



# St Vincent's Catholic Primary School

URN: 148979

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle

21–22 January 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 any additional requirements of the diocesan bishop

Yes

The school has responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection

Fully

## Compliance statement

- St Vincent's Catholic Primary school is fully compliant in relation to the general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishops' Conference.
- St Vincent's Catholic Primary school is fully compliant in relation to the requirements of the diocesan bishop.
- St Vincent's Catholic Primary school is fully compliant in addressing the previous areas for improvement.

## What the school does well

- School leaders at St Vincent's Catholic Primary School are unwavering and unapologetic in their determination to enhance the lives of their children and the wider community. The support that they provide for families is exceptional.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary, demonstrating kindness, care, love and respect for all.
- The quality of teaching and learning is consistently outstanding, ensuring strong progress for every pupil.
- Catholic life and mission permeate every aspect of school life, offering pupils a wide range of opportunities to flourish and grow.
- Worship is central to the school day and equips pupils with the skills and confidence to pray both in and out of school.

## What the school needs to improve

- Ensure a consistent and progressive approach to teaching religious vocabulary so that all pupils develop secure religious literacy.

## 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

1

#### Provision

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

1

#### Leadership

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

1

1

1

Pupils at St Vincent's Catholic Primary School demonstrate a genuine love for this fully inclusive school. They know that they are part of a caring community and recognised as unique individuals, made in the image and likeness of God. One pupil, reflecting on a whole school display, explained, 'We are the same shaped leaves because we are all made in God's image, but different colours because we are all unique.' Pupils take on responsibilities with great enthusiasm and speak passionately about these roles. Each year group is given their own annual mission, for example Year 2 pupils make Christmas decorations for parishioners, and pupils speak confidently about their care and concern for others. One member of the Cafod Club commented that, 'Communities with war and poverty can be helped by little people like us, making big changes and this can change the world.' Their words and actions demonstrate a clear understanding of Gospel values and a deep appreciation of Catholic social teaching principles. The behaviour and attitudes of pupils in all year groups are exemplary, both in lessons and around the school, and they consistently show respect for each other, staff and visitors. The calm and purposeful atmosphere in the well-attended breakfast club is testament to this.

The mission statement is truly demonstrated in the daily lives of all members of the school community, creating a wonderful environment in which to learn. The spiritual, emotional and physical well-being of all is given the highest priority and the school benefits from its own psychotherapist to support pupils further. Pupils with special educational needs are nurtured in this inclusive environment, with the separate learning hub providing consistently high-quality support and care. Parents recognise the impact that the school has on their children, with one response stating that, 'Teachers are making a great imprint on pupils and care greatly about the faith within the school.' Another parent commented that staff, 'look after the children as if they

are their own. They give our kids a better future.' The school environment creates a warm and welcoming place in which to learn and grow. The entrance hall clearly demonstrates the centrality of Catholic life and mission, with a Year 6 pupil stating, 'Peace, truth and loyalty is by the door, so that everyone knows that this is what we do.' Relationships, sex and health education is carefully planned to reflect Catholic teachings and principles.

Leaders and governors are passionate in their pursuit of a joyful school community with Christ at the centre. Parish links flourish through the hard work of the headteacher and the parish priest, who have worked hard to create a meaningful relationship between school and the parish, including with the extended Indian Catholic community. Parents appreciate how the headteacher exemplifies the values of the Catholic Church in all that she does. One parent stated that, 'She does everything. She even shovels the snow.' There is a deep commitment to Catholic social teaching from leaders, and this permeates every aspect of life at St Vincent's, with the most vulnerable at the forefront of all decisions. One governor shared, 'We are unwavering and unapologetic in enhancing the lives of our children and families, underpinned by faith.' Staff feel well-supported by leaders and each other. One member of staff stated, 'I feel constantly supported and cared for. Why would I want to ever work anywhere else?' Staff value the training given through Bishop Bewick Catholic Education Trust and the religious education leaders. The experience and expertise of the highly ambitious governors ensure that they provide appropriate challenge and support and have an outstanding understanding of the school's strengths and needs.

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

### Religious education key judgement grade

#### Pupil outcomes

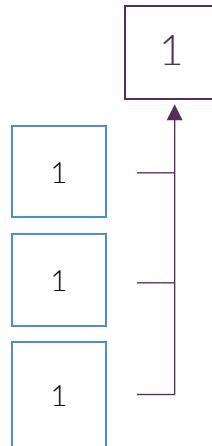
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

#### 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 develop excellent knowledge, understanding and skills in religious education. This is evidenced in their independent learning, their articulate answers offered during lessons and in the written work that is produced. Pupils thoroughly enjoy lessons, leading to very high levels of engagement and interest. They understand the importance of religious education as the 'core of the core subjects', with one Year 6 pupil stating, 'Religious education is more important than English and maths because Christ and God are at the heart of everything that we learn about.' Pupils throughout the school make consistently good progress, with books showing high levels of understanding and ensuring full coverage of the curriculum. Presentation in books is high quality, and pupils are extremely proud to show their learning; however, there are some inconsistencies in pupils' understanding and use of specific religious vocabulary. Pupils are able to articulate what they have learned and are able to reflect critically on their work. Opportunities are provided for pupils to continually self-assess, and they are conscientious in their response to feedback. Behaviour for learning is exceptionally strong in every class, ensuring high levels of engagement even from the youngest pupils. Pupils are highly motivated by the active learning provided.

