

# St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary & Nursery School

URN: 104649

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Archbishop of Liverpool

02–03 July 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

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

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

1

## Compliance statement

- The school meets the requirements for religious education laid down by the Bishops' Conference.
- The school is compliant with any additional requirements of the Archbishop of Liverpool.
- The school has fully responded to the areas for improvement identified in the last inspection.

## What the school does well

- St Cuthbert's is at the heart of the community that it serves, and is a school filled with hope, ambition, and love, where everyone is included, valued and nurtured, and families are well supported.
- The school's Catholic identity and mission are rooted in the charisms of St Cuthbert and lived out joyfully by every member of this school family through the motto: 'In Love with Christ: Be the Best I Can. Be Kind to One Another. Amen' and a strong focus on Gospel values.
- Pupils feel valued and know that their voice is heard, taking great pride in their school and taking advantage of every opportunity on offer. The school enables pupils to aspire to achieve their very best in all that they do.
- Structured opportunities from retrieval practice in religious education support pupils to demonstrate high levels of knowledge, skill and understanding, building on the strong foundations of prior learning.
- Prayer and liturgy is central to the daily life of St Cuthbert's and pupils participate actively and fully through reflection, in prayerful responses and joyful singing.

## What the school needs to improve

- Support pupils in consistently developing a secure and deeper understanding of religious vocabulary.
- Use questioning in religious education lessons that challenges pupils to further enrich their learning.
- Sustain a prayerful atmosphere throughout all stages of the celebration of the word by supporting staff to plan appropriate and reflective ways to 'respond' and 'go forth'.

## 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



St Cuthbert's is a school at the heart of its community filled with hope, ambition, and love. Its Catholic identity and mission are rooted in the charism of St Cuthbert and lived out through the motto: 'In Love with Christ: Be the Best I Can. Be Kind to One Another. Amen'. Pupils speak passionately about their love for the school and its staff, clearly understanding what makes their school special. They feel safe and valued as individuals each created uniquely by God. They state that all are welcome. Gospel values are the golden thread running through every aspect of school life, which guide pupils' actions, and are reflected in strong relationships and exemplary behaviour. Pupils are proud to support others through initiatives like the school's food pantry, uniform donations, and partnership with the Zarach, the pupils bed charity, as well as other local, national, and global charities. They recognise these actions as ways of following Jesus' example. The school continues to build on their achievement of the Live Simply award. The Eco Club members are stewards of creation, taking the responsibility of caring for the environment, which a Year 6 pupil linked to God's command for humanity in the Book of Genesis. Pupils embrace the wide range of opportunities on offer and religious education ambassadors play an important role in enriching and evaluating Catholic life.

The school's Catholic identity is tangible through the beautiful, calm and purposeful environment. The annual mission day provides an opportunity for the whole school community to review and reflect on the mission, which is currently linked to the jubilee year of hope. Staff are role models in their daily interactions and a governor noted, 'Staff surround the pupils and their families with love and compassion.' Parents value this commitment, recognising that staff go above and beyond in their support and communication, with one sharing, 'I really appreciate how the school integrates Catholic values into daily life. It's clear that faith is not just taught, but

lived out through prayer, acts of kindness, and a strong sense of community.' This sense of community at St Cuthbert's is a defining strength. The school embraces diversity, fostering an inclusive and respectful environment where every pupil feels valued, ably expressed by a Year 4 pupil when stating, 'It doesn't matter if people are different, everyone is beautiful in their own way.' Relationships and sex education is carefully planned and delivered through a Catholic lens, fulfilling archdiocesan and statutory requirements.

School leaders and governors are committed to the school's mission, ensuring a shared purpose and vision. Governors are actively involved in monitoring and evaluation, using a range of evidence to secure continued improvement. Leaders strengthen the school's Catholic life and mission through active engagement with opportunities offered by the archdiocese, including visits to the Metropolitan Cathedral, leadership development, and contributions to various projects. Pupils enjoy visits to church for Mass and welcome the parish priest into school with joy. Parents and parishioners are regularly invited to participate in the Catholic life of the school, and these opportunities are valued and enjoyed. Staff wellbeing is a priority for leaders, reflecting the school's caring and compassionate ethos. Staff speak positively about how membership of the school community positively impacts upon their faith. Professional development is embraced by staff who are supported to thrive, a factor which significantly contributes to the school's Catholic life. Leaders have embedded Catholic social teaching into religious education and prayer and liturgy, working with Cafod to introduce its principles, which are lived through the Gospel values and used to enrich the whole curriculum and life of the school.

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

### Religious education key judgement grade

#### Pupil outcomes

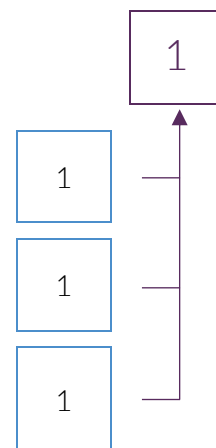
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

#### 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 enjoy religious education, as evidenced by their enthusiastic participation, thoughtful discussions, and high-quality work, which they are keen to share and explain. They are well engaged and eager to contribute, whether working independently or collaboratively in pairs or groups. High expectations across lessons help pupils build knowledge, understanding, and skills that foster confidence and independence. Structured opportunities to recall prior learning are embedded in lessons and this well-established practice consolidates knowledge and provides strong foundations for new learning. Pupils speak with confidence about their learning, for example a Nursery pupil excitedly recalled a visit from the parish priest, and in Reception a child recalled that St Paul travelled to different places to tell people about Jesus. They also make links to previous topics, for example Year 5 pupils referred to the topic of 'freedom and responsibility' when grappling with moral issues around stewardship and care for our common home. Pupils are introduced to a wide range of religious vocabulary, though more consistent opportunities to explore and deepen this vocabulary would enhance their ability to apply it accurately. Books and other evidence show clear progression, consistency, and high expectations. Pupils express their learning creatively through writing, video, audio, art, music, and drama, effectively using technology. Progress is evident both within lessons and over time, ensuring pupils achieve well in religious education.

