



Report on IQM Inclusive School Award



School Name: St Anne's Primary School

School Address: Feilden Street
Blackburn
Lancashire
BB2 1LQ

Head/Principal Adam Pierce

IQM Lead Ms Andrea O'Toole

Assessment Date 3rd March 2026

Assessor Ms Sharon Owen

Sources of Evidence:

- IQM Self-Evaluation Form
- School Improvement Plan 2025-26 (SIP)
- School Self - Evaluation Form (SEF)
- Pupil Premium Strategy Report
- Catholic Schools Inspectorate Report 2026
- SEND in a 'nutshell' report
- Safeguarding in a 'nutshell' report
- Attendance in a 'nutshell' report
- Dates for your diary newsletter
- School website
- SEND information report
- Learning walk
- Observation of interventions
- Assembly led by the Chaplin group
- Observation of lunchtime

Meetings Held with:

- Head Teacher, Deputy Head/SENCO (IQM co-ordinator)
- Assistant Head and EYFS/KS1 lead
- ECT's
- Teachers
- Pupils and their Support staff
- Pastoral lead
- Parents
- Educational Psychologist
- Advisory Teacher for Development Language Disorder (DLD)
- Governors



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Overall Evaluation

Saint Anne's Roman Catholic (RC) Primary School is a one-form-entry primary school situated in the town centre of Blackburn. The school includes a nursery and serves a highly deprived, diverse and mobile community. With 189 pupils in the main school and 211 including Nursery, deprivation indicators place the school within the top 10% nationally, with 29% of families in the bottom 1%, 46% in the bottom 5%, 53% in the bottom 10%, and 85% in the bottom 20%. The school population reflects significant linguistic and cultural diversity, with a very high proportion of pupils who speak English as an Additional Language (EAL). Levels of socio-economic challenge are further reflected in the fact that 55% of pupils are eligible for free school meals (FSM). A substantial proportion of pupils have Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND), including 7.4% with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

This complex and richly diverse context shapes the school's unwavering commitment to meeting the needs of each individual pupil. Saint Anne's aims to nurture the whole child - academically, socially, physically and spiritually, within a secure and loving environment rooted in the Gospel values of forgiveness, reconciliation and hope. As a Catholic community, the school promotes the belief that every child is a unique creation made in the image of God. This faith-driven ethos creates a culture of compassion, fairness and dignity for all, where children are encouraged to recognise their God-given talents and understand their role within the school and the wider world.

Inclusion sits at the heart of Saint Anne's RC Primary School. High-quality teaching, early identification of need and carefully planned interventions ensure that pupils receive personalised support and appropriate challenge. Staff share a collective belief in the entitlement of every child, regardless of background, starting point or additional need - to access an ambitious, high-quality curriculum. The school provides a nurturing, supportive environment where pupils feel valued, respected and able to succeed. Inclusive provision is significantly enhanced through strong collaborative work with external partners, ensuring a coordinated and multidisciplinary approach. The school engages proactively with a wide range of professionals, specialists and community organisations to ensure that support is timely, tailored and impactful. This joint approach enhances pupils' academic, social and emotional development, ensuring that interventions are purposeful, evidence-based and sustained.

The school's inclusive ethos is reflected throughout daily life. Belonging, kindness and community are visibly embedded in relationships and routines. Staff work with determination to support families, recognising the challenges faced by many within the local community, and offering a range of pastoral, emotional and spiritual support. Community engagement is strong, with high levels of involvement in events such as coffee mornings, celebrations, and charitable initiatives.

The Inclusion Quality Mark assessment day was highly organised and meticulously planned by the Deputy Headteacher/SENCo, who also serves as the school's IQM Lead. A rigorous and well-structured timetable ensured that all eight IQM elements were explored in depth across classrooms, interventions, meetings and wider school



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activities. This enabled the assessor to gather comprehensive, triangulated evidence from staff, pupils, governors, parents and external partners.

Following a whole-school assembly led by the Chaplain, the Head Boy and Head Girl, accompanied by a peer, conducted a confident and articulate tour. They spoke knowledgeably about the school’s mission and values, emphasising that peace, fairness and respect are central to their community. They shared examples of how new pupils are supported, including the buddy system designed to ensure that every child feels safe, welcomed and able to make friends. One pupil commented, “The staff are lovely here, the teachers help you and if you are new, you get a buddy to help you make friends and feel that you belong.”

The pupils showed visible pride in the recently developed prayer garden, describing it as a special reflective space. They also spoke about their connection with Bishop John, their participation in the Harvest Mass and their involvement in charitable outreach and community initiatives. Their insight, maturity and genuine affection for their school offered compelling evidence of an inclusive ethos that is deeply embedded and consistently modelled across the school community.

