



## St Thomas More Catholic Primary School

URN: 142600

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

11 March 2026 – 12 March 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

3

2

2

3

Yes

Yes

Partially

#### Compliance Statement

- The school has partially complied with the areas for improvement from the previous inspection.

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## What the school does well

- This school exudes a strong sense of community, where everyone establishes and maintains good relationships as a priority.
- Pupils are kind, courteous, and enthusiastic about learning about the faith.
- All members of the community are committed to the mission statement: relationships in school are strong and pupils and staff feel cared for and loved.
- Parents are rightly proud of their school and value the support given to them.

## What the school needs to improve

- Leaders should ensure that in religious education lessons there is regular use of open-ended learning tasks and teacher questioning, with a focus on developing pupils' full potential and greater independence.
- Fully implement a Prayer and Liturgy Policy which impacts the provision and experiences of pupils across the school.
- The governing body should fulfil its core functions for which it is responsible through active involvement in its evaluation of the Catholic Life and Mission, Religious Education and Collective Worship to support and challenge leaders.

## 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

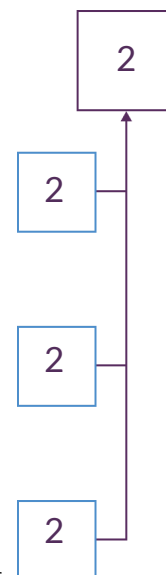
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

#### 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



Catholic life and mission is central in the everyday life of St Thomas More. This is the result of the vocation and dedication of the school's leaders, especially the long-serving and well-regarded headteacher. The mission of the school, 'Love One Another as I have Loved You' is weaved across the school and is well understood by all. Pupils understand the distinctive Catholic identity of the school. They are proud to be part of the school's community and to participate in the opportunities given to them to celebrate and share their faith. Pupils grow into confident, happy individuals who know God loves them. Pupils know they have a duty to care for those less fortunate than themselves. Pupils regularly support charitable fundraising activities, including an Easter Raffle towards a memorial rose for the Holocaust Centre, The Good Shepherd charity and singing in a local care home.

Staff are positive and committed role models, who along with pupils, readily take part in those activities which reflect the school's Catholic life. Through their relationships with each other and the love and care they show for pupils, staff bear witness to the mission of the school. Staff say that 'It doesn't feel like a job, it's family...God called me to be here' and, alongside parents are wholeheartedly positive about the school. The school communicates well with parents through the weekly newsletter and invites them into the Catholic life of the school, recognising their rightful place as first educators of their children. One parent said, 'My child's understanding of the catholic faith is really warming when they come home, hearing them talk about Jesus and God'. Each classroom display reflects the liturgical year, but the space and focal points devoted for prayer are not of high-quality. Relationships, sex, and health education (RSHE) is taught throughout the school and is rooted in the teaching of the Church.

The head teacher is committed and driven to implementing planned improvements, that will better provision and standards for all. She has a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for development, but as the only religious leader across the school lacks capacity to deliver the improvements necessary. Governors have been fully informed about pupils' progress through the headteacher reports. However, governors do not ensure that the school self-evaluation is accurate, or know that the school policies are having impact because they are not fully involved in challenging the school leaders through active monitoring, analysis and self-evaluation. This leads to them not having a good strategic vision or oversight of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. There are good links with the local parish; the school and parish join for events, including sacramental preparation, St Thomas More day and school mass. The parish priest is very supportive and his commitment to the school is highly valued by leaders and staff. Parents appreciate the pastoral support given by the school and value it as a supportive family.

## 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

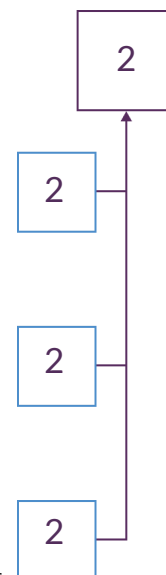
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

#### 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 are mainly confident in their knowledge and understanding of religious education and make good contributions during lessons, showing an awareness of key concepts. Most pupils concentrate well and are keen to develop their religious literacy skills and become competent learners. They are able to work independently and show signs of emerging individuality. Although most pupils are attentive in lessons, their engagement lessens, when the main teaching and learning point is too long. Teachers often do not give pupils opportunities to record their work and extend their written outcomes due to the limitations of worksheets. Some pupils are articulate when it comes to answering questions regarding key concepts and scripture. However, questioning is not always planned to develop pupils' thinking and understanding further and there are too few opportunities for pupils to generate their own questions related to their learning to deepen their knowledge and improve outcomes and progress. Presentation of pupils' work in books is inconsistent. The feedback policy is implemented well.

