

# Springhill Catholic Primary School

URN: 137293

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Portsmouth

27–28 February 2025

## Summary of key findings

### 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 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 is fully compliant with the norms for religious education stipulated by the Bishops' Conference.
- Currently there are no additional requirements laid down by the diocesan bishop.
- The school has completely met the areas for improvement identified in the last Section 48 inspection by Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth.

## What the school does well

- The headteacher and her senior leaders personify the mission statement, 'together we do our best for Jesus', through their unwavering commitment and dedication to Catholic education.
- Catholic social teaching is firmly woven into all areas of school life, fostering a culture of compassion and service, and extending the community's generous influence beyond its boundaries.
- Pupils exhibit exemplary behaviour, are religiously literate and possess a strong sense of self-worth, allowing them to flourish in all aspects of their lives.
- Teachers demonstrate a passion for religious education, employing a consistently effective approach to teaching pedagogy across the school, which significantly contributes to exceptional outcomes in this subject.
- The school is a deeply spiritual community, rooted in prayer; meaningful experiences are offered that enrich the lives of its members, with pupils actively involved in the planning, delivery and evaluation of prayer and acts of collective worship.

## What the school needs to improve

- Review the relationships, sex and health education (RSHE) curriculum to ensure that the associated Catholic theology underpinning each area of study, is clearly identified and taught within these lessons.

## 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**

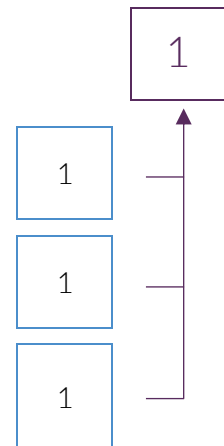
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

**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 across Springhill greatly enjoy being part of a Catholic community and fully understand the mission of their school, embracing it enthusiastically at every opportunity. Their understanding of the Catholic ethos, shapes their excellent behaviour and positive relationships, resulting in an environment in which all feel happy and supported to succeed. Pupils have a very strong awareness of the teachings of Jesus within the Gospels and this frames the way that they behave towards each other, as well as their attitudes toward the poor and needy. For example, as part of the pupils' extensive work around Catholic social teaching, the pupils have eagerly committed to a whole school initiative to raise money to support a charity in South Africa, which seeks to build a new home for a vulnerable family. The Faith in Action group exemplifies the eagerness of pupils to participate in other similar activities and many pupils also take a highly active role in delivering chaplaincy provision, which they carry out with fervour.

Both the mission statement 'together we will do our best for Jesus', and the charism of Springhill school, permeate every facet of school life and have a remarkably positive impact on the lives of everyone within the community. The school is very diverse in nature with pupils coming from a range of cultures and traditions. Despite this, everyone is united around the strong Christian ethos that permeates everywhere. Staff come from a range of backgrounds themselves, but all are highly committed to the Catholic life of the school and act as exemplary role models providing the highest levels of support for the pupils both pastorally and academically. Every part of the school unambiguously reflects its Catholic identity; in particular, the fairly recent addition of a beautiful new chapel, offers all members of the community the opportunity to pray before the Blessed Sacrament. Chaplaincy provision in the school is excellent; the school is blessed with a dynamic and highly effective chaplaincy team, who work hard to provide an

extensive array of vibrant opportunities. Whilst the current relationships, sex and health education curriculum is taught consistently and effectively, it is not explicitly rooted in Catholic theology, meaning pupils have less opportunity to demonstrate their understanding in their written work.

All leaders, including governors, passionately work as custodians of the Catholic mission of Springhill. They are motivated by their own personal commitment to the Catholic identity of the school, ensuring that its mission is celebrated and lived out in every aspect of school life. Subsequently, leaders and governors create policies and procedures that are rooted in Catholic principles. The school actively works with the Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth to promote the Bishop's vision for Catholic education and has formed an effective partnership in which staff regularly support other local Catholic schools. The links with the three parishes that the school serves are extremely strong, with the parish priests of these respective communities being actively involved in school life. The school works very successfully with parents who fully appreciate how staff seek to involve them. One summed up the common opinion by stating 'Springhill is a wonderful, Catholic community. It has been a joy to watch my daughter grow in faith during her time there'. Leaders have worked very hard to ensure that Catholic social teaching permeates both the school curriculum and community attitudes towards the disadvantaged and have enabled children to proactively engage in a range of activities around this. Staff very much recognise that they are well supported by leaders and governors, with one new staff member summing up the general view by stating 'Coming here has been life changing for me, it opened me up to different views about God. I really enjoy being in this school and feel well looked after.'

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

### Religious education key judgement grade

#### Pupil outcomes

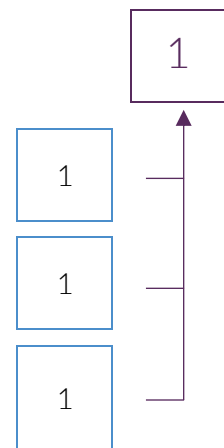
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

#### 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' understanding of the religious education curriculum is excellent and they are developing a very broad range of knowledge, skills and mastery of key concepts. Progress over time for all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, is extremely strong, so that outcomes in religious education are exceptional overall. As they progress, pupils develop the ability to think ethically and theologically about key concepts, which helps them understand and interpret the world around them from a Christian viewpoint. During religious education lessons, pupils are highly adept at articulating what they have learnt, using appropriate religious vocabulary. They are keen to ask questions and deepen their learning in the subject. Pupils consistently demonstrate excellent attitudes to learning and diligently apply themselves in religious education lessons, displaying high levels of independence and concentration. The work in pupils' religious education books is extremely impressive. They take care to ensure that their presentation is of an extremely high standard. They are well supported to self-assess their work so that they have a clear and accurate idea of how to make improvements. As a result of their excellent attitudes to work, the attainment of pupils in religious education is well above average.

