



CATHOLIC SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

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



Ss Aidan & Oswald RC Primary School

URN: 105721

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

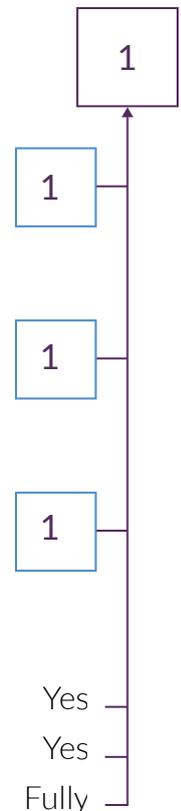
Collective worship (p.7)

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

- Pupils are religiously articulate and confident, using subject-specific vocabulary fluently to express complex theological ideas, supported by skilful and incisive questioning from teachers.
- The mission is central to the life of the school. It is known and lived by the community, which is characterised by deep respect, exemplary relationships and a strong culture of welcome.
- Prayer is embedded in school life. Reflection through prayer journals enables pupils to engage thoughtfully with their faith and make meaningful links between prayer and action.
- Behaviour for learning in religious education is outstanding. Pupils show high levels of engagement, concentration and enthusiasm.
- Leadership of religious education is strong and purposeful. The subject leader provides clear direction and drives continued improvement in curriculum and mission.

What the school needs to improve

- Ensure that pupils' written work consistently demonstrates the depth of religious literacy evident in their oral responses, so that written outcomes reflect theological precision, secure subject-specific vocabulary and sustained conceptual understanding.
- Develop a consistent, rigorous and systematic process for evaluating collective worship, ensuring that pupil evaluation is planned, searching and directly informs well-targeted improvements to the quality and impact of prayer and liturgy.

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

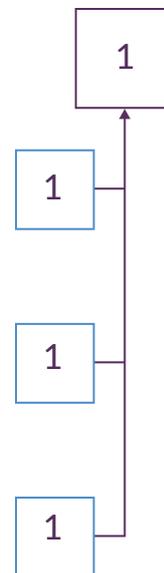
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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



Mission is central to everything the joyous community of Ss Aidan and Oswald's does. The school personifies a strong Catholic identity in which everyone is valued and respected through the weekly 'SHINE mission'. Pupils demonstrate a pervasive culture of respect and care, firmly rooted in their spiritual and moral development. Catholic social teaching is known throughout the school and most pupils articulate confidently how they are called to live this out in their community. Leadership groups such as the 'Growing in Faith Together' (GIFT) team and the 'Stewards of Creation' group provide meaningful opportunities for pupils to respond to local and global issues. Pupils embrace these responsibilities willingly, embodying the example of Jesus in their actions. Year 6 pupils apply and are interviewed for GIFT positions, demonstrating their desire to serve others and make a tangible difference to charities such as Cafod. This commitment reflects pupils' growing understanding of faith in action and their responsibility to contribute to the common good.

Across the school, the SHINE mission is regularly revisited and clearly understood by pupils, staff and families, ensuring that the mission remains central to daily life. This is reflected in the outstanding pastoral care provided, anchored in strong, trusting relationships from the earliest stages of a child's journey at Ss Aidan and Oswald's. One parent describes their child as being 'enriched by Catholic education' through the opportunities offered to live out the mission each day. Such testimony typifies the strong sense of community in which the school goes the extra mile to support all members of its loving family. Staff serve as exemplary role models, witnessing to the mission through relationships characterised by love, respect and compassion. The school community warmly welcomes families of all cultures and faiths,

ensuring that every individual is honoured in their dignity. The physical environment visibly reflects the school's Catholic identity, including a whole-school Pilgrims of Hope display which celebrates faith and inclusivity. Provision for relationships and health education meets statutory and diocesan requirements through the implementation of the 'Life to the Full' programme, supporting pupils' holistic development within a faithful Catholic framework.

