

# Venerable Edward Morgan Catholic Primary School

URN: 400383

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Wrexham

11–12 March 2026

## Summary of key findings

### Overall effectiveness

The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school

2

#### 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

## Compliance statement

- The school fully complies with the general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishops' Conference
- This school is fully compliant with the additional requirements of the diocese
- This school has fully addressed all previous areas for improvement

## What the school does well

- Venerable Edward Morgan School is a welcoming, inclusive community where pupils and staff enjoy strong, positive relationships.
- Pastoral care is rooted in Gospel values; staff know families well and offer wide-ranging support through sacramental preparation, wellbeing initiatives, and partnerships with external agencies.
- Staff plan directly from the *Religious Education Directory*, ensuring the curriculum is accurate and aligned with the Church's expectations. This supports consistently good religious education (RE) teaching.
- Groups such as the Growing in Faith Together (GIFT) Team, Prayer Partners, School Council, and Super Ambassadors demonstrate strong and developing pupil leadership roles, rooted in faith, service, and empathy.
- Collective worship is well established, with pupils engaging reverently and confidently in prayer and liturgy.

## What the school needs to improve

- To ensure that staff consistently use questioning that prompts deeper thinking, more extended pupil responses, and design tasks that provide greater challenge for more able learners.
- Further develop the role of the RE coordinator to strengthen responsibility for supporting the continued implementation of the Directory and contributing to the monitoring, evaluation, and strategic overview of RE.
- Leaders need to ensure that the leadership of prayer and liturgy, and the implementation of the *Prayer and Liturgy Directory*, continues to be a priority.

## 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

2

**Provision**

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

2

**Leadership**

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

2

2



Pupils make strong and purposeful contributions to the life and mission of the school, speaking with genuine pride about being members of a community in which faith is lived joyfully and expressed through meaningful action. They demonstrate a secure sense of identity, confidently articulating that they are known and loved as individuals, made in the image and likeness of God. This understanding supports their emotional wellbeing, positive relationships, and active engagement in school life. Pupils benefit from the school's commitment to nurturing their spiritual and moral development, reflected in the thoughtful and compassionate way they interact with others and promote the common good. Their enthusiastic involvement in charitable outreach—supporting the foodbank, homeless charities, and global appeals—shows pupils translating their faith into practical action. The school is at the early stages of developing the Catholic Pupil Profile values, and this work is becoming increasingly embedded as classes focus termly on specific virtues. Pupils explore qualities such as being compassionate and loving and link them directly to their behaviour, relationships, and acts of service. Pupil leadership is a notable strength; the GIFT Team, school council and school ambassadors enrich the community by displaying confident leadership, modelling faith in action, and inspiring their peers.

Provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school is strong. The mission statement, 'Learn, believe, achieve together,' clearly expresses the school's purpose, guiding policy, curriculum, and daily practice. While the mission is understood by pupils and staff, increasing its visibility would further strengthen all pupils' ability to recall and articulate it. Masses, assemblies, meditation, displays, and well-maintained class prayer tables reflect the school's Catholic identity. Staff demonstrate strong commitment to the mission, modelling Gospel values through their teaching, pastoral care, and involvement in parish sacramental

preparation. As a result, Christ is clearly at the heart of the school, and relationships are characterised by warmth, respect, and welcome. Pastoral provision is a significant strength. Staff deliver a range of effective wellbeing interventions, including *A Quiet Place* and a bespoke holistic wellbeing programme, ensuring pupils and families receive appropriate support. Leaders work proactively with families, the SVP, and external agencies, providing practical assistance such as housing support, foodbank vouchers, and Christmas gifts for vulnerable families. Regular coffee mornings, toddler groups, assemblies, concerts, and fundraising events promote inclusion and strengthen community engagement. The physical environment reflects Catholic identity through liturgical focal points, including a Prayer Trail and reflective spaces linked to Lent and other liturgical seasons. Relationships and sexuality education (RSE) meets diocesan requirements, enabling pupils to articulate confidently their learning about the human person.

