



St Oswalds Catholic Primary School

URN: 119637

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Archbishop of Liverpool

04 March 2026 – 05 March 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

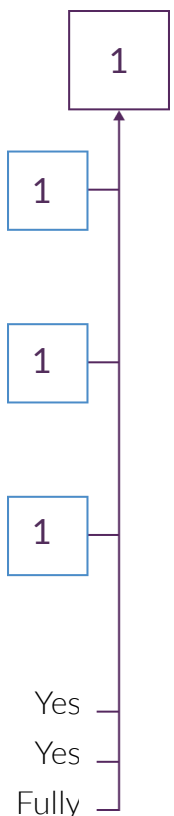
Collective worship (p.7)

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



What the school does well

- St. Oswald's has very strong links with the parish and the local community, enabling pupils to be of service to others.
- Relationships at all levels are nurtured and valued, and members of the school community feel loved, respected and safe.
- Pastoral support offered to all pupils at St. Oswald's is a significant strength. Staff know pupils and their families very well and pupils benefit from this, particularly the most vulnerable.
- In religious education teachers' subject knowledge is excellent, resulting in well planned and engaging lessons.
- Prayer and liturgy is inspiring, engaging and of a very high standard.

What the school needs to improve

- Involve all stakeholders in a full review of the school's mission statement.
- Create a robust and comprehensive written schedule for monitoring teaching and learning in religious education.

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

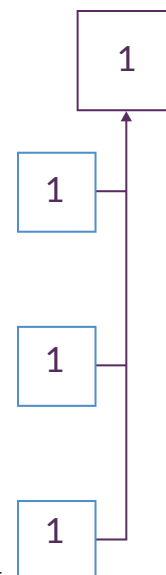
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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



The Catholic identity of St. Oswald's Primary School is explicit and deeply embedded. The mission statement, *"With Christ at the centre of our community, our mission is to live, love and learn as Jesus taught us,"* is known and understood by pupils and is clearly reflected in their attitudes and actions. Pupils speak confidently about the mission and understand its importance in guiding how they treat others. As one pupil explained, *"That is how we show we are living as Jesus taught us."* Pupils are happy, confident and proud of their school. Their behaviour demonstrates a strong understanding of Gospel values. They speak thoughtfully about the importance of reconciliation and forgiveness. Pupils understand that helping others enables them to "be like Jesus." Catholic social teaching is naturally embedded in the life of the school. Pupils are inspired to serve others. For example, a group of pupils independently organised the making and selling of bracelets to raise funds for a major local children's hospital. This pupil-led initiative demonstrates their mission in action. Other examples of service to others include the pupils serving meals to parishioners at the Caritas lunches held each month. Pupils also support Cafod, Children in Need and the local foodbank.

There is a strong culture of inclusivity at St. Oswald's, ensuring that all pupils feel valued and respected. Staff consistently promote the mission of the school through their actions and relationships, creating an environment where pupils feel safe, supported and encouraged to flourish. Pastoral care is a strength. The school is highly attentive to the needs of pupils and provides a range of additional support to ensure they feel safe and happy. Carefully chosen resources and external professional services are used to provide a blended approach to nurturing pupils' wellbeing. One example of the strength in pastoral care is how the

pre-school children are allocated a buddy from Year 5 before they start in September. This allows the youngest pupils to settle quickly into school life. Chaplaincy provision is a particular strength, reinforcing the close relationship between school and parish. Staff are exemplary role models, and their warm, respectful interactions with pupils clearly demonstrate the mission in action. This fosters a calm, caring and supportive ethos. Provision for relationships, sex and health education meets archdiocesan requirements. The school environment reflects and celebrates the Catholic mission and faith. Classrooms are well resourced and create purposeful learning spaces.

