



# St William's Catholic Primary School Trimdon

URN: 147402

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of Bishop Stephen Wright, Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle

06–07 March 2025

## 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

2

#### Religious education (p.5)

The quality of curriculum religious education

2

#### Collective worship (p.7)

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

2

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 any additional requirements of the diocesan bishop

Yes

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

Fully

2

## Compliance statement

- St William's Catholic Primary School is fully compliant in relation to the general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishop's Conference
- St William's catholic Primary School is fully compliant with the requirements of the Diocesan Bishop
- St William's Catholic Primary School has responded to and met the area for further development which was identified during the last inspection

## What the school does well

- St William's Catholic Primary School is a welcoming community with a strong family ethos
- The school offers a high level of pastoral care, nurture and support within the school. The school prides itself as being a family where all are fully included and supported
- Pupils enjoy leading acts of collective worship and are willing and active participants in adult led prayer
- School leaders are determined to enable all pupils to live out the Church's mission through close relationships with the parish community
- Pupils take great pride in their work in religious education and talk about their enjoyment and enthusiasm for the subject

## What the school needs to improve

- Develop pupils' awareness and knowledge of the impact of their actions when involved in catholic life and mission opportunities, particularly around Catholic social teaching.
- Develop more opportunities for creativity in religious education to enable pupils to respond to their learning in a variety of forms
- Develop more opportunities for creativity in prayer to enable pupils to develop their own independence in organising and leading prayer across 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**

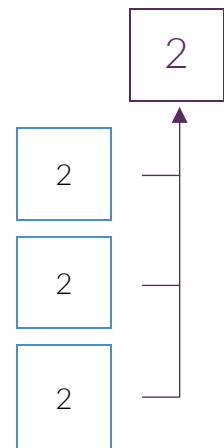
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

**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



The school's mission statement 'We love and learn together in the light of the Lord' is known by all stakeholders and underpins all aspects of school life. Pupils know they are valued, and this Christ centred approach of the school ensures that all pupils thrive and feel that they are part of the school family. Due to this, pupils have a great pride in their school and can clearly articulate their own importance as members of the school community. Pupils have opportunities in school to take on leadership roles within prayer and school events and these include Mini Vinnies, prayer leaders and faith in action groups. These groups are being developed to help support pupils with their understanding of the mission of the school. Pupils are beginning to develop their understanding of Catholic social teaching and have been given opportunities to help others in the local community and the global community. Pupils discussed with great enthusiasm their work supporting local foodbanks and their Lenten walks on a Friday to raise money for Cafod. Some of these opportunities have recently been adopted by the school, so pupils are just at the beginning of their journey to deepen their own understanding so they can take full ownership of their mission.

Pupils could state their full vision statement that linked to each of the letters of St William's and take great pride in being part of their school community. They could all say how important it was that everyone felt welcome. Due to this, the school is a very inclusive place to be, and this is a real strength of the school. The staff are role models for the pupils. The pastoral care and support provided by the school enable all pupils to thrive in a nurturing and safe environment. Staff show an overwhelming commitment to ensuring the uniqueness of each child is supported. Pupils talk about how much they love being part of the school and one child said, 'Our school is

one big family, and everyone knows each other here. We know that God has made us all and we respect each other because of this.' Pupils are beginning to develop their understanding of how and why the school mission and the mission of the Catholic church can have an impact on the local and wider community. Catholic social teaching principles are beginning to be embedded across school, but pupils are still developing their own understanding of how this impacts positively on the community they serve.

Leaders and governors of the school are passionate about the school and their role in leading the mission of the Church. There are close links with the parish priest and the parish community with parishioners working alongside pupils on joint projects such as the St. Vincent de Paul Society with the Mini Vinnies group. Leaders have worked hard to develop very positive relationships with parents, and this was very evident through discussions with parental groups and at the school gate. Leaders ensure they make sure that the most vulnerable pupils are well nurtured and supported. Governors are actively involved in the Catholic life of the school and are regular visitors. This enables them to hold school leaders to account and be active participants of the school faith community. Leaders discussed the regularity of parental involvement in the Catholic life of the school and the importance of including them as the first educators of their children. Parents happily discuss the highest level of pastoral care with one parent saying that St William's is, 'A fantastic school, leading my child through her journey with Christ.'

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

### Religious education key judgement grade

#### Pupil outcomes

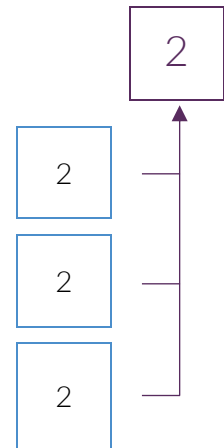
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

#### 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 make good progress from their starting points and discuss what they have learned in their lessons with great enthusiasm. Through effective teaching and skilled questioning pupils are supported well to know more and remember more. Behaviour for learning is excellent and the work in pupils' books is generally well-presented and of a good standard. Pupils' religious literacy across both key stages is good and is enabling them to grow in their understanding of faith and its application to daily life. Pupils are guided by effective marking and feedback that they build upon to develop their understanding. Therefore, they know what they need to do to improve their work. As a result, pupils achieve at least in line with age-related expectations across the school. They respond well to the structure of their lessons, and the regular opportunities to recall their previous learning helps pupils to retain new knowledge. There are some opportunities for extended writing in religious education but limited opportunities to present their learning in a wide variety of ways. Opportunities for all children to show what they have learned in more original and creative ways such as using art and music was not as well developed.

