



Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection report for  
Our Lady's RC Primary School, Aspull, Wigan

URN:

Carried out on behalf of the **Right Rev. Bishop of Salford** on:14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> December 2023

Date:

Overall effectiveness The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school.....	1
Catholic life and mission (p.2) 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.4) The quality of curriculum religious education.....	1
Collective worship (p.6) 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	Yes
The school is fully compliant with all requirements of the diocesan bishop	Yes
The school has responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection	Fully

## Summary of key findings

### What the school does well

Leaders have successfully developed highly successful collaborative relationships with other local schools and churches.

Through the mission statement the school community bears witness to its Catholic life with Christ at the heart of the school.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. The children respond well to high expectations and are happy, confident engaged learners.

The school is a warm, nurturing and welcoming community where all are cared for and valued.

### What the school needs to improve:

Prepare for the new *Religious Education Directory* – "To know you more clearly".

To fully embed the new guidance for prayer and liturgy – " To love you more dearly".

## 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

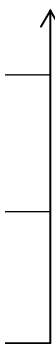
The quality of provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school .....

1

### Leadership

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

1



The pupils’ who attend Our Lady’s, Aspull fully embrace and live out the mission of the school, “Learning and loving together, we grow with Jesus. They recognise and rejoice in the distinctive Catholic identity of the school. They know they are always valued and they show respect and care for themselves and others. Children are highly knowledgeable about Catholic social teaching and speak with passion and commitment about the need to care for others. Furthermore, older pupils understand and confidently articulate the relevant scripture that inspires and informs this care for those less fortunate. Pupils love to participate in “The Big Sleep Out” to raise money for the homeless and a vast array of other practical initiatives. Pupils deeply value a variety of leadership roles, but especially the opportunity to be pupil chaplains whose varied work is deeply embedded in the life of the school.

The mission statement is known, lived and witnessed throughout Our Lady’s school community. All stakeholders display great loyalty and support for the Catholic life of the school. They fully embrace its core values and mission. Christ is at the heart of this community and this is reflected in the warmth of welcome all visitors receive. The head teacher has been tireless and highly effective in bringing about significant improvements to the physical fabric of the building. The school environment fully expresses the school’s distinctive Catholic character. For example, above each classroom door a school value is displayed and these are then linked by pupils with an appropriate piece of sacred scripture. Staff at all levels understand and deeply value the opportunity to act as role models for the children. School leaders have developed a comprehensive relationships, sex and health education programme that is firmly rooted in the teachings of the Church and truly celebrates a holistic vision of the human person.

Inspection report:

Date:

---

The head teacher leads with authenticity alongside a deeply devoted senior leadership team and a supportive and highly knowledgeable, dedicated governing body. Together they have reviewed the mission statement to ensure that it reflects the distinctive nature of the school. Leaders are outward-facing and they have been instrumental in forming highly productive collaborations between local schools. The parish priest and lay chaplain have established successful ecumenical partnerships with other local churches. Parishioners are welcomed into school and a very strong and long-established partnership exists. For example, many children carry out roles during Mass acting as altar servers and readers and also support a huge range of parish activities. Parents are full of praise for the school and are fully recognised as the first educators of their children. Leaders, including governors are highly supportive of diocesan policies and the Bishop's vision for Catholic education. Leaders care for the individual human dignity of each person who works in the school. Relationships are exemplary and staff feel highly valued and supported.

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade:.....	1
<b>Pupil outcomes</b> How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education.....	1
<b>Provision</b> The quality of teaching, learning, and assessment in religious education.....	1
<b>Leadership</b> How well leaders and governors promote, monitor, and evaluate the provision for religious education.....	1

Pupils excel in religious education lessons because teachers plan highly engaging and creative learning activities that build on prior learning. Pupils accumulate knowledge and understanding over time that fully meets the requirements of the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*. Pupils are highly articulate when discussing their learning and recall much significant content. In lessons seen those pupils with special educational needs were expertly supported to take a full part in learning. Teacher questioning probed children’s understanding and quickly identified any misconceptions so these can be addressed. Children are religiously literate because teachers have thought through how to sequentially introduce relevant religious vocabulary. In one lesson for older pupils, pupils worked collaboratively to annotate a famous religious painting, drawing upon prior learning to help them more fully comprehend many aspects of the artwork. This was impressive. The work in religious education books and in religious education floor books is of a consistently high standard and comparable to that seen in other core subjects. Teachers use assessment intelligently to both track pupil progress and also to feedback to children their next steps in learning.

