

# St Vincent's Catholic Primary School

URN: 111376

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Archbishop of Liverpool

21–22 May 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

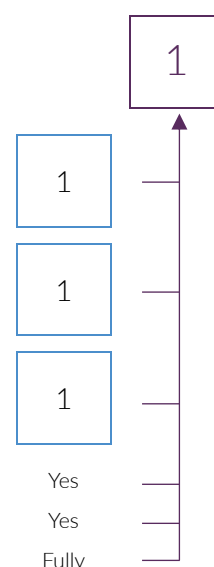
#### Collective worship (p.7)

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

The school is fully compliant with the curriculum requirements laid down by the Bishops' Conference

The school is fully compliant with all requirements of the diocesan bishop

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



## Compliance statement

- The school is faithful to the curriculum requirements of the Bishops' Conference.
- The school has also undertaken any additional requirements of the Archbishop of Liverpool.
- Areas for improvement identified in the last inspection have been addressed.

## What the school does well

- St Vincent's mission statement, 'To love, serve and learn as Jesus shows us,' is lived out joyfully and celebrated throughout the beautiful school environment.
- Committed staff and governors, together with inspirational leaders, have high expectations in all areas of Catholic life, religious education and collective worship, so that pupils receive the very best in Catholic education.
- The behaviour and attitudes of pupils are exemplary. Pupils have great self-respect and are kind and caring towards others, particularly those who are vulnerable.
- Highly effective, inclusive and creative teaching in religious education, ensures that pupils are well-motivated, achieve well and are religiously literate.
- Opportunities for prayer and liturgy are well-planned, uplifting, spiritual experiences for all participants.

## What the school needs to improve

- Provide guidance for pupils in self-evaluating their work and identifying their next steps in learning, so that they know how to make improvements to their work in religious education.
- Implement the Prayer and Liturgy Directory.

## 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 to be part of St Vincent's Catholic Primary School. They feel safe and loved in their school family. Pupil groups such as Mini Vinnies, the school council and the Faith in Action group have a great awareness of and sense of responsibility to care for their common home. Together with the pupil mission ambassador, they invigorate all stakeholders to action. Pupils explain how they celebrate Earth Day, by wearing green and blue clothing and reflecting on the Pope's teaching about God's planet and our environment. Beautiful artwork celebrates the season of creation, with links to Laudato Si. All are committed to providing charitable support for those who are vulnerable, for example, providing bags for the homeless and raising funds for St Rocco's hospice. They support Mary's Meals saying, "This is how we live out Catholic social teaching." Their actions are inspired by the Gospels and the teachings of the Church. Pupils clearly articulate their understanding and show a deep sense of respect for themselves and others. One pupil playleader said, "Our job is to help everyone play and make sure everyone is included." Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are exemplary as they live out their school's Catholic mission.

The school's mission, 'To love, serve and learn as Jesus shows us,' is lived and celebrated for the benefit of all. The annual mission review day, held on the feast of St Vincent, ensures that all members of the school community can contribute to its formation. As a result, it is deeply appreciated, shared and understood. One parent said, "We are incredibly grateful for the positive impact the school has on our children's development and faith journey." The mission is underpinned with clear aims and values, which are celebrated through the talents of artistic Year Five pupils in the school hall. St Vincent's is an exceptionally supportive and joyful place, where everyone is valued and included. Staff are exemplary role models who provide the highest levels

of pastoral care. Parents value their school and staff highly. One parent stated, "St Vincent's feels like an extended family, where every child is known, nurtured, and supported to grow spiritually, academically and personally." The beautiful environment and creative use of space embody the school's cherished Catholic character. Scripture is at the heart of displays, for example, a sense of belonging is created by class photographs with the quote, 'Being one together in Christ'. Provision for relationships, sex and health education is carefully planned and mapped out, in line with archdiocesan requirements.

