CATHOLIC SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

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

Alice Ingham RC Primary School, A Voluntary Academy

URN: 144982

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Salford

30 April 2026 – 01 May 2026

Summary of key findings

Overall effectiveness — 2

The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school

Catholic life and mission (p.3) — 2

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) — 2

The quality of curriculum religious education RE

Collective worship (p.7) — 2

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	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

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 core values of love, respect, care and resilience are deeply embedded and consistently lived across all aspects of school life.
- Families from all backgrounds, including those who join at different points in the year, are warmly welcomed and quickly feel a strong sense of belonging within the school community.
- High quality pastoral care effectively promotes the dignity and wellbeing of every child.
- Pupils are enthusiastic learners who enjoy religious education.
- The Growing in Faith Together (GIFT) team makes a meaningful and valued contribution to the prayer life of the school.

What the school needs to improve

- To strengthen pupils' ability to articulate how their faith and understanding of Catholic social teaching influence their everyday actions, decisions and relationships.
- To develop pupils' understanding of their progress in religious education by enabling them to identify what they are doing well and what they need to improve.
- To enable pupils to engage more deeply with prayer and develop their own personal responses by providing regular opportunities in collective worship for reflection, stillness, and silence.

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

2

Pupil outcomes

2

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

Provision

2

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

Leadership

2

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

Across the school, pupils benefit greatly from the strong and clearly articulated Catholic life and mission. They demonstrate kindness, respect and compassion in their relationships and show pride in living out the school's values of love, care, resilience and respect. These values are reflected consistently in pupils' behaviour and contribute to a calm, inclusive and welcoming environment where pupils feel safe, valued and cared for. Pupils engage actively in charitable outreach, including fundraising for Cafod through initiatives such as the *Big Lent Walk*, and participate in activities led by the Caritas group and Laudato Si' ambassadors. These opportunities enable pupils to put faith into action through service, stewardship and care for creation. Developing pupil leadership roles further enhance engagement, with many pupils eager to contribute to the wider life of the school community. Families value the school's strong pastoral care and inclusive ethos, often describing the community as a family. However, pupils are not yet consistently able to articulate the deeper personal impact of faith on their thinking, decisions and behaviour.

Thoughtful and inclusive provision underpins the Catholic life of the school and supports pupils' spiritual, moral and personal development effectively. The school's Catholic identity is clearly visible throughout the learning environment through purposeful displays, shared language and symbolic expression, reinforcing the school's mission and strong sense of belonging. Robust pastoral systems ensure that pupils and families, particularly those whose circumstances have made them vulnerable, are well supported within a culture of care, dignity and respect. The free breakfast club, open to all pupils, supports pupils' wellbeing and readiness to learn. Provision reflects the school's inclusive understanding of Catholic mission,

ensuring that pupils from all faiths and backgrounds are welcomed and encouraged to participate fully in prayer, worship and acts of service. Prayer spaces support reflection and provide regular opportunities for prayer throughout the school day. Relationships, sex and health education is delivered consistently and supports the development of the whole child within a Catholic framework. Staff value the ongoing formation and support they receive and model the school's values consistently through their interactions with pupils and families.

Committed leadership and governance ensure that Catholic life and mission remain central to the school's vision, strategic direction and daily practice. Leaders communicate the school's mission clearly and model Gospel values consistently through their relationships, decision-making and strong pastoral approach. The headteacher is a visible and inspirational presence, nurturing a culture of care, respect and inclusion in which pupils and families feel welcomed and supported. Pastoral leadership is a notable strength and contributes positively to pupils' engagement, attendance and wellbeing. Governors, working closely with the Catholic Academy Trust, provide informed challenge and effective support, ensuring accountability and a shared ambition for the Catholic life of the school. Through regular monitoring and dialogue, leaders and governors maintain a clear focus on the school's mission and its impact on the community. Leaders engage in reflective self-evaluation, enabling priorities to be identified accurately and resources to be directed purposefully. Partnerships with parents and the parish are promoted effectively, with families valuing opportunities to participate in celebrations, assemblies and Masses. However, monitoring does not yet consistently capture the longer-term spiritual impact on pupils' ability to articulate faith personally.

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

2

Pupil outcomes

2

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

Provision

2

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

Leadership

2

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

Pupils make good progress in religious education and achieve securely from their individual starting points. They demonstrate age-appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills aligned with the *Religious Education Directory*, with standards comparable to other core subjects. Learning builds effectively over time and is supported through recall of prior knowledge, purposeful vocabulary teaching and meaningful engagement with scripture. Pupils apply their learning confidently through written, creative and oral responses. Attitudes towards religious education are positive, with pupils showing enthusiasm and curiosity through activities such as discussion, drama and art. Work in pupils' books is of a good standard and often demonstrates pride and developing independence. Pupils are beginning to make connections between their learning and their own lives, recognising how faith can influence attitudes and personal choices. This was evident in the early years, where pupils demonstrated a developing understanding of Pentecost and its significance. However, pupils do not yet consistently evaluate their learning independently or articulate their progress over time. A greater focus on pupil-led questioning, self-assessment and reflection would strengthen ownership of learning and enable pupils to express faith-based reasoning with increasing confidence and understanding.