Teachers demonstrate excellent subject knowledge, appropriate to the phase in which they are teaching. Staff plan and deliver highly creative religious education lessons that stimulate and engage. Teachers have appropriately high expectations and children respond well to these. A wide variety of learning opportunities are woven into lessons – artwork, collaborative discussion and debate, dance and music. All pupils are on task in religious education lessons and behaviour for learning across the school is outstanding. Questioning is used skilfully as teachers take time and trouble to plan these out prior to the lesson, including more demanding and searching questions for higher attainers. The “big questions” are displayed in every classroom, allowing pupils more opportunities to reflect on the meaning of religious education in their own lives. Work is marked according to the school’s stated policy. New teachers and those from a non- Catholic background

Inspection report:

Date:

---

demonstrate excellence in teaching because their professional development has been prioritised. Support staff are deployed effectively to ensure children at all attainment levels are learning well.

Leaders, including governors have ensured that curriculum religious education is “the core of the core” and comparable to other subjects in terms of staff development, resourcing, staffing and timetabling. The religious education subject leader has successfully resourced and supported all staff across all Key Stages to fully realise her highly ambitious vision for the religious education curriculum. The religious education curriculum is carefully sequenced to enable pupils to consolidate new learning that over time deepens and broadens pupils’ religious education experience. Leaders access high quality professional development via the diocese. Caritas work and work on the care of our common home are woven through the religious education curriculum and are a strength of the school.

## 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



Class collective worship is an established part of the school's timetable from Reception through to Year 6. Pupils fully participate and respond with great enthusiasm to experiences of prayer and liturgy by the school and their class teachers. Pupils have a thorough understanding of the liturgical year and confidently link this to a range of appropriate prayers. Over time children have come to a fuller understanding of the different ways of praying together as a class and whole school. Fully reflecting the Catholic tradition, children plan their own liturgies and are able to include well-chosen scripture, liturgical music, symbols, silence and meditative reflection. Prayer chaplains are enthusiastic in their role and are committed to providing opportunities for other pupils to grow spiritually. Older children can confidently self-evaluate liturgical sessions and recommend improvements where appropriate.

Prayer is central to the daily life of the school and there is clear evidence of how this is planned out through a school year. A policy for prayer and worship is in place. Sacred scripture reading is evident in all prayer and worship sessions. Music is often used to enhance these experiences, for example during the gathering times and for moments of quiet reflection. The changing themes used in prayer and worship reflect the liturgical calendar. All staff are highly committed and fully trained to support these sessions. Every classroom has a well-resourced, high status prayer table and many other quality resources throughout school enhance school worship. There are regular school masses with significant pupil participation and parents also attend. The relationship between school and parish continues to flourish.

Leaders, including governors fully understand the importance of prayer and liturgy in the spiritual development of pupils and staff. The school's annual liturgical calendar is carefully planned and includes partnerships with the parish and other local schools and churches. All holy days of obligation and feast days are celebrated. Leaders have thought through how children's participation

Inspection report:

Date:

---

will increase as their knowledge and skill set is systematically enhanced through meaningful, regular experience of prayer and liturgy. Leaders have prioritised the formation of staff at all levels and this means staff are well prepared and trained to support pupils participation in prayer and liturgy. Liturgies seen were varied in format, appropriately reverent and joyful opportunities to worship the Lord. Pupils were keen to participate and offered spontaneous prayers. Leaders monitor these collective worship sessions and a system of pupil/staff self-evaluation is in place.

## Information about the school

Full name of school	Our Lady's RC primary school, Aspull, Wigan
School unique reference number (URN)	106490
Full postal address of the school	Holly Road, Aspull, Wigan, Wn2 1RU
School phone number	01942832299
Name of head teacher or principal	Mr Chris Horridge
Chair of governing board	Mrs Claire Massingham
School Website	<a href="http://www.aspullourladys.wigan.sch.uk">www.aspullourladys.wigan.sch.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	Salford Diocese
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	2016
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

## The inspection team

David Deane	Lead inspector
Clare Campbell	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