



CATHOLIC SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

THE NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE INSPECTION OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS, COLLEGES AND ACADEMIES



St Anne's RC Primary School

URN: 119511

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Salford

28 January 2026 – 29 January 2026

Summary of key findings

Overall effectiveness

The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school

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

Religious education (p.5)

The quality of curriculum religious education RE

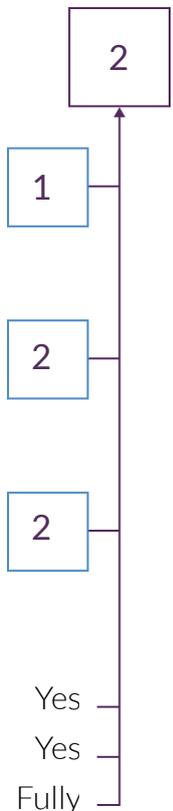
Collective worship (p.7)

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

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

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

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



What the school does well

- The culture of welcome and belonging at St Anne's is deeply embedded, with strong relationships ensuring that pupils, families and staff feel known, valued and supported. Pupils demonstrate exemplary behaviour and highly positive attitudes, creating a calm, respectful and purposeful environment in which learning can flourish.
- Catholic life and mission at St Anne's RC Primary School is inspirational. The school's sense of community and belonging to the family of Christ is evident at every level. St Anne's is fully inclusive, it is awe-inspiring; all are welcomed as equals, nothing is too much trouble, and no one is left behind.
- Leaders demonstrate truly authentic leadership, staying true to their vision for the whole community to embrace the mission of St Anne's and encounter Christ and experience His love every day.
- All staff are highly invested in relationships at St Anne's ensuring that all are welcomed in this family and children are at the heart of decision-making.
- Training is conducive to growth, and because of this staff feel empowered, supported and believed in; this commitment is shared with the pupils who know they are loved.

What the school needs to improve

- To develop a diagnostic approach to feedback in religious education, so that pupils know their strengths and ways in which they record their reflections, to develop their knowledge and understanding.
- To embed opportunities for pupils to plan, lead and evaluate prayer and liturgy across the school, in line with Salford Diocesan expectations.
- To develop opportunities for pupils to apply their knowledge of scripture when planning and leading prayer and liturgy, in order to deepen the learning and prayer life of the school.

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

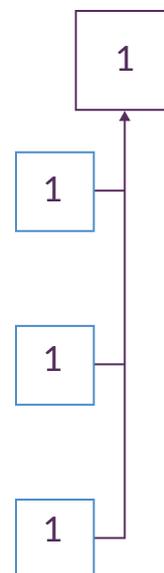
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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



The Catholic life of St Anne's is lived authentically through the daily actions and attitudes of pupils, staff and leaders. Pupils are actively involved in supporting charitable causes, many of which they help to select, developing a strong sense of justice, compassion and service to others. They understand the school's mission clearly and articulate how it shapes their behaviour and relationships. The commitment to 'making tomorrow a better day' is evident in practice and embedded across school life. The school is welcoming and inclusive, embracing children and families of all faiths and backgrounds. Pupils show enthusiasm for learning about scripture and faith and engage positively with opportunities to deepen their understanding. Leaders place a strong emphasis on supporting families within the community, providing timely and compassionate help that has had a significant impact on pupils' wellbeing. There is a clear moral purpose in identifying and supporting those who are vulnerable or marginalised.

Attendance is consistently strong, reflecting pupils' enjoyment of school and their sense of belonging. Pupils are keen to attend and speak positively about the care, opportunities and support they receive. The provision for wraparound care and enrichment activities is outstanding, ensuring pupils are well supported beyond the school day and able to access a wide range of experiences that enhance their personal and spiritual development. Links with the parish are strong and purposeful, enriching the spiritual life of the school and strengthening pupils' understanding of their faith. A culture of welcome is evident in all relationships. Staff are highly visible and approachable, ensuring pupils feel safe, known and valued. As a result, pupils demonstrate confidence, security and positive attitudes to learning.

