



# **The Catholic Year in Review 2025**

*St Teresa's Catholic Primary School —  
Academic Year 2024/25*

*"With Jesus we live, love and learn."*

## Rationale:

This piece of work, the first of its kind at St Teresa's, aims to serve as a moment of reflection so that we can all, as members of this community, look back on all that was achieved in academic year 2024-2025. It is a chance to capture some of our success, which all too often we overlook when focused on the next lesson, event or goal. It is also a chance to consider where we want our school to be this time next year and what we may do to achieve this.

## Data sources:

This information was assembled from a survey sent out in July 2025, which has 140 responses. It was supplemented with information gathered from a review of the school website, operational plan, catholic provision plan, Catholic Self Evaluation Document, book monitoring, lesson observation and student voice.

## Summary of Findings:

- **Strong affirmation of Catholic Life & Mission** across all stakeholder groups.
  - *Parents: 96.6% positive* — “How effectively do you think the school promotes its Catholic life and mission?”
  - *Staff: 95.5% positive* — “How effectively do you think the school promotes its Catholic life and mission?”
  - *Pupils: 94.3% positive* — “How well does our school help us pray and celebrate special times together?”
- **Collective Worship** has been frequent, inclusive, and pupil-involved during 2024/25 (class-led worships, musical liturgy, liturgical season celebrations, nativities, May Procession, Ash Wednesday, Lenten promises).
- **Catholic Life & Mission** has been visible in service, charity, and community: food bank and uniform bank, harvest drive, pupil-led fundraising, parish links, restoration of the Prayer Garden, and a newly blessed Sensory Space supporting pastoral care.
- **Religious education** goes from strength to strength, following teacher training and the rolling implementation of the RED. Lesson observations, student feedback and attainment data all serve as metrics to measure this by.

## 2024-2025 Highlights:

- **Service & Charity**
  - Multiple pupil fundraising initiatives that embody the school's values of love, gratitude, and service such as the Faith Council-led **Harvest Food Drive** and **Big Lent Walk**.
  - Supporting families through the **Food Bank and Uniform Bank** restocked through parish, families and staff donations.
- **Community & Pastoral Care**
  - The creation of a **New Sensory Space** (blessed by Fr Sabu) to support emotional regulation and wellbeing — an investment in long-term pastoral provision and care for the wellbeing of our children.
  - Robust pastoral culture expressed through daily care and responsive support for families in difficulty, externally ratified in our safeguarding review.
- **Witness & Ethos**
  - School-wide commitment to the values of **Love, Accept, Respect, Reflect** with visibly strong behaviour, kindness, and sense of belonging.
  - The **Prayer Garden** fully restored (after first being opened in 2017) — a renewed calm space for prayer and reflection used across the school day.
- **Regular, varied worship** throughout the year: class collective worships (including outdoor worship in the Prayer Garden), key stage/whole-school collective worship linked to the liturgical calendar, hymn practice and musical liturgy, and parish Masses.
- **Liturgical celebrations:** Advent & Christmas (EYFS/KS1 and Y5/6 Nativities), **Ash Wednesday** liturgies and Mass, **Lent** (whole-school sharing of promises), **Pentecost** hymns, **May Procession (2025)** honouring Our Lady, feasts (e.g., **St Basil the Great**), Jubilee Year reflections (Visio Divina with the **Jubilee Icon** and CAFOD).
- **Pupil leadership:** Faith Council regularly leads prayer intentions and supports planning/delivery of acts of worship. Students been empowered to create and lead collective worships in their classes.

## Religious Education in 2024-2025:

- *Staff voice:* 100% positive that children are **engaged in and enjoy RE lessons**.
- *Pupil voice:* **strong positive ratings for RE lessons** and enjoyment of learning.
- **Lesson observations** (both from internal senior leaders and external observers) found that teaching and learning in RE was a strength.
- The establishment of a **Catholic Library** for teachers and TAs (subject knowledge, worship ideas, resources linked to St Thérèse, CCRS, the Mass, and best practice in RE).
- **Attainment in RE was very strong** across Ks1/2, demonstrating alignment between RE attainment and other core subjects.

