

## Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection report for St Benedict's Catholic Primary School

URN: 135085

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

Date: 29<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup> March 2023

### Overall effectiveness

The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school.....

1

### 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.....

1

### Collective worship (p.7)

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

1

The school is fully compliant with the curriculum requirements laid down by the Bishops' Conference

✓

The school is fully compliant with all requirements of the diocesan bishop

✓

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

Fully

## Summary of key findings

### What the school does well

- The pupils are exemplary ambassadors for the school community.
- The headteacher and governing body are highly ambitious for the community in which they serve.
- The school has established strong links with the parish that enables the community to flourish.
- The subject leaders for religious education are outstanding, they are aspirational in their vision for the school.
- Parents are highly invested in the religious development of their children.

What the school needs to improve:

- Develop the involvement of pupils in the evaluation of the Catholic life and mission.
- Ensure that pupils can clearly articulate what they need to do next to improve their work.
- Fully utilise the school environment to develop prayer spaces.

## 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

There is a strong sense of community within St Benedict's. The mission statement of 'With Jesus we learn, love and laugh' is lived out and experienced by all pupils and supported by staff, parents, parish community and governors. The pupils are encouraged to grow in, understand, and embrace the Catholic faith. The pupils articulate a clear understanding that they are valued as individuals and follow the teachings of Jesus. The pupils are proud of their school. They said 'We are following the path of Jesus; it is what we do. We try to help others and when we do this, we grow closer to God'. The pupils have much to contribute to the school's development. They show a deep respect for themselves and each other. This caring nature is extended to the ways in which they support those in the local community. There is an established link between the school and the local care home. Weekly visits take place, and the impact is evident in the way that the pupils, staff, parents and governors talk about the strength in this relationship. In addition, they support a range of planned charities such as CAFOD, Nugent Care and the local foodbank. The pupils respond to the demands of Catholic Social Teaching and develop their understanding through projects led by CAFOD and through the Live Simply action plan. The Eco team have led whole school initiatives such as the park away day, tree planting and Big Lenten Walk. Year 6 pupils are given the opportunity to develop through the Faith in Action award. They support younger pupils and actively take on roles in the parish community.

The staff of St Benedict's are deeply committed to the school's mission and providing high quality care for pupils. Staff act as excellent role models for pupils. The support of the parish community has a deep impact on the pupils moral and spiritual development. The parish

priest is a pivotal figure in the school. He supports the pupils in their faith journey through the sacramental preparation programmes and wider school care. Staff feel supported in their roles by the head teacher and religious education team. The school values and recognises the well-being of all members of its community. Staff and pupils talk highly about the ways in which they feel supported by leaders. The school has a welcoming Catholic environment. They recognise that they could make further use of prayer space to develop and enrich the opportunities for pupils. The leader for relationships, sex and health education is highly committed to the role. The school use the Archdiocese recommended programme which is enriched further by the schools coherent and highly developed planning. Parents are kept fully informed of the content of the programme and to review the offer at regular intervals.

Leaders and governors ensure policies and procedures are in place which prioritise Catholic life and mission. They are dedicated to ensuring staff receive high quality training so that the Catholic life and mission of the school are consistently embedded. Key staff regularly attend training and meetings organised by the diocese. This is further enriched by active involvement in a local cluster group. Staff are treated with respect and dignity, resulting in an aspirational and dedicated staff team. Feedback demonstrates how they feel valued and supported and speak highly of the role of the mission in their working life. In the survey one member of staff commented 'I have never worked in a school that holds the Catholic faith and mission statement so central in everything that it does.' The religious education leaders are deeply committed to the ethos of St Benedict's. Staff speak highly of their leadership and the tireless work that they put in to develop the Catholic life of the school. The governors are highly supportive and serve the school well. They are committed to ensuring it provides the best possible Catholic education and care for its pupils. Governors' high expectations and aspirations are displayed in the quality of Catholic life and mission. Governors, staff and pupils have contributed to the development of the mission, and this is reflected in the pupils' own words. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school and are very supportive of its work.

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade:.....

1

### Pupil outcomes

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education.....

1

### Provision

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

1

### Leadership

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

1

A consistent approach to teaching and learning enables pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding of religious education. Pupils speak with confidence about their learning, using high level vocabulary accurately. The staff develop learning through different creative activities such as drama and art which results in an engaging Catholic curriculum. During the inspection, pupils demonstrated good learning behaviours. They asked inciteful questions and made links between scripture and everyday life. They confidently explained to inspectors how listening to scripture had helped them to develop into loving, hardworking and humble children of God. They demonstrated high levels of engagement and clearly enjoy their religious education lessons. Pupils make links to prior learning, demonstrating the capacity to know more and remember more, achieving strong outcomes. The work produced by pupils is of a consistently high standard. Pupil workbooks are exemplary models of practice at all stages. The standard of presentation and creativity across the school is high. Pupils' achievement is in line with attainment in other core subjects.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge, and high expectations. In this school there is an embedded culture of staff working together with committed support from the religious education leaders to ensure teaching is never less than good. Staff have a deep understanding of the impact that their teaching can have on the moral and spiritual development of pupils. They enable pupils to use this knowledge to make sense of the world they live in. Pupils respond effectively in lessons. Lessons are structured to draw out pupils' responses through skilful questioning, expanding the learning of all pupils. The school has invested in good quality resources, which are well used by staff to enhance learning. Staff plan work linked to careful assessment of pupils needs. The coverage and progress evident in pupil workbooks support