Parents express pride in the school and value the nurturing, family-centred ethos created by leaders. Displays throughout the school reflect the mission, values and lived experiences of Catholic life, celebrating faith in action. Provision for relationships and health education meets diocesan requirements fully. Staff at all levels are united in their commitment to the school's mission and work collaboratively to ensure that Christ remains at the centre of the community.

The whole school community understands its role within the local area and demonstrates a strong commitment to service. A deeply embedded culture of welcome is evident in the way staff support pupils, families and one another. Staff speak positively about leaders who have created a caring and supportive environment where wellbeing is prioritised. The school is fully inclusive; pupils with complex needs are treated with dignity and compassion and receive high-quality support. Leaders and governors share an ambitious vision for the school, which is clearly communicated and widely understood. Parents and carers are recognised as the first educators of their children and value the support they receive in nurturing their children's faith and wellbeing. Governors provide effective support and challenge, prioritising pastoral care for pupils and staff. They are proud of the school's contribution to the community and its strong parish links, which are recognised as a significant strength.

Religious education

How faithfully the school responds to the call to live as a Catholic community at the service of the Church's educational mission.

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

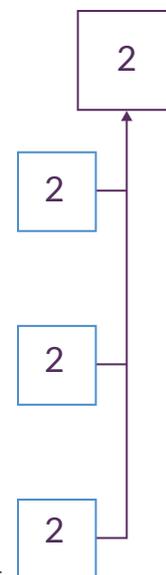
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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



Religious education is valued by leaders and staff and has clear parity with other core subjects within the curriculum. Leaders have recently introduced the new *Religious Education Directory* through the diocesan scheme of work, which provides greater coherence and consistency and ensures the statutory aims of religious education are met. This development is beginning to have a positive impact on teaching and learning across the school. Pupils engage well in lessons and speak positively about their experiences of learning in religious education. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), make progress over time. Pupils' behaviour in religious education lessons is exemplary. They are respectful, attentive and eager to contribute, creating a calm and purposeful learning environment. Relationships between pupils and adults are strong, and pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. In most classes, pupils are supported to ask thoughtful questions, where pupils reflect maturely on scripture, leadership and moral decision-making. Opportunities to work collaboratively are evident in most classes through partner and group talk. Pupils are increasingly able to verbalise their understanding of new knowledge and apply this over time. However, the quality of learning is not yet consistently strong across all classes. In some lessons, presentation does not consistently reflect pupils' best efforts and expectations are not always applied with sufficient rigour. While pupils are able to talk about how their work is assessed, they are not always clear about what they need to do next to improve. Feedback to pupils often lacks the precision required to help them understand how to deepen their learning, which limits progress for some pupils.

Questioning is a developing strength within the school. In some classes, staff confidently ask deep and challenging questions that encourage pupils to think more deeply about faith, scripture and moral issues. Pupils respond positively to these opportunities and articulate their thinking well. However, in other lessons, opportunities are missed to extend pupils' responses or to probe their understanding further. As a result, pupils are not always supported to explore concepts in greater depth or to develop their own questions to drive learning forward. Teachers value religious education and plan appropriate lessons, drawing on their good subject knowledge. The use of strategies such as lesson check in and outs and end-of-branch assessments are developing across school; these approaches are beginning to support assessment for learning, though they would benefit from further refinement to ensure time is used effectively and pupils' understanding is assessed with greater precision. In some classes, limited opportunities for discussion restrict pupils' ability to reflect deeply and make personal connections with their learning. The development of pupils' spiritual and moral understanding is evident across all age phases. Pupils are beginning to make meaningful links between their learning and their own experiences; attitudes to learning in religious education are strong.

