CATHOLIC SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

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

St Clement's Catholic Primary School

URN: 111320

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Shrewsbury

20 May 2026 – 21 May 2026

Summary of key findings

Overall effectiveness — 2

The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school

Catholic life and mission (p.3) — 1

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) — 2

The quality of curriculum religious education RE

Collective worship (p.7) — 2

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	Yes
The school is fully compliant with any additional requirements of the diocesan bishop	Yes
The school has responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection	Fully

This Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection was carried out under canons 804 & 806 of the code of canon law. For maintained schools and academies in England it fulfils the statutory requirements of s.48 of the Education Act 2005. For maintained schools and academies in Wales it fulfils the statutory requirements of s.50 of the Education Act 2005.

What the school does well

- The mission statement is known and lived by all. Staff bear witness to the Catholic life and mission of the school.
- Pastoral support for children and families is a key strength of the school
- Children are engaged in their religious education lessons showing respect and enjoyment.
- School provides a variety of events and services that reflect the liturgical year.
- Leaders and governors place a high priority on the professional development of all staff.

What the school needs to improve

- To develop all children's understanding of the demands of Catholic social teaching.
- Encourage the children's use of subject specific vocabulary in response to questions and so further demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of key concepts in religious education.
- Develop the skills and knowledge of staff so they can support children to confidently plan, undertake particular ministries, and evaluate 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

1

Pupil outcomes

2

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

Provision

1

The quality of provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school

Leadership

1

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school

The children of St Clement's Catholic primary school understand the mission of their school. They participate in many aspects of school life, fulfilling the strapline of the mission statement 'Together in Love and Faith'. Children are happy, confident and respectful to each other, knowing they are valued and cared for by the adults in their school. Behaviour around school and in lessons is excellent. Pupils are eager to take on leadership roles and responsibilities which include being members of the Mini Vinnies group, the school council and as religious education ambassadors. Pupils are able to talk about the charity work school is involved with including fundraising for Cafod, the Runcorn foodbank and a national leukaemia charity. Leaders need to continue to further develop pupil leadership opportunities, especially children in the role of ambassadors, so their work can impact on the spiritual life of all children. All children would benefit from continuing the Catholic social teaching work which has already commenced, so they understand fully why we are called to action to serve others, and what role we play in looking after and caring for God's world.

The mission statement and school values are lived and witnessed throughout St Clement's school community. Staff and parents speak of the school as a family with Christ at the heart of all the school's work. Staff demonstrate their commitment to the school's mission through the support they provide for many of their families and the fundraising activities they organise and are involved with. This includes the harvest festival foodbank, Christmas and Easter raffles and work for the Halton young carers group. There is a flourishing partnership between the schools and the churches in the St Maximilian Kolbe parish and the parish priest is a regular and welcome visitor to school. The school provides a high level of pastoral care for

all children, including the most vulnerable, with staff as positive role models, demonstrating the excellent relationships they share with each other. Parents speak positively of the support offered by the school. The school environment reflects the Catholic nature of the school and offers a welcoming and organised setting for the children to learn. The relationships, sex and health education (RSHE) curriculum is delivered from Reception through to Year 6, with school following the *Life to the Full* programme. It is fully rooted in the teachings of the Church and fulfils all statutory requirements.

Leaders and governors are deeply committed to developing the Catholic faith life of the children and ensure that Christ, and his teaching is at the centre of all their work. Governors are regular visitors to the school; they are enthusiastic and ambitious in their role, and work in close partnership with the leadership team. The school has an excellent relationship with the diocese, with leaders ensuring that all staff access the many training courses that are on offer. The governors would benefit from accessing diocesan training to further support the leadership team with developing the school's Catholic life and mission. There is a flourishing relationship between the school and parish which leaders and governors have ensured has been developed and maintained over recent years. Parents are highly complementary about the school recognising the support they receive as one states 'staff, including the headteacher, take time to listen to concerns'. Leaders show a commitment to supporting new staff with a focussed induction programme which inspires staff to contribute to the Catholic life and mission of the school. Children would benefit from being involved in the school's evaluation of its Catholic life and mission, and so further develop their sense of personal responsibility to care for our world and for others.

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

2

Pupil outcomes

2

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

Provision

2

The quality of teaching, learning, and assessment in religious education

Leadership

2

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for religious education

Children at St Clement's Catholic primary school enjoy their religious education lessons and are developing secure knowledge and understanding as required by the *Religious Education Directory.* During lessons they listen with interest and respond to questions asked of them. They show great care and respect for each other, working well both collaboratively and independently. Behaviour in lessons is excellent and this is apparent in all classes across the school. Pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of many Gospel stories and parables. Key vocabulary from the unit being taught is displayed on the religious education display boards, however, children would gain from a greater focus and encouragement in the use of religious vocabulary when discussing their work in lessons. This would enable them to express their knowledge and understanding confidently and clearly. Though some children have an understanding of how well they are doing in religious education and what they need to do to improve in order to make progress, this understanding is not consistent across the school. The majority of children produce good work but some would benefit from being encouraged to strive to achieve presentation that is of the highest quality.

