



Holy Family Catholic Primary School

URN: 104915

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Archbishop of Liverpool

26–27 November 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

Religious Education (p.5)

The quality of curriculum religious education

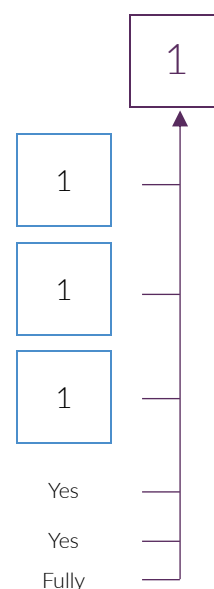
Collective worship (p.7)

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

The school is fully compliant with the general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishops' Conference

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

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



Compliance statement

- 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 Archbishop of Liverpool.
- The school has responded fully to all areas identified for improvement in the last inspection.

What the school does well

- Holy Family's inclusive Catholic life and mission is a major strength, fostering a community where every pupil feels loved, valued, and supported, enabling all to flourish.
- Pupils care for our common home with creativity and purpose, growing a deep responsibility for God's creation through meaningful teaching, thoughtful worship, and daily practice.
- Parental engagement is a real strength of the school, where families are warmly welcomed and actively involved, enriching pupils' spiritual and moral development and strengthening the whole school community.
- The school's indoor and outdoor spaces reflect its Catholic character, with inspiring displays and prayer areas that nurture reflection, spiritual growth, and a strong sense of belonging.
- Pupils take pride in religious education at Holy Family, producing consistently well-presented work that reflects their engagement, enjoyment, and commitment to deepening their faith.

What the school needs to improve

- In religious education increase the level of challenge and higher-order questioning to deepen learning and maximise progress, particularly for the most able pupils.
- Strengthen pupil voice by enabling them to evaluate their work and identify steps to improve learning and engagement.
- In prayer and liturgy provide clearly defined leadership roles for pupils that enable them to understand their responsibilities and the impact they have on the prayer and liturgical life of 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

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



Holy Family has a strong and distinctive Catholic ethos, clearly expressed through its mission statement, *'Living, loving, learning as followers of Jesus Christ.'* This ethos is embedded throughout the school's culture, curriculum and wider provision. For example, pupils are taught to care for our common home, and the outdoor environment is used imaginatively to enhance learning and deepen pupils lived experience of faith. Because the mission statement is known, understood and genuinely owned by the pupils, they confidently embrace and model the Catholic identity of the school. They play an active and valued role in the Catholic life and mission through a range of responsibilities, including Mini Vinnies, school council, eco council and buddy roles, collectively recognised as school ambassadors. Pupils speak proudly of their environment, which they describe as 'God's gift,' and recognise their responsibility to care for and protect it. Pupils demonstrate a developing understanding of Catholic social teaching and show initiative in applying its principles to real-life situations within the school, the local community and the wider world. Their commitment to caring for others and reducing their carbon footprint has contributed to the school's achievement of the *Live Simply* Award.

Staff at Holy Family are fully committed to the mission statement and consistently live it out in their daily practice. The whole community recognises that Christ is at the centre of the school, and families speak highly of the many ways they are welcomed and involved. Holy Family is a warm, nurturing community where Gospel values permeate everything, creating a special and safe environment in which pupils thrive. One pupil commented that 'Everyone at Holy Family is loved equally,' reflecting the school's deeply embedded culture of inclusivity. Staff celebrate the uniqueness of every pupil and model the belief that each person is made in the image and likeness of God. They consistently go above and beyond to ensure the needs of all pupils are met, including those with additional learning needs, pupils for whom English is an additional language and those with physical disabilities. Pastoral care is a significant strength of the school. Support, guidance and compassion are offered readily to pupils and their families where needs are identified. Displays throughout the school are thoughtfully presented and reflect the

inclusive nature of the community, with every pupil contributing to shared artwork. Relationships, sex and health education provision is a strength that is fully compliant with Archdiocesan expectations.

