



St Paulinus RC Primary School

URN: 141456

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Apostolic Administrator of Middlesbrough

11 March 2026 – 12 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

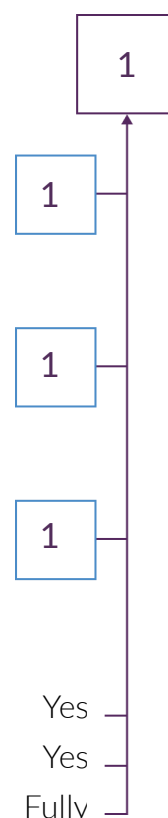
#### Collective worship (p.7)

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

- The dedicated and focused leadership provided by the inspirational executive headteacher, and her impressive senior leadership team, ensures that this school is always striving to improve. Leaders continuously seek new ideas which will positively enhance the experiences of pupils and improve the outcomes they achieve academically, spiritually and as children of God.
- The school's mission is deeply embedded in the fabric of the school and everything it does. The values of perseverance, ambition, community and empathy are celebrated, and implemented in tangible ways within the school community, the parish, the local area, nationally, and globally.
- The behaviour and attitudes of pupils are truly exemplary. They undertake a wide range of valuable leadership roles, demonstrating genuine respect and support for one another. They know they are valued and cared for by the adults with whom they spend their days.
- Religious education lessons are well constructed and sequenced, so that all pupils, including those who find learning more difficult, can be fully included and attain high standards of skills and knowledge.
- The provision for prayer and worship is varied, vibrant, creative and well planned. This gives pupils experiences which help them to come to know God and to understand their faith in many special and unique ways.

## What the school needs to improve

- Leaders to plan and embed opportunities across curriculum subjects that link to the richness of Catholic contributions to culture.
- Ensure that the full implementation of the Religious Education Directory provides all pupils with the knowledge and skills to know more and remember more, and to therefore make good or better progress over time.
- Embed practices that support and develop the personal prayer life of pupils so that they can reflect and express the impact of prayer on their daily lives from their earliest years.

## 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

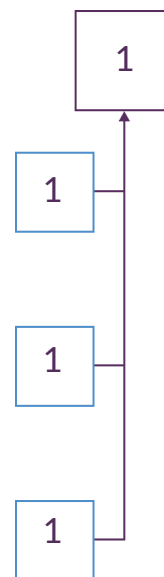
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

#### 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 at St Paulinus clearly know they are valued and cared for as unique persons, created by God. They exhibit highly positive attitudes to school life, having understood and embraced the school's values of perseverance, ambition, community and empathy. They understand the theology, in child-friendly terms, of the Catholic mission of the school, and how they can help to implement it. Their behaviour is exemplary, and they have deep respect for themselves and others. They describe the school as an inclusive, peaceful, happy place. They relish the junior leadership opportunities the school provides. The House Chaplains, Mini Vinnies and School Council are active in promoting the school's mission and attending to the needs of others, as part of their developing understanding of Catholic social teaching. They delight in regular opportunities to organise and participate in a wide range of fundraising activities for local, national and global charities. They have a growing understanding of why they are asked through the principles of Catholic social teaching to 'turn concern into action'. Some pupils recently attended and contributed to a trust synod which provided them with the opportunity to contribute to the future of their trust through scripture-based discussions.

The school mission statement, 'Love one another as I have loved you', has a significant impact on the life of the school. It is widely known, clearly understood and lived out across the school so that the school is a beacon of Catholic practice, rooted in the word of God in scripture. There is a tangible sense of community at St Paulinus which is evident in the quality of relationships at all levels and the strong culture of welcome, particularly to the most vulnerable.

All staff are exemplary role models in their daily interactions and in the level of pastoral care that they provide for the pupils and for each other. The school works hard to understand the needs of all members of the community and shows particular concern for those who are most vulnerable. The Catholic character of the school is strongly reflected and celebrated through the high quality displays, scripture quotes and prayer areas, including the chapel. The joint parish/school chaplaincy team provides a wealth of opportunities to support the spiritual development of all members of the school community. The provision for relationship and health education meets diocesan requirements.

