



Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection report for  
**Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School, Gorton**

URN: 134479

Carried out on behalf of the Title. Arch/bishop's name, Arch/bishop of Diocese on:

Date: 23-24 November 2022

Overall effectiveness The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school.....	2
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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 behavior of the children is exceptional and they care and respect one another.
- Relationships throughout the whole school community are strong and everyone is valued.
- Pastoral care for the most vulnerable is a real strength.
- Links with the Parish.
- Support from governors,

### What the school needs to improve:

- For a more learning-focused approach to planning religious education lessons that meet the needs of all children.

- Children should be given more opportunities and freedom to develop independence in their responsibilities when planning and leading collective worship with increased opportunities for their choice of theme, personal prayer and reflection across 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:.....

1

### 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



Sacred Heart is situated in an area of Manchester where there are a large number of vulnerable families. The school is very strong in its pastoral care of its community. Sacred Heart has a strong community of governors, leadership, staff, children, parents, families and parish. As a result of this excellent support and the high-quality work that they do, the school is held in high regard. The school is very led well by a dedicated headteacher who is well supported by governors and staff who all share in the Church's mission for education. Catholic life and mission outcomes are outstanding because pupils can clearly express an understanding that they are valued and cared for as unique persons made in the image and likeness of God. The children are happy, confident and feel secure. They are also extremely well behaved and show a deep respect for their own personal dignity and that of others. Everyone is welcomed in a spirit of generous hospitality, especially those who are vulnerable. Pupils understand the distinctive Catholic identity, charism and mission of the school. They value their school and what it stands for. This was evident in conversations with children, as all were proud of Sacred Heart school. The children put their own faith in action through their enthusiasm such as fundraising for charities to help the vulnerable. This was seen in a religious education lesson where a child was heard to say that we should, "Give to the homeless and to charities in Advent."

Catholic life and mission provision is outstanding because there is a lived sense of community in the quality of the relationships observed. For example, during an assembly when a child became upset, a staff member moved in immediately to reassure and to calm the pupil. Observations of children on the yard show them playing together and showing respect to all. Relationships throughout the school community are a strength. The school is outstanding because the school environment effectively bears witness to the Catholic mission in education and Catholic character.

Book swap and sales days are organised to allow all members of the school community to have access to books to engage in reading. To be even better, the school should ensure that relationship and sex education can be confidently articulated by all children, staff and parents.

Leadership of the Catholic life and mission of the school is outstanding because the headteacher and governors exercise their duty as guardians of Catholic life and mission of the school extremely well, ensuring that Christ is always at the heart of everything they do. An outstanding feature of the school is its strong links with the parish. All leaders, including governors, are deeply committed to the Church's mission in education, making Sacred Heart school a place for evangelisation. Support from governors is strong, with visits to school and challenge and support, for example, the parish priest gives training to staff each half term to refresh their expertise with Catholic life and mission. The headteacher works very hard to ensure that the staff are well versed in the expectations of working in a Catholic school and in serving the needs of the school's local community. Pastoral care of the vulnerable is a strength at Sacred Heart. The headteacher and governors know their school very well. Discussions with parents, (both those chosen by the school and those chosen by the inspection team) and the parent questionnaire show that the work that the school does is greatly valued by the school community.

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade:.....

2

### 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



The school has met the two areas for development from the last inspection under the framework that they were set. Religious education outcomes are good because assessment data, children's books and the school's self-evaluation show that religious education attainment is in line with the other core subjects. The presentation of the books show that children take great care when working in religious education lessons. Due to the current approach to planning, learning is not always matched to pupils' needs. To be outstanding, this needs to be adapted so that all pupils learn extremely well.