School leaders demonstrate a commitment to Catholic life and mission, fostering strong partnerships with parents and the parish and this will benefit from ongoing review. Opportunities for families to attend Mass and school activities are actively promoted, reflecting the school's inclusive and welcoming ethos. Governors are involved in the life of the school, showing understanding of its challenges and a proactive commitment to strengthening links with the parish. They play an active role in reviewing the mission and are instrumental in its ongoing success. Staff feel highly valued and supported in their roles. Opportunities for spiritual and professional formation are prioritised, including shared prayers at staff meetings, attendance at Mass during Inset days, and access to continued professional development. New staff are fully supported and integrated into school life, ensuring that all contribute meaningfully to the mission. The school also ensures that pupils with additional needs, both academic and pastoral, are carefully supported. Close collaboration with the local high school ensures that transitions to secondary education are smooth, further demonstrating the school's commitment to the well-being and holistic development of every pupil. Parents speak highly of the school's caring and nurturing ethos. Regular updates linked to Catholic life are shared on the school's website.

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

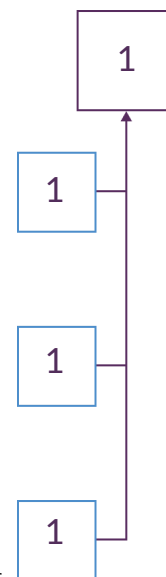
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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 at St. Oswald's make excellent progress in religious education, with attainment that is consistently high and sustained over time. Evidence in pupils' books clearly demonstrates strong progress and a depth of understanding. Pupils take great pride in their work, which is presented to a very high standard and reflects the value placed on religious education within the school. Pupils engage in a wide range of carefully planned activities that enthuse and motivate them to learn. As a result, standards of achievement are high. Pupils speak confidently and fluently about their learning and demonstrate strong religious literacy, using subject-specific vocabulary accurately and appropriately. They respond well to the level of challenge provided and are supported effectively to deepen their understanding. Pupils are able to articulate their learning clearly. They can make links between scripture and their own lives and recall prior learning with confidence. They can retell favourite Bible stories with understanding. Pupils with additional needs are fully included and well supported to access the curriculum. Behaviour for learning is excellent. Pupils work independently, demonstrating excellent concentration and highly positive attitudes to their learning. They show motivation and a clear sense of purpose, recognising how their learning connects to the school's mission.

The provision for religious education is of a very high quality. The school environment celebrates and promotes the Catholic faith, with classrooms that are well resourced and organised to create purposeful and engaging learning spaces. Teachers demonstrate excellent subject knowledge in religious education, supported by the school's strong expectation that staff work towards achieving the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies

(CCRS). This commitment enhances the quality of teaching and ensures that religious education is delivered with confidence. Teachers show a deep commitment to the subject and have consistently high expectations for all pupils. This is evident in detailed planning, carefully chosen learning activities and high-quality enrichment opportunities. Scripture is central to teaching and learning, ensuring that lessons are firmly rooted in the word of the Lord. Teachers use a range of visually stimulating resources which enrich the learning experience and support pupils' understanding. Skilled questioning is used effectively to recall prior learning, deepen pupils' thinking and address misconceptions. Lessons are well paced and engaging, maintaining pupils' focus. Pupils' contributions are valued and listened to attentively, fostering confidence and participation. Teachers provide varied opportunities for pupils to record their learning through creative approaches such as art, drama, comic strips, and writing, further enhancing engagement and understanding.

Leaders demonstrate a clear and ambitious vision for religious education, ensuring that it remains the core of the core within the curriculum. The implementation of the *Religious Education Directory* across all year groups has been carefully planned and effectively supported by the subject leader, enabling staff to approach the new framework with confidence. Religious education is given full parity with other core subjects through dedicated timetabling, resourcing and a strong commitment to professional development. The subject leader provides strong leadership, offering ongoing guidance and support to colleagues. Regular training, cluster meetings and opportunities to share good practice ensure that staff continue to develop their expertise. The impact of this professional development is evident in the quality of lessons and the depth of pupils' learning. The subject leader has a clear vision for the continued development of religious education and is deeply committed to maintaining the high standards evident across the school. Monitoring and evaluation is well established and informs ongoing improvement. This process needs to be thoroughly documented. The link governor works closely with the subject leader, bringing valuable expertise and support. A rich programme of enrichment further enhances provision, including visits from the parish clergy, a Year 6 pilgrimage to the cathedral and a retreat at the diocesan centre for youth ministry.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

