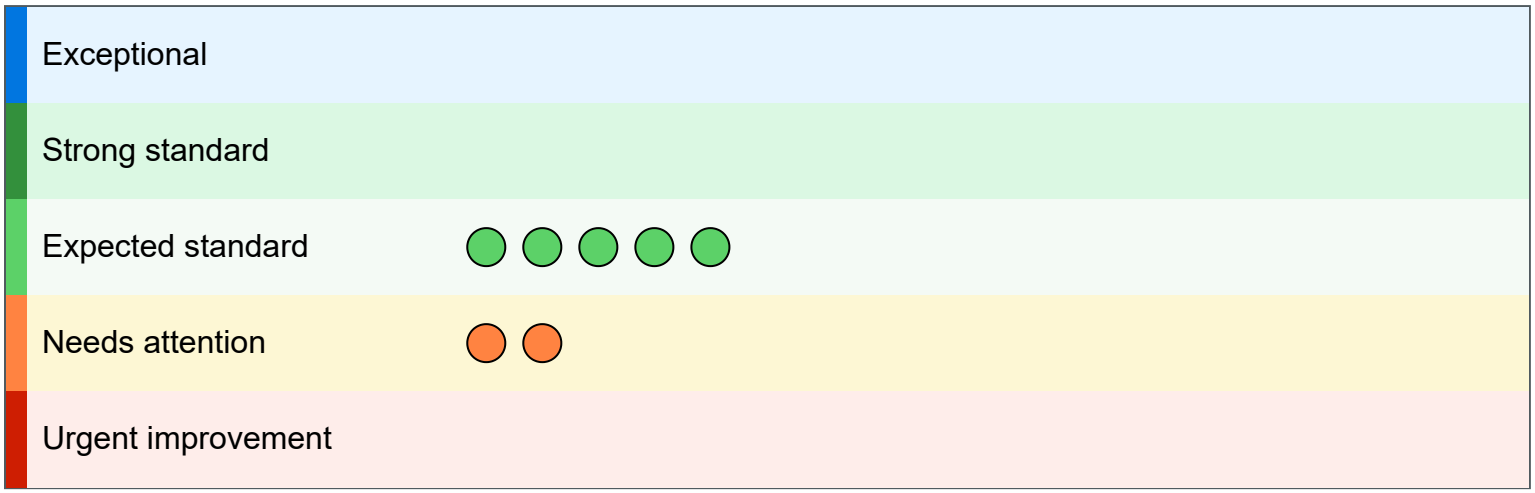
St Mary Queen of Martyrs VC Academy

Address: Nidderdale, Sutton Park, Hull, HU7 4BS

Unique reference number (URN): 140903

Inspection report: 13 October 2026



Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- Met: The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- Not met: The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Expected standard

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard

Leaders are committed to improving attendance through persistent engagement with families, early interventions and personalised support. Leaders track attendance rigorously, and any pupils not attending are quickly identified and offered support. This support includes telephone contact, meetings with families, home visits and engagement with extended family members. Leaders' determination is having a positive impact on pupils who previously would have been persistently absent. Current whole-school attendance is in line with the national average for all groups of pupils.

Pupils generally behave well. Pupils are supportive of each other and look to follow the school values of respect, care and kindness well. In lessons, they are polite and respectful. Pupils listen to and follow teachers' instructions carefully. This is also the case at social times, where pupils of all ages play cooperatively together. Pupils say bullying is very rare, and, if any problems arise, adults address issues quickly and effectively. Where pupils need additional help to manage their emotions and behaviours, staff take quick and appropriate action to support them to settle and return to learning. Leaders seek appropriate support for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs, including one-to-one work and specialist outreach support.

Early years

Expected standard

Across the school, there is a passion about the importance of early years education. Leaders recognise that learning to learn begins from children's first days in school. The newly introduced provision for the youngest children, 'Little Cuthbert's', provides a safe, caring and warm environment for the youngest pupils to flourish.

The early years provision is calm, purposeful and well organised. Children in 'Little Cuthbert's', Nursery Year and the Reception Year classes are happy and settled and engage positively in a range of learning opportunities. Established routines support children's readiness to learn, and transitions are generally smooth. Staff promote warm, supportive relationships and respond positively to support young children's emotional needs.

Leaders have established a curriculum that prioritises children's communication, language and vocabulary development. Vocabulary progression is mapped from 'Little Cuthbert's' onwards to support children to be ready to progress to Year 1. Children benefit from opportunities to develop early writing, mark-making, fine motor skills and mathematical understanding in the classrooms and in the expansive outdoor area. Phonics teaching across the early years provision is appropriate and purposeful.

Leaders use baseline assessments, information from previous settings and regular checkpoints to identify children’s starting points and monitor their progress. Teachers use the information from these checks effectively to adapt the provision to support all children's development.

Inclusion

Expected standard

The school is committed to providing inclusive education for all pupils. Leaders promote a school culture that celebrates diversity and values difference. To achieve this, leaders seek to build positive relationships with parents and carers. They work with parents to quickly identify and overcome any barriers pupils may have to achievement. Leaders' decisions are firmly rooted in pupils' best interests.