Leaders and governors are inspiring guardians of the Catholic life and mission of St Vincent's. They ensure that their school is an integral part of the parish family, which nurtures a flourishing relationship. Leaders support and engage parents and carers very well. Consequently, they understand and value the school's distinctive ethos. One parent stated, "A golden thread of faith in action runs throughout the school." The school self-evaluation is rigorous. Clear strengths and appropriate plans for improvement are identified, which are successfully actioned and impact on the school community. There is a great sense of pride in the achievement of the Cafod Live Simply Award. One governor explained, "Catholic life is the cornerstone of all our decision making." Financial choices are targeted to the development of their Catholic school and to support those who are vulnerable. They invest in resources and training. They ensure that policies and curriculum plans reflect the priority given to their Catholic identity. Leaders provide the highest level of pastoral support for staff. New staff are ably supported in their contribution to the mission by dedicated, inspiring leaders.

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

### Religious education key judgement grade

#### Pupil outcomes

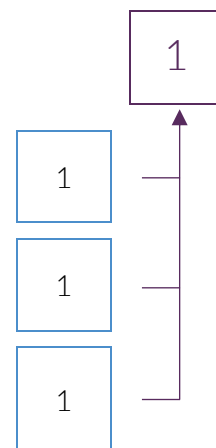
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

#### 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 are developing excellent knowledge and skills, and a deep understanding in religious education. They are religiously literate and articulate. They make links with religious themes and build on previous knowledge very well. The youngest pupils know about the early Church and use mature vocabulary to explain how they make wind chimes and coloured flames to symbolise the Holy Spirit. Pupils in Year 5, explore discipleship very well, recalling the role of Mary across a variety of scripture readings, for example, at the Wedding Feast of Cana. Challenging questions are generated during discussions, for example when learning about Oscar Romero in Year 6. Pupils reflect spiritually and have a strong sense of moral purpose. They work hard, collaborate very well and greatly enjoy their learning in religious education. This is reflected in their beautifully presented writing and creative art, for example, the use of pastels when drawing Mary, as she greets Elizabeth. One pupil said, "Religious education is our special subject, and I love that we get to work hard." Pupils achieve well, however, they would benefit from further support in developing self-evaluation skills, so they can articulate their next steps in learning.

Teachers have excellent subject knowledge and effective teaching skills. They have established high expectations for religious education. They use effective questioning to deepen pupils' responses. They support pupils to make links between scripture, Catholic social teaching and everyday life experiences, for example, linking Mary's discipleship to Mary's Meals. Verbal feedback celebrates achievement, and time is provided for personal reflection within lessons. Ongoing teacher assessment carefully informs planning. Each lesson begins with a focus on knowledge retrieval. This enables pupils to make strong connections across the branches of the Religious Education Directory, so they learn extremely well. Pupils with additional needs are very well supported by skilled adults. Specific and tailored adaptations enable all pupils to access the curriculum. Good use is made of the school environment to enable successful learning in a

variety of ways. Pupils look at well-chosen images in the classroom, while a group explores statues in the prayer garden and others listen and respond to hymns in the hall. High quality resources are used very effectively. A golden box, with carefully selected small figures and objects is used to explain and re-tell stories from scripture. Consistently high-quality teaching, therefore, leads to successful outcomes.

Leaders and governors are committed to ensuring that religious education is given the highest status at St Vincent's. It has full parity with other core subjects. Religious education is prioritised at the centre of the curriculum and timetable, and there is financial investment for resources and training. Excellent links are made with the community to enrich learning, for example a minister of the Eucharist from the parish clearly explained her role to early years children, with a focus on taking Holy Communion to the sick. Governors are regular visitors to the school providing appropriate challenge. They meet with the inspirational head of school, who is also the subject leader for religious education. She has a tangible vision driven by a high level of expertise. This is shared and fully supported by the executive headteacher. The link governor for religious education has received training in school and through the archdiocese. She stated, "It is such a delight to see how engaged the children are with the new curriculum, and the way it is being taught by the teachers." Thorough monitoring and evaluation processes by leaders and governors are highly effective. The school fully utilises both internal and external moderation and shares best practice with a local cluster group of Catholic schools.

