



St Hugh's Catholic Primary School

URN: 106340

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Shrewsbury

29 April 2026 – 30 April 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

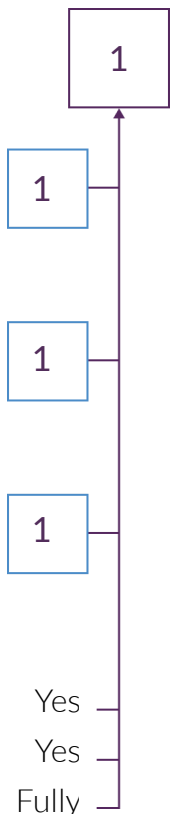
Collective worship (p.7)

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



Yes

Yes

Fully

What the school does well

- Pastoral support for the social, emotional and academic needs of all pupils creates an atmosphere of care where children feel valued and respected.
- The commitment to the Catholic life and mission of the school develops flourishing partnerships with the parish, families and local Catholic schools.
- The retention of knowledge and understanding of what pupils have learned in religious education means children make excellent progress from their starting points.
- Active participation in a wide variety of prayer and liturgies throughout the year develops pupils' spirituality which guides their daily lives.
- Supported by the governors, senior leaders and staff are exemplary role models for pupils.

What the school needs to improve

- Refine the established monitoring procedures of religious education to include a rigorous review of planned action, which sustains outstanding teaching and learning at St Hugh's.

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

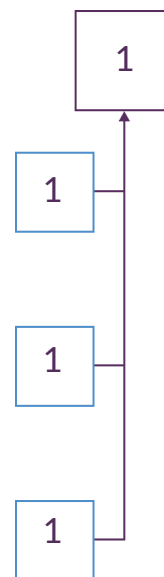
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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 at St Hugh's know their mission statement and can articulate what it means, explaining if they 'walk in the footsteps of Jesus, we are his disciples trying to be like him'. They feel valued because teachers give them time to talk and 'they listen and cheer you on', which reflects the positive atmosphere in which the pupils learn. They are encouraged to 'be the best they can be'. Pupils embrace opportunities to be part of various leadership groups, for example, Mini-Vinnies, Eco councillors, Shining lights and Rights Respecting ambassadors. They are developing an awareness of the demands of Catholic social teaching through these groups, assemblies, religious education lessons and other curriculum areas. This results in them enthusiastically suggesting ideas for fund raising events, supporting the local food bank and charities such as The little green sock. Mini Vinnies organise the MacMillan coffee morning and the choir sings at the local nursing home. They know their faith in action makes a difference beyond the school community and helps them to feel part of God's bigger family. One parent recognises that 'the school mission is reflected in our child's kindness and empathy at home'.

Staff understand their Catholic mission and know that 'Christ is at the centre of everything we do and the values we expect of the children are echoed by the staff. This results in a parent describing St Hugh's as 'a special place where all are known and loved'. Staff joyfully and enthusiastically participate in activities that reflect their mission by supporting many charitable works, attending parish celebrations, and ensuring the behaviour policy is carried out using gospel values as their guide. St Hugh's is described by many as 'a family' and 'we're a big school with a small family feel', which results in quality relationships and staff who are

excellent role models for the pupils. There is a real sense of welcome for all who come to the school, and parishioners, governors, parents and staff recognise this. Pastoral care is a strength of the school and there is an experienced team who provide excellent support for the social and emotional wellbeing of the pupils through a carefully mapped bespoke curriculum. Parents are consulted about the scheme *Life to the Full*, which is used effectively to develop pupils' understanding of relationship and health education. Provision of quality playtime equipment ensures a variety of choice, which pupils enjoy.

Senior leaders and governors have a determined commitment to ensuring Christ is at the heart of everyday life at St Hugh's. They offer significant contributions to all aspects of the Catholic life and mission of the school. Live streaming of Masses enables more parishioners and younger pupils to engage with liturgical celebrations. Senior leaders actively support all diocesan initiatives and generously offer their expertise in many ways for the benefit of other colleagues within the diocese. Links with the parish are a strength. Many governors and staff are actively involved in the parish community and the head teacher successfully promotes initiatives with local Catholic schools. The significant number of positive responses to the survey indicate parents have a deep understanding of the school's mission, which they value and support throughout the year. Leaders and governors actively promote many varied activities to demonstrate their commitment to the most vulnerable. They also ensure that staffing and resources provide excellent support for those with particular needs. The governors know the school well and have a clear understanding of its strengths as they are actively involved in self-evaluation on a regular basis.

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

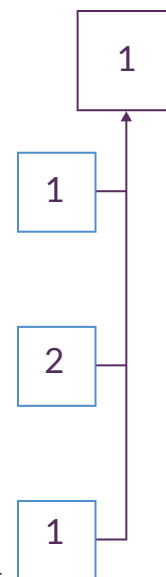
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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 are developing an excellent knowledge and understanding of the religious education curriculum and confidently recall what they learn in previous lessons. Pupils of all abilities make excellent progress from their starting points in the nursery where they have an excellent start to their religious education. They are learning to use correct vocabulary to express their understanding. For example, nursery children know the Bible 'is a special book with very special stories about Jesus'. In the Early Years Foundation stage, children explain that Jesus 'left us the Holy Spirit so he would be with us'. In Lower Key Stage 2 pupils talk confidently about Peter 'learning from his mistakes and Jesus forgave him', and can explain Peter, 'the rock', as being a foundation for the Church. By the end of Key Stage 2 some pupils can articulate differences between St. John's gospel and the three synoptic gospels. Because pupils enjoy their lessons they engage enthusiastically in their learning and as a result can work in groups and independently. They have opportunities to reflect on their learning in lessons so they are able to correct misconceptions or give more detail to previous responses.