Under the passionate and deeply committed leadership of the senior team, Catholic life and mission are prioritised at every level. The school is highly regarded within the wider community and is supported by a parish that continues to grow in strength. A governing board with a broad range of skills works to ensure that pupils are given the best opportunities to pursue their mission with confidence and determination. School policies clearly prioritise and safeguard the Catholic identity of Ss Aidan and Oswald's. Leaders recognise the vital role parents and carers play as the first educators of their children and actively nurture these partnerships, strengthened further by strong parish links and the support of the recently appointed parish priest. Parents speak warmly of the school's commitment, often remarking that it 'always goes beyond for everyone.' The school works closely with families and staff, offering extensive support and formation, particularly for those facing challenging circumstances. Self-evaluation of Catholic life is detailed and informed by the views of stakeholders, ensuring that improvement is purposeful and mission-focused. Ongoing professional development in Catholic life deepens staff understanding and strengthens their contribution to the school's mission.

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

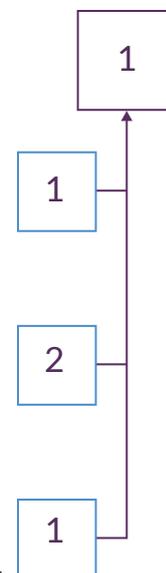
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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



Pupils at Ss Aidan and Oswald's demonstrate highly developed oracy skills in lessons rooted in scripture and aligned closely with the *Religious Education Directory*. They speak fluently and confidently, articulating theological reasoning and offering thoughtful, critical responses appropriate to their age and stage of development. Across year groups, pupils make strong progress in knowing and remembering more through a carefully adapted curriculum. Most pupils demonstrate a clear understanding of how religious commitment shapes their daily lives and explain how faith influences their decisions and actions. Contributions are respected and encouraged, fostering an inclusive learning environment in which pupils feel secure expressing their views. Pupils work independently with confidence and collaborate effectively, taking initiative in their learning. Written work reflects growing creativity and theological understanding, though consistency in high-quality presentation and depth remains an identified area for refinement as the curriculum embeds. Pupils are deeply engaged and demonstrate exemplary behaviour and enthusiasm for learning. Attainment compares favourably with other core subjects. Most pupils understand clearly what they need to do to improve and make further progress, though a small minority would benefit from more precise guidance to secure this consistently.

Staff demonstrate secure subject knowledge and a sound understanding of how pupils learn in religious education. Planning is effectively linked to the liturgical year, enabling pupils to engage meaningfully with scripture and make connections to collective worship. In lessons observed, teachers selected appropriate scripture passages that built on prior learning.

Questioning is used well to assess understanding and address misconceptions, supporting most pupils to deepen their responses with guidance. Pupil effort is recognised and celebrated, contributing to a positive climate for learning. Teachers provide feedback that supports pupils in understanding what they have achieved and how they might improve; however, this is not yet consistently precise enough to ensure all pupils have complete clarity about their next steps. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) is strong, with adapted tasks and effective use of visual stimuli enabling meaningful access to religious concepts. Resources are used appropriately to support learning, and respectful dialogue is promoted across classrooms. While oral responses demonstrate depth of understanding, written work does not yet consistently capture this fully. Overall, teaching promotes good progress for most pupils, with clear next steps identified to strengthen consistency in written outcomes and feedback.

Leaders and governors ensure that the religious education curriculum is a faithful and coherent expression of the *Religious Education Directory*. The curriculum has been thoughtfully planned and refined before implementation, ensuring progression and parity with other core subjects. Leaders demonstrate rigorous and reflective self-evaluation, identifying precise areas for development, including the balance between spoken and written outcomes. Ongoing professional development has been purposeful and effective, securing strong staff understanding and commitment to the new curriculum. The religious education subject leader provides inspirational direction and expertise, driving improvement and modelling high expectations. Exposure to scripture is purposefully woven throughout the curriculum, with leaders continuing to refine and enrich provision. Strategic oversight, strong formation and clear ambition ensure that religious education remains central within the life of the school and continues to move forward with clarity and purpose.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