the school's tracking and analysis. Staff have established a clear process for providing feedback to pupils. They understand what the next steps are for all pupils and adapt their planning appropriately. This process is being fully embedded with pupils to ensure they can clearly articulate what they need to do to progress even further. All teachers follow the school's marking and feedback policy, recognising and valuing pupils' efforts. Teachers encourage and support pupils to do their best and understand how to improve.

Leaders ensure that the school curriculum reflects the expectations of the *Religious Education Directory* and that all classes cover the required content. Leaders and governors ensure religious education is comparable with other core subjects in terms of resourcing, timetabling and staffing. The leaders for religious education are role models for others. They lead with knowledge and commitment that demonstrate a clear vision for the continued development of religious education. They systematically undertake detailed monitoring, which leads to well targeted improvements. Through the monitoring of teaching and learning, staff are provided with feedback which contributes to the school's outcomes. Leaders and governors participate in and evaluate this feedback. They use the impact of monitoring to improve provision even further. The subject leaders for religious education support staff with their practice, through targeted staff meetings and consequently the quality of teaching and learning has developed. The curriculum is thoughtfully planned and well-structured so that it meets the needs of different groups of pupils and enhances the learning for all.

## Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade:.....

1

### 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 .....

1

### Leadership

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

1

The school has a daily pattern of prayer that is embedded into the school routine. Pupils engage and actively participate with reverence. At St Benedict's, prayer and liturgy is at the heart of the school. Pupils are given a wide variety of opportunities to take part in prayer and liturgy. They are reverent when they gather for worship and there is a real sense of calmness whilst they come together to be one in the presence of God. Pupils participate in prayer wholly and consciously. Prayer and liturgy are inclusive and accessible to all. Pupils are respectful when listening to God's word. The school choir enhance times of prayer with reverent and joyful singing. Pupils understand the liturgical year of the church, making connections between it and notable school events. Year 6 pupils speak excitedly of the opportunity to attend a retreat where they can spend time together. They look forward to this important opportunity to worship as part of their transition to high school. They see it as an important part of their faith journey.

The pupils attend Mass regularly and speak warmly about their experiences and understanding of the liturgy. Pupils have regular high quality spiritual experiences through celebration assemblies, pupil led acts of worship and special celebrations in church. Prayer is central to the pupils lives during their time at school. Pupils enjoy opportunities to plan their own prayers following the appropriate structure. This is gradually built upon as the pupils move through the school. Staff are highly skilled and knowledgeable in creating prayer opportunities for pupils. Scripture is used well, and readings are chosen in relation to the liturgical season. Staff set a positive example for pupils in prayer, both as leaders and participants. Music is used to enhance reverence and children were observed singing, adding vibrancy to their experience. Staff use their own musical talents to enhance worship by playing

instruments to accompany children. The use of music along with artwork, creative displays and focus areas provide engaging acts of prayer and liturgy. The school have plans to develop the space for worship. They plan to use areas other than classrooms both indoor and outdoor.

Leaders have an in-depth knowledge and understanding of the liturgical year and ensure that the school marks events in the Church's cycle of seasons and feasts. Prayer is prepared in partnership with the parish priest and parish family resulting in opportunities for worship that is appropriate to pupils ages and experiences. This enables all pupils to fully participate in a variety of ways. One key occasion for all is the welcome assembly for all new members to the school community. Staff and pupils speak very highly about this important service to ensure all are welcome. Leaders and governors ensure that staff receive high quality training to deliver prayer and liturgy, which results in high levels of confidence and skill among staff. Senior leaders monitor the school's provision of prayer in line with their monitoring cycle, which leads to well planned improvements. Leaders and governors ensure that prayer and liturgy is well resourced. They have recently invested in resources that have ensured high quality experiences for the whole school community.



## Information about the school

Full name of school	St Benedict's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	135085
Full postal address of the school	Copy Lane, Netherton, Bootle, L30 7PG
School phone number	0151 526 6423
Name of head teacher or principal	Mr Michael Phillips
Chair of governing board	Mrs Kathy Sullivan
School Website	<a href="https://www.stbenedictsprimary.co.uk">https://www.stbenedictsprimary.co.uk</a>
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	n/a
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age-range of pupils	3 to 11
Trustees	Archdiocese of Liverpool
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	October 2015
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

## The inspection team

Jude Ryan	Lead inspector
Sarah Jane Carroll	Team inspector

## Key to grade judgements

Grade	England	Wales
<b>1</b>	Outstanding	Excellent
<b>2</b>	Good	Good
<b>3</b>	Requires improvement	Adequate and requires improvement
<b>4</b>	Inadequate	Unsatisfactory and in need of urgent improvement