Leaders and governors demonstrate clear commitment to promoting and supporting the Catholic life and mission of the school, ensuring that policies, procedures, and daily practice reflect its Catholic identity. Governors make purposeful use of diocesan guidance, training, and networks to strengthen provision. Engagement with the parish is positive and enhances the school's liturgical life. A well-planned calendar of worship involving pupils, parents, and parishioners, alongside visits from the parish priest and the celebration of Mass, enriches the school's spiritual life. The parish priest describes the school as "caring, open, and inviting," noting strong interaction with the parish. Leaders work constructively with families, recognising parents as first educators in the faith and encouraging meaningful home-school-parish relationships through open communication and shared opportunities for prayer and celebration. Governors demonstrate respect for staff wellbeing. The Mission and Purpose Committee undertakes twice-yearly learning walks and book looks, enabling governors to discuss strengths and areas for development with the head teacher. Induction processes for new staff are well established, ensuring colleagues understand expectations linked to the school's Catholic mission.

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

### Religious education key judgement grade

**Pupil outcomes**

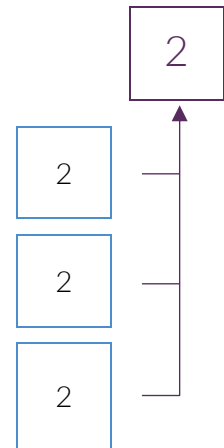
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

**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 at Venerable Edward Morgan Catholic Primary School achieve well in religious education (RE), showing progress in knowledge, understanding, and skills in line with the expectations of the *Religious Education Directory*. They are becoming increasingly religiously literate; relative to their age, they use appropriate vocabulary, recall prior learning, and apply their knowledge to reflect spiritually and think ethically and theologically. Their responses to Big Questions show growing confidence in engaging with scripture, key concepts, and faith in action, including fundraising, donating to foodbanks, and supporting the wider community. Pupils' work provides clear examples of secure understanding. During the Desert to Garden branch, pupils used scripture to plan and perform role-play sequences exploring Peter's betrayal of Jesus, demonstrating insight into his emotions before and after the event. Most pupils retold the story accurately and worked collaboratively to create scenarios about broken promises and reconciliation. In another class, pupils explored reconciliation through practical and reflective tasks, including designing handprints to illustrate the steps of saying sorry and creating a reconciliation tree. These activities showed strong engagement, sustained concentration, and effective self-assessment. Nearly all pupils enjoy RE and participate with enthusiasm, curiosity, and creativity.

Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and confident pedagogical understanding, enabling them to plan effectively from the Directory. This provides clarity around expectations and progression across each branch of learning. A range of teaching-approaches engages pupils and deepens understanding. Younger pupils use role play to explore key events such as Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, while older pupils show thoughtful reflection when creating artistic representations of heaven. Resources, including parish links and visits from Cafod representatives further enrich learning and broaden pupils' experiences. Questioning is effective in many lessons and often prompts deeper thinking, though practice is not yet fully consistent. In a small number of lessons, closed questioning or rapid teacher intervention limits opportunities for pupils to articulate ideas. Strengthening open-ended questioning and

increasing thinking time will further enhance pupils' religious literacy. Assessment procedures are well established. A clear whole school approach enables teachers to track progress reliably and build sequentially on pupils' knowledge and skills. Pupils receive regular, purposeful feedback that identifies next steps, and their achievements are celebrated through displays, assemblies, and classroom recognition. Spiritual and moral development is woven through daily routines, supporting pupils' formation and contributing to sustained, meaningful progress in RE.

Leaders and governors are committed to promoting and sustaining high-quality RE. The decision to plan directly from the Directory has ensured that tasks are age-appropriate and that RE reflects its core principles with clear parity alongside other curriculum areas. This shared approach strengthens consistency, progression, and clarity in what pupils learn. Staff benefit from diocesan training and in-school professional development focused on planning from the Directory, improving their knowledge and confidence. The coordinator is developing well in the role and, through close work with the headteacher, helps ensure that curriculum design remains coherent and faithful to the teachings of the church, however, the coordinator's wider involvement in monitoring, evaluation, and self-evaluation is currently limited. Strengthening this aspect would enhance consistency across classes and support systematic improvement. Leaders place pupils' wellbeing at the centre of their work. Enrichment opportunities, including visits to Wrexham Cathedral, pilgrimages to Holywell, and links with the Catholic High School, deepen pupils' understanding of the Catholic faith and strengthen their sense of belonging to the wider Catholic community. Governors monitor Religious Education through the Mission and Purpose Committee, undertaking learning walks, speaking with pupils, and discussing self-evaluation with the head teacher, ensuring a clear, shared understanding of priorities.

