

St Illtyd's Catholic Primary School

URN: 400948

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Archbishop of Cardiff-Menevia

20–21 March 2025

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

2

Collective worship (p.7)

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

2

The school is fully compliant with the general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishops' Conference

Yes

The school is fully compliant with any additional requirements of the diocesan bishop

Yes

The school has responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection

Fully

Compliance statement

- The school fully complies with the general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishops' Conference.
- The school is in full compliance with the additional requirements of the diocesan bishop.
- The school has carried out a thorough programme of work in order to carry out the recommendations for improvement made in its previous S50 inspection.

What the school does well

- Senior leaders and governors at St Illtyd's are passionate and dedicated, driving the school's vision and ensuring the mission remains central to the community. They have created a strong, cohesive, and welcoming Catholic environment that benefits pupils, staff, and families.
- St Illtyd's is a welcoming, joyful, and inclusive Catholic learning community that celebrates the dignity and uniqueness of every individual. Christ is at the heart of school life, shaping strong relationships and a deep sense of belonging.
- The mission of St Illtyd's, 'With God's love, we play, learn and grow together', is evident in daily school life. It is celebrated through display, learning, worship, and the way the community reaches out to others in faith and service.
- Pupils are proud and happy to be part of St Illtyd's. They feel safe, nurtured, and valued, displaying high standards of behaviour and kindness in their daily interactions.
- Staff are positive role models, demonstrating love, care, and commitment to the school's Catholic mission. Their witness to faith fosters strong relationships, creating a community built on respect and trust.

What the school needs to improve

- Ensure high quality teaching and learning that fosters pace, challenge, independence, and creativity and fully meets the expectations of the *Religious Education Directory*, particularly for higher attaining pupils.
- Strengthen assessment of and for learning, to support pupils in achieving highly and understanding their next steps for improvement.
- Expand the range of prayer opportunities, including traditional, spontaneous, reflective, and creative prayer, to deepen pupils' spiritual development and strengthen their connection to faith.

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 actively engage and participate in the Catholic life and mission of the school. The school's mission statement, 'With God's love, we play, learn and grow together', is central to the school community and is known, lived, and experienced by the pupils, governors, staff, and parents. Pupils are happy, polite, and respectful; they feel valued and are very supportive of each other. The behaviour in lessons, assemblies, and around the school is excellent. Pupils clearly understand that the school community is committed to following the teaching and example of Jesus in the Gospels. For example, pupils talked passionately about how we should treat others as we would like to be treated, and about caring for others in need. Pupils flourish as they seek opportunities to grow in virtue and pro-actively live out their faith, with Mini Vinnies leading initiatives aligned with Catholic social teaching and the development of virtues, such as the reverse Advent calendar, foodbank donations, and care home visits. The school council also takes pride in organising such events as 'Crazy Hair Day', Mental Health Week activities, and the Mr X Christmas Gift Appeal.

This inclusive, welcoming school community demonstrates commitment to the most vulnerable and provides the highest level of pastoral support, which is greatly valued by parents. The quality of relationships across the school is excellent and a very strong culture of inclusion is firmly in place. This includes leaders, teachers, teaching assistants, administration staff, lunchtime supervisors, and the caretaker. Staff are excellent role models for pupils through the way they bear witness to the school's Catholic life and mission. For example, in the whole school assembly, focusing on the Jubilee Year theme, 'Pilgrims of Hope', each staff member shared their hopes for the future. Pupils show respect for other cultures and belief traditions, speak knowledgeably about how they became a 'School of Sanctuary' and how

proud they are to be 'Language Ambassadors'. The Catholic character of the school is reflected throughout the environment. Vibrant, high quality corridor and hall displays, such as the entrance display on Catholic social teaching principles, are effective signs of the school's Catholic character. The newly developed outdoor space, 'The Dingly Dell', also offers opportunities for prayer, reflection, and spiritual development. The school makes effective use of the resources identified by the diocese to provide relationships and sex education in an age-appropriate manner.

