CATHOLIC SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

THE NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE INSPECTION OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS, COLLEGES AND ACADEMIES

St Michael's Catholic Primary School

URN: 144971

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Hexham & Newcastle

04 November 2026 – 05 November 2026

Summary of key findings

Overall effectiveness

The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school

1

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

1

Religious education (p.5)

The quality of curriculum religious education

1

Collective worship (p.7)

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

1

The school is fully compliant with the general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishops' Conference	Yes
The school is fully compliant with diocesan directives	Yes
The school has responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection	Fully

This Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection was carried out under canons 804 & 806 of the code of canon law. For maintained schools and academies in England it fulfils the statutory requirements of s.48 of the Education Act 2005. For maintained schools and academies in Wales it fulfils the statutory requirements of s.50 of the Education Act 2005.

What the school does well

- The Executive headteacher and Head of school are exemplary witnesses to the Catholic life and mission of the school. They make a formidable team ensuring that the school's distinctive Catholic identity permeates all aspects of its work and relationships.
- A strong culture of welcome and inclusion ensures that every pupil and family is valued for who they are.The school's mission 'to come as you are and grow with us' is fully lived out. As a result, pupils feel safe, supported and empowered to thrive in all aspects of their development.
- Pupils are happy, confident and proud to be part of the school community. They show kindness, respect and consideration towards others.
- Leaders have successfully fostered a culture in which all staff recognise themselves as leaders of the school's Catholic mission. United by a shared vision, they provide a consistent and authentic witness to the school's Catholic ethos through their words and actions.
- Teachers have excellent subject knowledge, together with dedicated support staff, they provide high-quality learning experiences that deepen pupils' understanding of the Catholic faith as well as increasing their academic knowledge.

What the school needs to improve

- Develop their Catholic curriculum so that Catholic values, knowledge, and teachings are woven throughout the entire curriculum.
- Review the impact of the new religious education curriculum to maintain the high standards already evident in pupils' learning and outcomes.

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

1

Pupil outcomes

1

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

Provision

1

The quality of provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school

Leadership

1

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school

St Michael's Catholic Primary School is proud of its School of Sanctuary status; however, this recognition simply affirms what is already deeply evident in the daily life of the school. The school embodies sanctuary in its truest sense, providing a nurturing and inclusive environment where everyone is welcomed, cherished and empowered to flourish. The rich diversity of cultures, languages and needs is celebrated as a strength, creating opportunities for pupils to embrace the school's mission to, 'Live life to the full' and 'Come as you are and grow with us.' Pupils make an exceptional contribution to the Catholic life and mission of the school. They have a deep understanding of the mission and confidently articulate how it shapes their actions and relationships. Numerous pupils told inspectors, 'We know our mission is to bring Christ to others. By following our school values, we help everyone feel loved.' Pupils demonstrate an excellent understanding of Catholic social teaching, which is evident in the way they lead and serve others as Mini Vinnies, Faith in Action members, Prayer Leaders and School Council representatives. Through their actions they promote human dignity, respect and inclusion within the school community. Pupils show deep respect for other faiths, cultures and languages.

The mission statement is prominently displayed, well known, and fully lived throughout St Michael's, shaping every aspect of school life. Parents speak confidently about how staff embody the mission daily, modelling the gospel values they wish pupils to grow in. Staff at all levels fully embrace this shared purpose; they know their families exceptionally well and serve the community with generosity, compassion, and deep professional commitment. The school is described by staff as, 'a beacon of hope'. Staff working at St Michael's regard it as both a

privilege and a vocation. This sense of calling is evident in the excellent pastoral care offered to pupils and their families, creating an environment that is consistently nurturing and rooted in dignity and respect. As a result, parents describe the school as an, 'oasis of calm'. The Catholic life of the school is further strengthened by the strong links with the parish. The parish priest is a warmly welcomed and valued. His presence enriches worship and supports pupils' spiritual development. Provision for relationship and health education is fully compliant with diocesan expectations, delivered through the Ten Ten programme. This is taught with sensitivity and clarity, guiding pupils to recognise their dignity as children of God.

