

St Alban's Catholic Primary School

URN: 143366

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Diocesan Administrator of Arundel & Brighton

23 September 2026 – 24 September 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

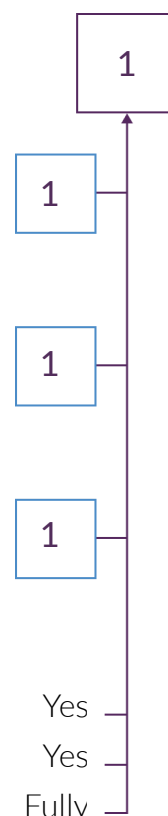
Collective worship (p.7)

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 diocesan directives

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



What the school does well

- The headteacher is an inspirational witness to the Gospel values and, together with the leadership team, effectively serves and leads the school community in living out its mission.
- The school lives out its mission authentically. Pupils are exceptionally happy and fulfilled and strive to follow the example of Jesus in their everyday lives, embodying the school's vision of 'Leading the Way.'
- Pupils enjoy their religious education learning, make good progress and attain highly. Leaders and governors undertake rigorous, effective and accurate self-evaluation of religious education, which informs further development.
- Pastoral care is of a very high quality, ensuring that pupils feel happy, confident, valued and secure and supporting their personal and spiritual development.
- Prayer and liturgy are at the heart of the school's daily life and well-chosen scripture allows pupils to readily identify links to Catholic social teaching and to their own lives.

What the school needs to improve

- Develop the school's provision for pupils undertaking liturgical ministries, enabling them to grow in confidence, understanding and skill, therefore ensuring that pupils are increasingly engaged and active and participants, according to their age and development.

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

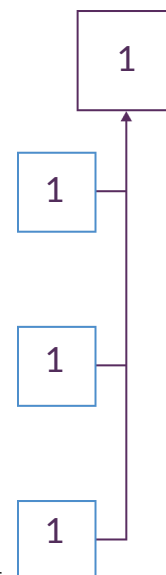
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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 values of St Alban's are deeply embedded in the life of the school community. The headteacher and school leaders foster a strong sense of belonging, bringing together home, school and parish. This is evident throughout the school and is spoken about with great pride by pupils, staff, governors and parents. The school's mission to 'Lead the Way' provides a clear and compelling foundation for the life of the school. As one pupil explained, the mission is about 'being role models for others wherever we are'. Pupils speak with genuine affection about being part of the 'St Alban's Family'. They demonstrate respect for themselves and others, consistently show good manners and conduct themselves exceptionally well. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is exceptionally strong. Pupils are enthusiastic about putting their faith into action and show an understanding of Catholic social teaching through their concern for others. The Faith in Action group provides a particularly strong example, with pupils actively choosing to support the 'Feed a Child for a Year' initiative. Pupils value their leadership roles through 'RE Council' and other pupil groups and recognise the contribution they make to the life of the school. Pupils understand and value the school's mission and readily demonstrate it in their everyday lives. As one pupil summarised, 'Kindness doesn't have to cost anything, by just smiling at someone you can brighten up their day.'

St Alban's is a welcoming, inclusive, calm and purposeful Catholic community in which all are recognised and cared for. The school knows its families well and pastoral care is excellent and highly regarded by pupils, staff and parents. Staff are exemplary role models in their relationships with pupils and families, ensuring that everyone feels known, supported and

respected, with particular care given to those who are vulnerable. Initiatives such as 'Nurture Start' provide a welcoming start to the day for pupils who benefit from additional support and exemplify the school's commitment to inclusion and care. Different traditions and cultures are recognised and celebrated, with 'Belonging Week' being a well-established event. The quality of the school environment is a visible expression of its Catholic identity; high-quality displays throughout the school, alongside carefully developed outdoor prayer spaces and the wildlife garden, provide opportunities for quiet reflection and demonstrate a meaningful commitment to stewardship of our common home. The school's provision for relationships, sex and health education (RSHE) reflects Catholic teaching. Pupils and staff recognise that the Catholic ethos prepares pupils well for their life and mission beyond St Alban's. The joyful, supportive and respectful relationships evident across the school make a significant contribution to the flourishing of the whole community.

