



St Anselm's College

URN: 136780

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Shrewsbury

04 February 2026 – 05 February 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

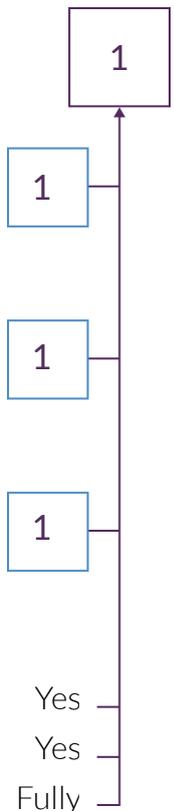
Collective worship (p.7)

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



Yes

Yes

Fully

What the school does well

- The headteacher is faithful to the charism of Edmund Rice and held in the highest regard by her colleagues and students. She leads by example and inspires all staff to serve as outstanding role models.
- Teaching and outcomes in A level theology are a strength of the religious education department. Students are effusive about their lessons and numbers who study the subject are increasing.
- The inspirational lay chaplain has invigorated chaplaincy provision through his understanding of the needs of all members of the college community. Thus, ensuring a richer and fuller Catholic life experience for all.
- Relationships between staff and students are outstanding. Consequently, pastoral care is exceptional, with the college having a real focus on supporting the most vulnerable within its community.
- All staff work effectively with students to deliver prayer and liturgy that invokes deep reverence.

What the school needs to improve

- Ensure consistency with assessment and feedback approaches in religious education so that all students know what they need to do to improve.

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

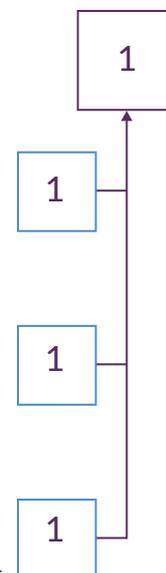
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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 unique charism of the Edmund Rice Network is woven into every aspect of daily life at St Anselm's. The college's mission statement, 'I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me' is a principle that all members of the community live by, with students embracing their unique religious identity. They understand that the 'Eight Essentials of Edmund Rice' form the backbone of all that they do. These are known and articulated clearly by all and have inspired a number of student leadership groups such as the Edmund Rice society, the junior chaplaincy team and the faith in action group. Regardless of faith, students can clearly express how the Eight Essentials impact on their actions and their spiritual wellbeing. They are wholly committed to following the teachings and example of Jesus, being aware that they are unique individuals made in the image of God. Consequently, they feel happy and secure in college. Students are confident when leading on a wide range of charitable initiatives that serve and strengthen both their own and the wider community. Students and staff benefit from a comprehensive range of chaplaincy opportunities that enrich and develop them spiritually. There are strong relationships between staff and students which culminate in outstanding behaviour and a calm and purposeful atmosphere, which is evident at all times in the classroom.

Driven in their mission to ensure that everyone benefits from the St Anselm's experience, staff and students are enthusiastically involved in the numerous opportunities on offer that serve others. The college exemplifies inclusivity, with every pupil being known and diversity being embraced. One student described the college as, 'an inclusive and welcoming place where we thrive through the Edmund Rice Essentials'. This creates a harmonious environment rooted in

authentic, Catholic tradition. Staff serve as outstanding role models, demonstrating a firm commitment to their college and local parishes. Additionally, through the global Edmund Rice Network, charities at a global level are benefactors of the college's work. A significant number of parents, carers and students cite the strengths of the pastoral team at St Anselm's. All staff go above and beyond to support those in their care, particularly the most vulnerable. Students recognise this and appreciate their work. Chaplaincy provision is outstanding and discussions with all groups identify the college's lay chaplain as a driving force behind the wide range of initiatives in place. His dedication is commented on by many. Working closely with new and established staff members, he is a key player in the refinement of the Catholic life experience, creatively providing opportunities that strengthen the college's offer.

The mission of the college is at the heart of the work of leaders and governors. They are ambitious to find ways to improve on provision. Governors visit frequently and are fully aware of the college's priorities for improvement. Their support and appropriate challenge are effective, with the Eight Essentials being the driver for their strategic thinking, informing all policy decisions. Consequently, Catholic social teaching principles, seen through the lens of the Eight Essentials are always at the forefront of their work. Leaders have high expectations, demonstrating a clear commitment to the college's continued improvement. The rigorous and reflective quality assurance process ensures that Catholic life provision in school remains relevant, benefiting the students and strengthening the college's commitment to shared responsibility for improvement. Wellbeing is a priority and this is recognised by staff, who speak highly of the personal, practical and spiritual support they receive through training and chaplaincy provision. Induction for new staff is a strength with all feeling supported in their work through ongoing training.

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

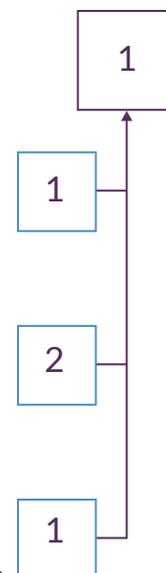
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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



Students enjoy religious education and talk positively about their lessons. Strong relationships and a climate of mutual respect enables them to feel valued, enabling them to flourish and develop an appreciation of the subject. This mutual respect, coupled with the department's focus on inclusivity and high expectations, results in positive engagement and maximises learning. Students demonstrate knowledge and understanding that is compatible with the requirements of the *Religious Education Directory*. Religious literacy is excellent and students use this well during recall sessions. They are also confident when contributing to discussions, utilising their religious vocabulary well. They respond enthusiastically to a variety of activities on offer resulting in work that is typically presented well. Most students have a good understanding of how well they are doing in the subject but some would benefit from more regular feedback. At Key Stage 5 students can articulate their learning fluently, making links across the curriculum and demonstrating curiosity. Academic outcomes are consistently above national figures for the vast majority of student groups, and when compared to other core subjects. This success is rooted in a culture of belonging, where every pupil feels valued and supported. The sense of shared purpose, enables all students to flourish academically and spiritually.