Effective planning leads to high quality lessons which incorporate a range of resources, visits and visitors to support creative learning. Teachers and teaching assistants demonstrate strong subject knowledge and collaborate closely to deliver lessons. Learning is well-adapted to ensure all pupils make progress, including thorough use of progressive stem sentences and driver words that scaffold responses. Religious education is well-resourced, with golden boxes creating moments of awe and wonder that enhance learning. Purposeful reflection opportunities help

pupils connect learning to their lives and the wider world. For example, Year 2 pupils used scripture's teaching about kindness to understand what it means to be a good neighbour. These reflective opportunities are clearly linked to Gospel values and Catholic social teaching. Pupils receive regular feedback during lessons and in their books, helping them understand their progress and how to improve. Marking and assessment overviews enable staff to capture key achievements and note any adaptations needed so that future planning secures progress. In most classes, questioning is used precisely to scaffold and challenge learning. Greater consistency in questioning across all classes will further enhance pupil progress. Regular assessments are moderated internally and externally within the local cluster to ensure accuracy and consistency.

Leaders and governors at St Cuthbert's are deeply committed to giving religious education the highest priority as the core subject. The dedicated religious education lead, alongside the headteacher and senior leaders, provides a clear and inspiring vision for high-quality religious education. Staff feel well-supported, noting, 'We are hugely supported and guided by our religious education lead and senior leaders to ensure we are delivering to the highest of standards, which in turn allows our pupils to flourish.' Governors are actively involved, regularly visiting the school and maintaining a strong understanding of religious education provision. Staff benefit from quality professional development that is informed by rigorous monitoring and evaluation, with clear impact seen in classroom practice. The religious education lead identifies and shares strong practice, encouraging collaborative planning and peer learning through coaching and modelling. Leaders support staff in adapting learning to meet individual needs through scaffolds, adult support, and adapted tasks. In implementing the new *Religious Education Directory*, the lead works closely with staff to adapt model planning so that it meets the individual needs of pupils.

## 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

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

1

Pupils value the range of prayer and liturgy opportunities offered at St Cuthbert's, recognising that these are times to 'feel God's presence' and 'say thank you' for the gifts they have received. They benefit from prayer and liturgy which is joyous and reflective, and a parent has recognised this impact saying, 'My children are spiritually uplifted at school.' Pupils engage with reverence during times of reflection, and are confident when joining in with responses, symbolic actions and song. Younger pupils begin to develop their understanding of prayer routines and liturgical norms through making the sign of the cross, dressing the focus table with the appropriate liturgical colour, placing a candle and the Bible alongside other appropriate objects that reflect the theme. As pupils progress, they take greater ownership by prayerfully adding extra items to the focus table and explaining the relevance of each. They are supported by staff to join in with planning and leadership with older pupils confidently producing celebrations of the word with greater independence, making it personal and relevant to their everyday lives. Pupils are confident in citing specific examples of how, with one providing a personal commentary on the importance of resilience.

The daily pattern of prayer is central to life at St Cuthbert's and part of all gatherings for pupils, staff and governors, including monthly staff celebration of the word which supports their spiritual development. Pupils join in the regular celebration of Mass and participate in other styles of prayer such as Stations of the Cross. Well-chosen scripture is not only central to times of prayer and liturgy but is made real for the pupils through its presence around school. All staff lead prayer and liturgy, supported by the religious education lead and other senior leaders who provide a model of excellent practice. On some occasions, the prayerful atmosphere established is not sustained when 'go forth' messages involve a task or action, and when pupils are asked direct questions in response to scripture. The school has worked hard to make creative use of

spaces for prayer around school, including prayer windows and outdoor areas. Pupils are beginning to use these places for spontaneous prayer. The outdoor pods are used for 'little church' which provide experiences of prayer for smaller groups of pupils based on their needs. Religious education ambassadors play an active role in maintaining these prayer spaces and evaluating celebration of the word. Parents and parishioners are regularly invited to Masses, celebrations, assemblies and times for 'stay and pray' which are very much welcomed and appreciated.

School leaders and governors use monitoring to continually evaluate and improve provision and the planning of professional development to ensure that staff have the necessary skills and knowledge to lead high quality prayer and liturgy. The staff has access to excellent resources to support planning and preparation. Full use is made of training expertise within school and continued professional development provided by the archdiocese. In most classes staff have put their knowledge and understanding into practice effectively, and where there is inconsistency, leaders and staff are skilled in offering support. Leaders and governors have produced a clear and concise policy for prayer and liturgy which provides direction for planning, preparation and delivery. The content of the policy also ensures strategic guidance in enabling progressive participation and leadership by pupils. It includes a well-planned overview of themes related to Gospel values that offer pupils' foundations for the preparation of prayer and liturgy that is reflective of the liturgical year. These themes enable and encourage pupils to meaningfully celebrate holy days, feasts and memorials with a particular focus on St Cuthbert.



## Information about the school

Full name of school	St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary & Nursery School
School unique reference number (URN)	104649
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	3413551
Full postal address of the school	St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary & Nursery School, 30 Church Road, Liverpool, L13 2BA
School phone number	01512284137
Headteacher	Claire Bellis-Knox
Chair of Governors	Patrick Moloney
School Website	stcuthberts.school
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	N/A
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Voluntary Aided School
Admissions policy	N/A
Age-range of pupils	2-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	27 <sup>th</sup> November 2018
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

## The inspection team

Dominic Vernon  
Charlotte Hillier

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