School leaders are deeply committed to the Church's mission and ensure that the Catholic identity of St Alban's is reflected consistently in its policies, priorities and daily life. Governors are active in evaluating the school's Catholic life and provide well-informed challenge and support. Their regular visits enable them to see the school in action and contribute to an accurate and evidence-informed self-evaluation. Staff are well supported and value the opportunities provided for professional development, including diocesan training, school-led and joint training within the Trust. New staff receive rich and meaningful induction which enables them to contribute positively to the Catholic life and mission of the school. The partnership between the school and parish is a particular strength and the parish priest is a regular and valuable presence in school. Parents appreciate the home-school partnership and the support they receive in nurturing their children's faith. One parent described St Alban's as 'a school where the Catholic mission is seen and shared by the whole community.' Events such as 'Noah Day' provide evidence the school's commitment to Catholic social teaching and care for our common home. Leaders, governors, staff, parents and parish work together to ensure that the Catholic mission of St Alban's is lived out authentically.

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

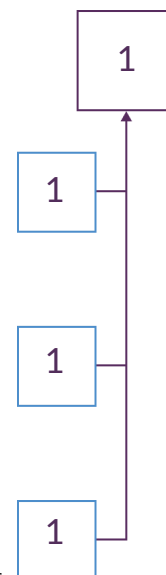
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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 throughout the school develop deep and secure knowledge, understanding and skills in religious education and make very good progress in their learning. Pupils know more and remember more as they progress through the planned religious education curriculum. Pupils respond confidently to questioning and deepen their understanding through discussion. Through their discussions, they demonstrate age-appropriate religious literacy and use subject-specific vocabulary accurately when explaining what they have learned and make insightful and meaningful connections between their learning in religious education and their own lives. In a lesson about being made in the image and likeness of God, one pupil said, 'There is only one of me, and I need to appreciate all the things I can do in life because they are all special.' Pupils take pride in their work, which is exceptionally well presented and reflects high expectations across the school. Books illustrate a rich variety of written and creative activities and show faithful coverage and fidelity to the *Religious Education Directory*. Pupils enjoy their learning and approach lessons with interest and enthusiasm, demonstrating very positive attitudes to learning. One pupil commented, 'I get lots of help and support and opportunities to express myself creatively.' Pupils understand how to improve their work and respond positively to feedback and challenge. Consequently, they achieve well and confidently demonstrate secure and age-related knowledge and understanding across the religious education curriculum.

Teachers are committed to the provision of high quality religious education and recognise its significant contribution to the moral and spiritual development of pupils. High expectations

are evident across the religious education lessons observed and motivate pupils to engage positively and achieve well. Teachers and dedicated learning support assistants, create supportive learning environments in which pupils feel confident to contribute, ask questions and express their understanding. Skilful questioning from teachers, extends pupils' knowledge and understanding and provides age appropriate challenge across all year groups; during a Key Stage 1 lesson on creation, pupils were asked to explain their thinking in more detail, 'Why do you think that?' Adults know pupils well and provide effective support during lessons. Adaptations to learning are carefully considered so that pupils with special educational needs can access the curriculum, participate fully and achieve well. Teachers regularly check pupils' understanding and respond effectively to misconceptions and gaps in knowledge. Pupils show a genuine enjoyment of religious education and are keen to share their ideas and learning. Their ability to articulate their understanding orally, use religious vocabulary appropriately and make connections between faith and their own experiences demonstrates the positive impact of the school's provision. Religious education is a significant and prioritised aspect of pupils' learning and contributes strongly to their wider formation.

Leaders and governors give religious education a high priority and ensure that it receives equal prominence with other core subjects across the school. The curriculum is securely rooted in the *Religious Education Directory*, and leaders are committed to ensuring that its requirements are faithfully implemented. The dedicated subject leader shows a strong commitment to the ongoing development of religious education and provides highly effective support for colleagues. Staff value her accessibility, expertise and guidance, which contribute to their confidence and professional development in the subject. Opportunities for staff formation and training are used effectively to strengthen the quality and consistency of religious education across the school. Leaders undertake rigorous monitoring and evaluation of the subject, drawing on a range of evidence to identify strengths and areas for development. Findings are shared appropriately with governors, enabling them to have a clear understanding of the quality and impact of the subject and to provide informed challenge and support. Leaders' and governors' self-evaluation is accurate, honest and evidence-based and is securely embedded within the school's culture. There is a clear commitment at all levels to sustaining and extending religious education, ensuring pupils receive high quality provision which supports their academic, spiritual and moral development.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

