



## **INSPECTION REPORT**

**CORPUS CHRISTI CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
Ellenborough Park South, Weston-Super-Mare  
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DfE Number: 8023354  
URN: 109242

Executive Headteacher: Mrs H Taylor  
Head of School: Mrs R Suik  
Chair of Governors: Mrs S Wills

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**Canonical Inspection under Canon 806 on behalf of the Diocese of Clifton  
and inspection of Denominational Education under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005**

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Date of inspection: 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2022  
Date of previous inspection: 5<sup>th</sup> October 2017

Reporting Inspector: Mrs B McLaughlin  
Additional Inspector: Mrs A Barrett

## **Description of school**

Corpus Christi is a smaller than average, one-form entry primary school in Weston-Super-Mare. The school serves the three Catholic parishes in Weston-Super-Mare; namely Corpus Christi, Our Lady of Lourdes and St Joseph's, and Our Lady Queen of the Apostles.

There are 192 children at the school. 67% of children are Catholic. Of the other children at the school, 19% are from other Christian denominations, 4% of other faiths and the remainder are of no faith.

The proportion of children with Special Educational Needs is below the national average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and those speaking English as an additional language are above the national average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support from the pupil premium is below the national average.

Since the last denominational inspection, the school entered a formal federation, the Holy Trinity Catholic Federation, with St Joseph's Catholic Primary School in Burnham. The federation had one Governing Body for both schools. From 1<sup>st</sup> March 2022, the school became a member of a newly established Multi Academy Trust (MAT), the Dunstan Catholic Educational Trust, with five other Catholic primary schools. The previous Executive Head has become the CEO of the MAT and the school now has a Local Governing Body as well as the MAT Trust Board.

## **Overall effectiveness of this Catholic school**

**Grade 2**

### **This is a good school.**

- The school Leadership Team is fully committed to the Catholic life and character of the school and are excellent role models. They have created an open, welcoming and faith-filled school community.
- The Religious Education (RE) Lead is highly knowledgeable and effective. She provides valued support to staff in relation to chaplaincy, curriculum RE and the prayer life of the school.
- The staff of the school are committed to the Catholic ethos of the school and active in developing their practice in this area. They promote high standards of behaviour within a calm learning environment and provide excellent role models of mutual respect for pupils. As a result, the behaviour of pupils is excellent.
- The links between the parish and the school are strong and the support provided by the parish priest is exceptional.
- The Chaplaincy provision at the school has grown and large numbers of pupils are involved as chaplaincy leaders.

- Pupils make good progress in religious education, and this has been sustained despite the disruption posed by the Covid pandemic. They enjoy religious education lessons and display high levels of enjoyment and enthusiasm.
- This is a caring school where staff know the pupils and families extremely well. Pastoral support to pupils, families and staff is very effective.

**The capacity of the school community to improve and develop is good:**

- The areas for development identified in the last S48 denominational inspection have all been addressed.
- The leadership of the school is focused, united and works positively with staff to secure quality provision and outcomes for all pupils.
- The staff are dedicated to their pupils, the school and to working with each other.
- Collaboration within the federation has impacted positively and bodes well for wider partnership work within the MAT.

**What the school should do to improve further:**

- Build on the existing monitoring of the Catholic life and prayer life of the school, so that strengths and areas for development are clearly highlighted; and systems for the planning, tracking, and reporting of improvements are in place.
- Develop further the confidence and skills of staff in supporting collective worship and the prayer life of the school; so that they can confidently empower pupils to lead a greater variety of prayer and worship.
- Deepen governors' understanding of the requirements of the S48 denominational inspection framework, in particular regarding how it impacts on their roles and responsibilities.

### a) The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school

- There is a strong sense that children and staff are members of an inclusive and vibrant Catholic community, that welcomes all. There has been frequent revisiting of the school values, as part of an extensive and consultative process involving pupils, staff, parents, governors, and the parish. As a result of this pupils have a deep understanding of the values of the school, and these underpin all aspects of school life.
- The school fosters and nurtures in pupils a heightened sense of worth and respect for themselves and others. They understand that they are called, not only to be aware of the needs of others, but also to use their gifts to help others. In school, this is evident in a range of pupil responsibilities such as the buddy system, class ambassadors and 'safeguarders'. Pupils act to support the needs of others beyond the school and support CAFOD, the Weston Food Bank and a school in Zimbabwe.
- Pupils embrace opportunities to participate in activities that support the Catholic life of the school and value being able to work with other partnership schools. Consequently, they are growing in their interest and understanding of moral and ethical issues.
- Chaplaincy is a strength of the school and has developed to include a team of whole school chaplains as well as opportunities for all who want to serve as class chaplains, to do so. Large numbers of children want to be chaplains and are actively involved. The whole school chaplains' role has an element of monitoring, but they are not yet involved in evaluating aspects of school life.
- Pupils value and respect the links with the parish, the diocese and the wider church as demonstrated in the school's excellent response to the Synod, where every child contributed their thoughts and hopes for the future of the Church.
- Pupils speak positively about the care and support they receive from a range of staff. They feel safe and happy and enjoy coming to school.