Religious education provision is good. Lesson observations and interviews with children and staff show there are some systems in place that check children's knowledge at the start of a unit and at the end. There is also a visit to previously learnt knowledge in some lessons. To be outstanding, the routine at the start of religious education lessons to review learning from the previous lesson, week, term and year will enable teachers and pupils to know how well they are doing and of what they need to improve. Lessons observed showed whilst there is a large emphasis on teacher talk, children remain very well behaved and engaged. However, passive learning needs to develop into active engagement more consistently. Religious education books show work learnt in a variety of forms and the children present this work with pride. Children's tasks need to be driven by the learning objective, and this will show teachers more rigorously that learning has been achieved. Religious education lessons observed were made up of many creative ways to impart knowledge onto the children, including written work, art work, the use of video and question and answer sessions. Talking partners were observed to be appropriate and to support teaching. Discussions regarding new vocabulary were observed in many lessons.

Religious education leadership is good. Continuous professional development is a priority and religious education is well resourced. Religious education timetabling fulfils the Curriculum Directory and staff see creativity as a way of engaging children. Religious education books and lesson observations have shown that there are times when the task dominates the lesson, challenge should always be focused on the learning rather than the task. The subject leader has a clear vision for teaching and learning. However, the monitoring of religious education needs to be more robust to identify when teaching and learning does not challenge all children. Religious education leadership provides opportunities for children to progress through sequential subject content (Come and See, Caritas in Action), but leaders need to empower teachers to take more ownership of religious education curriculum planning ensuring content is introduced in an increasingly demanding way.

## 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

Sacred Heart RC Primary School has met the area for development in collective worship from the last inspection under the framework that it was set. Outcomes in collective worship are good because observations and floor books show pupils work well with others such as teachers and other pupils to prepare engaging experiences of prayer and liturgy. All children should have wider opportunities, appropriate to their age and capability, and the freedom to choose their own theme to independently plan prayer that is responsive and spontaneous with confidence, understanding and skill. In discussions, children showed that they understood how they reflect on their experience of prayer and liturgy and that this influenced wider school life, such as a 5K walk to raise money for CAFOD.

Collective worship provision is good. Interviews with children and observations show that there is a daily pattern of prayer that reflects the rhythm of the prayer life of the Church. Older children were observed leading worship for their peers with services, prayers and resources that were planned by themselves. To be outstanding there should be a creative balance between routine and innovative times of prayer. Staff, including senior leaders, are models of good practice. This is in keeping with the school mission statement which says, "We support and encourage everyone to reach their full potential." Staff should see the religious education leader model collective worship to see exemplary practice. The school's collective worship section of the religious education policy states that, "Music is used to create the appropriate atmosphere of reverence and quiet reflection." This was observed at Sacred Heart in collective worship which saw pupils begin the session in a calm manner with music to gather themselves and reflect. The inspection took place at the beginning of Advent and seasonally appropriate scripture passages were central to prayer and liturgy, which enabled those present, including parents, to fully participate. Staff successfully work with families to include them

in the prayer life of Sacred Heart with parents turning up to see their children lead prayer in assembly.

Leadership of collective worship is good. Observations and interviews indicate that leaders, including the governors, offer regular opportunities for developing staff in the provision of collective worship. However, continued professional development for prayer and worship needs to respond to the needs of staff from rigorous self-evaluation. Leaders and governors recognise the importance of collective worship and this was shown with the ample resources available for staff and children to plan and lead prayer and worship. Children took part in prayer and worship across the school, with reverence that was seen in the youngest children developing well by the time they reach Year 6. Some examples of spontaneous prayer were observed across the school and prayer evaluations by the children were also seen, for example children in a Key Stage 1 class were able to say which part of their worship they enjoyed and meant something to them. This should be encouraged and promoted consistently across the school.

## Information about the school

Full name of school	Sacred Heart RC Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	134479
Full postal address of the school	Knutsford Rd, Gorton, Manchester, M18 7NJ
School phone number	0161 223 0231
Name of head teacher or principal	Suzanne Walker
Chair of governing board	Barbara Porter
School Website	sacredheartschool-gorton.org.uk
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	N/A
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age-range of pupils	3-11
Trustees	Salford Diocese
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	21 <sup>st</sup> January 2015
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

## The inspection team

Jim Graves	Lead inspector
Sinead Colbeck	Team inspector
Name of inspector	Lead/team
Name of inspector	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