The head teacher and the deputy head teacher, who is also leader of religious education, display an impressive sense of vocation and have a strong vision for Catholic education. They are a source of inspiration and are passionate and committed to ensuring that the school actively achieves its mission and that Christ is at the centre of the school's life. All policies and procedures clearly reflect the Catholic identity and mission of the school. The governing body is well informed and knowledgeable about the life of the school. The link governor for religious education and the parish priest, who visit the school regularly, are fully committed to their roles and are highly ambitious in ensuring that the best possible Catholic education and care is provided for pupils and staff. They work hard to ensure a flourishing partnership between the school and its local parish. Leaders acknowledge that parents are the first educators of their children and work diligently to develop partnerships with them. The parent questionnaires were overwhelmingly supportive, including comments such as 'It is truly a blessing to have such a lovely, caring school.' All staff, including new staff, regularly receive professional development, making good use of diocesan training opportunities and resources. Further opportunities for all stakeholders, including pupils, to evaluate the school's provision and outcome of Catholic life and mission, would further enhance the school's work in this area.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

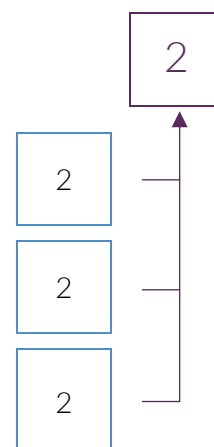
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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 their learning in religious education. Their engagement in lessons is good and they are beginning to become religiously literate. They are beginning to develop secure knowledge, understanding and skills that exemplify the learning required by the *Religious Education Directory*. Pupils steadily improve their knowledge, making appropriate progress from their starting points as they move through the school. This includes disadvantaged learners and those with additional learning needs (ALN). Due to the school's focus on developing pupils' oracy skills, pupils can speak with confidence about their learning, showing an awareness of key concepts and using subject specific vocabulary such as 'consecration' and 'crucifixion'. Pupils were often given opportunities to ask questions about their learning. For example, Year 1 pupils shared what they wondered about an image of the Last Supper. Pupils were proud to share their learning in religious education, including their work on the common good and the importance of thinking about how the choices they make affect others. However, pupils produce work that is inconsistent in its quality, showing limited evidence of individuality and creativity. There is a heavy reliance on worksheets and, consequently, potentially high-attaining learners are not challenged to deepen their learning to meet the ambitious expected outcomes. The marking and feedback policy is used consistently across the school. However, there are limited opportunities for pupils to reflect on their learning, identify ways forward and improve their work.

Teachers are becoming more confident in their subject knowledge, supported by senior leaders, the link governor for religious education and the parish priest. Teachers are clearly committed to religious education and effectively communicate this. All adults are used effectively to optimise learning for all pupils. During the inspection, there was some variability evident in the quality of teaching across the school. In the best lessons observed, effective

questioning was used to recall prior knowledge and deepen learning, and pace was good. This practice needs to be shared, implemented and monitored across the school. In addition, opportunities for pupils to develop their individuality and creativity, and to present their learning using a variety of forms, are limited. Celebration of effort, verbally and through their written work and display, is effective in motivating learners to achieve. All staff recognise the impact that religious education has on the holistic development of pupils, and opportunities for reflection during lessons were often provided. However, assessment for learning practice needs to be developed.

Leaders have a clear vision for the successful implementation of the Religious Education Directory across the school, but this is still an area to be developed further. Religious education is given priority, ensuring that 10% of curriculum time is taught. The school's self-evaluation is accurate, and leaders have a realistic understanding of the school's current position and priorities for development. The head teacher and deputy head teacher have already made a significantly positive impact on the standards produced by pupils. Leaders ensure all staff access professional development, including diocesan training and sessions led by the parish priest, to deepen understanding of scripture and Church teaching. Governors are well informed about the school's work and demonstrate dedication to their role. The monitoring, evaluation and review cycle includes all stakeholders and gives leaders the opportunity to evaluate all areas of RE. For example, governors spoke passionately about their involvement in the school's self-evaluation, including completing work scrutiny and listening to learners. They show a determination to help in a practical way with this work, and the contributions made by the parish priest and the link governor for RE are highly valued. The tracking of pupils' progress for the new Directory is in its early stages.