Leaders at all levels provide clear vision, strong direction and exemplary support, enabling the Catholic ethos to permeate every aspect of school life. Through effective communication with the community, the use of social media, the school website and regular engagement with the diocese, leaders actively place the school at the service of others. The close partnership with the Friends of Holy Family contributes significantly to fundraising efforts. These have enhanced the nature trail, which serves not only as a learning resource but also as a valued outdoor prayer space. Strong links between the school and parish continue to enrich the school's Catholic identity. The parish priest is widely respected and warmly regarded by pupils, staff and families, his regular involvement strengthening the spiritual life of the community. The school has developed strong links with the chaplain from the local high school. This has enhanced the provision for Catholic life. Governance also plays a significant role in sustaining and developing the Catholic mission. They are actively involved in school life and are proud to, 'see how the pupils live out the Gospel.' The governors' engagement in initiatives promotes faith in action through strong links with CAFOD and other charities such as Love my Community, Compassion Acts and the Trussell Trust.

Religious Education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious Education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

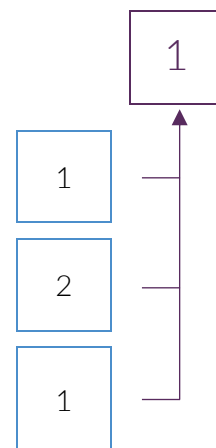
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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' development in religious education at Holy Family is clearly evidenced through the high quality of work in their books and through articulate pupil voice. Pupils speak positively about their learning in religious education and recognise the impact it has on their lives and the way they choose to live. When asked how religious education influences the life of the school, one pupil commented that 'God's love is all around us,' reflecting the depth of their understanding. Pupils engage confidently in discussions and activities that promote progression in knowledge, skills and understanding, supporting their spiritual and moral development. Their knowledge of scripture stories and parables is particularly strong; pupils enthusiastically recall their favourites and can explain their significance. Work in books is presented with care and pride, demonstrating the value pupils place on the subject. In Early Years, children receive an excellent start to their religious education journey. They listen attentively, respond well to whole class teaching and already show emerging religious literacy, using accurate vocabulary when describing events such as Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem. Pupils can articulate what they have done well, what they need to do to improve and know they can ask for help when needed.

Teachers at Holy Family demonstrate a strong commitment to maintaining high expectations in religious education. This is clearly reflected in the beautifully presented work found in pupils' books, floor books and displays, all of which highlight the value placed on the subject. Lessons are planned in accordance with the Religious Education Directory and are often creative and engaging, particularly in the Early Years, where imaginative approaches support children's early religious understanding. High-quality resources are used effectively to maintain pupils' focus and promote active engagement. Teachers make regular use of retrieval questions to assess whether pupils are knowing more and remembering more. While this supports progress well, further opportunities for higher-order questioning would deepen learning and maximise progress for all pupils, especially the most able. Prior learning is typically revisited at the start of lessons, helping pupils to build secure foundations before moving on to new concepts. Their

achievements are celebrated in weekly assemblies, contributing to high levels of motivation. Teachers possess good subject knowledge and lessons are delivered at an effective pace. Inclusive practice is a notable strength, with pupils who have additional needs receiving well-tailored support. Through learning linked to the natural world, CAFOD and the Jubilee Year of Hope, pupils continue to develop spiritually and morally.

The planned curriculum at Holy Family fully meets the expectations for religious education, ensuring that it remains the core of the core subjects. This is evident in the high-quality resources, careful timetabling, and ongoing professional development provided for staff. The subject leader for religious education is knowledgeable and passionate, articulating her vision with enthusiasm. She works closely with the senior leadership team to ensure that the curriculum is delivered effectively across both key stages, supporting staff to teach with confidence through targeted continued professional development. Where appropriate, homework is used to consolidate and enhance learning. Innovative enrichment opportunities, such as 'forest schools' and the use of the nature trail, significantly enhance pupils' religious education experiences. These activities support pupils' social, physical, spiritual and moral development while promoting engagement and enjoyment. Leaders and governors have a thorough understanding of the school, accurately identifying strengths and areas for development, ensuring self-evaluation is robust and well-informed. The link governor for religious education is actively involved in school life, demonstrates a clear understanding of the curriculum and its expectations, and celebrates the impact of religious education, noting how it is 'changing the way children think.' These measures ensure that religious education at Holy Family is engaging and central to the life and mission of the school.