### b) The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school

- There is a strong sense of ownership of the Mission Statement and school values by pupils, staff and parents. The school Mission Statement is seen as instrumental in underpinning the Catholic values of the school and has been further strengthened through its collaborative review, as part of the establishment of the MAT.
- Leaders have created a clear sense of community at all levels. This is evident in the quality of relationships that exist between pupils and staff. Celebration is an important feature of this school community and the popular Friday Laudate assemblies recognise the achievements of pupils while reinforcing the values of the school.
- The school environment clearly reflects the school's Catholic identity and is centred around the liturgical year. Displays are engaging and include opportunities for pupils to reflect and interact with them.

- The school is inclusive and committed to the social teachings of the Church. This could be further enhanced by introducing the language of Catholic Social Teaching to pupils and staff.
- There is a strong commitment from staff to develop their own professional development in relation to the Catholic life of the school. This is driven by the RE lead and supported by the leadership team and the parish priest, who play an important and valued role in supporting staff and pupils alike.
- Staff provide positive role models, supported by well-developed systems for pastoral care, which extend and respond to the individual needs of pupils and families.
- The spiritual development of pupils is strengthened by the close links between the parish and the school. This link leads pupils to see spirituality as a part of daily life, rather than something that they experience in one place.
- The Chaplaincy provision includes pupils of all ages and abilities, enabling them to participate regularly on a class and whole school level. Links to chaplaincy teams across the partnership are active and effective.
- The school has reviewed and updated its Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) programmes in line with DfE and Diocesan guidelines. Full details of the programme and a curriculum map are included on the school website.
- The school's website gives high profile to the Catholic Life of the school and includes many photographs of pupils putting their faith into action, such as their CAFOD cake sale and trip to take donations for the local foodbank. The website also has all the appropriate policies relating to the faith life of the school and these have been recently reviewed.

**c) How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school**

- The school's leadership is fully committed to the Catholic life and character of the school as demonstrated by excellent role modelling, which has resulted in an open, faith-focused environment.
- Systems for monitoring the Catholic life of the school are regular but these are not yet linked to a whole school self-evaluation framework which informs school improvement planning. As a result of this, improvements in the Catholic life of the school are not planned for in the same way as for other curriculum areas.
- The school provides and promotes a range of opportunities for pupils' spiritual and moral development. Pupil conferencing is used to check their understanding and enjoyment of these opportunities; however, the content and impact of them is not yet being systematically evaluated.
- The induction and training provided to staff is good and the school makes use of diocesan training opportunities and resources. The RE lead and parish priest provide formal and informal training and support. The Governing Body would benefit from ensuring all its members attend appropriate training.

- The school has strategies for engaging with parents. These include a regular newsletter and the school website, which makes explicit the Catholic ethos of the school and also shares information about events in school. The school has taken steps to make information available in home languages for those for whom English is not their first language. It is developing mechanisms to obtain feedback from parents and the introduction of electronic questionnaires is gradually increasing the number of responses obtained.
- The school responds well to diocesan policies and initiatives. Engagement with the Dunstan Partnership has been exemplary, and leaders have played a key role in the establishment of the diocese's first Catholic MAT.

