



Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection report for
Holy Cross Catholic Primary School

URN: 100739

Carried out on behalf of the Most Rev. John Wilson, Archbishop of Southwark on:

Date: 15-16 June 2023

Overall effectiveness The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school.....	1
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	<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	Choose an item.

Summary of key findings

What the school does well

- Enables pupils to clearly understand the theological underpinning of their actions.
- The enjoyment and engagement of the pupils in their religious education is palpable leading to high progress and attainment across all groups.
- Leaders have created an environment where pupils can grow in understanding and living of their faith.
- Holy Cross is an incredibly inclusive community for all stakeholders.
- The active participation of all stakeholders in the collective worship of Holy Cross enables a deeply lived experience of prayer.

What the school needs to improve:

- Further enhance the subject knowledge of staff through providing opportunities for staff to engage in deeper learning.

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

Holy Cross school community are proud of the relationship with the parish and the local community. Pupils clearly express an understanding of how they are valued and how they value each other as individuals created in God’s image. Pupils and parents describe Holy Cross as a family where there are ‘many opportunities to share our faith together and as a family we feel blessed to be part of the Holy Cross family.’ Pupils show a deep sense of respect for personal dignity and for those of other faiths exemplified through their many and varied leading roles. The Mini Vinnies are very involved in charity work, United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) ambassadors help others to know their rights such as during a relationships, sex and health education (RSHE) lesson pupils gave a talk on rights. Year 6 pupils act as buddies for children in reception to ‘help them settle in the school.’ Pupils participate in numerous charities and support local activities noting particularly the Diamond Club, a club for those who are retired and elderly. Pupils regularly visit them and they are ‘beloved’ by the school. As a result of a visit involving two Ukrainian children the Diamond Club spontaneously did a collection for a Ukrainian charity. This clearly shows their commitment to following the teachings of Jesus and the social teaching of the Church.

The school mission statement, ‘May God’s love shine in our lives as we care and share and learn together’ is a clear and inspiring expression of the mission of the school and the Church. Christ is at the heart of the school, all are welcome whatever their faith and culture in a community which celebrates diversity. Staff commitment is exceptional; they see their job as a vocation, fully participating in the activities of the school ensuring pupils, especially the most vulnerable, are valued and embraced. RSHE is well planned, rooted in Church teaching using the Ten Ten programme, enabling pupils to learn and grow as confident articulate individuals who can be the best they can be. Pupils feel safe, know to whom they should speak if they have a concern and any incidents involving bullying are dealt with through the peacemakers’ process. These are pupil leaders, who have learned how to resolve conflict within the school community through restorative justice. As such, they help others reconcile when there is disagreement. Holy Cross


school is integral to Holy Cross Parish. The school fully engages with the life of the parish which enables high quality experiences for the spiritual and moral development of the pupils.

Leaders and governors are exceptional leaders of the Catholic life of the school. The executive headteacher and head of school have a very clear statement of vision and personal faith. They want to 'empower children with faith,' so that they leave with a strong faith, sound knowledge and understanding. Governors are very proactive making regular visits to monitor and contribute to the mission of the school. They talk with the pupils about their experiences which they follow up with the leadership team. Governors support by, for example, mentoring altar servers. There is commitment to wider Catholic education such as sharing excellent practice and supporting new headteachers. Parents greatly value the Holy Cross school community. 'What I enjoy seeing is the children getting involved in local charitable projects, working/singing with the elderly, they are taught the importance of God's values in everything they do. His words, his actions, his love is evident in the school's veins. They are a true witness to their mission statement.'

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

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



Pupils thoroughly enjoy their learning at Holy Cross. Over time they develop excellent knowledge and understanding. Pupils can speak confidently and fluently about what they have learnt accurately quoting from miracle stories such as the feeding of the 5,000. Pupils engage with their learning and have a clear understanding of how well they are doing and how to improve. They are religiously literate and can reflect theologically. A lesson on the Calming of the Storm, showed total engagement, very good literacy development and a good foundation for deeper learning. In lessons where there are complex needs, teachers and teacher assistants are highly effective in managing these needs so that pupils meet the learning objective. Pupils most liked 'learning from Jesus' and 'following God's footsteps.' Pupils consistently produce work of a high quality showing creativity and originality. This was very evident in books across all classes. Attainment in religious education is strong with high outcomes for pupils across all groups including those with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND). Cross-curricular religious education was evident in one lesson where links with Victorians was made.