Children in the early years benefit from the well-planned continuous provision on offer. Teaching continues to be mostly effective across Key Stage 1 and teachers ensure that well planned tasks and activities meet the needs of their pupils. However, the quality of teaching is varied across Key Stage 2, where teachers do not always provide enough opportunities that challenge pupils to strengthen and deepen their theological understanding, particularly the more able pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by their class teachers and teaching assistants. This is particularly effective when they ask questions at an

appropriate level and help develop pupils' knowledge and understanding. There is a high degree of scaffolding for pupils, across the school, leading to a general lack of independence in pupil learning. In some lessons, class teachers do not have a clear sense of how learning was to progress within the lesson, and opportunities for pupils are limited. In the best lessons teachers deliver engaging lessons that allow pupils to make good progress from their starting points and use questioning well to elicit strong pupil responses including making links to previous learning.

Leaders ensure that religious education programmes and resources deliver the curriculum aims set out in the *Religious Education Directory*. The head teacher is very responsive to the needs of staff and provides informal, regular support when it is required. This, alongside internal training for staff, ensures that they have access to professional development. The good practice taking place in some year groups of the school is not shared widely enough. Staff training occurs and is frequent and accessible to all, but no evaluation of staff training or training needs are made and monitoring is not linked to the quality of Teaching and Learning. As a result, inconsistencies in teaching religious education through the school's scheme of choice hinders some pupils. Staff say they value the support offered, which is helping them to improve their pedagogical knowledge in religious education. Leaders and governors listen to, but have not always acted upon feedback from pupils and parents.

## Collective worship

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

### Collective worship key judgement grade

#### Pupil outcomes

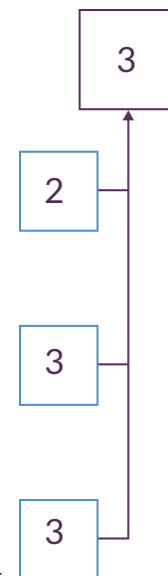
How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

#### 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 recognise some different ways to pray that are part of the Catholic tradition. They respond well to the experiences of liturgy and worship offered by the school. Pupils are reverent during class liturgy and assembly, listening attentively and making an active contribution. Occasions for Prayer and Liturgy are limited because the school does not plan for daily acts of worship, therefore pupils are unable to fully experience liturgical formation. Pupils' knowledge of the liturgical year is limited and they are unable to articulate how these seasons influence the prayer life of the school and help them to grow deeper in the faith. When planned for, pupils enjoy opportunities to prepare and lead acts of worship, using the liturgy template of 'gather, listen, respond and go forth'. They appreciate that all pupils have an opportunity to be prayer leaders at the end of each topic.

The standard of prayer provision is inconsistent, and there is variability in the quality of liturgy provision. The daily pattern of prayer in each year group is well established. Pupils are more confident in using the traditional prayers of the Church, though their repertoire is relatively narrow. The policy for Prayer and Liturgy is not yet fully developed or implemented so opportunities during the liturgical year are missed. Pupils experience limited ways of praying because the policy is not well-established and embedded. It is mainly leaders who have the expert knowledge, experience and confidence needed to lead liturgy to an expected standard. Some staff currently do not have the skills to lead liturgy within the rich tradition of the Catholic Church. The school and the parish work well in partnership to offer regular opportunities to receive the Eucharist. The parish priest works closely with the school to plan the liturgical experiences for the pupils in the coming year. Older pupils have access to the

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Sacrament of Reconciliation. Parents and parishioners are encouraged to join the school liturgies where possible.

Leaders have initiated improvement in Prayer and Liturgy through training and support for staff and that most teachers have undertaken training in the facilitation of pupil-led worship and the school has a Prayer and Liturgy policy alongside an Annual Plan of Provision, but the lack of structure and detail has led to these having little impact on the quality of Prayer and Liturgy across the school. Leaders use diocesan training, external partnerships, and in-house training and support. Although staff feel exceptionally well supported as both leaders of and participants in prayer and liturgy, the impact of the policy and training has yet to show sufficient impact across the school. Where Prayer and Liturgy is well-constructed, pupils' engagement is high, prayer spaces are of high quality and pupils are full participants. Governors have yet to monitor the full impact of the new Prayer and Liturgy Policy. Pupils, with adult support, are not planning, leading and evaluating prayer and liturgy, to the extent they are capable of. Some planning of prayer and worship is done collaboratively, but this is not frequent enough or recorded efficiently, to enable the consistent sharing of ideas, leading to measurable skills progression and effective evaluation.

## Information about the school

Full name of school	St Thomas More Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	142600
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	3733424
Full postal address of the school	Creswick Lane, Sheffield, S35 8NN
School phone number	0114 246 8020
Headteacher or Head of School	Mrs Donna Faley
Chair of Governors	Miss April Worrall
School Website	<a href="http://www.st-thomasmoresheffield.co.uk">www.st-thomasmoresheffield.co.uk</a>
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Academy
Admissions policy	
Age-range of pupils	4 - 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	03 May 2019
Previous denominational inspection grade	Good

## The Inspection Team

Bernadette Nesbit Lead

Emmeline Janvier

## 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