School leaders provide inspirational, faith-filled leadership, ensuring that the Church's mission is clearly articulated, deeply embedded and authentically lived by the whole school community. Through their strategic vision, Catholic life and mission permeate every aspect of school life and remain central to decision-making. Rigorous and evaluative self-assessment enables governors to provide effective challenge and support, ensuring continual improvement and fidelity to the school's mission. Leaders and governors work proactively with the diocese and the Bishop Bewick Catholic Education Trust (BBCET), participating fully in formation opportunities. and contributing positively. Highly effective partnerships with parents and the parish ensure that faith remains at the heart of the school community. Parents recognise St Michael's as a deeply inclusive community where all are welcomed, valued and encouraged to participate in the faith life of the school and parish, regardless of their faith background. Staff feel valued and are well supported through a strong culture of professional development and well-being. Induction procedures are highly effective, enabling new staff to embrace the school's mission from the outset. Consequently, there is a deeply shared understanding of the school's Catholic identity, with all staff affirming that 'the school prioritises its Catholic ethos, ensuring that faith, prayer and liturgy are central to everything we do as a community.'

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

1

Pupil outcomes

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

1

Provision

The quality of teaching, learning, and assessment in religious education

1

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for religious education

1

Pupils at St Michael's demonstrate exceptional knowledge, understanding and skills in religious education, reflecting the school's high expectations and deeply rooted Catholic mission. Through carefully sequenced learning, pupils consistently know more, remember more and do more, building securely on prior knowledge and achieving highly from their starting points. The explicit teaching of subject-specific vocabulary in every lesson enables pupils to explain their learning confidently and accurately. Pupils not only enjoy religious education but actively embrace the challenge of the new teaching resource: 'The Way', demonstrating deep engagement and a genuine enthusiasm for learning. They are highly reflective and readily apply their learning to their own experiences. Year 4 pupils explain that they can, 'see God in the morning light' demonstrating the depth of their spiritual awareness. Frequent opportunities for reflection, self-assessment and discussion deepen understanding and nurture pupils' faith development. Pupils take great pride in their work, which is consistently well-presented and completed to a high standard. Although meaningful links are made with other curriculum subjects, cross-curricular links are not fully embedded. Pupils understand how well they are achieving, respond positively to feedback and confidently articulate their next steps, resulting in outstanding outcomes in religious education.

The majority of teachers have completed, or are currently undertaking, the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies, resulting in highly secure subject knowledge. This expertise is reflected in the consistently outstanding teaching of religious education, where lessons are engaging, challenging, inclusive and accessible for every pupil. Teaching assistants provide unobtrusive,

skilful support that promotes pupils' independence and confidence. Skilled questioning is used to probe understanding and deepen thinking; in Year 6, pupils confidently link the story of Joseph son of Jacob with the experiences of the Israelites in the time of Moses, demonstrating secure biblical knowledge. All staff are recognised as leaders of religious education, sharing an unwavering commitment to the subject and maintaining consistently high expectations that enable pupils to achieve exceptionally well. Planning for 'The Way' is bespoke and carefully adapted to the context of St Michael's and enriched through meaningful learning experiences that deepen understanding and nurture spiritual growth. Lessons are thoughtfully structured, with hinge lessons used effectively to capture pupils' enthusiasm. Pupils' books provide evidence of sustained excellence over time. Presentation is exemplary, reflecting pride and commitment to learning. High-quality resources, opportunities for reflection and carefully sequenced learning ensure pupils consistently produce work of an exceptionally high standard.

Leaders and governors know the school exceptionally well through their strong partnership and shared commitment to living out the mission, 'Come as you are and grow with us.' Governors are highly visible within the school community and make frequent visits, enabling them to gain first-hand knowledge of its strengths and priorities. As a result, they provide both effective support and appropriate challenge, holding leaders rigorously to account while championing the school's Catholic vision and strategic development. Through highly effective strategic leadership, religious education is afforded full parity with other core subjects, and the expectations of the Directory are fully met. Leaders have established a culture of excellence in which pupils flourish academically, spiritually and personally. The religious education subject leaders provide expert guidance and support, both within the school and across the BBCET, generously sharing expertise. Self-evaluation is forensic and ambitious, resulting in continual improvement and sustained high standards. As the curriculum is in the early stages of implementation, leaders recognise the importance of ongoing review and evaluation to ensure its intended impact is fully realised. Partnerships with the parish, diocese, BBCET and the wider community are highly effective and enrich pupils' learning significantly. These strong collaborations provide valuable opportunities for formation, service and spiritual growth.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade

1

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

Prayer and liturgy are central to the life of St Michael's and are woven seamlessly into the daily experiences of pupils and staff. Well-established routines, taught explicitly from the earliest years, enable pupils to participate confidently, prayerfully and reverently in worship. The youngest children readily make the sign of the cross and greet the gospel with confidence and understanding, demonstrating how effectively the school forms pupils in the traditions and practices of the Catholic faith. Every classroom contains an age-appropriate prayer focal point which serves as a valued space for reflection, prayer and spiritual growth. As pupils progress through the school, they are given increasing responsibility to plan, lead and evaluate prayer and liturgy. Year 6 pupils speak passionately about their roles as prayer leaders recognising their responsibility to nurture faith across the school and bring Christ to younger pupils. They ensure prayer stations remain welcoming, relevant and inspiring spaces that are used by the children to write spontaneous prayers. Pupils participate in prayer and liturgy with reverence, enthusiasm and joy. Across the school, behaviour during acts of worship is exemplary; pupils listen attentively, participate wholeheartedly and demonstrate deep respect for prayer, reflection and silence.

Prayer is carefully nurtured through a comprehensive annual plan of prayer that reflects the liturgical year of the Church. Pupils engage meaningfully with key seasons and traditions, including praying the rosary during October and participating in stations of the cross throughout Lent. Scripture lies at the heart of daily prayer and worship for both pupils and staff, ensuring that the word of God informs and inspires every aspect of school life. Through regular opportunities for prayer and reflection, staff deepen their understanding of the

school's mission, striving to ensure that every child feels seen, valued and accepted. They speak with conviction about their vocation and recognise their responsibility to be witnesses of faith, hope and love. The school provides a rich variety of prayer experiences, including Examen, hand prayer meditation and creative prayer activities, enabling pupils to develop a meaningful and personal relationship with God. Consequently, pupils confidently articulate the importance of prayer and identify forms of prayer that resonate with them. Prayer is a lived reality, evident in the compassionate relationships that permeate the school community. Parental feedback consistently reflects the impact of the school's provision, with many parents reporting that their children have developed a deep understanding of human dignity and confidently recognise that, 'we are all children of God'.

St Michael's has a precise and ambitious prayer and liturgy policy that is consistently implemented across the school and underpins the strength of its prayer life. Leaders have carefully mapped the knowledge, skills and experiences pupils should develop as they progress through the school. These are regularly reviewed through rigorous and highly effective monitoring, ensuring continual improvement and consistently high-quality provision. As a result, pupils grow in confidence, independence and leadership in prayer and liturgy. Leaders are exemplary role models who place prayer at the heart of school life. They actively support and encourage staff to lead prayer and liturgical celebrations for both colleagues and pupils, creating a culture in which faith is visibly lived and shared. Prayer is central to staff formation and well-being with relationships central to the school. This strengthens their understanding of the school's mission and their role in bringing Christ to others. Parents value and enthusiastically attend opportunities such as 'Stay and Pray', reflecting the strong partnership between home and school. Leaders, including governors, have a deep understanding of the families and community they serve. Robust parish links further enrich pupils' experience, ensuring prayer and worship are authentic, joyful and firmly connected to the wider faith community and Church.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Michael's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	144971
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	3912023
Full postal address of the school	Clumber Street North, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE4 7RE
School phone number	0191 273 9383
Executive Headteacher	Mrs Charlotte Chapman
Headteacher or Head of School	Ms Jenny Consterdine
Chair of Governors	Mr Michael Scurr
School Website	www.st-michaels.school
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Bishop Bewick Catholic Education 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	23 January 2019
Previous denominational inspection grade	Good

The Inspection Team

Angela Mary Phillips	Lead
Lianne Peart	

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