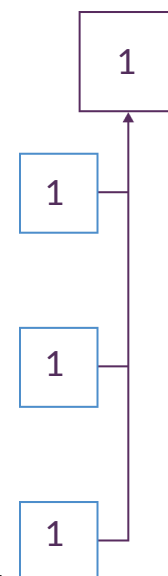
How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

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



Pupils engage in prayer and liturgy with reverence. They gather together knowing it is a special time and resources are used to enhance the atmosphere. A daily pattern of prayer has been established across the school. Pupils confidently participate in both traditional and shared prayer. All celebrations begin with shared morning prayer and key stage gatherings reflect the structure and rhythm of Mass. They use appropriate responses, signs and actions to show respect for the Scripture. Music plays a significant role in worship, with carefully chosen hymns linked to the theme of prayer. Pupils sing with joy and enthusiasm, contributing to uplifting and meaningful acts of worship. Pupils show an excellent understanding of the Church's liturgical year and holy days, including the significance of St. Oswald. They can explain how and why these important celebrations are marked within the life of the school and parish. Pupils actively contribute to the planning of prayer and liturgy, working with staff to write bidding prayers for celebration of the word and for the parish Vigil Mass. Pupils confidently read prayers and reflect thoughtfully on their meaning. They articulate how prayer influences their lives, with one pupil explaining, *"It makes me feel happy that Jesus is listening."*

Prayer and liturgy is central to the life of the school. A well-established pattern of prayer exists ensuring that pupils regularly experience meaningful opportunities for worship. Provision closely mirrors the structure of Mass, beginning with a time for reflection and contrition. This approach reflects the presence of the living Church within the school and enables pupils to become familiar with the responses and actions used within Mass. Signs, symbols and gestures associated with the liturgy are thoughtfully incorporated into worship. For example,

pupils stand to greet the Gospel, make the triple sign of the cross and respond appropriately during prayers. The headteacher and religious education leader provide inspiring and highly skilled leadership of prayer and liturgy. They engage pupils effectively through thoughtful reflection and meaningful explanation of scripture, ensuring that the word of the Lord is central to all acts of worship. Scripture is carefully chosen in line with the liturgical year and presented in ways that help pupils understand its relevance to their daily lives. Resources used during worship are visually engaging and support pupils' reflection and participation. Families are given opportunities to attend Mass and are fully engaged in the prayer life of the school.

Leadership of prayer and liturgy at St. Oswald's is inspirational and highly effective. Prayer and liturgy is fully embraced by staff and consistently prioritised as central to school life. The school's policy is regularly reviewed and approved by governors, providing a clear framework to support planning and delivery. Staff formation is embedded through meetings and training days, ensuring all are confident in leading worship. Senior leaders model excellent practice, demonstrating the importance of prayer and acting as highly visible role models. Worship is carefully planned, with a school-wide calendar of themes aligned to the liturgical year. Staff know the pupils and their backgrounds exceptionally well, enabling them to deliver worship that is both spiritually and pastorally appropriate. Scripture is central and explained thoughtfully, helping pupils make meaningful connections between faith and daily life. A child-led approach encourages pupils to contribute actively, including planning bidding prayers and shaping themes. Pupils' experiences of prayer and liturgy lay strong foundations for their continuing faith journey, with many continuing to engage in Faith in Action and Saint Vincent de Paul work at secondary school. Leadership ensures that worship is inspiring, relevant, and deeply rooted in the school's mission, making prayer and liturgy a meaningful experience for all pupils.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Oswalds Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	119637
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8883729
Full postal address of the school	Chapel Lane, PRESTON, PR4 5EB
School phone number	01772 613402
Headteacher or Head of School	Mr Christopher Hough
Chair of Governors	Mr Bill McMahon
School Website	www.longton-st-oswalds.lancs.sch.uk
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Voluntary Aided School
Admissions policy	
Age-range of pupils	4 - 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	01 May 2019
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

The Inspection Team

Lyn Rawlinson Lead

Joanne Harrison

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