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

From the earliest age, pupils participate reverently and show respect in acts of prayer and liturgy, joining in with responses and invitations to pray, and singing confidently, using actions when appropriate. They listen well to readings, understanding how scripture guides them in living their faith and responding to God's will in the world. Many pupils articulated the importance of fasting, prayer and almsgiving during Lent as a way to show compassion and care for others. Pupils are familiar with the traditional prayers of the Church and are able to explain the reasons behind prayers said throughout the day. They undertake liturgical ministries and enjoy participating in Mass and collective worship. Pupils and staff plan collective worship using the four-part format and well-chosen scripture. The Acts of Liturgy observed were warm and sincere, providing an opportunity for pupils to respond thoughtfully and deepen their relationship with God. Older pupils plan independently and model this practice for younger pupils. The observed Lenten worship used appropriate liturgical colours, artefacts and music to enhance the joyous celebration.

Prayer and liturgy is at the heart of the school community. The liturgical year and Catholic tradition are central to provision, and there is a clear, well-planned schedule for acts of prayer and liturgy across the school, which provides opportunities for spiritual growth and a shared sense of faith. Praying together is a daily experience for all. The rhythm and routine of prayer throughout the day marks all significant moments and provides an opportunity for pupils to pause, focus, and include God in their learning and lives. Staff are positive role models and are actively committed to fostering a strong prayer life. Throughout the school, technology, displays, art, well-chosen artefacts, and outdoor spaces are used effectively to engage pupils in a creative prayerful experience. Classroom prayer tables are themed to reflect the liturgical season; they are used interactively and serve as focal points for prayer. One pupil commented

that they are 'places where we can pray if we have a problem or want to spend some time with God'.

Parents and parishioners are warmly invited to school Masses and other celebrations, fostering community and togetherness. The half termly class based collective worship observed was joyful, well attended, and appreciated by parents. One parent commented, 'This is a caring school and everyone is made welcome'. Parishioners are invited to school masses and leaders and governors support the parish sacramental preparation. Pupils are able to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation at key times in the liturgical year, such as Lent and Advent. Pupils enthusiastically remembered the May Procession and Harvest Festival as happy and holy occasions.

Leaders and governors recognise the importance of prayer as the bedrock of their faith-filled community, inspiring pupils and preparing them for their life-long faith journey. The deputy who is the leader of religious education, recognises her significant role in shaping the spiritual formation of staff and pupils and has embraced the journey. She fosters continuous improvement in prayer and liturgy by providing in-house training, modelling best practice, creating opportunities for collaboration, and offering targeted support for staff, including new staff. As a result, the ability of staff to lead and support worship is developing well. The passionate head teacher and deputy are committed, knowledgeable, able, and are keen to move prayer and liturgy forward. The school improvement plan and self-evaluation identify and support this work. Governors monitor prayer and liturgy through regular updates from leaders, by visiting classrooms, and reviewing documentation. There is a strong capacity for leaders and governors to plan and build on the good progress already made over a short period of time and to embed an effective cycle of self-evaluation and planned improvements to continue to move the school forward.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Illtyd's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	400948
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	6703305
Full postal address of the school	St Illtyd's Catholic Primary School, Jersey Road, Bonymaen, Swansea, SA1 7DG
School phone number	01792462104
Headteacher	Maria Davies
Chair of governors	Keri Purcell
School Website	www.stilltydsschool.co.uk
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	N/A
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Voluntary Aided School
Admissions policy	Non-selective
Age-range of pupils	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	2015
Previous denominational inspection grade	GG

The inspection team

Laura Taylor
Sheelagh McCool

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