2024-2025 | Summer 2 | Summative against ARE | Year 2, Year 3, Year 4, Year 5, Year 6, Year 7 | Not Leaver | (172 Pupils)

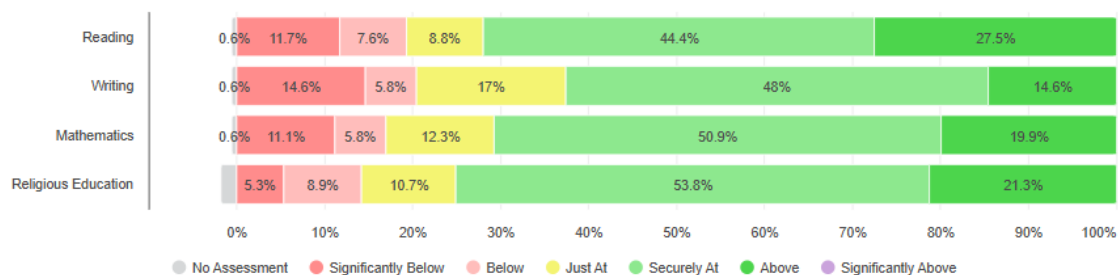
Just At or higher in all subjects

76.9% (130)

Above or higher in all subjects

11.2% (19)

	No Assessment	Significantly Below	Below	Just At or higher	Securely At or higher	Above or higher	Significantly Above
Reading	0.6% (1)	11.7% (20)	7.6% (13)	80.7% (138)	71.9% (123)	27.5% (47)	
Writing	0.6% (1)	14.6% (25)	5.8% (10)	79.5% (136)	62.6% (107)	14.6% (25)	
Mathematics	0.6% (1)	11.1% (19)	5.8% (10)	83.0% (142)	70.8% (121)	19.9% (34)	
Religious Education	1.7% (3)	5.3% (9)	8.9% (15)	85.8% (145)	75.1% (127)	21.3% (36)	



- **Training for implementation of the RED** in Ks2 concluded, and the school prepared for September implementation. The implementation of the RED in Ks1 and EYFS was a success with externally ratified lesson observations highlighting lessons in the younger years as a particular area of strength.

## 2024-2025: Highlights:

- **Prayer & Worship:** We have enjoyed class worships (incl. EYFS-led), outdoor worship in the **Prayer Garden**; **musical liturgy** focused on hymn as prayer; celebration of feasts (e.g., *Christ the King*, *St Basil the Great*); the **May Procession**; **Pentecost** songs of praise; **Ash Wednesday** liturgies and many mid-week masses.



The Prayer Garden was fully restored by volunteers.

- **Parish & Sacramental Life:** regular Masses at St Basil's have allowed for pupil readers and altar servers to serve. These have had strong parish and parental attendance.



School staff and parishioners supported First Holy Communion celebrations.

- **First Holy Communion** support and celebration.

- **Service & Charity:** Faith Council leadership (Harvest Food Drive); **Food Bank** restocked; **Uniform Bank**; pupil fundraising initiatives for national charities



The Faith Council were instrumental in developing service and charity.

- **Special Spaces:** The **Prayer Garden** was restored, **the Shrine** created, and a new **Sensory Space** created and blessed.

- **Celebrations & Performance:** Nativities (EYFS/KS1) and Carol concerts were interwoven with prayer and Scripture. The Easter Tableau was poignant and well received.



Ks1 students prepare for a nativity performance.

- **CPD:** Two members of staff **passed their CCRS** qualification and another enrolled on the course for next year. Teachers engaged with Diocesan training and Senior leaders with Diocesan conferences.

## Impact:

- **Catholic Life & Mission:**  
Tangible acts of service were seen. The explicit Catholic identity was visible in environment and practice. The school sustained and strengthened parish links and pupil leadership (particularly through the Faith Council).
- **Collective Worship:**  
Frequent, inclusive and reverent worship was seen. Pupils planned and lead. Worship reflected the liturgical year and Church teaching. St Teresa's continued its strong singing tradition as prayer.
- **RE:** High engagement was reported by staff and pupils. Outstanding attainment results were seen across key stages. The Catholic Library was created as a staff resource. The curriculum connected to the liturgical year. Teachers engaged in CPD to develop themselves as teachers of RE both through internal training as well as external support from the Diocese and Trust.



"The Big Lent Walk" organised by the Faith Council.



We have strengthened Parish links this year.



RE continues to be a subject beloved by our students.

## Pupil Voice:

### Top strengths

1. *Opportunities to attend mass within the school year: **100% positive***
2. *Student support for charities / raising money for those in need: **98.9% positive***
3. *Help to pray & celebrate special times together: **94.3% positive***
4. *Care from teachers & staff: **90.6% positive***



The prestigious Malaika Adam's "kindness award" celebrates when our children live "The Little Way" in their daily lives.