Leaders are fastidious and energetic in promoting the Catholic mission and are a source of inspiration to staff. They are thoughtful and reflective, joyful and determined, and have skilfully embedded an ethos that ensures that Christ is at the heart of the school. School leaders are well supported by governors and the Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust, who are active in evaluating, challenging and supporting developments. They are highly ambitious for continuous improvement. Leaders are supporting pupils in beginning to make links with their religious education in all areas of the taught curriculum. However, this element of curriculum planning is underdeveloped at present. The school is valued by its parents. A parent commented that, 'this is an excellent school, it is reflective of Christ and living out the gospels. My child is growing with God here'. It has developed successful strategies for engaging parents and carers to the benefit of the pupils, especially those who are most vulnerable. Leaders and governors actively promote a flourishing partnership with the parish. They ensure that excellent structures are in place to support the wellbeing of staff and, as a result, staff feel highly valued. Well planned and effective professional development and coaching is enabling new staff to develop and secure their knowledge and understanding of Catholic life when they join the school.

## 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

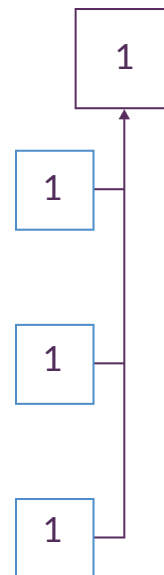
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

#### 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 demonstrate excellent knowledge, understanding and skills in religious education lessons, appropriate to their age. Behaviour is exemplary. Almost all pupils, including those with additional needs, make good progress and achieve well, relative to their age and starting points. Pupils speak with confidence about what they have learnt in religious education. There are high levels of religious literacy, with the older pupils being particularly skilled in explaining how religious commitment impacts on their daily lives. The consistent lesson structure in religious education is providing regular opportunities for pupils to make links to their prior learning within lessons. Pupils are independent learners who can think for themselves and apply what they have learnt in their oral and written work. They state that they enjoy their lessons due to the creative and varied activities teachers plan for them. Pupils like to take care with their written work and present it well. From their earliest years, they show sustained engagement in their lessons because they are interested in what they are learning. Pupils have a good understanding of how they are progressing in religious education but are not always given opportunities to show their deepening knowledge effectively.

Teachers have a high level of confidence based on secure subject knowledge and are committed to the value of religious education. Staff have an accurate view of the pupils' prior knowledge and starting points for new learning due to secure assessment practices. Adaptations to teaching strategies and task design enable pupils with the most significant needs to access the religious education curriculum successfully.

Curriculum developments provide pupils with secure, sequential knowledge of scripture: children in the Early Years Foundation Stage can confidently relay Jesus' words when He told His disciples to allow the children to come to Him and Year 1 pupils can recall in detail when Jesus was left in the temple as a child. Year 2 pupils have a secure knowledge of the elements of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. In Key Stage 2, pupils have a good understanding of the Eucharistic Rite and the Concluding Rite within the Mass. Teachers communicate high expectations consistently, and the effective use of questions during lessons ensures that they can identify where pupils are in their understanding. Pupils are given regular opportunities to reflect on key themes from their learning and how these impact on daily life.

All leaders, including governors, ensure that the curriculum for religious education is a faithful expression of the Religious Education Directory. The religious education leaders have a high level of expertise, which is shared across other schools within the Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust. They are inspirational in their vision for the teaching and learning of religious education in the school. As a result of their monitoring, and incisive feedback to staff, teaching across the school is at least good and in many instances outstanding. High quality training is provided through the sharing of effective internal practice, as well as opportunities offered by the diocese and the trust. This has strengthened teachers' subject knowledge and improved pedagogy. The outstanding religious education leadership team provides highly effective guidance and support. Through robust and supportive monitoring, alongside constructive feedback, leaders have successfully improved the quality of teaching. The impact of this work was evident during the inspection. Staff speak very positively about the targeted training and support they have received and how this has enhanced their confidence and classroom practice. Leaders' self-evaluation of religious education is informed by regular monitoring, analysis and self-challenge. As a result, strategic action being taken by leaders is strengthening outcomes.

