CATHOLIC SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

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

St Anne's Catholic Primary School

URN: 111347

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Shrewsbury

21 October 2026 – 22 October 2026

Summary of key findings

Overall effectiveness

The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school

1

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

1

Religious education (p.5)

The quality of curriculum religious education

1

Collective worship (p.7)

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

1

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 diocesan directives	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

- Staff create a nurturing, joyful and family atmosphere so pupils enjoy coming to learn at St Anne's.
- The dedicated headteacher is well supported by an experienced team whose commitment ensures the school keeps Christ at the heart of all they do.
- Pupils develop an understanding of Catholic social teaching and know how they can make a positive difference through their actions.
- Pupils develop their knowledge of religious education through a variety of creative and engaging activities and as a result make good progress from their starting points.
- There is a flourishing partnership between school, parish and family which enriches the Catholic life and mission of the school.

What the school needs to improve

- Develop an effective system to monitor and evaluate all aspects of prayer and liturgy which informs future training needs, leading to consistently high quality and creative experiences of prayer for all.
- Develop opportunities for governors' self-evaluation of Catholic life and mission, religious education and prayer and liturgy to ensure it is embedded in the school's cycle of self-evaluation and planned improvements.

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

1

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

Pupils talk confidently about what makes St Anne's special, and they understand that their mission statement, 'Christ is at the heart of all we do' encourages them to 'put others before ourselves'. This makes St Anne's a 'peaceful, joyful and fun' place to learn. The pupils feel valued and cared for and recognise that 'God is always with us'. They embrace opportunities to live out their mission through their relationships and recognise the positive difference they can make to others. Pupils develop an excellent understanding of Catholic social teaching and can clearly articulate how to put their faith into action. Governors believe that Catholic social teaching is 'brought to life here', and pupils experience this in a variety of ways. In Reception, children are able to talk about what dignity and stewardship means to them. Pupils explain that their range of activities support both the local community and the wider world. For example, younger pupils know planting seeds and growing vegetables are examples of caring for God's creation. Key Stage 2 pupils describe how raising money for a school in India in support of WaterAid is an example of showing preference for the poor and solidarity with those in greatest need. The pupils show respect for themselves and others, and behaviour is exemplary within a calm, relaxed atmosphere.

Daily life at St Anne's is deeply rooted in the word of God, and parents know that 'staff treat the children and one another with kindness, respect and compassion'. Therefore there is a warmth that welcomes everyone to St. Anne's community, including families from various cultures and other faiths. Staff ensure their traditions are celebrated and offer opportunities for prayer in their own language, which enriches the lived faith experiences of the whole community. Staff go above and beyond to support the community, and a number of staff and

governors regularly attend Sunday Mass and undertake ministries. Staff also ensure the Mini Vinnies provide opportunities for pupils to support the work of the St Vincent de Paul society. Staff are exemplary role models and the pupils respond positively. Pastoral care for all pupils is a strength and there is an effective team approach to supporting those with the most needs. The environment is well looked after and explicitly shows the Catholic character of the school through displays in communal areas and prayer focus tables in classrooms. Staff work in partnership with the parish to provide a range of experiences that nurture the spiritual and moral development of pupils.

Governors and leaders are deeply committed to the Catholic life and mission of St Anne's, therefore the community is energised by their joyful leadership. The leadership team actively supports diocesan initiatives and is represented on working parties for the Early Years curriculum and other primary school developments. Leaders and governors actively contribute to the flourishing partnership between school and parish in a variety of ways, including supporting catechists during preparation for Sacraments of Eucharist and Reconciliation. The parish provides funds for all Year 3 pupils to be a given a Bible, which becomes a special book for them to use in religious education lessons. Parents' responses to the recent survey indicate their overwhelming support for the school and its commitment to 'encouraging staff and children to live out their faith through actions'. This creates a place where the whole community feels respected. There is a well organised induction programme that is supported by all staff so new members quickly understand what it means to keep 'Christ at the heart of all they do'. A more formal self-evaluation of Catholic life and mission by all stakeholders is identified in the school action plan.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

1

Pupil outcomes

1

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

Provision

1

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

Leadership

1

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

Pupils approach their learning with great enthusiasm because they enjoy religious education lessons. Their behaviour is exemplary and they take pride in their work, which reflects the progress they make in lessons and throughout the year. They develop skills and vocabulary to enable them to clearly express their understanding that religious education can be a guide for their own lives. For example, Key Stage 1 pupils know their 'good actions' are a way of saying 'yes' to God, just as Mary did. In Key Stage 2 they know 'we reflect God's goodness by the choices we make' and the Bible is 'the living word of God'. Pupils respond enthusiastically to a wide range of creative tasks which enables them to express their views and learn in imaginative ways. For example, through drama, hot seating, art and opportunities to produce extended writing in a variety of forms. Pupils in all age groups actively engage in discussions with partners and small groups before eagerly settling to work independently in order to express their own views and consolidate their learning. By the end of Upper Key Stage 2 pupils ask challenging questions. In all classes pupils receive positive written and oral feedback from teachers, however when there is more constructive feedback pupils know how to improve their work.

