

# Our Lady And St Oswald's Catholic Primary School

URN: 123553

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Shrewsbury

26–27 June 2024

## Summary of key findings

### 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

1

#### 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

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

N/A

## What the school does well

- There is a tangible sense of family and welcome at Our Lady and St Oswald's Catholic Primary School. Relationships at all levels are a strength of the school. Everyone feels happy, safe and valued.
- The recently reviewed mission statement is known, understood and lived out by all.
- Pastoral care for all is outstanding. The school lives up to its motto of 'the small school with a big heart'.
- The behaviour of pupils and their attitudes to learning in religious education lessons are exemplary.
- Pupils are reverent and respectful during times of prayer and liturgy.

## What the school needs to improve

- Ensure that opportunities for all pupils to plan, lead and evaluate prayer and liturgy are provided at an age appropriate level.
- Provide all staff with professional development opportunities for liturgical formation to enable pupils to engage with the rich prayer tradition of the Catholic faith.
- Support relevant staff with the planning, monitoring and evaluation of prayer and liturgy across 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**

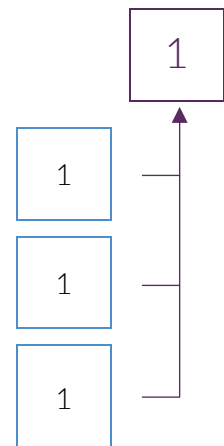
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

**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



Pupils at Our Lady and St Oswald's Catholic Primary School embrace the school's distinctive Catholic identity and having been fully involved in the recent review of the mission statement, have a clear understanding of it. When asked what 'Through Christ we inspire and flourish' means, one Year 6 pupil explains, 'If we follow the path of Jesus, we can influence people and watch them bloom.' Pupils have a strong sense of worth, are happy in school, and know that they are loved and valued in this welcoming community. Relationships are a strength of the school, and as a result, pupils show a deep respect for others. Their behaviour is exemplary. Pupils willingly take on a range of responsibilities and take these roles seriously. Often pupils have to apply for these roles, which include Eco Club, Chaplaincy Team, School Council, Wellbeing Ambassadors, Calm Team, Rotakids, Sports Leaders and Librarians. Pupils have many opportunities to represent the school in the local community such as Remembrance Day and the Civic Remembrance Service on the death of Queen Elizabeth. They told inspectors they are proud to do so. Their commitment to supporting a wide range of local and national charities is impressive. Pupils know they are listened to and can describe ways in which they have influenced decisions in the school, such as designing the graphics of the new mission statement, and planning the refurbishment of the pupil toilets. They know their voice is heard.

The commitment of staff to the Catholic life and mission of the school is exceptional. As one staff member writes, 'I feel Catholic life is at the heart of our lovely school. It is a pleasure to work here, and I value the ethos and community of our school.' There is a real culture and spirit of welcome and family in this school and this means that new pupils quickly become part of the school community. Staff are excellent role models for the pupils, consistently bearing witness to the school's mission. As one parent writes, 'I have seen how teaching staff are positive role

models and they are very clear on the type of behaviour that is expected, the values that the children should learn to become good citizens of an ever-changing world, with a readiness to learn.' Staff, at all levels, know pupils and their families extremely well, and so can provide support at the earliest opportunity. This means that pupils flourish in this school. As one pupil states, 'Teachers dedicate so much time constantly checking we're ok.' Significant efforts are made to ensure all are included and this means that pupils with needs can participate fully in the life of the school. The school's environment explicitly reflects its Catholic mission and identity.

Leaders and governors have an accurate view of the school, thanks to their planned and regular monitoring activities. The head teacher, ably supported by the acting deputy head teacher, leads the school with passion and commitment to make the school the best it can be. Governors are dedicated, perceptive and reflective, and knowing the school extremely well, can challenge and support leaders in equal measure. The parish and the school benefit from a mutually strong relationship which enhances the opportunities they both provide. One parent writes that there is, 'A great relationship with the Church and this is regularly reinforced throughout the year. All my children value the role of the Church in their daily school life.' Relationships, sex and health education is a strength of the school, meets diocesan and statutory requirements, and is fully rooted in the teachings of the Church.

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

### Religious education key judgement grade

#### Pupil outcomes

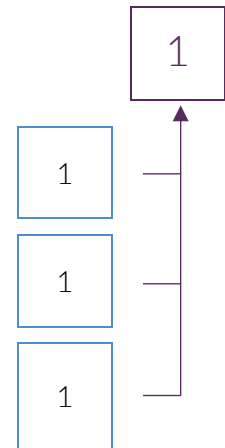
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

#### 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 say they enjoy their religious education lessons, and they are engaged and eager to contribute to the lessons and participate in the wide range of activities on offer. Pupils are developing a rich knowledge, they make consistently good progress over time, and as a result, outcomes in religious education are high. From the outset, pupils are building up a wide religious vocabulary. For instance, in the Reception and Year 1 class, pupils confidently name features of the church, such as tabernacle, pews, lectern, sanctuary lamp and altar. In lessons, pupils' behaviour is impeccable, and this means that lessons can move on at a fast pace. Pupils remain on task for extended periods whilst working on their own, as well as collaboratively in pairs and in small groups, showing great independence in their learning. Pupils speak with confidence about their learning, and ask insightful questions, demonstrating their interest and curiosity. Their written work shows they can personally reflect on what they have been taught and what it means to them. They answer Discern questions verbally and in writing showing deep reflection. Their books are very well presented and show that pupils take pride in their work.