Teachers have an excellent knowledge of the *Vine and Branches* and most have a high level of confidence about how to make links between this knowledge and the ways of knowing in the *Religious Education Directory*. Therefore they plan lessons which lead to outstanding teaching in most classes. This ensures pupils make excellent progress during the topic and by the time they reach the end of Key Stage 2 attainment is high. Teachers and support staff value religious education and clearly demonstrate this through high expectations and the links they make to the spiritual and moral development of pupils. Most teachers use effective

questioning skills to guide pupils' learning and deepen their understanding. They provide positive feedback during lessons, and correct misconceptions in an encouraging way. Marking in books follows the school policy and in most classes opportunities are consistently given for pupils to respond to these questions and comments. Adult support is used effectively to ensure all pupils understand and stay on task. There are many outstanding features of teaching and learning, which are evident in lessons, books and in pupils' ability to articulate what they learn.

Leaders and governors work hard to ensure religious education lessons are enhanced through specialist training and a variety of activities ranging from prayer and reflection to active service to the community. The experienced subject leader is respected and appreciated by staff, because she 'guides and motivates us, which gives us confidence to teach the *Vine and Branches*'. Her expertise is recognised outside school as she is a diocesan inspector and a valuable member of diocesan working parties. She is part of a passionate senior leadership team, who together with the governors provide outstanding leadership to ensure religious education is the core of the whole school curriculum and daily life. Leaders ensure the curriculum is carefully planned to meet the needs of pupils in each age group so by the time pupils leave they have made excellent progress from their starting points. Leaders have structured systems for monitoring in place, and governors are invited to spend a day with leaders during their monitoring of religious education which includes learning walks, looking at written work and discussions with pupils. This gives governors a clear overview of the strengths in religious education. Reviewing the impact of this, and other planned monitoring, is not always as detailed as it could be to build on the outstanding teaching and learning which takes place at St Hugh's.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

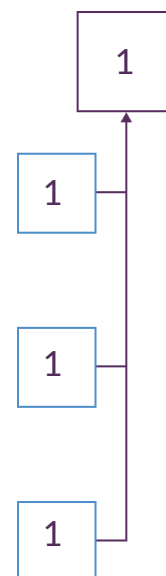
How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

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



The high quality and creative experiences of prayer provided by staff enable pupils to engage and actively participate in a wide range of meaningful times of prayer. The parish priest ensures that pupils have many opportunities to attend Mass throughout the year. Pupils reflect in silence and pray aloud, which brings them 'closer together'. At other times pupils praise and pray enthusiastically in song. They enjoy and actively participate in the rich traditions of the liturgical year which are experienced in a variety of ways. For example, special reflections during Advent, prayer trails and Stations of the Cross in Lent, and crowning of Our Lady and praying the Rosary in May and October. All of these enrich the spiritual life of the pupils, who 'feel calm and ready to raise money and help others'. As pupils take part in the school's liturgical formation they develop the understanding and skills necessary to confidently undertake ministries during celebrations of the word and liturgies. They recognise the positive influence prayer has on their lives and express this as 'we help people by putting our faith into action'

Prayer is central to the life of the school and has a calming impact on the pupils' daily lives, helping them to 'follow in the footsteps of Jesus'. Scripture is well chosen to enhance pupils' understanding of the liturgical year and supports their learning in religious education. Teachers' own appreciation of prayer enables them to plan age appropriate celebrations of the word and this helps pupils to relate scripture passages to their own experiences. Pupils in Key Stage 2 reflect on the servant king and know why they try to 'put others first'. In the Early

Years Foundation stage they regularly experience the awe and wonder of prayer using appropriate artefacts to help them. For example feeling the wind from a fan, symbolising the Holy Spirit, which makes them 'feel happy'. Staff, including senior leaders, are inspiring models of exemplary practice to other staff and pupils by engaging in and leading prayer and liturgy on a regular basis during the week. Teachers provide a welcoming space where pupils feel they belong and where they can focus on the lit candle and show reverence to the Bible. Luca's garden is a special and reflective space outside. Classes regularly visit church for Mass with parishioners but they also enjoy Mass in school or outside on special feast days.

The policy for prayer and liturgy is a meaningful document for staff and is reviewed regularly by leaders and governors. The subject leader provides a wide range of training to explore the *Prayer and Liturgy Directory*, including formation for staff which deepens their understanding of how to pray with pupils of different ages. Diocesan training enriches the provision of prayer and liturgy at St. Hugh's. External trainers provide formation for faith councillors and Mini Vinnies so they can undertake ministries in school with younger pupils. There are flourishing partnerships with local Catholic schools and the parish as a significant number of staff and governors are regularly involved in parish services and liturgies, including children's liturgy, choir, Mini Vinnies, and Extraordinary Eucharistic ministry. During the preparation for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion pupils receive meaningful mementos to highlight the importance of this special time. The senior leadership team are passionate about providing rich experiences for pupils in order to develop their spirituality and are continually looking for ways to further include parents in the prayer life of the school. Self evaluation of prayer is embedded and this includes pupil voice and governors' observations.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Hugh's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	106340
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	3583304
Full postal address of the school	The School Office, Park Road, Altrincham, WA15 6TQ
School phone number	0161 962 1852
Headteacher or Head of School	Mrs Lisa Kelly
Chair of Governors	Mr Hugh Faupel
School Website	www.sthughstimperley.org
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	13 March 2019
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

The Inspection Team

Susan Lyonette Lead

Susan Ralph

Jean O'Keeffe

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