Leaders ensure staff receive regular training to support the implementation of the new curriculum, and staff speak positively about the guidance and support they receive. The religious education leader, supported by senior leaders, has established a collaborative approach to curriculum development. Staff work together to plan using the new scheme of work and value the opportunities to share good practice. Leaders monitor provision and outcomes accurately and are aware of the key priorities required to improve consistency in teaching, learning and assessment. Governors have a secure understanding of the strengths and areas for development in religious education. They engage in monitoring activities and ensure the subject is appropriately resourced and prioritised. Leaders and governors demonstrate a clear commitment to continued improvement so that pupils are consistently challenged, supported and enabled to deepen their understanding of faith and learning.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

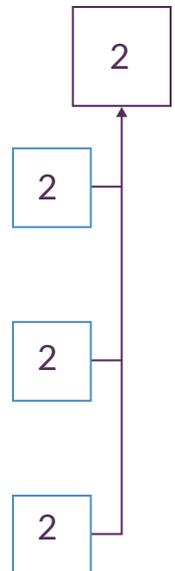
How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

Provision

The quality of collective worship provided by the school

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for collective worship



Prayer and liturgy is a valued part of school life and contributes positively to pupils' spiritual development. Leaders have created a prayerful environment in which worship is central to daily school experience. The presence of a dedicated chapel and a thoughtfully developed prayer garden provides pupils with meaningful spaces for prayer, reflection and quiet contemplation. Displays in shared areas further support this by offering opportunities for spontaneous and reflective prayer throughout the school day. Celebrations of the word are planned regularly and are inclusive, reverent and age appropriate. Pupils behave exceptionally well during celebrations and demonstrate a deep respect for prayer and reflection. All pupils participate fully, regardless of faith background, and feel valued and included. This inclusive approach reflects the school's commitment to welcoming all members of the community while remaining firmly rooted in its Catholic identity. Pupils are confident in the structure and purpose of prayer and liturgy and understand the importance of scripture within it. They listen attentively to the word of God and are able to make links between scripture and their own lives. Pupils speak thoughtfully about how the Gospel message encourages them to 'go forth' and live out what they have learned through acts of kindness, service and care for others. This demonstrates that worship is not only prayerful but also meaningful and lived out beyond the act itself.

Prayer and liturgy follows a consistent structure, enabling pupils to feel secure and confident in participating. Pupils are increasingly involved in planning and leading worship, with support from adults. They read scripture, lead prayers and support responses with growing confidence. Pupils show enthusiasm for these roles and are eager to extend their involvement

further, particularly through chaplaincy and leadership opportunities. While pupils are developing confidence in leading elements of prayer, opportunities for them to independently select and share scripture are not yet fully embedded across the school. Music plays a significant role in celebrations, and enhances pupils' engagement. Pupils participate enthusiastically in hymns and songs, responding respectfully during moments of quiet reflection. Staff model prayerful behaviour effectively and support pupils to engage meaningfully. As a result, worship is calm, purposeful and spiritually uplifting.

Leaders provide clear guidance and support for staff in planning and leading celebrations of the word. Resources are used effectively to ensure prayer is rooted in scripture and reflects the liturgical year. The annual plan for prayer and liturgy supports staff well and ensures that significant seasons and celebrations within the Church's calendar are recognised and celebrated appropriately. Monitoring of prayer and liturgy takes place, and consequently leaders have an understanding of strengths and areas for development. While pupils are eager to extend their leadership roles, further opportunities are needed for them to plan, lead and evaluate celebrations more independently. In addition, increasing opportunities for pupils to share scripture more widely and creatively would deepen their ownership and understanding of prayer. Links with the parish strengthen the school's provision. Pupils benefit from opportunities to join the celebration of Mass and participate in parish life, supporting their understanding of belonging to a wider faith community. Governors understand the importance of prayer and liturgy within the school and ensure that resources are prioritised appropriately. Leaders and pupils alike are enthusiastic about extending the use of the chapel further, recognising its potential to enhance prayer, liturgy and reflection across the school. Celebrations are inclusive and reverent. Pupils participate with respect and enthusiasm and demonstrate that the Gospel message is understood and lived out in daily life.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Anne's RC Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	119511
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8893504
Full postal address of the school	Feilden Street, Blackburn, BB2 1LQ
School phone number	01254 580462
Headteacher or Head of School	Mr Adam Pierce
Chair of Governors	Rev James McCartney
School Website	www.stannesblackburn.co.uk
Trusteeship	Diocesan
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	23 January 2018
Previous denominational inspection grade	Good

The Inspection Team

Josephine- Anne Butterworth Lead

Gemma Shakespeare-Regan

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