



St Thomas Of Canterbury Catholic Primary School

URN: 138828

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Hallam

3 December 2025 – 4 December 2025

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

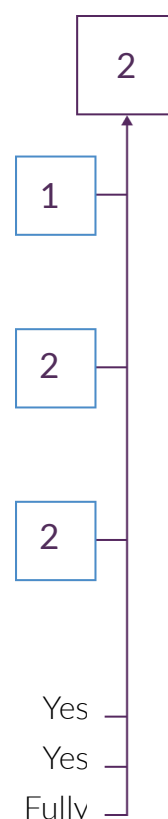
Collective worship (p.7)

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



Yes

Yes

Fully

What the school does well

St Thomas of Canterbury benefits from leaders, including governors, who are inspirational in the example they show to others, living out their faith as authentic guardians of the Catholic life and mission of the school.

There is a palpable sense of community at this school, evidenced in the quality of relationships fostered and nurtured at all levels.

Inclusive practice lies at the heart of how staff approach their work, which means that pastoral care and support for those in need is prioritised at all times.

Pupils show a good depth of knowledge in religious education lessons, recalling and discussing what they know with ease.

When praying and singing together, pupils show reverence, interest and enjoyment.

What the school needs to improve

Empower pupils and staff to be able to explain and explicitly link the school's mission with how this faith community lives and works in practice.

Where pupils complete written work in religious education lessons, ensure that the content and depth of knowledge in workbooks fully reflects the quality shared in verbal responses.

Provide support so that pupils can build up their skills when participating in, and ministering to others, in 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

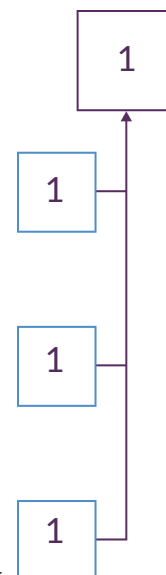
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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



Pupils are proud ambassadors for their school and are a credit to the community of St Thomas of Canterbury. They highly value the school's mission and values, which shape their understanding of how we should treat one another: 'Let all you do be done with love' is a much-recited line from the recently reviewed mission statement. Pupils reflect in their own behaviour the example demonstrated by leaders. This is seen through their impeccable manners, consideration of the feelings of others, and joyous approach to school life: furthermore, these qualities reveal pupils' deep respect for themselves and others, creating a culture of compassion which is striking. Pupils talk openly about the school's Catholic nature, though rarely go as far as to link this directly with their own faith, or explicitly link it with the new mission statement. However, this does not detract them from a deep commitment to charity work, as they devote themselves to raising funds for Cafod, the hospice, and a local foodbank, 'so the poor get fed and aren't vulnerable and they don't get left out'. The 'disciples' and 'pupil parliament' show dedication and pride in their roles, keenly seeking opportunities to influence improvements, for example through litter-picking on the school site, and caring for other people.

Each child is known and loved at St Thomas'. There is an unwavering commitment from all staff to ensure that the mission of the school is embraced and, in doing so, they strive to 'do all things in love'. Staff do not always articulate this as strongly as they live it, since they are modest in their approach and do not overtly link their actions with the faith dimension of the

school, despite representing it so effectively and being able to quote the new mission statement. There is an established ethos of welcome shown to all, in a spirit of openness which is extended warmly to the most vulnerable but also enjoyed by all members of the school community. Staff reflect on the fact that they are a close-knit community, where 'everyone scoops you up'. The Hive, where pupils with a range of special educational needs receive some or all of their education, epitomises this Catholic ethos and philosophy: pupils thrive as they laugh, learn and grow alongside adults who understand their specific needs and try at all times to extend pupils' skills and abilities as well as their confidence and self-belief, demonstrating that, 'integration has blossomed here'. This professionalism and expertise is replicated through the school, in classrooms, and beyond.

Leaders ensure that Christ is at the centre of the school, and all decisions and plans reflect this commitment. Senior leaders inspire those around them: staff recognise the authenticity of the senior leadership team, who have guided and supported them with high levels of professional and pastoral support; parents are overwhelmingly positive, as they feel that, 'the values of the school are impressive' and that the headteacher is, 'always available, always smiling, and knows every child's name'; schools within the diocese benefit from the strong partnerships which leaders have developed, selflessly sharing with colleagues to help Catholic education across the St Clare Catholic Multi-Academy Trust and the diocese. Governors are highly ambitious for the school, proactive and determined in the support and challenge they employ in their quest for continuous improvement. New staff highly rate the induction they receive, citing the coaching and mentoring from senior leaders as invaluable, and recognising that the high quality of support is extended to all colleagues through a careful, annual plan of 'professional development meetings'.

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

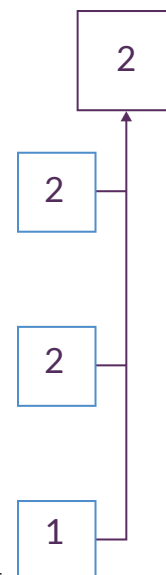
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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 enjoy their lessons in religious education. Those in Key Stage 1 like their learning because, 'We get to learn about God'. Pupils across the school happily contribute to discussions, listen carefully to the thoughts and ideas of others, and pay attention to their teachers. Pupils demonstrate strong recall of previously learned information, which helps them in verbalising and extending their responses during question and answer sessions. To some extent, pupils are able to express their learning through the completion of charts, pictures, storyboards and labelling, as well as pieces of writing. However, although written work is well presented, it does not consistently reflect the understanding pupils demonstrate verbally, nor does it show the depth or extent of knowledge shared by pupils when talking about their learning. Nevertheless, pupils have strong independent skills: they can work on their own or with a partner to complete tasks in a timely fashion. Key Stage 2 pupils fully recognise that they are well supported by staff, and demonstrate self-motivation, saying, 'When we need help, they try and help us - but they don't just tell us the answer, so then we need help less and less and less!' Learning behaviours are positive, meaning that time in lessons is not wasted and pupils are mutually supportive of their peers.