Religious education staff have strong subject knowledge and this is reflected in their approach to teaching. All teaching is at least good, with there being clear evidence of outstanding practice within the department. Feedback provided by teachers helps most students make progress in their learning, with many responding well. However, this is not consistent across

the department and, as a consequence, not all students know what they need to do to improve. The effective deployment of teaching assistants enables students who require support to achieve the objectives set in lessons. Praise is used frequently to motivate and recognise the work of students in lessons and they respond well to this. Questioning, a current focus for the school, is strong. In the best lessons, teachers utilise skillful questioning techniques that increase engagement and maximise learning. Time for reflection is built into lessons that allows students to consider their work and their personal context. Classroom routines and expectations are consistently implemented and there is a variety of good quality resources available, in the best lessons these are used very effectively. Provision in A level and core religious education is strong, with students speaking positively about their experiences.

Leaders and governors hold religious education in the highest regard, it is seen as the beacon subject in the curriculum. The department is in the process of fully embedding the directory and more work is required to ensure that this is done so in a cohesive manner. There is parity with other core subjects and leaders prioritise training for religious education, taking up the development opportunities on offer through the Laetare Trust and the diocese. The subject lead for religious education is well supported by other senior leaders who, as specialists, have an in-depth understanding of the department and offer a wealth of experience. She has a clear vision for her department and her considered approach to leadership ensures that all members of the department feel supported. The religious education curriculum is carefully planned, ensuring that all students access their learning in a manner that allows them to confidently build on their prior learning. Leaders ensure that all students are exposed to enrichment activities that extend their learning within religious education. The take up for these opportunities is impressive. Quality assurance processes, which effectively identify clear areas for development, inform future planning and provide the focus for further professional development.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

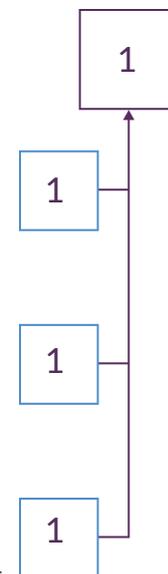
How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

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



At St Anselm's, prayer and liturgy opportunities, that are aligned with the liturgical calendar, are consistent and relatable to all. Students easily articulate the wide variety of ways that they pray, participating fully during these times. Their deep involvement allows them to make links between prayer and liturgy and their actions. They comment that their reflections encourage them to support others compassionately and consider their own spiritual growth. The familiar pattern of high-quality, daily prayer provides a reflective and purposeful pause in the day, reminding students that the Eight Essentials are the focus for all that they do. One student commented, 'when I pray, I think of our mission and know that we can do anything through Christ, who strengthens us.' Students collaborate effectively with staff to prepare and lead prayer and liturgy that impacts on themselves and those in their community. The junior chaplaincy team is influential in shaping the prayer life of the college, approaching this responsibility with a genuine desire to inspire their peers.

Staff unanimously affirm the centrality of prayer for both students and adults. Supported by strong partnerships with local clergy who further enrich the Edmund Rice tradition, they complement the work of the lay chaplain who offers timely and appropriate guidance and support. Daily form-time prayer provides opportunities for reflection on weekly themes that consolidate student familiarity with the Church's liturgical year. Consequently, they understand that their school prayer life is shaped by the Church's calendar. Staff lead well-structured prayer skillfully, working collaboratively with the lay chaplain and students to plan meaningful experiences that have scripture as their focus. All are confident in this work, commenting that thought-provoking guidance is readily available that enables them to deliver

prayer and liturgy which meets the context of the college. Dedicated prayer spaces, including the chapel, are used frequently. Outdoor prayer spaces are well utilised, with plans in place to extend this further through the construction of a rosary walk. Opportunities to pray the rosary and for adoration of the Blessed Sacrament are available to all in the chapel. The college works well with families to include them in their prayer and liturgy and there are numerous opportunities for them to do so.

Leaders and governors have ensured that the college's policy on prayer and liturgy maintains the charism of Edmund Rice whilst upholding Catholic tradition. As a result, ample time and resourcing are dedicated to appropriate prayer and liturgy, taking time to ensure that planned events motivate and engage students, inspiring them to action. The prayer and liturgy policy is well-considered, with recent staff training having taken place on this. A renewed focus is evident through discussion and in practice. The local parish priests offer weekly Mass in college and the Sacrament of Reconciliation during Advent and Lent. The college also places a high tariff on holy days of obligation and patron days, with Mass being celebrated to mark these. Leaders ensure that there are regular formation opportunities within their training and development programme and staff value this. The evaluation of prayer and liturgy by leaders, staff and students has high priority and informs future planning, refining the prayer and liturgy experience for all. The mutually beneficial relationship between the religious order, the Laetare Trust and the diocese has enabled senior leaders to focus on strengthening St Anselm's offer and their work is now bearing fruit.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Anselm's College
School unique reference number (URN)	136780
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	3445900
Full postal address of the school	Manor Hill, Prenton, CH43 1UQ
School phone number	0151 652 1408
Headteacher or Head of School	Serena Cubbin
Chair of Governors	Mrs Pam Green
School Website	www.st-anselms.com
Trusteeship	Religious Order Congregation of the Christian Brothers
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Laetare Catholic Multi Academy Trust
Phase	Secondary
Type of school	Academy
Admissions policy	Selective
Age-range of pupils	11 - 18
Gender of pupils	Boys
Date of last denominational inspection	26 March 2019
Previous denominational inspection grade	Good

The Inspection Team

Mark Taylor Lead

Louise Mason

Katherine Packham

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