### a) How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education

- Overall, most pupils, from their varied starting points, make good progress in each key stage, with no significant variation between groups of learners. From Reception through to the end of Key Stage 2 (KS2), clear progression and development are demonstrated through the work in pupils' books and in discussions with them.
- The religious literacy of pupils is strong. They make full use of the key words which staff share for each topic of study. This was particularly evident in a Year 6 lesson, where pupils confidently used specialist vocabulary pertaining to Lent and discussed 'metanoia'.
- The behaviour of pupils in lessons is very good. They engage positively and show a desire to do well. They enjoy RE and appreciate the range of learning activities they undertake. They particularly like discussions, group activities and role play.
- Pupils participate in their lessons extremely well. They respond well to the high expectations and challenge that is provided by teachers in most classes. They seek to improve their work, as evident in their verbal responses, written and extension tasks.
- Pupils display enthusiasm and curiosity when encouraged to ask "I wonder why..." questions. This was demonstrated in a Year 5 lesson, where a question about why, if God created everything, did He create the devil, resulted in a class discussion on free will. Pupils in all year groups can link faith to everyday life, especially in the key seasons of the Church year, such as Advent and Lent.
- The current work of pupils is well presented and there is evidence of a consistent, systematic approach across all year groups. Most pupils take pride in their exercise books and can discuss what they have been doing.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the school assessment system. They understand and respond to teacher feedback, which supports progress in their learning. Older pupils also track their own progress using assessment grids which are shared at the start of each new module of study.

### b) The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education

- The RE Lead has high expectations of herself and staff. She offers effective challenge and support relating to lesson planning and delivery. Lesson planning is therefore of a good standard and clearly linked to schemes of work. Teachers have good subject knowledge and understanding, and consequently show mastery in their delivery of religious education lessons. In all classes they deploy a range of teaching styles and learning opportunities.
- Teachers are enthusiastic in their teaching and as a result the pupils are enthusiastic too. They are aware of the different needs of pupils in their class, and together with a team of committed teaching assistants, they provide differentiated activities and support to individual learners. Teachers and support staff provide lots of praise and affirmation to learners; these impact positively on pupil attitudes and behaviour.

- In the majority of lessons, the pace of lessons is strong, while being flexible enough to accommodate pupils' queries. Staff are confident in responding to pupil questions and this encourages pupils' curiosity and engagement.
- Teacher questioning is effective and frequently focused on extending learning. In the best examples teachers do not just accept the first answer given but push the pupil to provide more detailed information to demonstrate their understanding; as seen during a Year 5 lesson on the temptations of Jesus.
- The learning environment is purposeful and focused. A range of resources are appropriately deployed, with a particular focus on the use of Scripture. Clergy provide valuable curriculum support, contributing to lessons and sharing experiences, thus enabling pupils to have a deeper understanding of the sacraments and vocation.
- Feedback to pupils is in line with the school policy and is appropriate to the age and ability of each learner. The expectation that they respond to feedback expands as pupils progress through the school and purple pen improvements made by pupils are present in exercise books.
- Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to self and peer assess their work. Examples of pupils co-constructing success criteria were seen in Years 3 and Year 5 lessons. Next steps could include these success criteria being extended to cover learning content as well as process.
- During the period of school closure and remote learning, due to the Covid pandemic, teachers maintained their high expectations with a range of structured activities and thoughtful support for both pupils and parents.

**c) How well leaders and governors monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education**

- Leaders and governors ensure that the religious education curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference and that the required amount of curriculum time is given to religious education. As a result of this the quality of work produced by pupils has parity with other subjects.
- The school's Mission and Ethos Committee includes the RE link governor, executive head and foundation governor representatives. It is also attended by the head of school and RE lead. Together they scrutinise all decisions relating to programmes of study in religious education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Personal, Social and health Education (PSHE). The minutes of their meetings are presented to the Full Governing Body (FGB)
- Leaders understand the importance of monitoring and assessment. They have established well-understood and effective systems for the tracking of pupil progress and ensuring that the needs of different groups of pupils are met. Their approach also extends to staff who receive high quality bespoke support in the delivery of religious education.
- The RE Lead has a clear system for monitoring the delivery of religious education. This involves regular work scrutiny, lesson observations, pupil conferencing, tracking pupil progress and moderation within the Dunstan Partnership. She is rigorous in her

approach and has an accurate understanding of the quality and impact of teaching in religious education.

- The RE Lead shares the findings of her monitoring with the RE link governor, leadership team and the Mission and Ethos committee. However, her findings have not systematically been used to influence the federation development plan, which refers to some required areas of improvement in RE but is underdeveloped in terms of required actions, success criteria and timescales.
- The RE link governor has a good understanding of the school's approach to the teaching of religious education and has undertaken independent pupil conferencing activities which she has reported to the FGB.

