

Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection report for St Brendan's Catholic Primary School

URN: 142064

Carried out on behalf of the Right Rev. David Oakley, Bishop of Northampton on:

Date: 4-5 October 2023

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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	Fully

Summary of key findings

What the school does well

- This is a school where the mission statement "Always treat others as you would like them to treat you" is at the centre of all of their work. This is evident in all relationships.
- The school environment is a celebration of the Catholic identity of the school.
- The religious education leader has a clear vision of where she wants religious education teaching to go and implements initiatives and strategies to ensure consistency.
- The school uses a range of effective strategies to nurture their more vulnerable children.

What the school needs to improve:

- To give children across the school the opportunity to plan collective worship by, for example, choosing prayers, scripture, hymns.

- To ensure more able children are challenged through effective adaptation of lessons.
- Find ways to forge stronger links with the parish.

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



St Brendan's is a Catholic school where the school mission statement "Always treat others as you would like them to treat you" is brought to life through relationships. Relationships between pupils, between pupils and adults, and between the adults themselves are extremely positive. Pupils expect everyone to follow the mission statement with one pupil saying "There are no bullies because of our mission statement and how well our teachers treat us." St Brendan's lives out the mission of the Church in many ways but in particular by ensuring the most vulnerable pupils are included and at the forefront of all of their work. They have bespoke provision for their pupils in receipt of pupil premium and in recent years developed a sensory room to support a number of children who had suffered bereavements.

There is a large pupil chaplaincy team, the Faith Friends, mainly made up of year 6 pupils which is highly valued by the school community. The pupil chaplains are eager and enthusiastic. Pupils have lots of other opportunities to take on leadership roles at St Brendan's through for example, the Minnie Vinnies, Eco-Warriors and Reading Ambassadors. They are actively encouraged to take on responsibility. Some Year 5 pupils talked enthusiastically about a Climate Change Protection Group (CCPG) which they had started independently. St Brendan's has implemented a virtue programme to ensure pupils understand how to grow in virtue and what this means to their personal and spiritual growth. This is well embedded and was mentioned often throughout the inspection by pupils and staff. The programme has permeated through all aspects of the school including assemblies and religious education lessons.

Catholic identity is at the forefront of leaders' work. The Executive Leader and Head of School

have a clear vision for the mission of this school. This common vision is shared by the rest of the staff. There is a strong induction programme which is valued by new staff who know where they need to go to get support. This is then followed by regularly training for teachers during staff meetings. Particular attention has been given to the school environment. There is a healthy balance between displays of pupils' work, photos which celebrate the pupils at work in school and more permanent murals which not only brighten the school, but also celebrate the whole curriculum. The school is well supported by the local academy governors who visit the school regularly. They understand their responsibilities as guardians of the mission of the school. The governors ensure that school leaders report to them regularly and they challenge appropriately. The school have recently implemented the Ten Ten relationships, sex and health education curriculum which meets both statutory and diocesan requirements.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade:.....

2

Pupil outcomes

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education.....

2

Provision

The quality of teaching, learning, and assessment in religious education.....

2

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor, and evaluate the provision for religious education.....

1



Pupils are developing good knowledge and understanding. They achieve well, with the majority of pupils reaching expected levels by the end of year 6 but the school recognises the need to stretch the more able children further. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well. They enjoy their religious education lessons. Pupils are proud of their work and speak confidently about what they have learnt. Behaviour for learning is excellent. Pupils work collaboratively and enjoy the range of creative activities that their teachers plan for them. These include drama, role play, art and different forms of writing. Some of the pupils spoken to during the inspection said they would like more challenge in lessons. The school should consider the adaptation of lessons to stretch the more able children, particularly in classes with mixed year groups.

The quality of teaching and learning in religious education is good. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure. Their lessons are planned well and there are clear objectives throughout units of work. Knowledge organisers are used to make sure teachers are clear about the knowledge, skills and scripture that the pupils are learning. These are displayed in the classroom but not always used consistently by the pupils. Religious education lessons start by lighting a candle and saying a prayer. Pupils are engaged and enthusiastic as teachers use open-ended questioning, discussions with talk partners and an interesting selection of tasks and resources to deepen pupils' learning.

There is a clear consistency in teaching across the school which is the result of outstanding subject leadership. The religious education leader has worked across the schools in the Multi academy Trust and has a clear understanding of how to use systems and initiatives to improve

teaching and learning. She has introduced pink sheets to assess recall, mission footprints for the end of topics and knowledge organisers for each unit of work. She works collaboratively with staff and facilitates all teachers in observing either herself or another teacher. Regular monitoring and a clear action plan have helped to drive improvement. A recent initiative has been to introduce a timetabled Catholic Social Teaching lesson which has already been very well received. Although there has been some inconsistencies in assessment in the past, recent assessments seem much more secure. This has already helped the leadership team identify groups, such as the more able, who could be progressing further. The leadership team and governors ensure that religious education is given a high priority in line with English and mathematics. They ensure the curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference with at least 10% of curriculum time devoted to the subject. Directors are well informed of standards through the leadership team's reports.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade:.....

2

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



All pupils fully engage with prayer and liturgy at St Brendan's. During the inspection, observations of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 prayer and liturgy showed that the pupils were respectful and keen to respond fully to the experiences offered to them. Teachers gathered the pupils together and created a reflective mood in the classrooms. The pupils were reverent and engaged well with prayer and liturgy. At times, however, particularly in Key Stage 2, there was too much content in the prayer and liturgy and as time went on it became more like a religious education lesson. Pupils have opportunities to lead prayer and liturgy for their classes and for the whole school and the older pupils have some opportunities to plan prayer and liturgy. This academic year a new parish priest has moved into the parish who is very keen to work closely with the school. The school and parents are very keen to forge stronger links. Pupils understand how prayer and liturgy affects their lives and the experiences they've had, although they have a limited understanding of the liturgical year.

There is a daily pattern of prayer and liturgy which is embedded across the school. Prayer and liturgy are integral to the life of the school. Scripture is used as a matter of course in all prayer and worship. A weekly Gospel assembly reflects the church theme. All staff are committed to the prayer life of the school and acts of worship are planned throughout the year. The school environment is a particular strength of the school. The addition of the "Sacred Space" where pupils can go to pray and reflect has been a welcome addition to an already vibrant school. Parents value the opportunities their

children get at school with one parent saying: "It's wonderful that our child is coming home singing Christian songs, talking about prayer and feeling like he can talk about his love for Jesus."

Prayer and liturgy is well led and supported by the religious education leader and Faith Friends. There is a clear policy in place and leaders plan the school calendar and timetable carefully to ensure that opportunities are regularly offered to the whole school community to celebrate, particularly at key times in the liturgical year. Staff are invited to observe each other which is seen as an important part of their professional development. Local Academy governors have met with the Faith Friends and regularly attend liturgy in the school. This gives them the opportunity to monitor the pupils' engagement with the school's prayer life. The Chair of the Local Academy Committee recognises how important this is in "growing Global citizens for the future."

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Brendan's Catholic School
School unique reference number (URN)	142064
Full postal address of the school	Beanfield Avenue, Corby. NN18 OAZ
School phone number	01536 202491
Name of head teacher or principal	Executive Headteacher Mrs Leanne Brydon
Chair of governing board	Brian Sweeney
School Website	stbrendansprimaryschool.co.uk
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Our Lady's Catholic Academies Trust
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy
Age-range of pupils	4 to 11
Trustees	Diocese of Northampton
Gender of pupils	mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	June 2017
Previous denominational inspection grade	2

The inspection team

Mark Holdsworth	Lead inspector
Amanda Dowling	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