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

1

Leadership

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

1

1

Pupils at Holy Family participate in prayer and liturgy with reverence, respect and attentiveness. They demonstrate a secure understanding of the central place of prayer in the life of the school and can articulate why particular prayers are used at key moments in the day, liturgical seasons and significant celebrations. Pupils confidently join in the recitation of traditional prayers and contribute positively when invited to offer spontaneous prayer. During worship, they remain engaged, expressing their participation through both their spoken responses and their thoughtful actions. Pupils show enthusiasm for active involvement in prayer and liturgy. This is strengthened by the regular 'stay and pray' sessions, which foster strong home and school links and are warmly welcomed by the pupils. School ambassadors play an important role in supporting the planning and leading of prayer and liturgy. However, some responsibilities would benefit from further clarification to help pupils understand the purpose of their role and the impact they can have on worship. Pupils aspire to become ambassadors and speak about opportunities such as visiting the cathedral, which one pupil described as a 'pilgrimage'. They recognise the many forms and settings of prayer, including hymn singing and quiet reflection in the school's nature trail, a space they cherish and identify as a 'gift from God'.

Prayer and liturgy is embedded in the daily and weekly life of the school, reflecting its central importance within the community. There is a well-planned, unified approach to prayer and scripture which ensures that all pupils engage with the same weekly readings, promoting a shared understanding of the Gospel message. Scripture passages are well chosen, and staff demonstrate skill and confidence in explaining their meaning, enabling pupils to develop a deeper appreciation of the word of God. Staff are role models of faith who willingly offer their own prayers when invited, which in turn inspires pupils to share thoughtful spontaneous prayers. The school provides a range of opportunities for individual and communal prayer. Creative and inviting prayer spaces are situated throughout the school, encouraging pupils to

pause, reflect and pray. The regular 'stay and pray' sessions are highly valued by pupils and parents, offering precious time to come together in a meaningful, reverent and reflective way. Parents describe these moments as 'the most beautiful prayer session' and speak of how they 'cherish the experience to worship and pray with our children.' Strong, positive links with the parish further enrich the prayer life of the school community.

Themes for prayer, liturgy and worship are meticulously planned and closely aligned with the liturgical year, demonstrating the school's commitment to the development and quality of worship. The school benefits from its strong relationship with the parish priest, who is a regular and highly valued presence. His involvement strengthens the sense of community and provides staff, pupils and families with meaningful opportunities to deepen their faith. The liturgical year is celebrated through a rich and varied programme, ensuring that key seasons, feast days and holy days are marked with appropriate reverence and significance. Pupils are given frequent opportunities to attend Mass both in church and in school, enabling them to engage fully in prayer, participation and reflection. Leaders place significant importance on high-quality professional development and its impact on worship. The religious education leader and senior leadership team have guided staff skilfully through the transition to celebration of the word, enabling pupils to become increasingly confident with Mass responses and familiar with different forms of prayer. Governors act as dedicated guardians of the faith, ensuring that policy is consistently enacted in practice. The headteacher and deputy provide strong, inspiring leadership of worship, underpinned by a clear and coherent vision that is widely respected across the school community.

Information about the school

Full name of school	Holy Family Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	104915
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	3433336
Full postal address of the school	Norwood Crescent, Southport, Merseyside, PR9 7DU
School phone number	01704213084
Executive headteacher	Not applicable
Headteacher	Marie Hilton
Chair of governors	Craig Houghton
School Website	http://www.holyfamilyprimary.com
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Not applicable
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Voluntary Aided School
Admissions policy	Non-selective
Age-range of pupils	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	February 2019
Previous denominational inspection grade	1

The inspection team

Lyn Rawlinson
Karl Landrum

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