## 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

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

1

1

Pupils engage deeply in the varied opportunities provided for prayer and liturgy. They understand and value the times to celebrate Mass throughout the liturgical year. Older pupils work collaboratively to plan, lead and evaluate beautiful acts of worship. They read confidently from well-chosen scripture, share prayers sensitively, and use appropriate resources to enhance the experience. For example, older pupils read from the Bible and tell stories using objects from a golden box. A powerful spiritual moment is created, as small coins resonate against a metal dish, representing money given in the temple. As a candle is lit, pupils acclaim together that Christ is the light of the world. Younger pupils prepare inviting focus tables and present flowers to the beautiful statue of Mary, in the prayer garden. The youngest pupils praise God with joy as they sing, "Alleluia!" to greet the Gospel. All classes reverently greet scripture through symbolic acts and correct liturgical responses. Older pupils embrace contemporary forms of music. They conclude prayer and liturgy saying together, "As we blow out this candle, let the light of Jesus live in us." One parent stated, "It was a privilege to join my daughter's child-led prayer session in the lead up to Easter this year – a perfect way to begin Holy Week."

Prayer and Liturgy is central to the life of St Vincent's, where there is a deep commitment to the routines of prayer. An increasingly wide range of prayer styles is offered, which promotes the richness of the Catholic tradition. Thoughtfully chosen scripture and weekly Gospel values reflect the liturgical year. Staff are committed and skilled in enabling pupils to confidently plan meaningful experiences of prayer and liturgy. The prayer life is extended, through the provision of class prayer bags, which facilitate opportunities for children and parents to pray together at home. Parents feel involved and they greatly value invitations to class Masses. One parent stated, "I have enjoyed attending worship and Mass, both at school and at church. It is wonderful to see the children leading the collective worship too. They show respect and reverence, and

their singing is beautiful." Parents speak with great appreciation for the staff, who are valued role models for their children. The whole school environment is used very well to create sacred prayer spaces and reflection areas, for example, the recently opened prayer garden among the trees, with flower arches, wind chimes and a lovely statue of Our Lady.

There is a well-formulated policy and clear guidelines for prayer and liturgy. These provide age-appropriate levels of participation and pupil ministry, which are evidenced through the prayerful engagement and reverence of pupils. The annual calendar has been carefully designed, with the parish priest, and includes a celebration on the feast day of St. Vincent. Leaders provide inspirational professional development opportunities. This includes modelling of planning and sharing of best practice. Consequently, teachers and pupils provide high quality and accessible prayer and liturgy opportunities for all. Staff appreciate the times for sharing in Mass together. They greatly value the bi-annual Mass, celebrated with their local Catholic cluster of Warrington schools. Leaders and governors have prioritised investment in resources, which enhance the experience of all participants. Monitoring and evaluation of prayer and liturgy takes account of pupil voice, the needs of the community and parish family. A governor described the impact of prayer and liturgy saying, "Senior leaders have great energy for collective worship, they provide a beacon of good practice, where everyone can see Church, here." The school leaders' aims to bring the whole community together in hearts and minds, and to bring everyone closer to God is reflected through their service to St Vincent's.



## Information about the school

Full name of school	St Vincent's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	111376
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8773627
Full postal address of the school	St Vincent's Catholic Primary School, Finlay Avenue, Penketh, Warrington, WA5 2PN
School phone number	01925 726544
Headteacher	Dominic Vernon - (Executive Headteacher) Amy Norris – (Head of school)
Chair of Governors	Helen Chaplin
School Website	<a href="http://www.stvincentsprimary.org">www.stvincentsprimary.org</a>
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	N/A
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	6 <sup>th</sup> November 2018
Previous denominational inspection grade	Good

## The inspection team

Christine Mason  
Joshua Marshall

Lead  
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

