

St Patrick's Catholic Primary School

URN: 116390

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Portsmouth

07 May 2026 – 08 May 2026

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 RE

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

2

1

2

2

Yes

Yes

Fully

What the school does well

- Pupils are exceptionally happy and proud to live out the school's mission statement which they know and understand thoroughly.
- The school provides the highest levels of pastoral care and welcome to all.
- The headteacher and senior leaders lead the whole community to effectively and compassionately live out its Catholic mission.
- There is very strong provision in religious education for pupils of differing needs and abilities.
- The Catholic ethos and mission of the school are strengthened by the well-designed areas created around the site for prayer and reflection.

What the school needs to improve

- Ensure that pupils can speak fluently and confidently about their learning in religious education and therefore ask incisive questions of themselves and adults.
- Ensure that tasks in religious education consistently allow pupils opportunities to demonstrate individuality and creativity.
- Provide a wider variety of prayer and worship experiences for the school community.

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

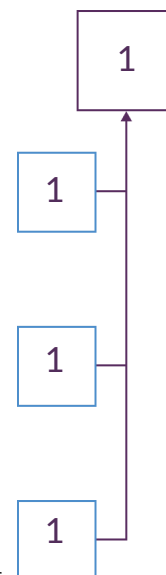
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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



All pupils at St Patrick's strive to 'Learn from Jesus, Love like Jesus and Live like Jesus'. They can clearly express an understanding that they are valued and cared for, and know that they are part of a faith-filled community, describing their school as compassionate and cherishing; consequently they are happy and confident and demonstrate excellent behaviour and attitudes. Pupils value the support and guidance given to them by all adults in the school, with one pupil stating that, 'the adults are genuinely interested in you to be a good person.' They speak with pride about their school's distinct Catholic identity, noting, 'our school is unique—we're always helping someone.' They can confidently link their actions to following the example of Jesus and the principles of Catholic social teaching, for example, explaining that by supporting charities such as Mary's Meals and the local foodbank they are demonstrating the preferential option for the poor. The stewardship team take great pride in looking after the school site, saying that 'God made the world for everyone' while the school council particularly relish the work they have initiated with Knellwood Care Home, including hosting a tea party for residents. To further enhance this strong practice, the school should provide wider opportunities for pupils to actively participate in and take more of a leading role in chaplaincy activities.

Staff wholeheartedly embrace the school's mission statement and readily use it to guide their actions and decisions each day. They are exemplary role models demonstrating a family-centred approach to everyone in their care. From the moment anyone steps over the threshold, they are warmly welcomed into the school family, with pupils proudly observing, 'you can come to this school with any religion.' Because staff, including senior leaders, know

their families so well, they are able to target the highest levels of pastoral support to those most in need, as well as having more general provisions available, such as the 'swapping shed' and emotional literacy support for pupils. A shared moral purpose ensures that inclusion is lived out practically, for example, through the play partners scheme which ensures that no child is left on their own. Staff say that pupils are given a clear moral grounding that 'carries on after they leave.' The environment itself is a faithful witness to the school's Catholic character, with carefully developed areas such as the prayer garden and the many prayer displays and spaces throughout the building.

Leaders and governors are deeply committed to the Church's mission in education and ensure that it underpins every aspect of school life. The headteacher is determined in her drive to ensure that the mission statement is a lived experience for all, and together with senior leaders they support and guide staff to keep Christ and children at the heart of the school. Staff feel valued and cared for saying that, 'St Patrick's is a strong community focused on the needs of the children with Christ at its centre' and staff new to the school are well supported with a programme of induction so that they very quickly 'feel at home.' Parents are highly supportive of the school and its mission, with one parent commenting that all staff were 'unwaveringly committed to the children and making school a wonderful experience for them.' The school has forged strong links with the Salesian Community who serve the local parishes and the priests are regular visitors to the school, celebrating Mass and supporting with spiritual formation. Governors are committed and visible in school and have in place a self evaluation schedule which includes visits, feedback from staff and pupils and a clear improvement plan but they should now focus on being more precise about the school's strengths and areas for improvement.

Religious education

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 key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

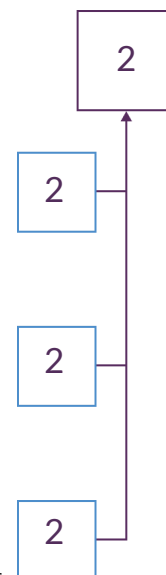
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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 make good progress in religious education and are developing secure skills and knowledge. They demonstrate positive attitudes to learning and in the best lessons there is a real excitement and enjoyment in the classroom as observed, for example, in a Year 5 lesson where pupils were working in groups to write a modern-day version of the Exultet. Pupils are able to work well independently as seen, for instance, in a Year 4 lesson where pupils were researching about a person to inspire them to be a witness to Christ. Although most pupil's work is generally well presented, leaders should ensure this is consistent across all classes. There was clear evidence of challenging tasks in some classes, for example, in Year 6 work on the Garden of Gethsemane. Pupils are able to speak about their learning with growing confidence: a Year 1 pupil told inspectors that Cafod raises money for the poor and vulnerable and helps us to be like God'. The school should now ensure that pupils can do this fluently and therefore begin to ask incisive questions of themselves and adults.

Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and use it to plan lessons that meet the needs of different groups. They adapt resources using, for example, widgets, pictures and scaffolded tasks and work alongside effective teaching assistants to support and motivate pupils with differing needs. In Early Years, teachers provide a range of stimulating activities to develop children's understanding and inspectors saw children drawing Alleluia pictures, chalking words on the floor and using small world figures for Godly play while all the time engaging in religious discussions with an adult. A particular strength in some classes is the use of questioning to gauge pupil understanding and adapt teaching in real-time as seen, for

example, in a Year 6 lesson where precise questioning was used to address misconceptions and cement complex liturgical vocabulary about the funeral liturgy. However, in some classes questioning does not allow pupils to deepen their thinking and so pupils are not consistently challenged to think more deeply or apply their knowledge in various ways. Teachers provide regular feedback to pupils who say that the 'extra question and success criteria helps us to improve our learning.' There is evidence of a variety of tasks for pupils to express their understanding, such as artwork and drama as well as worksheets and extended writing: to further improve outcomes, the school should now develop tasks that consistently allow pupils opportunities to demonstrate their individuality and creativity.

Leaders and governors are highly committed to maintaining the subject's status as a core area and ensure that the religious education curriculum satisfies all diocesan requirements. The senior leadership team have a clear vision for the subject and have worked hard to improve standards in teaching and learning. They have implemented an effective monitoring cycle involving book looks, lesson observations and learning walks which lead to specific and individual feedback to teachers. An impact which followed from this was the recent introduction of success criteria for pupils across the school. Support for teachers takes the form of coaching, staff meetings and support with planning and leaders have worked with the other Catholic school in the federation on this. This has led to improvements in teaching throughout the school. Governors know the information they are provided about religious education is accurate because they visit the school regularly, taking part in learning walks and talking to pupils and staff. They ensure that religious education is always a priority on the school improvement plan and therefore discussed at all governing body meetings.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

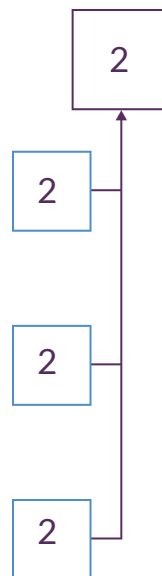
How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

Provision

The quality of collective worship provided by the school

Leadership

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



Pupils respond well to the experiences of prayer and liturgy provided by the school. In all acts of worship, they participate appropriately by reflecting in silence, joining in prayers and singing and maintaining a calm and prayerful atmosphere. They work well with each other and staff to prepare and lead worship appropriate to their age: younger children for example lighting a candle and setting up a prayer focus while in Key Stage 2, pupils routinely prepare and lead class worship. Pupils have a good understanding of the liturgical year, knowing for example the correct liturgical colours for each season and are beginning to recognise how different forms of prayer link to the Church's traditions, such as the rosary in May and October, and stations of the cross in Lent. Pupils know when and where they can pray, with designated spaces such as class prayer areas and the school's prayer garden providing opportunities for quiet reflection. Some pupils are involved in simple evaluations of prayer for instance asking for more music and song : the school should now enable pupils to be more regularly involved in evaluating the quality of the prayer and liturgy, using their reflections to directly drive future changes and actions.

Prayer and liturgy are central to the life of the school. Clear routines are in place to signify the importance of this time for pupils, such as lighting a candle or leaving and re-entering the room as a sign that class worship is beginning. Great care is taken to ensure a reflective environment and this includes setting up beautiful prayer focuses, having a darkened room and playing appropriate music, as seen for example in a Year 1 celebration of the word. Scripture is chosen carefully to be relevant to the session and pupils' lives and there is always a mission linked to the Gospel, for example, 'let your light shine' or 'go and bear fruit that will

last'. Senior leaders and relevant staff are models of good practice, for example the headteacher modelling celebration of the word to staff and other staff modelling key parts of class worship to pupils. The school makes imaginative use of available spaces to provide well-cared-for prayer environments. This includes a dedicated prayer garden constructed with the help of parents, pupils, and staff, alongside a creative fireplace prayer space initiated by pupils which they report using frequently for personal reflection. Leaders should now widen the worship experiences on offer to pupils, parents and staff.

Leaders and governors have developed clear and practical policies for prayer and liturgy which support staff to provide a meaningful approach to worship throughout the school. Together with the parish priest, they have planned the school calendar to celebrate key points of the Church's year, for example, Mass for Ascension Day, Epiphany and St Patrick's Day as well as Catholic traditions such as crowning of Mary and Stations of the Cross which they celebrate outside. Leaders provide effective professional development for staff, for example, staff meetings about upcoming liturgical seasons, modelling and coaching and providing resources to help with planning. They have also worked well to include families in the prayer life of the school with such innovations as the Travelling Nativity and regular faith newsletters. One parent commented that, 'we as a family have been routinely invited to Masses and prayer services which I think is an excellent way to foster a Catholic community.' Governors are actively involved in reviewing this provision: their formal monitoring visits are reported back to senior leadership and the full governing board to inform planned improvements. To further improve their self-evaluation, leaders and governors should now systematically identify the precise elements that are not yet outstanding so that they can implement highly targeted professional development.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Patrick's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	116390
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8503551
Full postal address of the school	Whitefriars, Avenue Road, Farnborough, GU14 7BW
School phone number	01252 542511
Headteacher or Head of School	Mrs Alison Tong
Chair of Governors	Mr Gerard Owens
School Website	www.st-patricks.hants.sch.uk
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Voluntary Aided School
Admissions policy	Non Selective
Age-range of pupils	2 - 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	15 January 2020
Previous denominational inspection grade	Good

The Inspection Team

Michael Lobo Lead

Tara Sharp

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