

Trinity Catholic College

URN: 142382

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

17 June 2026 – 18 June 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

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Yes

Yes

Fully

What the school does well

- Leaders and governors plan strategically to ensure that Catholic social teaching, and especially the preferential option for those with the greatest need, guides all decisions.
- Pastoral care is prioritised and resourced to ensure that students in need of support are known, embraced, loved and valued for who they are.
- The school leaders for religious education pursue an inspiring vision of teaching and learning, underpinned by Catholic social teaching, impactful staff training, regular quality assurance and robust standardisation.
- The school chaplain uses her considerable skills and links with others to ensure that Collective Worship is central to the life of the school. This is highly valued by students, staff, parents and parishes.
- All staff work together to create a sense of belonging, which is strongly expressed by students as being part of a family.

What the school needs to improve

- In religious education lessons, embed strategies to increase religious literacy, so that most students can confidently express what they have learnt and relate it to their own or others' experience.
- Use religious education lesson resources in a targeted way, offering support to those who need it and removing it when it is no longer needed, so that learning is optimised for most students.
- Review the mission statement to ensure that students can explain how it relates to their experience of the Catholic life and mission of the school.

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

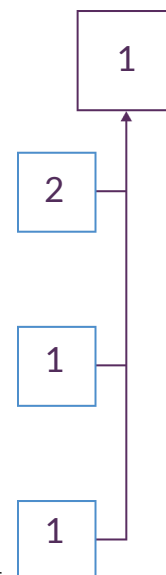
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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



Students feel loved and valued as part of the Trinity family, as one explained: 'if I was told I could not come in again, I would miss everyone'. When asked to describe the school in one word, examples are safe, kind, welcoming, inclusive. All students appreciate this is a Catholic school because there is regular prayer and an ongoing and generous commitment to helping those in need and welcoming everyone. In this sense, students understand, value and contribute to the school's Catholic life and mission. Recently developed chaplaincy leadership teams are very clear that the mission statement is lived out through Catholic social teaching, particularly in relation to human dignity and preferential option for the poor. Many students, however, cannot articulate the school mission statement or Trinity values, despite their prevalence in the school environment. Others make some links to how this is doing what Jesus did, though this is not always well developed. Nevertheless, students have a very strong community sense which brings with it a duty to care for others. Loving actions are encouraged throughout the day in all aspects of school life, starting with morning prayer and including lessons and pastoral care.

Without exception, staff are committed to Catholic life and mission and feel strongly supported to carry it out, with comments like 'as someone who has never worked in Catholic education before now, I could never imagine prayer and living out our Catholic mission not being part of my daily life now'. Every member of staff confirms that the school day is built on love and compassion, with its pastoral care strategy, at its heart. Staff are aware and ever

mindful of the needs of students, with care for the most vulnerable at the core of all interactions. They overwhelmingly agree that Christ is at the heart of this school, stating that students are met with the face of Christ as soon as they step on site. Students who struggle are met with integrity and forgiveness. The physical environment is explicitly and abundantly Catholic, with the chapel providing a clear example of how students contribute to this. Relationships, sex and health education is carefully planned, incorporating excellent links with outside agencies including public health. Chaplaincy life is vibrant, with students in all key stages keen to take on leadership roles, such as Cafod Young Leaders and Youth SVP.

Catholic life and mission is driven forward with an incisive focus. The headteacher goes above and beyond to embrace the community, especially those whose circumstances have made them vulnerable. Staff comment on his integrity, compassion and vision. There is an emphasis on inclusion, and many steps to avoid exclusion. All leaders and governors are determined in the pursuit of the school's mission. Staff say that leaders are genuine - they 'live it and love it'. Governors are experienced, enthusiastic and regularly present in the school. They are rightly proud of the enormous pace of change with Catholic life and mission at the heart. Key to this success has been the investment in pastoral teams and processes, and the praise culture. The head of sixth form ensures that Catholic life and mission is fully integrated, despite a separate building and large numbers of students for whom Year 12 is the first introduction to this ethos. Leaders and the chaplain have secure links with priests, parishes, and many parents, and are ambitious to improve this even further. Parents greatly value social media updates, the chaplain, and the school's strategic leadership. Training for all staff, including those new to the school is plentiful, strategic, and targeted. Staff are happy to work here.

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

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Students engage well in lessons and are keen to learn. They usually complete the work given in lessons and trust their teachers to help them achieve well. Most enjoy their lessons so that behaviour and the atmosphere in classrooms is good. When given the opportunity to do so, students work independently and concentrate well. Lessons are largely teacher-led supported by worksheets. This sometimes encourages passivity, where students wait for and copy the 'right answer'. Student books are very well presented, with evidence of ample opportunity to check understanding and correct misunderstanding. There is clear evidence of feedback in books, but its impact is variable. There is limited evidence of students being encouraged to engage, discuss and reflect and many students are not confident in articulating what they have learnt or how to improve. There is an improving trend in outcomes, particularly pleasing for disadvantaged students, and this is an ongoing focus for the department. A-level numbers are increasing, reflecting a greater value given to religious education by older students. Moreover, students in sixth form value Core RE, saying it is a good preparation for life. It gives a good insight into the benefits and challenges of a life of faith and is service focused.