### a) How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's prayer life

- Pupils show reverence and respect during prayer and participate willingly. During the inspection, the whole school attended the Ash Wednesday parish Mass, where all pupils were focused and engaged. Each Year 6 pupil sat next to their reception class 'buddy', modelling expected behaviour to them. Pupils were altar servers and readers at Mass. Given the Covid pandemic, this was the first whole school Mass in the church for over two years and pupils were excited about being able to attend as a whole school community.
- Pupils enjoy praying and understand its importance. They pray regularly during the school day. They are familiar with traditional Catholic prayers and the use of Scripture in prayer and have some opportunities for using some different prayer styles during their weekly class worship. The school has identified voluntary opportunities for prayer as something they wish to develop.
- Each term, there is a collective worship theme across the school and pupils in each class take turns to plan weekly class worship, which they share with their peers. They take their responsibility seriously and use a planning framework provided by staff. During the inspection pupils in Year 2 prepared and led a prayer and reflection on friendship, while Year 6 pupils explored the theme through the story of the Good Samaritan. In the best examples of pupil led worship, pupils have considered how to create an appropriate atmosphere for prayer.
- Pupils appreciate the support for prayer afforded by the physical environment of the school. A designated area in each class has a focal table for prayer which is linked to the liturgical season. It also contains resources made by pupils and the Class Happy Book, with examples of prayers and collective worship written by pupils. There is a prayer tree at the entrance to the school and an outdoor prayer garden, which pupils speak of fondly and which has scope for further development.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the liturgical year, which is consistently referenced across the school. This is reflected in classroom and whole school displays. Pupils have contributed to these displays, which are monitored by the whole school chaplaincy leaders.

### b) The quality of the prayer life provided by the school

- Prayer is an integral part of life at the school and reflects the school's Catholic character. Praying together is part of the daily experience of all pupils and staff and is greatly valued by all.
- Prayer and worship reflect the liturgical calendar and the values of the school, as evident during the inspection, in the focus on Lent. Staff have a thorough understanding of the liturgical year which they successfully convey to pupils.

- This is an outward looking school. The focus of prayer also responds to the events and needs in the world, in a very natural way. This was touchingly and spontaneously articulated by a Year 1 pupil and evident in prayers written by pupils in the class Happy Books.
- Staff are well supported to help pupils plan prayer and worship. This, however, tends to be perceived by pupils as always following a similar pattern. Staff are open and willing to develop and would benefit from specialist training to support them to explore a range of prayer styles which they could introduce to pupils, enabling pupils to have greater ownership of the format and style of prayer they are leading.
- Links with the parish are highly effective and the parish priest provides valued support to the prayer life of the school. The school shares prayers with parents and the wider community through the newsletter and website. Opportunities for parents to participate in person have previously been a strength of the school and are being reintroduced, following the period of Covid restrictions. The school would benefit from exploring how to engage those for whom English is not a first language as well as those of other faiths.

**c) How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the prayer life of the school.**

- Leaders and governors understand the importance and centrality of the prayer life of the school and ensure there are regular opportunities for prayer and collective worship. Systems for strategic planning and the evaluation of the prayer life of the school are not yet in place. However, leaders understand the importance of these and are planning positive steps to address this.
- Leaders have a secure understanding of the liturgical year, seasons and feasts, and ensure that prayer and collective worship have a clear purpose and message. They promote pupils' planning and leading of prayer and collective worship.
- Teachers are committed to being positive role models and developing the range of opportunities and approaches to prayer across the school. They greatly value the support provided to them by the RE Lead and parish priest; and would respond well to additional training which would enable them to extend their repertoire of approaches.
- The federation development plan recognises the importance of the prayer life of the school and includes priorities related to its development. These priorities could be further clarified if clear distinctions were made between the prayer life, Catholic life and RE curriculum.

## Summary of Parental Questionnaires

There were 22 parental questionnaires received. They were all positive in their praise of the school and their children's education. Some typical responses included:

"We chose this school for its catholic ethos, sense of community and caring atmosphere. We were also impressed by the core values that are promoted to the children."

"There is a clear sense of community, understanding of the school's vision and values by the children and respect for each other."

"RE and Catholic Life are embedded within daily schooling and not restricted to planned lessons."

"Corpus Christi has a good sense of community and children are supported in a holistic way, following the teachings of the Catholic Church."

"I wanted a school that would support our faith as a family. By choosing this school, my child continues to grow both academically and spiritually."

"Faith and Christian values are taught across the life of the school."

"Everyone looks out for each other."

"We like the prayers and the teaching of faith throughout the curriculum."

"The children are always polite and kind."