Religious education is well planned and effectively delivered, supporting pupils to make good progress and achieve expected outcomes across the school. Teaching is informed by the *Religious Education Directory* and benefits from clear sequencing, ensuring learning builds coherently over time. Teachers demonstrate secure subject knowledge and use a range of

strategies to engage pupils, including discussion, creative activities, drama and reflection. Learning is strengthened through opportunities to revisit prior knowledge and key vocabulary, enabling pupils to recall and apply their understanding with increasing confidence. Scripture is used thoughtfully to support pupils' understanding of faith, and lessons provide opportunities for oral, written and creative responses. Work in pupils' books is of a good standard and reflects consistent expectations across the school. Provision supports inclusivity effectively, with learning accessible to pupils of differing abilities and backgrounds. Early years provision introduces religious education appropriately through engaging learning experiences that support pupils' spiritual development. Assessment is used to inform planning and support progress, although opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own learning are not yet consistently developed. A greater focus on pupil-led reflection and self-assessment will further strengthen provision and support deeper learning across the school.

Leadership of religious education is purposeful and well informed, promoting continuous improvement and increasing consistency across the school. Leaders have a clear understanding of the *Religious Education Directory* and ensure it is implemented effectively through well-planned curriculum oversight. A range of monitoring activities, including learning walks, work scrutiny, planning reviews and pupil voice, is undertaken regularly to evaluate the quality of provision and its impact on pupils' learning. Feedback supports professional reflection and enables teaching practice to strengthen over time. Early career teachers are well supported through mentoring and coaching, particularly in developing confidence and consistency in delivering the religious education curriculum. Leaders demonstrate an outward-facing approach, engaging with diocesan professional development, trust networks and visits to other schools to inform curriculum development and improve practice. Governors provide effective oversight and support leaders through appropriate challenge and encouragement. Religious education is clearly prioritised within the school improvement plan and reflects leaders' high expectations for pupils' achievement. While leadership is effective, evaluation does not yet consistently focus on measuring pupils' depth of understanding and spiritual development. Refining success criteria and strengthening opportunities for deeper independent learning will further enhance leadership effectiveness and support pupils in articulating their faith with greater confidence and understanding.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade

2

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

Pupils experience positive outcomes from prayer and liturgy and participate with reverence, enjoyment and growing confidence. They engage respectfully in prayer and worship and demonstrate an increasing understanding of their role as active participants. Pupils understand and follow the four-part model of prayer and liturgy, which supports familiarity, coherence and increasing independence. As a result, pupils contribute appropriately and behave respectfully during worship. Prayer and liturgy linked to the liturgical year support pupils' understanding of Church seasons, symbols and celebration, enabling them to make connections between worship, the life of the Church and their own faith journey. Regular participation in Mass strengthens pupils' confidence in singing, responses and key prayers. Pupil leadership continues to develop effectively, particularly through the Growing in Faith Together team. Members show growing confidence and responsibility, including opportunities to work with other schools, which enhances pupils' understanding of mission and service. Pupils are beginning to reflect thoughtfully on prayer and worship and, with support, can explain how these experiences influence their attitudes and relationships. Opportunities for stillness and silence are not yet fully consistent for all pupils and remain an area for further development.

Provision for prayer and liturgy ensures that prayer is visible, accessible and valued throughout the school day. A clear and consistent daily pattern of prayer is established and understood by pupils as an important part of school life. This rhythm is signalled by a pupil leader ringing the prayer bell, which promotes a calm and reverent atmosphere and reinforces pupil involvement in prayer. Morning, lunchtime and end-of-day prayer are

supported by familiar routines which provide purposeful opportunities for reflection and stillness. Classroom prayer areas are well maintained and reflect the liturgical year, supporting pupils' engagement and understanding of the life of the Church. Displays across the school promote scripture, Gospel values and Catholic identity, encouraging reflection beyond formal acts of prayer and liturgy. Outdoor spaces, including the prayer garden, provide additional opportunities for prayer and contemplation. The prayer room supports worship and the development of pupil leadership, particularly for pupils involved in planning and leading prayer and liturgy. However, the space is not yet fully developed as a permanent dedicated prayer environment. Further enhancement would strengthen reflection, inclusivity and sustained pupil ownership of prayer and liturgy.

Leadership of prayer and liturgy is sustained through a well-structured and purposeful approach which ensures prayer and worship remain central to school life. Senior leaders and governors demonstrate strong commitment by embedding prayer and liturgy as a regular focus within leadership and governance meetings. This shared responsibility promotes consistency, clarity of vision and accountability. Key policies, including the prayer and liturgy policy and prayer progression document, provide clear guidance and support the development of pupils' liturgical skills over time. High-quality formation and continuing professional development are prioritised. Staff benefit from diocesan and trust-wide training opportunities, which strengthen confidence, subject knowledge and understanding of effective prayer and liturgy. The headteacher models high-quality worship and sets clear expectations, ensuring staff are well supported to plan and lead prayerful experiences. Monitoring arrangements are effective and include observation of prayer and liturgy and planning reviews. These processes support accurate self-evaluation and help leaders identify appropriate next steps for improvement. Further refinement of systems to capture pupils' lived experiences of prayer and worship would strengthen leadership effectiveness further and support deeper spiritual outcomes for all pupils.

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Information about the school

Full name of school	Alice Ingham RC Primary School, A Voluntary Academy
School unique reference number (URN)	144982
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	3542010
Full postal address of the school	Millgate, Halifax Road, Rochdale, OL16 2NU
School phone number	01706341560
Headteacher or Head of School	Mrs Leanne Gibson
Chair of Governors	Mr David Golding
School Website	www.aliceingham.stoccat.org.uk
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	St Teresa of Calcutta Catholic Academy Trust
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	28 June 2018
Previous denominational inspection grade	Good

The Inspection Team

Anne-Marie Bell	Lead
Martina Staffa	

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