### Children's quotes

- "Our school is wonderful, and we always have fun... we pray a lot and we have been kind to each other and shown respect."
- "... this school is very kind and it's Catholic... teachers care about us... This school is amazing with kindness."
- "We love God and Jesus Christ; we love, respect, accept, and reflect for each other."
- "We include everyone in our activities and charity work."
- "This school is very kind and Catholic... teachers care about us..."
- "We get to go to whole-school Mass and do collective worship."
- "We have a Prayer Garden... it's lovely and peaceful and really beautiful."
- "We gather together in worship for God in song and prayer."
- "We are a school that is kind and calm. We respect and accept everyone."
- "Ash Wednesday is special... I love the May Procession because we give Mary flowers. And I love God and Jesus."
- "On Ash Wednesday we went to church and had ashes on our heads; it reminds me that Jesus is close."
- "Going to Mass makes me feel closer to Jesus when we hear the Gospel."
- "We went to Mass because we get to pray."

## Parental voice:

### Top strengths

1. *Promotes Catholic life & mission: 96.6% positive*
2. *Embodies Love, Accept, Respect, Reflect: 93.1% positive*
3. *Sense of community; inclusion; pastoral care also rated highly.*



Parents recognised our sense of community and care.

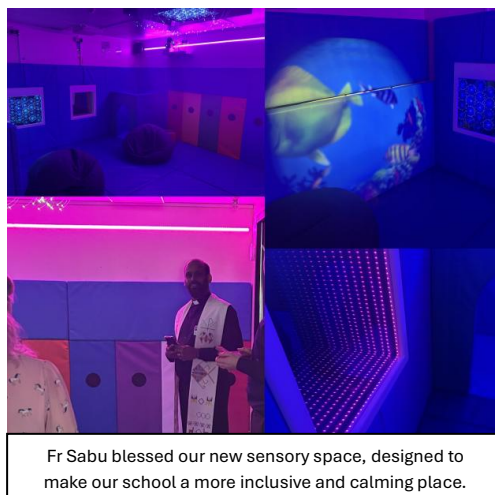
### Parent quotes

- “St Teresa’s is a school that lives Catholicism... my daughter has real respect for her peers and feels a great sense of Catholic community.”
- “Really appreciate the school conducting activities that give... it is a beautiful reflection of our Catholic values in action.”
- “The school really lives its Catholic faith. My child is developing real respect for others and feels part of a strong Catholic community.”
- “We appreciate the way the school gives to others—it’s a beautiful reflection of Catholic values in action.”
- “During a difficult financial period, the school’s food bank and the kindness we received made a huge difference to our family.”
- “At the school events we attended, the children were reverent, respectful, and so well behaved throughout.”
- “Staff have been there for us—checking in and being present. Their support has meant a lot to our family.”
- “My child was supported through bereavement; staff always had time for her and made sure she was OK.”
- “We love the opportunities for Mass, class collective worship, the May Procession, the Easter Tableau, and the Christmas performances.”
- “Leadership is visible and approachable—we feel listened to and supported.”
- “There’s a strong sense of community and inclusion; we feel welcomed and cared for.”
- “Our child talks about prayer, charity, and service at home—school and parish life are clearly connected.”

## Staff Voice:

### Top strengths

1. *Children are engaged in and enjoy RE: **100% positive***
2. *The school embodies Love, Accept, Respect, Reflect: **95.5% positive***
3. *The school promotes Catholic life & mission, inclusion, community and pastoral care: **95.5% positive***



### Staff quotes

- “... leadership fosters a genuine Catholic ethos with compassion that filters through the whole community.”
- “The class collective worship assemblies are beautiful ways for pupils to lead and share their faith... governors and the parish love attending.”
- “Yes, the children live out the core values daily... they enjoy being close to God and the school facilities support this.”
- “Pupils are engaged, learning about the Catholic faith and Scripture, and talking about what God wants them to do.”
- “Pastoral care at St Teresa’s is exceptional; staff are aware of families in need and ensure the right support is in place.”
- “Colleagues supported me during a difficult time—leadership encouraged me to share concerns and staff showed real care and kindness.”
- “We support families with a food bank and a uniform bank—quiet, intentional acts of service rather than grand gestures.”
- “I’ve experienced amazing support from the school; the kindness and compassion have been second to none.”
- “Children regularly talk about the Catholic ethos and show how they apply RE learning across the curriculum.”
- “There are rich opportunities for Mass and worship—May Procession, Easter Tableau, and Christmas liturgies are highlights.”

