love, care and support.
- The exceptional behaviour and attitudes of pupils is shown in a deep love and care for everyone in their community.
- At St Bede's, prayer and liturgy is central to the life of the school. Pupils understand and value the opportunity to grow in faith and become closer to God.
- The school is a joyous, happy place where everyone feels that they belong to a special family and community where the Catholic identity and mission is a lived reality.
- Pupils can expertly articulate how learning about the teachings of Jesus empowers them to embrace their personal responsibility to serve others and follow His example.

## What the school needs to improve

- To increase opportunities for pupils to engage in spontaneous prayer and guided, silent reflection.
- For feedback and assessment of religious education to include clear next steps for improvement.
- To ensure that there is regular, rigorous monitoring of religious education that leads to improved standards of teaching and learning.

## 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

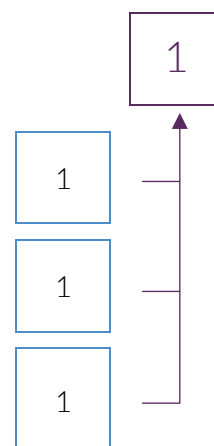
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

#### Provision

The quality of provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school

#### Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school



Catholic life and mission at St Bede's is outstanding. The core values of the school's mission statement – respect, perseverance, care, honesty and faith – are understood and embraced by everyone in the school community. There is a tangible feeling of joy and happiness in school. Pupils feel confident, safe and secure. They know that there is always someone that they can go to talk to who can help them with any problems or worries that they may have. Pupils have a clear understanding of how the school community is committed to following the teachings and example of Jesus. They take pride in their personal responsibility to serve others and pursue the common good. When describing the various fundraising activities in school, pupils relate this well to specific Bible stories and articulate their work as 'following in the footsteps of Jesus'. Pupils have a very strong understanding of Catholic social teaching. They can link this both to their learning in religious education and other aspects of school life. The behaviour of pupils, both during lessons and throughout non-structured times in school, is exceptional. They consistently show care and kindness to others. Pupils relish opportunities, such as through the GIFT team and the Faith in Action group, to take leadership roles within the chaplaincy provision of the school.

All staff embrace the mission statement and Catholic life of the school. They enthusiastically participate in all areas of school life. There is a deep sense of community at St Bede's, and this is evident in the strong relationships between each of its members. As one parent remarked, 'The school goes above and beyond' to support and care for everyone in the community. This was especially appreciated when the school provided exceptional love and support following a tragic event in the school community. The embedded culture of welcome ensures that families from different cultures and traditions feel quickly accepted and valued as part of the school family.

Staff are exemplary role models for pupils. When describing the strengths of the school, pupils and parents are quick to name the staff and the consistently high standards of love, care and kindness that they show. Well-supported by a highly effective learning mentor, staff provide the highest standard of pastoral care. Staff receive regular training, although opportunities for staff to access spiritual and moral professional development is currently limited. The provision for relationships, sex, and health education is strong, and pupils are able to articulate their learning very well for this subject.

Leaders and governors are committed to the Catholic life of the school. They clearly articulate the Church's mission for education and are joyful and determined in delivering this vision. There are very strong links with the parish. The parish priest is a regular visitor to school and is highly valued and respected by all members of the school community. Partnerships with parents are very strong. One parent described entering the school as 'like receiving a big hug'. Parents feel supported, included and valued. They appreciate the numerous opportunities to come into school and celebrate the Catholic life of the school with their children. Leaders prioritise the wellbeing of staff. Staff consistently refer to the school as an 'extended family where they feel supported and loved'. Although the Catholic life of the school is prioritised, there are currently limited opportunities for different subject areas to work together to support the understanding of the Catholic curriculum. Governors are committed, well-organised and actively involved in the evaluation of the school, but focused visits on the Catholic life of the school are limited in number and thus in measurable impact.

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

### Religious education key judgement grade

#### Pupil outcomes

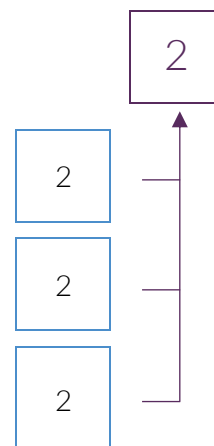
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

#### 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 are developing secure knowledge, understanding and skills that reflect the learning required by the *Religious Education Directory*. All learners are making good progress, including pupils with special educational needs. The religious literacy of pupils of is a key strength. Pupils can articulate very well how their learning links with their actions and behaviours and are acutely aware of the demands of religious commitment to everyday life. Pupils speak with confidence about what they have learned and by the time they reach Years 5 and 6 are able to talk with subject specific vocabulary and depth about different topics studied. In stronger teaching, questioning is used well by teachers and the enjoyment of learning is clearly evident. In some classes though, learners are more passive and do not have opportunities to develop creativity and independence. Pupils have an understanding of how well they are doing in religious education but are currently unable to articulate how they can improve the quality of their work. This is because feedback is not linked closely enough with the intended learning outcomes and is more frequently related to general presentation or English skills. Pupils achieve above average attainment when compared with other core curriculum subjects, reflecting the priority of religious education in the school.