Staff work together with support from senior leaders and the subject leader for religious education to ensure teaching is never less than good. Learning walks and lesson observations show that over time teachers show a high level of confidence in subject knowledge with much of the teaching deemed to be outstanding. Planning is informed by pupils' assessment leading to consolidation of learning and constantly improving outcomes. Questioning is used well enabling pupils to demonstrate their learning. In a reception lesson about objects in a church, children were able to recall the various objects and explain their meaning for example, the sanctuary lamp, which a pupil said, 'reminds us of Jesus.' Marking gives opportunities for pupils to deepen their learning and excellent responses in lessons were celebrated with praise and encouragement which was supported by marking in exercise books. Staff said that spiritual and moral development is central to teaching and a wide variety of strategies are used to enable all pupils to access the learning. As a result, data shows that all pupils make very good progress appropriate to their age.

The school uses 'The Way, The Truth and the Life' programme for religious education. Whilst this has been linked to the Religious Education Curriculum Directory (RECD), the subject leader is developing the programme to ensure it reflects fully the new Religious Education Directory. To that end, she has engaged with diocesan training, which is then cascaded to staff. The subject leader shares with staff her inspiring vision for religious education to continually improve teaching and learning. As the quality of teaching and learning is monitored, staff are given very helpful feedback which contributes to the school's excellent outcomes. Links with outside agencies such as UNICEF, promote pupils' learning. Leaders and governors rigorously monitor and evaluate through learning walks, lesson observation and interrogation of data to further improve the quality of teaching and learning. Religious education is given the same high status as other core subjects, lessons are well-resourced with good use of support staff, resulting in high quality learning for pupils. The thoughtfully planned and well-structured curriculum, meets the needs of every pupil, enhances the learning, and contributes to their feeling of being valued. A parent, valued, especially the teaching of other faiths: 'I do like that there is a faiths week as we live in such a diverse part of London, I think it is so important to learn about other cultures.'

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

Collective worship at Holy Cross is a clear expression of a life lived through prayer. Pupils demonstrate a great variety of praying within and beyond the Catholic tradition. Observations show a variety of experiences using scripture, music, time for reflection, and extempore prayer, a free form of prayer which often is spontaneous. Pupils' response to this is outstanding. Pupil leaders are members of Growing in Faith Together (GIFT) team. They understand the great significance of this, share prayer experiences and are keen to develop further. They lead prayers in different languages reflecting the diversity of the community and ensure everyone is involved. Pupils plan and lead prayer and liturgy and encourage participation in the voluntary rosary each morning. Pupils show respect and reverence during spiritual occasions. Pupils understand why they are present in the spiritual occasion and a well-established culture of prayer, formal, private and sung prayer is evident. Parents are delighted to be involved. Some attend and enjoy the morning prayers before the school starts each day, one parent stated 'my reception child spontaneously asked me if we could go to Rosary before school. My year 3 child who is on the faith council helped lead an assembly on St Oscar Romero.' Clergy said pupils were always very respectful and reverential.

The quality of prayer and worship enables all the community to 'be still in God's presence,' to reflect and express their own prayers. Parents said that the school offers many opportunities for pupils to practice their faith and the quality of what is offered is excellent. At Holy Cross it is the life-blood of the school, a natural expression of this community of faith. Prayer and liturgy is linked to the liturgical year, saints are celebrated as are important feast days. Staff demonstrate high levels of commitment and set a positive example in prayer as both leaders and participants, which in turn inspires the pupils. Clergy of the parish are very involved in the school and make a huge contribution to prayer and liturgy. This is integral with the Church community where pupils are very involved as altar servers, readers, and as the school choir. Clergy continually evaluate and are exploring how they can further support the school. The pupils' experience of prayer is further enhanced by links with their lived experiences, beautiful prayer tables in

every classroom and the use of drama and music. Parents expressed their joy at being part of the family of prayer of Holy Cross.

There is a clear, well-formulated policy for collective worship which is reviewed regularly by leaders and governors. There is a clear understanding of how prayer develops through age appropriate participation among the pupils and helps them to mature to the level where they can support their fellows. This is clearly evident through the leadership of the GIFT team. Leaders and governors have an in-depth knowledge and understanding of the liturgical year which the timetable follows, highlighting significant feast days. These and other religious occasions are celebrated by the school. Prayer and liturgy is planned so that pupils can fully participate in observances such as Holy Week, and the Crowning of Our Lady. Liturgical formation of staff is part of the school's professional development programme which, coupled with high quality resourcing leads to creating wonderful liturgical experiences for pupils. The head of school reports on collective worship, as part of her report to governors which governors challenge and celebrate ensuring this is part of the school's self-evaluation.

Information about the school

Full name of school	Holy Cross Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	100739
Full postal address of the school	Culverley Road, Catford, London SE6 2LD
School phone number	0208 698 2675
Name of head teacher or principal	Mary Collins
Chair of governing board	Tara Nelson
School Website	https://www.holycross.lewisham.sch.uk/
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Click or tap here to enter text.
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age-range of pupils	3-11
Trustees	Archdiocese of Southwark
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	November 2016
Previous denominational inspection grade	1

The inspection team

Stephen C Horsman	Lead inspector
Damian Fox	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