Teachers provide comprehensive resources, which are adapted well because they know their students well. However, the extensive use of worksheets means that students are scaffolded by default, which can be limiting. Teaching skill is particularly evident when teachers are checking understanding and adapting explanations, with regular use of tools such as the mini whiteboard. Students remark on how helpful this is. The 'Postgate Principles' are clearly used

in all lessons, with emerging success. Some further work is required to ensure they are fully and effectively embedded. The school's praise culture ensures student motivation. Systems are in place to ensure less experienced teachers are supported with both subject and pedagogical knowledge. There is variety in presentation of resources. Teachers relate lessons to their own and student experience, referring to the nature of faith belonging. There is scope for this to increase so as to enhance spiritual and moral development, ensuring student engagement at a more personal level and therefore helping students to know and remember more.

The curriculum is a faithful expression of the *Religious Education Directory*, planned meticulously by the subject leader with support from the Trust. The curriculum is enhanced by engaging enrichment activities, such as visits to places of worship and Vardy conferences. Leaders and governors are fully committed to the value of religious education, ensuring full parity with other core subjects in every aspect. Particularly careful attention has been given to growth in the RE team with substantial bespoke training and high-quality opportunities. This has ensured improvement in the department even where staff are new or where there has been some instability. The subject leader for religious education has an inspiring vision of outstanding teaching and learning and a high level of expertise in securing this vision. She is strategic and organised. As well as following regular quality assurance cycles, she provides hands-on practical support. As a result, she knows the department well and there is a remarkable pace of improvement. Well-designed mark schemes and moderation processes ensure consistency and robust standardisation. Leaders and governors have placed considerable focus on the needs of different groups of pupils, which is beginning to bear fruit. They collaborate effectively in evaluation, resulting in strategic action taken by the school and positive progress in outcomes.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

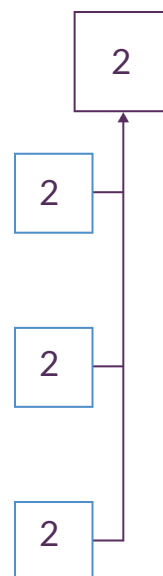
How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

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



Students at this school are used to prayer at the beginning and end of every day. They appreciate the regularity, consistency and space to reflect. One member of staff described it as 'a safe space' for students. As a result, they engage respectfully, with some students taking the opportunity to participate in form prayers by reading aloud from the centrally prepared resource. Because it is prepared centrally, all students have the same experience of prayer which includes scripture and introduces a variety of ways of praying that are part of the Catholic tradition. Weekly celebrations of the word are successful in encouraging student participation. These are often led by students and routinely include music, quiet reflection and the opportunity to respond. Students appreciate that the themes are relevant to their own lives, aptly reflecting the liturgical year, while also incorporating themes such as mental health and refugees. However, student participation in form prayer is variable. There are ongoing efforts to expand this further into the student body. Students recognise the impact of a praying school, explaining that it 'makes me helpful', 'helps me emotionally', 'makes us calm'. Another student explains that she likes it because 'we pray for each other'.

Prayer permeates the life of the school beyond the student experience. The chaplain and assistant headteacher with responsibility for prayer and liturgy ensure that all staff are comfortable, not only bringing students to prayer, but also leading and participating in weekly staff prayer. There are regular opportunities for their own spiritual growth, such as Stations of the Cross in Lent. The school chaplain has made a significant impact in this regard in just over

a year. Everyone speaks highly of her, and she is particularly credited with improving links with families and parishes. Parents appreciate regular communications, and seven priests are on a rota to support the school. Several parents speak approvingly of rapid change in this area and would like to be more involved. This is an area ripe for development. Sixth form provision is carefully planned to ensure all can participate, moving celebrations of the word to a time when all can be present, and increasing chaplain contact. The main school and sixth form buildings both benefit from chapels, which are enhanced by creative and inspiring resources made by or for the use of students. It is a used space not an ornament.

The school's policy on prayer and liturgy is an excellent resource for all staff, incorporating a clear explanation of the rationale and norms for prayer, alongside practical information such as training opportunities, responsible staff, FAQs and lists of prayers. The school calendar is comprehensively planned, including opportunities to participate in Mass and celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and services to mark the liturgical year and specific events. Leaders ensure that all meetings begin with prayer. They have encouraged other staff members to lead prayer at staff briefing and Friday staff reflections. Many members of staff say this has become a particularly spiritual part of their week. Leaders, including governors, place the highest priority on frequent, inspirational professional development of all staff, some of it led by the chaplain. As well as planned whole school training, staff feel able to ask for help on an ad hoc basis, so that all staff, including those new to the school, are well supported to lead prayer and liturgy. Prayer is robustly supported in budget and resource allocation, including the recent provision of a sixth form chapel. While the quality and impact of prayer and liturgy is evaluated by all stakeholders, a more systematic approach is needed to ensure that relevant stakeholders are an integral part of this cycle.

Information about the school

Full name of school	Trinity Catholic College
School unique reference number (URN)	142382
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8064702
Full postal address of the school	Saltersgill Avenue, MIDDLESBROUGH, TS4 3JW
School phone number	01642 298100
Executive Headteacher	Michael Burns
Headteacher or Head of School	Michael Blair
Chair of Governors	Victoria White
School Website	trinity.npcat.org.uk
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust
Phase	Secondary
Type of school	Academy
Admissions policy	
Age-range of pupils	11 - 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	07 June 2023
Previous denominational inspection grade	Requires Improvement

The Inspection Team

Catherine Danaher

Lead

Joshua Neal

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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