Skilled senior leaders work closely with staff to identify pupils' needs. They provide advice and support to help teachers make adaptations to learning in classes. The school provides effective assistance for pupils who face barriers to learning, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, disadvantaged pupils and those involved with children's social care. Support includes for writing, numeracy, communication and emotional regulation. Leaders carefully monitor the effectiveness of these interventions to ensure that they are having a positive impact.

The school has recently introduced a small specially resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities to provide bespoke support for some pupils. External support has been sought to help staff introduce a range of learning strategies in this provision.

Leaders use alternative provision and pupil premium funding appropriately and in the best interests of the pupils.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard

Leaders are extremely knowledgeable about the local community and the pupils and families they serve. They are ambitious for all pupils and determined to support them to achieve academically and develop aspirations for their future lives.

The school, working closely with the trust, has designed a detailed and progressive curriculum in all subjects. Leaders have started to improve teaching approaches in some areas. However, this work has been hampered by circumstances beyond their control. That said, where leaders have introduced changes, such as in the early years provision or in focusing on developing strong foundations for learning in key stage 1, improvements are evident. With growing stability in staffing, there is a clear determination and vision for further change and improvement.

The trustees and governors of the school are well informed and passionate about education. They have a clear understanding of the strengths and improvements made in the school, along with the challenges that the school has undergone. Trustees and governors have a clear plan to support the school leaders as they continue on the journey of improvement they have started.

Staff speak positively about the professional learning opportunities they are given, especially around supporting pupils with barriers to learning. They value leaders' focus on staff wellbeing and are growing in confidence to improve the teaching and learning opportunities they give to the pupils.

Some parents express concerns about communication with the school. Leaders are seeking to address this with urgency. They value the local community links and are seeking more effective ways to work with parents who raise concerns in the school.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard

Leaders are determined to help pupils to develop a positive view about themselves and what they can achieve in their lives. Pupils are encouraged to learn about their local community and develop a pride in belonging there. Leaders have designed a personal development programme to help pupils to do this. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern-day Britain.

Pupils are given extensive opportunities to explore their interests, carry out leadership roles and develop aspirations for the future. There is a nurturing focus in the school. Pupils' differences are celebrated, and support is quickly offered to pupils who are finding life challenging.

The personal development curriculum utilises a published programme of learning that has been enriched with extra topics that leaders see as important for pupils to learn about. For example, the school uses past events in the local community to support pupils to learn about both online and offline safety. Pupils learn about relationships and health in an age-appropriate way, within the Catholic teaching of the school.

The school provides opportunities for all pupils to celebrate a range of religious festivals. They learn about important values such as tolerance and respect and show a developing understanding of the importance of treating everyone equally.

There is a comprehensive range of clubs and activities for pupils to engage with and develop their wider interests. Pupils speak with enthusiasm about playing musical instruments, singing in the school choir or competing with other schools in a variety of sporting activities. Pupils' successes are celebrated through presentation evenings, where professional sports stars present medals, and pupils join with other schools to create an orchestra or sing on stage.

To ensure as many pupils as possible can benefit from extra-curricular clubs, leaders have moved some of these from after school to lunchtime. This has helped more pupils take part.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention

While most pupils make some progress over time, disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities have left the school achieving less well in reading, writing and mathematics than they should have done.

Teachers do not consistently identify and address misconceptions or gaps in learning, and therefore some pupils' progress is limited. Some pupils, including those who have barriers to

learning, are not sufficiently well prepared for their next steps, and other pupils are not sufficiently challenged.

Leaders' focus on improving pupils' strong foundations with pencil grip, handwriting and early reading is beginning to have a positive impact in early years. Pupils' growing confidence with reading and writing is also evident across key stage 1. However, these approaches remain at an early stage of implementation and are not embedded across the school. As a result, their impact on pupils' progress and achievement is not fully evident.

Curriculum and teaching

Needs attention

Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is broad and balanced. The curriculum is well designed to include appropriate knowledge and skills across a range of subjects. Leaders have recently prioritised improving the teaching of reading and writing. This work is starting to have a positive impact. Pupils are beginning to secure essential communication knowledge and skills. For example, phonics is taught effectively from the early years, and support is in place to ensure that pupils who fall behind are helped to catch up. This is helping pupils to become confident readers as they progress through the school.

In other areas, such as mathematics, there is variability in how well teachers implement new approaches aimed at building fluency and securing pupils' learning. This is also the case with some wider curriculum subjects where, too often, learning tasks, while engaging and fun, do not help pupils remember learning and do not align with the intended learning outcomes.

Currently, some teachers do not check learning sufficiently to plan future activities that build on pupils' prior knowledge. For some pupils with barriers to learning, adaptations are limited to adjustments of worksheets rather than building from individual pupils' starting points.