Highly skilled staff create learning experiences that address and support all pupils' needs. Staff have developed extremely strong subject knowledge, display high levels of confidence and a deep commitment to delivering high quality, well-planned lessons. Pupils speak enthusiastically about being able to take part in dance and drama, to respond to religious artworks and to undertake written activities to demonstrate their understanding and knowledge. The use of artwork to stimulate discussion gives pupils a clear initial motivation for learning. Skilful questioning enables staff to assess pupils' understanding and activities are adapted to support or challenge pupils. Additional adults are deployed effectively to support the learning of pupils

with special educational needs so that they too learn extremely well. It is clear that staff throughout the school teach as a team. From an early age, pupils know how well they are achieving and can explain with great confidence how teaching staff have given them the skills to assess and improve their own work. Teachers have a strong understanding of the impact religious education has on the spiritual and moral development of their pupils. Regular opportunities to assess pupils' work with colleagues within the school and across the diocese ensure that teacher assessment is accurate and enables pupils to develop their skills.

School leaders and governors ensure that religious education is at the heart of the school community. The curriculum has been imaginatively designed for the context and community of St Vincent's, and ensures that all can access a high-quality curriculum. The curriculum is enhanced by many opportunities for enrichment, such as RISE Theatre, outdoor learning and visits to places of worship. The headteacher and her senior leaders ensure that staff are very well supported in implementing the religious education curriculum. The dedicated and committed religious education subject leaders support their colleagues extremely well; their determination and passion for the subject are an inspiration to all. One of their colleagues reported, 'I have been provided with many opportunities for professional development to support my development in religious education. Jesus and Catholic teaching are ingrained within every aspect of the teaching in our school.' The dynamic headteacher, along with her senior colleagues and governors, shares a clear vision and determination for St Vincent's to be exemplary and to be forward-thinking. One governor made this view clear when stating, 'In our school, second best just won't do'. Together, leaders and governors ensure that the school enables pupils to become beacons of faith with a love of learning.

## Collective worship

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

### Collective worship key judgement grade

#### Pupil outcomes

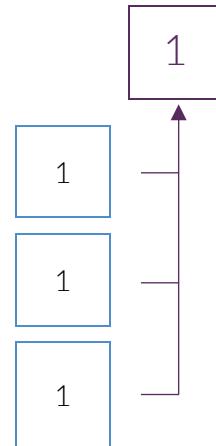
How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

#### 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



Prayer and liturgy are an integral part of daily life at St Vincent's. Pupils are respectful and reverent, enjoying the many opportunities to pray together throughout the school day. There is a clear pattern of prayer throughout the day, and pupils can confidently recite both the school prayer and traditional prayers. There are also many opportunities for pupils to pray spontaneously and privately, such as in the prayer garden or at the focal table in the entrance. They talk about how prayer supports them in their daily lives and that prayer is 'a part of my life'. One pupil commented that when he talks to God in his prayers, 'I can find time in the day to be with peace.' From an early age, and appropriately supported by skilled staff, pupils plan acts of worship and ensure that prayer, scripture, reflection and symbols are included. Pupils are able to discuss what they enjoy and how they would like to make it even better next time. Adults are adept at ensuring that the evaluation always ends on a positive note. Whole school celebration of the word ensures all members of the school community are involved, with pupils confident in leading and reading during the celebration.

That prayer and liturgy are central to the life of the school can be seen in a variety of sources, including the school's website. The inviting prayer garden provides pupils with a calm space in which to take time to pray, as well as being the central focus during Stations of the Cross. Most pupils attend Mass at least every half term as a class, as well as on holy days of obligation and liturgies during Advent and on Ash Wednesday. A rosary club, led by pupils, engages others in the richness of Catholic traditions. Well-chosen scripture is at the heart of prayer and liturgy, allowing children to fully engage and reflect. One parent described how her child returns from Mass with a clear understanding of the mission shared and willingly shares it with her brother. Staff, including senior leaders, are inspiring models of exemplary practice to other staff and pupils, as participants in prayer and liturgy. Staff are skilled in helping pupils to begin to plan and

lead prayer and liturgy and are starting to promote more independence in pupil-led worship. Parents welcome the support given by the school in recognising them as first educators in the faith journey of the child, with examples given of the travelling cribs and Lenten bags.

Leaders are resolute in ensuring that prayer and liturgy are central to the life of the school. Leaders and governors have developed a school policy for prayer and liturgy which enables a consistent approach to be taken to prayer and its structure across the school. Significant moments of school life are identified, planned for, and then celebrated in prayer, with school leaders ensuring pupils have access to the First Holy Communion programme. Leaders have the skills to model highly effective worship but ensure that the focus remains on pupils' formation and ability to lead. Staff value the training opportunities they have been given which have given confidence and ability to consistently plan and lead high-quality worship. Leaders ensure that sufficient budget is prioritised to adequately resource prayer and liturgy in school. As a result, all classes have their own resources to use, with each classroom area benefiting from accessible and appealing prayer areas. Prayer and liturgy are monitored by school leaders including governors. All leaders are faithful and visible examples of people for whom prayer is important. This is evident in the manner in which they lead, both within school and through their engagement in the life of the Church.

## Information about the school

Full name of school	St Vincent's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	148979
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	3913842
Full postal address of the school	Monkchester Road, Walker, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, Tyne and Wear, NE6 2TX
School phone number	01912655049
Executive headteacher	Not applicable
Headteacher	Angela Ness
Chair of local governing committee	Michael Willcock
School Website	<a href="http://www.stvincents.uk">http://www.stvincents.uk</a>
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Bishop Bewick Catholic Education Trust
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Academy
Admissions policy	Non-selective
Age-range of pupils	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	26 – 27 June 2018
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

## The inspection team

Paul Craig	Lead
Geraldine Yates	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