Teachers display strong subject knowledge and ask open ended questions, and this deepens pupils' knowledge and understanding. They have high expectations of pupils, and pupils rise to the challenge. For instance, parents are invited into class to join the lessons, and as one parent says, 'I was impressed with the knowledge and understanding the children had of the Catholic Church, and there was a stimulating debate amongst the children who were confident in expressing their thoughts, and posing questions.' Planned, regular retrieval practice is having a very positive impact on pupils knowing and remembering more over time. This was evident in the Year 1 and Year 2 class, with a pupil, without prompting, recalling from a previous topic the three things that Jesus told his disciples to do before his ascension into heaven, 'To baptise people, follow his footsteps, and make more disciples.' Teachers question pupils skilfully and for

a range of purposes: to check knowledge, deepen understanding, or extend thinking. This means that pupils are fully engaged in lessons and their learning is maximised. Pupils' effort at all levels is celebrated by staff, and marking is mostly responded to by pupils. A wide variety of tasks such as drama, art and extended writing are provided to enrich learning opportunities for all.

Leaders and governors are ambitious for religious education and leaders work conscientiously to ensure that curriculum is faithful to the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*. Conversations with staff acknowledge the support from the very committed and experienced religious education subject leader. Governors have a wide range of skills, and thanks to governor link weeks, they are very knowledgeable. They have ensured that there is parity with other core curriculum subjects in terms of resources, budget, timetabling, reporting to parents, and professional development for staff. Leaders have ensured that staff access external high quality professional development opportunities despite the distances that need to be travelled and this shows the high status of religious education in the school. Staff are appreciative of these opportunities and say that they have had a positive impact on teaching and learning in religious education. Induction for teachers who are new to the school and new to the profession is a priority of school leaders and is a strength. Leaders provide opportunities for enrichment such as Cafod workshops. Leaders have a well-planned monitoring programme, which includes significant input from governors, and all are very reflective in their evaluations, continually striving for excellence.

## 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

2

**Leadership**

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

2

2

Pupils are reverent and respectful and respond well to the prayer and liturgy provided by the school. They sing joyfully and join in collectively with prayer with even the youngest children reading prayers. Pupils have regular opportunities to write their own prayers in lessons and in response to daily prayer in class. They know a range of traditional prayers by heart, and the signing of the Hail Mary demonstrates how inclusive the school community is. Pupils are developing an understanding of the liturgical year. Members of the Chaplaincy Team told inspectors they love to help younger pupils participate in the Advent and Lent prayer trails, and the whole school Passion play was universally enjoyed by all members of the school community. Pupils read scripture with confidence and can find scripture references independently in Key Stage 2. Pupils can recognise ways in which prayer and liturgy influence their lives and their actions and this is evidenced by their heartfelt prayers for those in need written in their prayer journals. As one Year 5 pupil said, 'We are learning how to live our lives like Jesus.' Currently, although some pupils do assist staff in leading prayer and liturgy, they have limited opportunities to plan, lead and evaluate prayer and liturgy at an age-appropriate level.

Prayer and liturgy are, without doubt, central to the life of the school. There are many opportunities for pupils to gather together both in large and small groups and such opportunities are well planned throughout the year. These include regular Family Masses, as well as Holy Week Mass, Ascension Day Mass and The Crowning of Mary ceremony. As evidenced by the questionnaires, parents are appreciative of the opportunities to join the school community in worship. Parents are also appreciative of the close relationship between the school and the parish, as evidenced by this comment from a parent concerning First Holy Communion, 'The way school and parish work together to support this preparation and celebrate the event were very special.' A number of pupils regularly take part in leadership roles

in church, such as readers and altar servers. Staff show real commitment to the prayer and liturgy life of the school and appreciate the opportunities to take part in the school's wide provision. As one staff member writes, 'I very much enjoy and get a lot from joining in with the prayer life in school and out of school.' Leaders are good role models for other staff and pupils and provide effective support, when needed or requested. Prayer spaces around the school and in classrooms are well resourced and cared for, reflecting the Church's liturgical year. The school's prayer room is a welcoming and calm space which is conducive to prayer, with a range of thoughtful resources available. A range of liturgical music both contemporary and traditional enhances the provision for all.

Leaders and governors have placed a high priority on the preparation of a comprehensive calendar of Masses and other liturgical events throughout the school year. Leaders carry out monitoring activities to evaluate the school's provision for prayer and liturgy. They also ensure that there is a wide range of resources and artefacts available, including the recommended Bibles. Leaders support other adults to plan and lead experiences of prayer and liturgy through a consistent approach across the school. However, this could be further developed by giving staff greater ownership of prayer times, thereby utilising their considerable strengths and skills. This in turn, will enable the pupils to build up the skills of participation as they progress through the school.



## Information about the school

Full name of school	Our Lady And St Oswald's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	123553
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8933353
Full postal address of the school	Our Lady And St Oswald's Catholic Primary School, Upper Brook Street, Oswestry, SY11 2TG
School phone number	01691652849
Headteacher	Nikki O'Dwyer
Chair of Governors	Amanda Ali
School Website	<a href="http://www.osoprimary.co.uk">www.osoprimary.co.uk</a>
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	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	22 June 2017
Previous denominational inspection grade	1

## The inspection team

Julie Johnson  
Susan Ralph

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