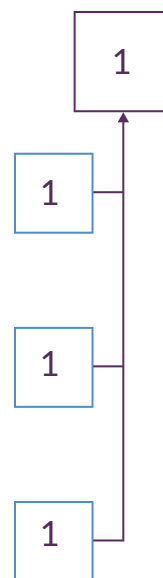
How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

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 wholeheartedly with the variety of prayer and liturgy provided across the school. They participate reverently in daily prayer and demonstrate a deep understanding of the different ways in which the school community prays. Pupils are confident in joining traditional and spontaneous prayer and reflect prayerfully in silence. In the early years, pupils are introduced to 'sacred silence' and are encouraged to speak to God in their hearts, establishing prayer is embedded from the earliest stages of their education. Pupils can explain how daily prayer shapes the rhythm of their day, describe aspects of the liturgical year and explain the significance of different liturgical seasons. Prayer experiences are varied, engaging and adapted to the age and stage of pupils. Religious artwork is used effectively to enrich pupils' spiritual experiences, including through Visio Divina and spiritual journalling. Pupils participate in liturgical ministries and understand the contribution they make to the prayer life of the school. The school should now work to strengthen pupils' confidence and skills in liturgical ministry to enhance active participation in prayer and liturgy. The school's prayer spaces and the 'House of Prayer' provide bespoke and varied opportunities for pupils to encounter stillness, reflection and prayer. Prayer is an important part of life at St Alban's and held in high regard, with one pupil describing it as 'helping us to be the best Catholic Christians we can be.'

Prayer and liturgy are central to the life of St Alban's and shape the rhythm and culture of the school community. The daily pattern of prayer provides pupils with regular opportunities to encounter God through scripture, silence and reflection. The priest works with leaders to plan regular opportunities for Mass and for the sacraments of Reconciliation and the Eucharist

throughout the school year. Staff, including senior leaders, are exemplary role models and lead prayer and liturgy with reverence, confidence and authenticity. Liturgies are well planned and well-constructed, enabling those present to participate meaningfully, and seasonal scripture is selected to support participation; parents are also included through opportunities such as 'Stay and Pray.' The school provides a rich variety of prayer experiences and prayer spaces throughout the school are used exceptionally well to create opportunities for reflection and encounter. The 'House of Prayer' is a treasured resource and was used to enhance a deeply spiritual experience during the inspection. Resources and religious artwork enrich prayer and liturgy, while prepared materials reflect the commitment of staff to ensuring that every experience is special and meaningful. Prayer and liturgy are central to the school's Catholic identity and provide opportunities for spiritual encounter and is affirming of the school's mission.

Leaders and governors place the highest priority on ensuring that prayer and liturgy are central at St Alban's. The school calendar and timetable are carefully and comprehensively planned so that significant moments in the liturgical year are celebrated; Holy Days of Obligation and important occasions, including the Feast of St Alban, are prioritised and celebrated appropriately. Policies and guidance for prayer and liturgy provide a clear and effective framework for staff when planning, preparing and leading prayer and liturgy. These are reviewed regularly and amended as appropriate. The leader for prayer and liturgy supports the ongoing formation of staff, providing regular professional development through focused staff meetings on different aspects of prayer and liturgy. Consequently, staff understand both the importance of prayer and liturgy and the significant impact it has on the spiritual formation of pupils. Resources for prayer and liturgy are prioritised and complemented by originally prepared materials produced by dedicated staff. The parish priest is an active partner, providing guidance with liturgical preparation and modelling good practice to the school community. There is a strong shared understanding that prayer and liturgy are at the heart of the life of St Alban's, and this is reflected in the reverence and engagement of the whole school community.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Alban's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	143366
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	9363921
Full postal address of the school	Beauchamp Road, East Molesey, KT8 2PG
School phone number	0208 979 5893
Headteacher or Head of School	Emma Chippendale
Chair of Governors	Emma Varley
School Website	www.stalbansprimary.org.uk
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Xavier
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	18 March 2022
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

The Inspection Team

Ursula Hargrave Lead

Rosalyn Lloyd

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