The majority of teachers are confident in their subject knowledge with all staff recognising and valuing the importance of religious education. Staff create a positive climate for learning with children being encouraged to support and help each other. The religious education working walls and prayer areas display the current work being undertaken. A variety of resources and creative activities are used in lessons, for example, in Upper Key Stage 2, children undertake an engaging interactive activity investigating the events of the resurrection

and its links to scripture. The use of scripture has a high priority in all lessons. Recall strategies are used by teachers at the start of lessons to reinforce previous learning. Feedback, and the celebration of children's efforts by teachers both in lessons and in pupils books, needs further development. This is to ensure children know what they must do to improve their work and in doing so make further progress. Encouragement of pupils to use subject specific vocabulary is needed when answering key questions and children need to be challenged to develop their own questioning, thus further deepening their learning and understanding. Pupils' progress in religious education is in line with other core curriculum subjects.

The Vine and Branches programme, which follows the *Religious Education Directory,* is used to deliver the religious education curriculum for St Clement's school. Religious education is comparable with other subjects in terms of timetabling, staffing and resourcing. Policies for this subject are in place. A variety of activities to support and enhance learning is evident in the majority of religious education books. The religious education subject leader is enthusiastic in her role and is striving to develop this subject to the highest standards. Leaders and governors are committed to ensuring that quality professional development for religious education is a priority and all staff have received training in the new religious education programme via the diocesan training programme. This has been valued by all teaching staff. Governors are regular visitors to school and have undertaken learning walks and the scrutiny of books with the headteacher and deputy headteacher to assess the quality of teaching and learning in religious education. Leaders need to continue to plan and develop regular forensic monitoring of this subject as part of the school's overall monitoring programme to ensure that self-evaluation is accurate and correctly informs next steps for development and progress in the teaching and learning of this subject.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade

2

Pupil outcomes

2

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

Provision

2

The quality of collective worship provided by the school

Leadership

2

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

Children respond well to the experiences of prayer and liturgy provided by St Clement's school, and show reverence and respect in times of prayer. A prayer area is established and dressed correctly in each classroom, with children being able to describe the key times of the Church's liturgical year. Pupils know traditional prayers and daily prayers are said in all classes at the appropriate times. Children have many opportunities to come together for prayer and liturgical services across the school year and are involved in school Masses in a variety of roles. All pupils would benefit from experiencing a variety of different ways of praying, including spontaneous prayer, quiet reflection and prayerful silence, during class prayer and celebrations of the word. Some opportunities for pupils to work with others preparing prayer and liturgy have taken place. Pupil ambassadors need further formation and support so their work can influence the spiritual life of all pupils. Leaders have identified this is an area for further development in line with diocesan guidelines.

Leaders, including governors, recognise the importance of prayer and liturgy for the whole school and parish community and so they are central to the life of St Clement' s school. An annual plan of provision is in place which includes the celebration of a number of liturgical services, including Mass on feast days and at key points during the school year. Other opportunities for prayer take place in line with the liturgical seasons which include families sharing the travelling crib during Advent, the celebration of St Clement's feast day and a whole day dedicated to the celebration of the school values. These values are linked to Gospel values. Seasonally appropriate scripture is used, prayer spaces are provided within classrooms, and a prayer garden is established in the school grounds. Senior leaders

have planned how to include families in the prayer life of the school by inviting parents and carers to stay and pray sessions and other school celebrations. School has worked hard to ensure they have a flourishing relationship with the parish. Senior leaders and staff are good role models in leading prayer and liturgy. However, they require further professional development in helping children to plan and evaluate prayer and liturgy and to undertake particular ministries. Pupils should be encouraged to utilise their creative and artistic skills to enhance prayer and liturgy across the school.

Leaders and governors recognise the importance of prayer and liturgy for the development of the faith life of the school and have ensured that funding and resources have been allocated to this area. A whole school training day on prayer held at Norton Priory supported all staff members with their own spiritual development. The parish priest has delivered training with staff on the writing of prayers. The purchase of Ten Ten and the Mark 10 Mission resources are used to enhance school and class prayer and celebrations of the word. A policy for prayer and liturgy is in place. Senior leaders support staff in the planning and leading of prayer and liturgy and lead by example, with the delivery of weekly key stage assemblies to which all staff attend. Appropriate time is allocated to class prayer. A skill strategy for pupil participation has been developed, however, the effectiveness of this plan is in its early stages. The professional development of staff in the delivery of prayer and liturgy has taken place, however teachers would benefit from further formation to become highly skilled in their own practice enabling them to then form the children.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Clement's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	111320
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8763510
Full postal address of the school	Oxford Road, Runcorn, WA7 4NX
School phone number	01928 572129
Headteacher or Head of School	Mrs Clare Hodgkins
Chair of Governors	Mrs Michelle Buckley
School Website	www.st-clements.halton.sch.uk
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Voluntary Aided School
Admissions policy	Non Selective
Age-range of pupils	4 - 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	17 October 2019
Previous denominational inspection grade	Good

The Inspection Team

Fiona Robinson	Lead
Linda Davison	

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