Leaders have a clear understanding of where further support is required to ensure that pupils' learning and achievement are improved.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Pupils are proud to belong to this school. Many arrive early, with big smiles, to join their friends at the daily breakfast club. This offer has helped to improve pupils' attendance, and on the whole, many attend school regularly.

Pupils and staff show kindness to each other. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, or other barriers to learning, are supported well in this inclusive school. Everyone feels valued and cared for. The school's values have meaning. Pupils learn to respect and care for other people and learn about tolerance and understanding of difference.

Pupils behave well. Although arguments sometimes do occur, pupils say they are resolved quickly and bullying is rare. Pupils know that adults will listen to them and help them to solve any disagreements.

Pupils are generally keen to learn. They listen carefully in lessons and strive to achieve. Much has been done to ensure that the curriculum supports pupils to develop knowledge and skills across a range of subjects. However, while many pupils achieve in line with national expectations, some, including those who are disadvantaged, are not sufficiently supported to make the progress that they could.

Pupils are proud of the wide variety of leadership roles they can hold in the school. For example, wellbeing leaders enjoy looking for ways they can help their friends. Safeguarding leaders seek ways they can support other pupils to understand how to keep themselves safe in the world beyond the school. A significant number of pupils carry out these roles with enjoyment and diligence, and their confidence grows as a result.

Leaders build productive relationships with families and the wider community. Pupils and parents and carers are greeted warmly by school staff at the start of each day. However, some parents express dissatisfaction with the communication that they receive from the school. Leaders are seeking to address this swiftly.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that the curriculum is implemented consistently well across the school. They should support teachers to plan activities that help pupils remember the most important knowledge so that all pupils make positive progress through the curriculum.
- Leaders should make sure that teaching provides appropriate ambition for all pupils, including those who need further support and those who have already secured the intended learning. They should support teachers to design learning that enables all pupils to deepen their understanding in all areas.
- Leaders, with support from the trust, should ensure that teachers and subject leaders have a clear and accurate understanding of how well pupils are learning, to help pupils to achieve well from their individual starting points.

About this inspection

This school is part of St Cuthbert's Catholic Academy Trust, which means that other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Rachel McEvoy, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by David Laws.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

The inspection took place on 13 and 14 October 2026.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with school leaders, staff and pupils during the inspection. Inspectors also held discussions with the chair of the trust, the chair of the local governing body, the CEO and other trust leaders.

Inspectors considered the responses of parents to Ofsted's survey, Ofsted Parent View.

Inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school is registered as having a Catholic religious character. Its last section 48 inspection took place in May 2022.

The school does not currently use alternative provision.

Headteacher: Catherine Coldham

Lead inspector:
Andrea Casey, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:
James Martin McGrath, Ofsted Inspector
Claire Leech, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

This was the data available at the time of the full inspection, taken from different sources. More recent data may have been published since the full inspection took place.

The inspector(s) used this data during the full inspection on 13 October 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

338
Close to average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 268

School capacity

280
Close to average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

30.93%
Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last 6 years.

National average: 26.5%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

3.25%
Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 4.1%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

16.27%
Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational needs support at the school.

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Well above average

What does this mean?

Based on the English indices of deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

All pupils' performance

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standards in a combined reading, writing and mathematics measure.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	63%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	61%	61%	Close to average

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	72%	75%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	80%	74%	Close to average

Pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	72%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	74%	72%	Close to average

Pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	77%	74%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	70%	73%	Close to average

The Key Stage 2 data we used for this inspection has not yet been published; therefore, we have not provided it alongside this school's report card. ‘R’ in the table indicates that the data is not yet available. We will update the table when the Department for Education publishes the data for the latest academic year.

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	29%	47%	Below
2023/24 (final)	59%	46%	Above

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	43%	63%	Below
2023/24 (final)	82%	62%	Above

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	43%	59%	Below
2023/24 (final)	71%	58%	Above

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	43%	61%	Below
2023/24 (final)	65%	59%	Close to average

The Key Stage 2 data we used for this inspection has not yet been published; therefore, we have not provided it alongside this school's report card. ‘R’ in the table indicates that the data is not yet available. We will update the table when the Department for Education publishes the data for the latest academic year.

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics, including the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	29%	69%	-41 pp
2023/24 (final)	59%	67%	-9 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	43%	81%	-38 pp
2023/24 (final)	82%	80%	3 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	43%	78%	-35 pp
2023/24 (final)	71%	78%	-7 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	43%	81%	-38 pp
2023/24 (final)	65%	79%	-15 pp

The Key Stage 2 data we used for this inspection has not yet been published; therefore, we have not provided it alongside this school's report card. ‘R’ in the table indicates that the data is not yet available. We will update the table when the Department for Education publishes the data for the latest academic year.

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2025/26 (1 term)	4.8%	5.1%	Close to average
2024/25 (3 term)	5.1%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	4.6%	5.5%	Below

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2025/26 (1 term)	13.1%	14.4%	Close to average
2024/25 (3 term)	12.6%	13.0%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	12.5%	14.6%	Close to average

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects services providing education and skills for children and learners of all ages, and inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people.

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