Across the school, teachers are very effective in their subject knowledge and pedagogical ability to support pupils in religious education lessons. They have high expectations both of the pupils and of themselves, and their commitment to the religious education curriculum is commendable. When planning lessons, teachers carefully consider what children have previously been taught so that their learning is progressively sequenced. They challenge pupils with probing questions during religious education lessons, so that pupils are familiar with having to explain their understanding; this maximises learning for all pupils. Teachers provide powerful feedback to pupils both during religious education lessons and when marking their books. This

further supports pupils to understand how they can improve their outcomes in the subject. Teachers also ensure that pupils are given the opportunity to reflect on their religious education learning. This is achieved, for example, through periods of prayer in the classroom and enables pupils to link what they have learnt cognitively with how they perceive the world spiritually. The standard of writing in religious education is very strong but teachers also use a variety of creative methods to ensure that learning is always highly engaging.

Leaders and governors are exceptionally committed to ensuring that religious education is taught to the highest possible standard and have made certain that the curriculum stretches all pupils. They make certain that the subject is taught with the same level of priority as mathematics and English; this is achieved by sufficiently resourcing and timetabling religious education and making sure that staff are provided with professional development that meets their needs. Leaders use a range of monitoring and evaluative exercises to continually strive for improvement and their expertise is recognised in the fact that they also support other local schools. Those pupils who have particular needs, such as those with special educational needs, are effectively supported to succeed at a level that is pertinent to them. Likewise, those who are more able, are further challenged so that they can benefit from activities which particularly stretch them. Leaders and governors have developed strong systems to self-evaluate the provision for religious education; for example, they regularly monitor lessons in religious education, check how teachers develop the physical environment to support the subject and also by routinely looking through pupils' religious education books.

## 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

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

1

All pupils across the school, engage respectfully, reverently and with enthusiasm, in regular acts of prayer and worship, which are always of a very high standard. This is evident through their continual attentiveness, humble silence during times of reflection and joyful singing. Pupils are familiar with the range of ways in which Catholics express their spirituality within prayer and liturgy, and they naturally apply themselves to such occasions, across the Church's liturgical year. Pupils have lots of opportunities to be personally involved in the planning and delivery of prayer and celebrations of the word. They undertake these responsibilities joyfully and skilfully, due to the effective support that they have been given. They are also adept at evaluating the opportunities of prayer that they have been involved in and do this routinely. Pupils are able to clearly talk about how their spiritual lives and their capacity for prayer are developing and shaping them into rounded human beings.

Prayer is central to life at Springhill and the community naturally comes together in times of both joy and sorrow to express themselves in prayer and draw closer to God. A daily pattern of prayer and an annual plan of provision ensure that prayer, celebration of the word and liturgies are thoughtfully planned out. Pupils and staff have the opportunity to experience both traditional types of prayer and those which are more contemporary. Staff are highly committed to ensuring that they act as exemplars to pupils in times of prayer and can skilfully and confidently plan a range of prayerful experiences. Pupils, staff and community members benefit from creative approaches to prayer and high-quality resources which are used in its implementation. The singing of jubilant hymns and the use of spiritual music are particular strengths of the school and are carefully used to complement the atmosphere at times of prayer. The school makes creative use of space to further complement opportunities for prayer and liturgy; classrooms all contain beautiful prayer areas, the school is blessed with a beautiful new chapel and a grotto in

the school grounds further emphasises the prayerful nature of the community. The chaplaincy team have worked hard alongside staff and leaders to support parents in their engagement with the prayer life of the school, for example by running a parent rosary group and by providing information to parents of children new to the school on how they can support with them with their prayer lives.

Leaders and governors have developed a highly effective policy on prayer and liturgy. This ensures that all staff not only understand the significance of prayer and liturgy at Springhill but are also empowered to contribute to it. Leaders understand how to support pupils in their prayer lives so that, over their time at the school, they grow a deeper spirituality. This has been achieved by producing a comprehensive, documented strategy for developing pupils' skills of participation in prayer and liturgy. Leaders and governors always ensure that major feast days, holy days of obligation and other significant times within the Catholic Church's liturgical year are marked within the school, either by celebrating Mass or other forms of liturgy. Being blessed with the effective support of so many priests and a deacon, staff always have the opportunity to receive professional development to enable them to grow even more proficient at planning and delivering acts of prayer and worship. All leaders, including chaplains, fully understand the significance of prayer within the Catholic Church and how to enable other members of the school community to develop their spiritual lives. They do this consistently and highly effectively, so that as a result, the prayer life of the school is thriving. Leaders and governors recognise this not only anecdotally but also through their effective systems of self-evaluation.

## Information about the school

Full name of school	Springhill Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	137293
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8523656
Full postal address of the school	Springhill Catholic Primary School, Milton Road, Southampton, SO15 2HW
School phone number	002380 333954
Headteacher	Roxanne Ashworth
Chair of governors	Graham Joslin
School Website	<a href="http://www.springhillcatholic.co.uk">www.springhillcatholic.co.uk</a>
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Newman Catholic Academy Trust
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Academy
Admissions policy	Non-selective
Age-range of pupils	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	November 2018
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

## The inspection team

Jamie Carroll	Lead
Catherine Whatley	Team
Sherlyn Lown	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