Teachers are committed to the value of religious education, and this is clearly communicated to the pupils. They recognise the impact religious education has on the moral and spiritual development of pupils and refer to this regularly throughout the school day. Lessons are well-planned, demonstrating good subject knowledge and consolidating previous learning well. During early parts of lessons, teachers re-visit previous learning and ensure this is secure before linking it to new learning. Teachers generally use questioning well; however, in some lessons, there are too many closed questions, and this affects the engagement and learning opportunities for all pupils. Pupil effort and achievement is celebrated, and pupils are motivated

to do their best and develop their knowledge and understanding. Teachers plan carefully, and books evidence a variety of different ways that pupil can express their learning. This learning is currently controlled by given activities though, and pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to choose their own individual way of presenting their learning. Support from teaching assistants is effective; adults adapt tasks well to ensure that all pupils can access learning and achieve well.

Leaders and governors prioritise religious education. They ensure that there is at least full parity with other core curriculum subjects. The school curriculum for religious education is a faithful expression of the *Religious Education Directory*. Programmes used by the school are enhanced and adapted to ensure the curriculum aims are met. The curriculum is carefully planned to meet the needs of the mixed age classes in school and ensure all pupils can achieve. Currently, action planning, monitoring, analysis and evaluation of religious education is not forensic or detailed enough. Therefore, this does not lead to consistently positive impact of practice. There are strong enrichment activities in the school. This includes a Year 6 residential that has key elements of prayer and reflection built into each day. The parish priest offers excellent support to the school's curriculum. He is a regular and highly valued visitor to school and has led a number of teaching sessions, including those with a focus on ordination, signs and symbols of the church, and sacraments. Pupils and staff speak highly of the impact of these visits. The school also has strong links within the community. They regularly visit the local nursing home and have an excellent relationship with Rotherham United Community.

## 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

2

#### Leadership

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

2

2

Pupils respond well to the experiences of prayer and liturgy provided by the school. They join in prayers and responses with confidence and enjoy singing together. All pupils show respect and reverence during all forms of prayer and liturgy in school. Pupils have a detailed understanding of the wide variety of praying and can name a number of traditional prayers. They have a strong understanding of the liturgical year and how this is expressed in the prayer life of the school. Pupils regularly work alongside adults to prepare and deliver acts of prayer and liturgy. They understand the different parts of a liturgy and enjoy the opportunity to take leadership roles. Pupil evaluation of worship is currently underdeveloped and has been identified by the school as an area for improvement. Pupils can expertly reflect on their personal experiences of prayer and how these impact and inspire them. They appreciate and value the opportunities they have to pray. Pupils readily talk about how the opportunities to pray in school help them to get closer to God. One pupil said, 'I pray to ask God for help with difficult things in my life'.

Prayer and liturgy are central to the life of the school. There is a daily pattern of prayer that is embedded and understood by all stakeholders. In addition to scheduled times, pupils have the opportunity to pray at other times of the day. This is particularly evident in the recently created prayer garden that is accessed frequently by pupils at playtimes and lunchtimes. Scripture passages are central to prayer and liturgy. At times, these are not intrinsically linked and referred to during reflection and mission/witness sections of the celebrations. Opportunities for pupils to have guided periods of sustained, reflective silence, and spontaneous prayer, are currently limited and are not an embedded part of regular prayer and liturgy. Staff are models of good practice and engage enthusiastically with all prayer and liturgy sessions. Prayer spaces in classrooms are well-maintained and other prayer spaces, including prayer tables in communal areas and a beautiful prayer garden, are imaginatively designed and conducive to prayer. Family

and parish links are strong. Parents value the opportunities to share in the prayer life of the school and are grateful for the regular occasions when they can be part of celebrations of the word.

The school's policy for prayer and liturgy is a clear reflection of practice in school and is carefully formulated to meet the aims of the school. There is a clear strategy to build up participation and independence of pupils when planning and delivering child-led celebrations. This was evident during a Year 6 child-led celebration of the word that included high levels of independence and creativity by the pupils that were leading it. Leaders, including governors and the parish priest, work together well to carefully plan the school calendar and include opportunities to celebrate the Eucharist, holy days of obligation and other significant days and events. Staff receive regular training related to religious education and liturgy, but opportunities for spiritual development and formation are currently limited. All staff understand the importance of prayer and liturgy and show commitment to this. Leaders have ensured that the school is well resourced and gives staff and pupils a variety of resources to enhance the quality of liturgy. Leaders and governors demonstrate an awareness of liturgy in the school, but do not currently formally review the quality and impact of prayer and liturgy as part of the school's cycle of evaluation. Pupils' views have been collated by the school and show that the majority of pupils enjoy opportunities to pray together.



## Information about the school

Full name of school	St Bede's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	139876
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	3723340
Full postal address of the school	St Bede's Catholic Primary School, Wortley Road, Kimberworth, Rotherham, S61 1PD
School phone number	01709740101
Headteacher	Amanda Wassell
Chair of local governing body	Jackie Hone
School Website	<a href="http://www.stbedescatholicprimary.co.uk">www.stbedescatholicprimary.co.uk</a>
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	St Francis Catholic Multi Academy Trust
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Academy
Admissions policy	Non-selective
Age-range of pupils	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	November 2016
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding (1)

## The inspection team

Christopher Power  
Diane Collins

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