Teachers have good subject knowledge and know their pupils well. They use questioning well in their lessons to ensure they effectively identify pupils understanding to enable them to make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities were well supported to take part fully in lessons alongside their peers. Where learning is celebrated, this leads to high levels of motivation, and this then deepens children's thinking. Teachers support pupils well so that every pupil can access the curriculum and make good progress. The school invites in visitors from the parish community such as visits from the parish priest, St Vincent de Paul Society and the Legion of Mary to work with pupils to develop further their religious understanding. Teachers communicate high expectations to pupils about religious education. They create a safe, positive, and respectful environment for learning. Teachers know their pupils well and they are aware of the different needs of pupils in their class and provide valuable support to individual learners. Key vocabulary that pupils need to support their learning has been identified and through

effective learning opportunities pupils use this accurately in their work. Teachers reinforce positive learning behaviour and celebrate pupil contributions. They recognise the impact religious education has on pupils' moral and spiritual development.

Leaders and governors understand the vital importance of religious education in the spiritual and moral development of pupils and ensure a high status is given to the subject. Leaders also ensure that the curriculum meets the requirements of the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory* and that it is given as high a status as other core subjects in terms of funding and resourcing. This resourcing includes professional development, and religious education is given a high profile within the school's professional development calendar and the school's improvement plan. The subject leader has carefully planned professional development opportunities to stay updated on current trends and best practices. They ensure staff are provided with guidance and support for planning and delivering good quality lessons in religious education. Leaders, including governors and Bishop Hogarth Catholic Education Trust (BHCET), use a variety of approaches to monitor the effectiveness of the school's work and have a clear and thorough understanding of strengths and areas for further development. Governors hold school leaders to account and provide effective challenge to ensure that religious education remains at the core and is the heart of the school's purpose.

## 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

2

**Provision**

The quality of collective worship provided by the school

2

**Leadership**

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for collective worship

2

2

Pupils throughout the school respond well to the experiences of prayer and celebration of the word provided for them. Praying together is part of the daily experience for all pupils which has a positive impact upon the school's sense of community. There is a policy for prayer and liturgy which is planned and has been well resourced to reflect the liturgical year. In every class, pupils have access to a sacred prayer space which pupils showed reverence to, when engaging in class prayer. Within every class, pupils can access scripture which is appropriate to the theme and accessible at the appropriate age level throughout the school. There are opportunities during celebration of the word for silence and reflection. Pupils are given the opportunity to participate fully within each class and there are several examples of children being able to support and lead prayer and liturgy where this was appropriate. Pupils are given ministries in the adult led worships which they undertake with reverence. Pupils enjoy working together collaboratively to prepare worship, as well as with staff to offer prayer experiences for the whole school community.

Prayer and liturgy are carefully planned across the school. There is a daily pattern of prayer as a whole school, key stage or within each classroom which follows the liturgical calendar and reflects the celebration of significant events for the school. The pupils could articulate that prayer is a time to 'tell God what is in your heart'. Pupils were given the opportunity to participate fully within each class and there were several examples of children being able to support and lead prayer and liturgy where this was appropriate. At all times, behaviour was very good, leading to a meaningful and spiritual experience for all pupils. Pupils are developing their knowledge in how to select appropriate scripture to enhance the prayer experience of pupil led prayer. A new outdoor prayer space had been created by the pupils that they were very proud of, and they

discussed in detail all the plans that they had to introduce it for all pupils in school. Pupils also discussed prayer spaces that they had set up inside school and why they were important to the prayer life of the school. However, pupils have not yet developed their understanding fully of different or more creative ways to pray.

The school has a well-established policy for prayer and celebration of the word which is followed consistently throughout the school. Pupil leaders are developing their confidence in leading prayer and speak with pride and commitment to the development of this within their own faith journey. Leaders model good practice for staff and pupils in planning and providing quality prayerful experiences. Governor monitoring has ensured that the prayer life of the school has retained its central role and is viewed as an integral part of school life. Staff understand fully the importance of prayer and liturgy to the whole school community. Leaders have developed an understanding of the strengths and areas for further development within the school and have worked closely with BHCET to develop staffs' knowledge in this area. Professional development for staff is well-targeted and well-received by the staff team. Leaders have ensured that collective worship is well resourced and that all staff and pupils have a wide range of resources to use. The school works closely with the parish priest to arrange regular Masses and sacramental preparations. Members of the school community can access Mass and other liturgies.



## Information about the school

Full name of school	St William's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	147402
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8403442
Full postal address of the school	St William's Catholic Primary School, Elwick View, Trimdon Village, Trimdon Station, TS29 6HY
School phone number	01429880348
Headteacher	Michael Tiplady
Chair of local governing body	David Pinnock
School Website	<a href="https://stwilliams.bhcet.org.uk/">https://stwilliams.bhcet.org.uk/</a>
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Bishop Hogarth 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	October 2017
Previous denominational inspection grade	1

## The inspection team

Sonia Fraser  
Paul Craig

Lead  
Team

## 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