Teachers work hard to increase their knowledge of the *Religious Education Directory.* They have high expectations of themselves and their pupils, which means religious education is valued by all staff and pupils. This is recognised by parents who know their children 'are proud of their religious education books', and are keen to talk about what they learn during these lessons. In the earliest years, continuous provision is linked very well to the theme, and active

learning is well planned to engage all pupils. In most classes teachers use effective questions and confidently follow up pupils' answers to deepen their understanding or correct misconceptions. However in those classes where the curriculum is relatively new, teachers still have support to deepen their own understanding of the *Religious Education Directory.* All staff appreciate the importance of religious education, and therefore teachers ensure pupils have time and space to reflect on their learning. This nurtures the pupils' spiritual and moral development, and enables them to make explicit links to Catholic social teaching. They understand that 'the kingdom of God can grow from one act of kindness'. Creative and adapted tasks, high quality resources, and the deployment of other adults effectively engage all pupils in their learning.

Leaders and governors are fully committed to developing teachers' knowledge of the *Religious Education Directory* and ensure ample resources are used creatively to enhance the curriculum. Religious education is funded as a core subject, and there is ongoing quality professional development from diocesan opportunities, internal training as well as training from specialist religious education consultants. Because of this, all staff recognise the significance of religious education across the life of the school. Leaders also provide opportunities for moderation within the local cluster of Catholic schools. The subject leader is an exceptional practitioner and has a clear vision of how to develop the teachers' knowledge and understanding of the *Religious Education Directory*. She uses her own expertise and personal commitment to inspire colleagues, and as a result teachers value her leadership and support. This ensures a curriculum that engages and challenges pupils at each age group. Leaders are continually monitoring ways of adapting tasks so that all groups of pupils make good progress by the end of Key Sage 2. Governors undertake self-evaluation of religious education, but it is not embedded in the school's cycle of self evaluation.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade

1

Pupil outcomes

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

1

Provision

The quality of collective worship provided by the school

1

Leadership

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

2

During celebrations of the word in their own classrooms, pupils are actively engaged in communal prayer, personal reflection and spontaneous prayer. When they attend Mass in church, parishioners often comment on their prayerful attention to the liturgy and their praise in song, which brings a 'joy to the parish community'. Pupils can talk confidently about how they pray at different times of the liturgical year, including Advent prayer trails, Lenten stations of the cross in the school forest area, Marian feasts and remembrance in November. Because of these traditions, pupils develop a meaningful understanding of the liturgical year. Pupils willingly undertake ministries because they take part in a formation programme which helps them understand the meaning of their particular ministry. Some pupils do evaluate the quality of prayer, but this doesn't take place often. Prayer has a meaningful impact on the school day with pupils able to clearly articulate how these times help them to pray for those 'who don't have schools or water'. Prayer also leads them into taking action to raise funds by supporting organisations such as Cafod, Missio and the local foodbank. Each class prayer book is a treasured record of the celebrations of the word.

Staff ensure prayer is central to the daily life of St Anne's as well as being a significant part of celebrations during the liturgical year. There is a richness of tradition with a balance between routine and more creative times of prayer. Scripture passages are well chosen and the word is proclaimed with understanding in an age-appropriate way. Teachers find ways of highlighting the importance of the Bible for pupils of all ages. Staff are developing different ways of praying so they are able to provide meaningful experiences of prayer for pupils in their class. All staff prioritise making a peaceful space for celebrations of the word, and in most classes

the atmosphere during the celebration is prayerful. The link between school and parish is highly valued and well-established. As well as the liturgical times of year celebrated with the school and parish, the community regularly comes together to attend school Masses in church, Sunday Masses, and Stay and Pray events. Parents comment on the 'meaningful and joyous experiences of prayer' they share with their children in school and church. These times contribute to the flourishing and valued partnership between school, family and parish.

Leaders have an authentic understanding of the ways of praying. They provide a wide range of meaningful prayer and liturgy during the year. The annual plan of provision clearly identifies opportunities for Mass, celebrations of feasts and liturgies. The policy for prayer and liturgy is a useful document for staff and explains the expectations for pupils as they progress through the school. With the support of the parish priest and deacons, St. Anne's community enjoys a rich experience of prayer and liturgy throughout the year. All feasts and times of sorrow are marked with appropriate prayers or liturgies. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is also offered at key times during the year. Leaders are providing regular development opportunities for staff to increase their confidence and understanding of prayer so they can provide more creative ways of praying with their pupils. An audit of resources for celebrations of the word means staff have good quality artefacts to enhance prayer times. Leaders are highly skilled at supporting staff and monitoring does take place with governors visiting school on a regular basis. However this cycle of monitoring and evaluation does not yet identify specific needs for individuals or lead to consistently high quality creative experiences of prayer for all pupils.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Anne's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	111347
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8953547
Full postal address of the school	Wellington Road, Nantwich, CW5 7DA
School phone number	01270 260783
Headteacher or Head of School	Mrs Nuala Ferguson
Chair of Governors	Mrs Deborah Penny
School Website	www.stannes.cheshire.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	28 September 2021
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

The Inspection Team

Susan Lyonette	Lead
Michael Glynn	

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