## Collective worship

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

### Collective worship key judgement grade

#### Pupil outcomes

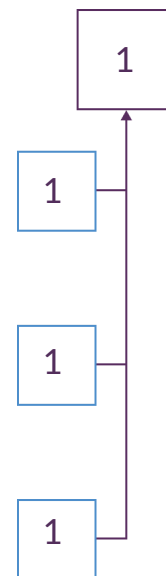
How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

#### 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



As a result of leaders' passion for and devotion to the enhancement of prayer and liturgy throughout the school, liturgy is a very prayerful and relevant experience for all pupils. They demonstrate their deep engagement in prayer and liturgy on every occasion that they come together, whether in class, in church, or as a whole school in the hall. Pupils, with the guidance of staff, become increasingly confident and independent in their planning and delivery of liturgy as they move through the school. Their evaluation of the quality of their planning and delivery of prayer and liturgy is regular and strengthening their practice. They demonstrate a detailed understanding of the variety of ways of praying in the Catholic tradition, including periods of silent reflection, joyful liturgical singing, symbolic actions and the use of scripture. Some pupils are able to articulate how prayer and liturgy influences their day-to-day actions. They have opportunities to go to prayer areas throughout the day to write their own prayers for others locally and in the wider world. The House Chaplains and Mini Vinnies support pupils with a sense of stewardship of their school environment and encourage them to engage in activities that deepen their religious knowledge and skills of personal reflection.

Prayer and liturgy are at the heart of the school, ever-present and central to gatherings of pupils and staff. There is an excellent breadth and richness of the Catholic tradition of ways of praying, and this range has been significantly enhanced over time to engage pupils more actively and deeply. Scripture is chosen well, informed by the liturgical year, with links developed between these passages, and the whole celebration, and actions to take into daily life.

The modelling of different types of prayer by the trust's Catholic standards lead has played a key role in enabling members of staff to demonstrate this to pupils and include them in their gatherings in class. Four-part celebrations of the word, lectio divina, list prayers, breath prayers, and movement prayers sit alongside more traditional practices. Staff are highly skilled in helping pupils develop their liturgical planning and leadership skills at an age-appropriate level. There is imaginative and creative use of spaces for prayer celebrations, with a strong desire to make each classroom a sacred space at appropriate times, in addition to the chapel. Families are welcomed into school liturgies and appreciate the opportunities provided by school to encourage prayer in their homes during key periods in the Church's year.

The school's policy on prayer and liturgy has been formulated anew to ensure it is fit for purpose. Leaders, including governors, have a clear understanding of how pupils' skills of participation should be built as they mature, and the quality of prayer and liturgy that should be provided. School leaders and governors have been effective guardians of the Catholic prayer and liturgy provision, striving consistently for the best possible experiences for the pupils. The liturgical year has been clearly mapped out to ensure that the school community can gather to celebrate significant days and events in the Church's calendar. Pupils regularly attend Mass and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament throughout the year. Leaders prioritise training for staff in how to plan, lead and support pupils in their leadership of prayer and liturgy. This training in-house and from the trust has empowered all staff and resulted in the high quality prayer and liturgy experienced by the school community on a day-to-day basis. The involvement of the dedicated parish/school chaplaincy team has also ensured that pupils have regular opportunities to participate in spiritual retreats as they move through the school. Rigorous monitoring and evaluation of prayer and liturgy over time has resulted in consistently high quality practices in the school.

## Information about the school

Full name of school	St Paulinus RC Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	141456
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8073309
Full postal address of the school	The Avenue, Guisborough, TS14 8DN
School phone number	01287 637978
Headteacher or Head of School	Mrs Anna McClurey
Chair of Governors	Mrs Morita Metcalfe
School Website	stpaulinus.npcat.org.uk
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Academy
Admissions policy	Non Selective
Age-range of pupils	3 - 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	07 May 2019
Previous denominational inspection grade	Good

## The Inspection Team

Alixena Lubomski Lead

Stephanie Mary Brown

## 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