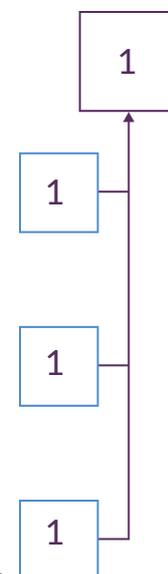
How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

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



Pupils appreciate the wide variety of prayerful experiences provided to them including Celebration of the Word, guided meditation, Visio Divina and communal singing. They are reverent, attentive and responsive in all opportunities offered and can speak with enthusiasm about how these bring them closer to God and allow them to feel calm and find peace. The enthusiasm of prayer leaders and their collaboration with the headteacher to plan and lead prayer and liturgy inspires others and motivates them to take increasing responsibility for liturgical ministries. They can talk confidently about how they plan these opportunities, with a particular enthusiasm for planning missions which will help improve their experiences in school. They can reflect on their prayerful experiences and the impact this has on them within their school, homes and local community. They would benefit from now developing this to consider how to use their experiences of prayer to support their commitment to the wider world through Catholic social teaching.

Prayer and liturgy are central to the life of Ss Aidan and Oswald's, with a pattern of prayer throughout each day and across the week, as well as planned opportunities to celebrate events within the liturgical calendar. There is a commitment to linking prayer to the school mission through the 'statements to live by' underpinned by a comprehensive understanding of scripture and the Sunday gospel each week. Alongside comprehensively planned prayer pattern, meaningful opportunities for spontaneous and reflective prayer are also planned using prayer journals and woven into class Celebrations of the Word. The pupils talk confidently about the regular opportunities they are given to reflect on the gospels and what they mean to them as well as the use of *Mark 10 Mission files* which engage them with

scripture. Staff are inspiring models of exemplary practice, and the pupils particularly welcome the support of the headteacher in helping them to plan class Celebrations of the Word. There is a clear commitment to creative and artistic opportunities to engage pupils: with pupils encouraged to pray with charcoal, reflect on artwork and their own ideas independently and creatively. Prayer spaces are well developed in classrooms, and the peace garden has been well developed to be a space that is cherished by pupils and staff, with the pupil 'Stewards of Creation' incorporating outdoor Stations of the Cross for Lent. There is a commitment to working with families to involve them in the prayer life of schools, with families invited to develop prayer stations with their children, a travelling nativity and regular Mass in church. The school works closely with the parish priest to secure a flourishing partnership with the parish and his enthusiasm for developing the prayer life of the school and pupils is welcomed and appreciated.

Leaders have developed an annual plan of provision, prayer progression policy and prayer pattern overview to ensure it is accessible and relevant; they work closely with staff to build confidence and skill in planning and leading prayer. This includes frequent opportunities for training, coaching and modelling as well as utilising the skills of the parish priest to develop an understanding of the richness of Catholic tradition including the Blessed Sacrament, Schoenstatt pilgrimage and Quarant'ore. Governors work closely with senior leaders to understand the development of prayer and liturgy across school, in line with the new directory. Through the annual plan of provision, there is a commitment to ensuring there are regular opportunities to celebrate the Eucharist as well as provision for the sacrament of reconciliation during the year. Leaders are enthusiastic and relentless in their commitment to planning and providing resources, support, professional development to ensure prayer and liturgy is at the central to the Catholic life of the school in a way that is inclusive and meaningful. They are determined to ensure 'every pupil has a genuine and personal encounter'. This is known, understood and appreciated by all members of the school community.

Information about the school

Full name of school	Ss Aidan & Oswald RC Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	105721
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	3533363
Full postal address of the school	Roman Road, Royton, Oldham, OL2 5PQ
School phone number	0161 652 2558
Headteacher or Head of School	Mrs Catherine Brogan
Chair of Governors	Mr Michael Madden
School Website	www.ssaoschool.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	20 March 2018
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

The Inspection Team

Matthew Lawrence Lead

Kathleen Mckeating

Sinead Colbeck

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