



Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection report for St Luke's Primary Academy Harlow

URN: 139577

Carried out on behalf of the Right Rev. Bishop Alan, Bishop of Brentwood on:

Date: 29-30 June 2023

| | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|---|
| 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 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

- St Luke's is a welcoming, joyful and inclusive school which bears authentic Catholic witness to the teachings of the Gospel and the way that this is lived out in daily life.
- All members of the school community are committed to the mission and values of the school, which are understood and embraced, and which underpin both the curriculum and the daily life of the school.
- Pupils' behaviour in and around school is exemplary and they show an appreciation of all that school has to offer. They are proud of their school.
- Pupils' religious literacy is well developed and this enables them to engage fully and thoughtfully in lessons.

- Engagement with parents is strong and the school works well in partnership with them to provide nurture and support for all its pupils. Parents value what the school does for their children.

What the school needs to improve:

- Increase opportunities for pupil self-assessment in religious education, so that all pupils know what they need to improve in their learning and can articulate how they have made progress.
- Enable pupils to become more involved in planning and leading collective worship, appropriate to age and ability, so that they engage actively in class prayer and liturgy and can evaluate the quality of what they have planned.
- Create innovative opportunities for personal prayer growth by offering a range of ways to pray that are part of the Catholic tradition, including scripture, moments of silence and reflection.

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



All members of the school community are committed to the school's mission which is understood by all. One parent wrote that St Luke's is 'a love filled school-staff could do no more- I am not a Catholic but really love what they do for my children'. The vibrant and celebratory school environment, with high quality displays, focal points and carefully designed architectural features, reflects the school's celebration of and commitment to excellence. Displays, photographs and samples of pupils' work in classrooms and around the school's communal areas encourage pupils to do their best; these celebrate and proudly acknowledge the very wide range of pupils' achievements. Responsibilities such as Mini Vinnies, Cafod Club and Year 6 Caritas in Action emphasise pupils' key roles as expressed through the Caritas Curriculum. Displays about happiness, for example 'God wants everyone to be happy', were seen around the school, as were those celebrating uniqueness and personal dignity. The ten values of the school, uniquely represented by a tree in every classroom and in the main entrance, help remind everyone of the school's mission. These values are made tangible through assemblies, awards, and everyday discussions in class.

The strong sense of community and welcome at St Luke's is valued by parents and staff. Excellent links with the parish and the highly-valued, regular involvement of the parish priest enhance and strengthen the school's unique Catholic character. Parents and staff spoke of the school's 'family feel' and the school's commitment to support all pupils. During the inspection the CEO and Head of School met with a large group of new parents as part of the preparation for September and spoke passionately about the school's Catholic identity. Relationships at the school are excellent and there is a calm and supportive climate where all are cherished and loved. A parent wrote about how all staff at the school know all the children well. Care for

pupils whose circumstances have made them vulnerable, and those with additional needs, is given high priority at St Luke's. There is a clear commitment to human flourishing and well-being. This is demonstrated through excellent support for pupils with special education needs, pastoral care systems such as support for bereavement, and the carefully planned and delivered programme for personal, social and health education. In the parents' survey, one parent wrote, 'I am so grateful for the way the school delivers inclusive values'.

School leaders are inspirational witnesses to the Gospel and to Catholic Social Teaching, and they are held in high regard by parents and staff. Authentic Catholic leadership, based on the example of Jesus and the teachings of the Gospel, is expressed through daily actions and through policies and decisions taken at the school. A staff member wrote, 'There is a strong sense of welcome and family within this school where we all come together to live the word and ways of God. I believe that our Mission Statement says it all - we really do grow, learn and achieve together while having God at the centre of everything we do.' Leaders take the well-being and support for all staff seriously and prioritise actions that will enable all to be happy in the workplace and to be able to carry out their tasks effectively. Staff know that they are appreciated. Governors, most of whom are relatively new, bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to their role. They work closely with school leaders, visit regularly and they make a significant contribution to the Catholic life and mission of the school. They are ambitious for the school and keep the Catholic life and mission of the school under review through regular surveys and interactions with staff, pupils, and parents.

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.....

1



Pupils enjoy religious education lessons and pupils' behaviour in lessons is exemplary. Pupils show interest and enthusiasm for their learning. Pupils can recall prior learning and use this to make links with new concepts. They show good understanding of key religious vocabulary and of scripture. Pupils can explain how their learning requires them to live out their understanding of faith commitment in their daily lives. It is evident that pupils understand how the Pope's message of looking after our common home, links with their reading of scripture and what they have learned in their lessons. Pupils can explain how the lives of the saints help Christians to act. They know about their patron saint, their class saints and the saints who are named for each of the six houses. Pupils show respect for the views and beliefs of others and the diversity in the school population is celebrated. Progress in religious education is good and progress for pupils with additional needs and those new to the school is particularly rapid. Pupils are developing skills in assessing their knowledge and understanding against the success criteria for lessons; they currently rely on the teacher's initial assessment of learning and how they might improve.