The rapport staff strike with pupils leads to warm and positive relationships in lessons which, in turn, creates a supportive culture of learning. Teachers have good subject knowledge; in addition, their pedagogy and teaching styles are effective. This is because they follow a clear and established pattern for lessons: for example, 'pair and share' activities are given to help

pupils to rehearse their ideas orally with a partner; teachers use a 'call and repeat' model to help key learning 'stick' because pupils can hear themselves reiterate important points; picture 'widgets' help pupils of all ages to recognise the sequence of a story, piece of scripture or theological concept in a very accessible way. However, opportunities are sometimes missed for pupils to fully capture their knowledge in workbooks, since the activities set, according to the age and capacity of pupils, do not consistently enable pupils to write in enough length or make multiple links to demonstrate what they actually know. A strength in religious education teaching is the focus on ensuring that all groups of pupils, regardless of ability, receive the support they need to improve and develop their learning.

Leaders made the brave step to embrace the new _Religious Education Directory_ at an early stage and have been planning a revised approach to religious education lessons over the last three years. Leaders are proactive in supporting teachers and visiting lessons to immerse themselves in religious education, testing out the successes of planning and resources, such as the helpful 'knowledge organisers' which scaffold learning for pupils across the school. Consequently, they have won the hearts and minds of staff, who share the inspiring vision of both the leader for this subject and the headteacher, to keep religious education as the 'core of core subjects' at St Thomas'. As a result, leaders, including governors, ensure that religious education has parity with subjects such as English and maths in terms of dedicated time on the weekly timetable and in professional development sessions. Leaders at all levels know the strengths within religious education as a result of regular and honest monitoring and evaluation activities. An example of this is found in their identification that focussing on the careful design of tasks in lessons, using creative approaches, is a valuable 'next step' in the school improvement journey for religious education.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

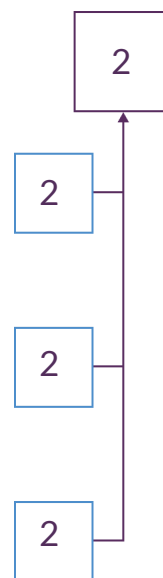
How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

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 respond well to the prayer and worship celebrated in the school, using action, gesture and Makaton signing to reinforce the messages being shared and understood. Pupils are interested and engaged, and the quality and breadth of their singing is a highlight. They enjoy having opportunities to plan and prepare for celebrations of the word; they demonstrate an emerging confidence about this, though they are at an early stage of developing their skills. As participants, pupils show reverence and the ability to respond appropriately; however, they are not used to reflecting deeply on their experiences of prayer or talking about what it means to them beyond making simple links. They have, however, significant influence on each other: for example, Year 5 pupils show great commitment and an exemplary attitude to their 'buddies' in the reception class, positively impacting the faith development of their younger peers. Parents report that they and their family members are struck by the depth of faith demonstrated by their children, such as making the sign of the cross at teatime and re-enacting assemblies at home in their independent play. The school's 'disciples' have a say in shaping the prayer life of the school, for example in dressing the chapel for use, preparing slides for a presentation during celebrations of the word, and planning ahead to prepare the prayer garden for when the weather improves.

There is an established rhythm of prayer in the school, which is valued by all: prayer is recognised as a special time for the whole community. Staff provide a range of experiences which reflect the tradition of the Catholic Church, including grace before meals, use of the

rosary at key times in the liturgical year, and daily morning prayers: Key Stage 2 pupils pray the latter in the playground, while parents are present, before they enter the school building. Prayer and liturgy in the school hall allow the community to gather as a whole, for example to share a daily Advent reflection. In classrooms, staff work hard to support pupils to develop their skills and knowledge about how best to plan and share meaningful times of prayer which can be enjoyed by all present. In the best examples, scripture is appropriate for the given theme, such as 'hope', and the gospel is referenced and introduced correctly. Where pupils need support to keep the flow and pace interesting when they are ministering to their peers, the most capable teachers prompt effectively, and intervene subtly without dominating the occasion.

Leaders have worked hard to develop a clear strategy to help pupils build up their skills in participating, planning for and leading celebrations of the word; this skill strategy also acts as a useful resource for staff to support pupils' increasing independence. The effectiveness of this is variable at present, though it is at an early stage of implementation. A strong partnership with the school chaplain is bearing much fruit: links with him are having a positive impact on the whole school community, and his knowledge alongside fellow governors is supporting school leaders in their drive for improvement. Opportunities to celebrate the Eucharist in school are embraced. Parents recognise how hard leaders and governors are working to reach out to and strengthen relationships with the parish, and comment that they would like the parish to reciprocate more readily. Senior leaders are unwavering in their commitment to prayer and liturgy and ensure that this has priority within school improvement policies, plans and practice.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Thomas Of Canterbury Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	138828
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	3733414
Full postal address of the school	St. Thomas of Canterbury Catholic School, CHANCET WOOD DRIVE, SHEFFIELD, S8 7TR
School phone number	0114 2745597
Executive Headteacher	
Headteacher or Head of School	Mrs Louise Clements
Chair of Governors	
School Website	www.st-tc.co.uk
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	St Clare CMAT
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Academy
Admissions policy	
Age-range of pupils	3 - 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	24 January 2019
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

The Inspection Team

Fionuala Anne Boucher	Lead
Thomas Kowalski	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