## Headteacher's reflection:



“Looking back over 2024–2025, I am deeply grateful for the way our community has lived the Gospel so simply and so well. The year’s evidence—from 140 survey responses and various other data sources—shows a community that prays together, serves together and learns together. It is heartening that this is not only our perception: **Parents**

**(96.6%), staff (95.5%) and pupils (94.3%)** all affirmed the strength of our Catholic life, mission and collective worship.

What most distinguishes St Teresa’s is not any single event, but a consistent habit of following in St Therese’s footsteps with small acts of love that make a big difference. The **Food Bank**, **Uniform Bank**, the **Faith Council’s Harvest work** and Lent initiatives (including the **Big Lent Walk**), and the quiet, daily pastoral attentiveness noticed by families in need, all speak to a school that sees and serves the person in front of us. I was heartened that in an external review by Essex Learning Authority, completely unconnected to the Catholic world, noted that “*excellent professional relationships ... exist between staff, parents and children,*” and that this is “*based on the Catholic mission and values.*” The culture of safeguarding and care has been affirmed in this review; internally, it is felt in classrooms, corridors and on the playground. The restoration of the **Prayer Garden**, establishment of the **Outside Shrine** and the blessing of the **Sensory Space** by **Fr Sabu** have given us places where prayer and wellbeing meet—visible signs of our mission to form hearts as well as minds.

Our pattern of worship has been both **frequent and inclusive**: class-led liturgies (including outdoors in the Prayer Garden), key stage and whole-school worship linked to the liturgical year, regular **parish Masses** at St Basil’s with strong pupil involvement, and a rich **musical liturgy** that teaches pupils to pray in song. Highlights such as **Ash Wednesday**, the **May Procession**, **Pentecost** praise and our **Christmas** and **Easter** celebrations were reverent and joyful. Crucially, pupils did not simply attend—they **planned and led**, growing in confidence as disciples who can proclaim, listen and respond.

Staff voice recorded **100% agreement** that children enjoy and engage in RE, a finding borne out in lesson observations and pupil feedback. Attainment in RE has remained strong and aligned with our standards in other core subjects. This year we consolidated our implementation of the **Religious Education Directory (RED)** in **EYFS and KS1**, with preparation for **KS2** completed for September 2025. Staff formation has been practical and purposeful: the establishment of a **Catholic Library** for teachers and TAs, two colleagues completing **The Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies (CCRS)** (with another enrolled), a comprehensive training programme delivered by our RE lead and strong engagement with diocesan and trust training. All of this ensures that what we believe is taught clearly, coherently and correctly.

Pupils spoke about feeling **close to Jesus** at Mass, about the peace of the **Prayer Garden**, and about **including everyone** in worship and charity. Parents noticed a school that **lives Catholicism**, where children learn **respect**, and where support is offered **quietly and consistently**. Staff highlighted **authentic leadership, pastoral excellence**, and pupils who **live the values** of Love, Accept, Respect and Reflect in the ordinary rhythms of the school day.

**Some priorities for 2025–2026:**

Our review does not invite complacency; it invites deeper fidelity. Building on this year's strengths, we will:

- **Make the mission visible and lived:** refresh sacred spaces, internal displays and classroom prayer corners
- **Increase pupil planning and evaluation:** use an age-appropriate *Gather–Listen–Respond–Go Forth* framework; develop the ways in which we gather pupil voice and next steps following on from collective worship.
- **Build staff confidence:** A CPD programme (both internal and from the Diocese) alongside a new leadership structure will allow for coaching cycles on leading class/whole school worship, especially for newer staff.
- **Implement the RED fully in KS2:** A full roll out across the key stage. Ensure alignment with EYFS/KS1 implementation.
- **Equity and inclusion in RE:** refine adaptive teaching for students high level needs, especially those who use our “St Isabella’s” provision (ensuring greater inclusion for all.)
- **Embed RE Homework task, adapted to the needs of learners,** strengthening home–school links and promoting prayer and religious discussion at home.
- **RE themed clubs** to be fully implemented alongside our extra curricula offer.

My thanks go to our pupils: whose creativity, questions and kindness keep our mission fresh, our staff: who witness daily to Christ's love, our parents and carers: for the trust you place in us, our governors and trustees for their wisdom. I would also thank **Fr Sabu, Sister Andrea** and the whole parish for your support of us. St Therese reminds us that holiness is found in small things done with great love. That has been the story of this year. With God's grace, it will be the story of the next.”



- Mr J. Bottjer (Headteacher)