There is a cohesive and consistent approach to teaching and learning in the school, underpinned by excellent staff development, which ensures that the teaching of religious education is effective. This is because teachers' subject knowledge is strong. There are clear expectations of how lessons should be delivered to ensure pupils build on prior learning, have opportunities to reflect and are challenged through skilful and targeted questioning. Teachers are committed to delivering high-quality lessons. Teaching is never less than good and where it is outstanding, teachers provide opportunities for challenge through probing questioning and creative approaches. For example, in an upper Key Stage 2 class, pupils were asked to think about justice and humility and consider how the words of the prophet Micah challenge

Christians to strive for fairness and equity. Pupils can draw upon learning in other subject areas to consider inequalities in access to the world's resources. There is a clear understanding of the principles of Catholic Social Teaching; for example, in a Key Stage 1 class, where pupils focused on God's precious world, they were encouraged to discuss and be respectful of differing points of views. Teachers recognise the contribution that religious education makes to the moral and spiritual development of pupils, and religious education is held in high regard.

Leaders of the school, including governors, are very knowledgeable and they are clear about the expectations in the religious education curriculum. They are committed to securing high quality professional development for all staff to ensure secure subject knowledge and effective teaching. They monitor teaching and learning robustly and use professional feedback to staff to guarantee ongoing development. New staff report that they are supported and encouraged. Staff are proud to work at the school. One member of staff wrote, 'I am incredibly proud to be a teacher at this school, and as a Catholic even prouder to be able to share my faith, whilst learning about others, with the most wonderful little minds'. Assessment processes are well developed and the subject lead for religious education and Head of School make full use of the excellent professional relationship with other schools in the Trust to evaluate and moderate standards. Religious education books show a range of activities offered to learners and there is a consistency across all books which make the intended learning clear to pupils. Success criteria are set out to aid self-assessment. Standards shown in books are broadly average, though pupils' religious literacy and responses shown in lessons reflects deeper understanding and knowledge.

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

1



Collective worship and prayer are central to the life of St Luke's and valued by all members of the community. Pupils show reverence and commitment to worship and they actively engage in the opportunities for prayer and reflection as part of their religious education lessons and class collective worship. In the nursery class, the very youngest children were encouraged to joyfully thank God in song for our wonderful world. The personal prayer books in each classroom enable pupils to express their own prayer intentions. These are displayed on the prayer focal areas which are in every class. Pupils know the prayers of the Church and the school prayers which are said in class at key points in the day. Pupils recognise and understand the Church's year and can explain the important feasts and celebrations, including the Feast of Our Lady of Fatima. They know about the month of Mary and the Rosary. During the inspection the whole school gathered for a beautiful Mass to celebrate the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul. Pupils showed deep reverence, responded confidently during Mass and hymns were sung with joy and enthusiasm.

Prayer and worship are well planned at St Luke's and reflect the liturgical year. There is a daily pattern of prayer with which all pupils engage and quiet reflection is a part of every religious education lesson. The school leadership ensures that opportunities to celebrate the Eucharist and receive the sacraments during Advent and Lent are prioritised. The school is well supported by the devoted involvement of the popular parish priest. Parents are always welcomed to attend prayer services and a number also attend class and school Masses along with parishioners. High-quality resources enable the school to offer rich prayer experiences. Prayer focal areas in each class are well cared for. Teachers enable pupils to take increasing responsibility for planning class worship and pupils show a firm understanding of the structure of the liturgy, setting out their plans in a class liturgy planning book. The beautiful prayer

garden is valued by pupils and staff and is in regular use. Stations of the Cross in the playground are used at key times during the school year. The pupils' chaplaincy group is guided to take a leading role in promoting prayer across the classes and help pupils to deepen their understanding of the school's values.

Leaders model prayer and worship with passion. The whole school celebration assembly at the end of the week drew together the Gospel reading from Monday's assembly and the events and achievements of pupils during the week. The Head of School led pupils in prayer to acknowledge and praise all that had been achieved and to set these in the context of God's love for everyone and the school's mission. All staff are committed to including prayer in their lessons and classrooms and are supported through well-planned professional development opportunities. The accessible policy and guidelines on collective worship and prayer assist teachers in their planning of worship. School leaders recognise that this is an ongoing area for development. Governors attend collective worship when they can and contribute to the discussions to evaluate the impact of this on pupils' spiritual development and well-being.

Information about the school

| | |
|--|---|
| Full name of school | St Luke's Primary Academy |
| School unique reference number (URN) | 139577 |
| Full postal address of the school | Pyenest Road, Harlow. CM19 4LU |
| School phone number | 01279 423499 |
| Name of head teacher or principal | Mrs Anne Marie Kendal |
| Chair of governing board | Mr Herve Rolland |
| School Website | https://www.st-lukesrc.essex.sch.uk/ |
| Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable) | Our Lady of Fatima CMAT |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Academy |
| Age-range of pupils | 3-11 |
| Trustees | Diocese of Brentwood |
| Gender of pupils | mixed |
| Date of last denominational inspection | 2017 |
| Previous denominational inspection grade | Good |

The inspection team

Angela O'Hara

Lead inspector

Bernadette Matthews

Team inspector

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 |