## 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

All classes engage in daily acts of collective worship. Pupils recognise the importance of prayer and liturgy throughout the school day and, in most classes, respond well to the experiences offered. They are reverent, attentive, and prayerful, speaking and reading with confidence during worship. Music is used effectively to create a reflective atmosphere. The collective worship observed was rich in symbolism and provided pupils with meaningful opportunities to express themselves and demonstrate a secure understanding of the season of Lent and the Feast of Easter. Pupils were eager to participate and showed age-appropriate spiritual and emotional maturity. Older pupils enjoy their roles as prayer partners for younger pupils. The Gift Team have created a prayer trail around the school and participate in the weekly teacher-led whole-school Celebration of the Word. Older pupils, with adult support, prepare acts of worship as a class and are beginning to develop greater independence in planning and delivering child-led worship. This was evident in their Celebration of the Word class books and remains an area for continued development.

The school's prayer and liturgy calendar is aligned with the liturgical year. With reference to the *Prayer and Liturgy Directory*, the school ensures that all year groups use appropriate prayers at the correct times. Monday's whole-school Celebration of the Word develops the theme of the previous Sunday's Gospel, which is then explored further in class worship throughout the week. All pupils participate in daily Examen and meditation sessions and can recite a range of traditional prayers confidently. There is a good standard of Welsh language used in prayer, including the Sign of the Cross and the Hail Mary. Staff, including senior leaders, are strong role models for pupils. Many practise their faith within their own parishes and lead acts of worship throughout the year. All staff attend the whole-school Celebration of the Word. The school environment clearly reflects its Catholic ethos. Attractive displays and artefacts chosen by pupils enhance prayer times. Prayer areas in classrooms and communal spaces are colourful,

welcoming, and linked to the liturgical calendar. They provide important focal points for pupils' spiritual development and include scripture passages and relevant artefacts. The school hosts Mass at the beginning and end of the school year and on key days such as Ash Wednesday, enabling parents, governors, and parishioners to participate in the prayer life of the school. Regular class assemblies also provide opportunities for parents to join in worship.

The school's policy on prayer and liturgy has recently been reviewed and is well formulated and fit for purpose. Regular professional development is offered to key staff. However, due to recent staffing changes, senior leaders and governors will need to ensure that the leadership of prayer and liturgy and the implementation of the *Prayer and Liturgy Directory* remain priorities. Leaders and governors regularly review the quality and impact of prayer and liturgy as part of the school's cycle of self-evaluation and improvement planning. The head teacher works diligently to promote, monitor, and evaluate collective worship. The vice chair of governors, who is also the RE link governor, has a clear understanding of the school's development needs and has contributed to reviewing the CSED, undertaken learning walks, monitored books, and acted as an effective critical friend. Leaders also facilitate preparation for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Holy Communion in partnership with parish catechists, strengthening the school's relationship with the wider parish community.

## Information about the school

Full name of school	The Venerable Edward Morgan Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	400383
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	6643312
Full postal address of the school	Caernarfon Close, Shotton, Flintshire, CH5 1AR
School phone number	01244830408
Executive headteacher	Not applicable
Headteacher	Rebecca Langley
Chair of governors	Doreen Mackie
School Website	vemschool.co.uk
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Not applicable
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Voluntary Aided School
Admissions policy	Non-selective
Age-range of pupils	4-11
Gender of pupils	Not applicable
Date of last denominational inspection	27 & 28 March 2017
Previous denominational inspection grade	Good

## The inspection team

Catherine Power  
Karen Lewis

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