I would like to thank St Anne’s RC for a thorough immersive day where staff radiated passion a week after Ofsted and the Catholic schools inspection - thank you.

I am of the opinion that the school fully meets the standard required by the Inclusion Quality Mark's Inclusive School Award. I recommend that the school be awarded the Inclusive School Award and be reassessed in 3 years’ time.

I also recommend that the school should consider applying for Centre of Excellence status subject to the inclusion within its plans of the appropriate areas for development and the completion of the Centre of Excellence documentation. If the school chooses to pursue this status and it were to be awarded the school would be subject to annual review from this point forwards.

Assessor: Ms Sharon Owen

Findings confirmed by Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd:

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Joe McCann MBA NPQH
Chief Executive Officer
Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd



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Element 1 - The Inclusion Values of the School

The inclusion values of St Anne's R.C. Primary School are clearly lived out across the whole community. Rooted in the belief that every individual is a unique creation made in the image of God, the school fosters a culture of dignity, peace, tolerance and fairness, inspired by Christ's call to love God and love others. This ethos was evident during the learning walk, where corridor displays reinforced the message that every pupil is valued and supported to realise their God-given talents.

The Chaplain Assembly, led confidently by pupils, further illustrated the school's inclusive culture. Several pupils with additional needs were fully involved, with support assistants sensitively enabling each child to contribute in a way that reflected their strengths. Weekly Picture News sessions deepen pupils' understanding of equality and the protected characteristics; pupils spoke knowledgeably and positively about fairness and diversity. One pupil captured the school's ethos simply: "everyone is valued here and there is a club for everyone to belong to." These observations collectively reflect a community that nurtures hope, aspiration and belief, ensuring every child feels that tomorrow can be a better day.

Safeguarding is central to practice at St Anne's RC. The pastoral lead plays a vital role in supporting vulnerable pupils and families, carrying out home visits for new arrivals and for pupils who are absent. Strong relationships with parents underpin this approach, and families are routinely signposted to appropriate external agencies to ensure timely support. This combination of pastoral expertise and partnership with families ensures pupils' wellbeing is prioritised and monitored effectively.

The school's commitment to inclusion is also reflected in its shared values and wider provision. St Anne's RC promotes a culture of kindness, fairness and mutual support, recognising the dignity of each person. The curriculum and wider activities nurture personal growth, wellbeing and academic success, while encouraging justice, responsibility and courageous advocacy. Strong leadership and clear moral purpose ensure that all pupils, including the most vulnerable, are supported to thrive within a community grounded in peace and shared purpose.

Policy development across the school is collaborative and clearly communicated. Leaders ensure that policies are accessible, aligned with the school's mission and statutory expectations, and informed by open dialogue with staff. Responsibilities are delegated appropriately, empowering staff and promoting ownership at all levels. This approach ensures that policies are not only well-constructed and contextually relevant, but also embedded in daily practice, supporting continuous reflection and improvement.

Staff across the school serve as strong role models for inclusion. They demonstrate a deep understanding of the school's inclusive mission and take professional responsibility for meeting the diverse needs of learners within their classes. Teaching and support are consistently tailored to ensure access to the curriculum and strong progress for all pupils. Staff make effective use of evidence-informed strategies, work closely with colleagues and specialists, and engage proactively with parents and carers.



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Through this collective commitment, St Anne's has created a learning environment where all pupils, including those with SEND, are valued, respected and supported to achieve their full potential.

Next Steps:

- Strengthen Early Identification and Support for SEND Pupils.
- Continue to improve adaptive teaching across the curriculum to challenge higher attainers and scaffold learning for lower attainers, including SEND and EAL pupils.
- Provide comprehensive SEND-focused CPD to develop staff expertise (aligned with current priorities). Establish collaborative working groups involving teachers, support staff, parents, and external specialists to share best practice and problem-solve barriers to inclusion.
- Implement coaching or mentoring models to support staff in inclusive practises (instructional coaching has been introduced this year).



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Element 2 - Leadership and Management and Accountability

At St Anne's R.C. Primary School, leadership and management demonstrate a strong, unified commitment to inclusion, supported by substantial expertise across the Senior Leadership Team. The Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher bring extensive knowledge and experience, contributing to school improvement both within the school and across local clusters. The Deputy Head also provides SEND support at cluster level, offering both wider strategic input and individualised guidance. Other members of the SLT hold responsibilities for curriculum leadership, phase oversight and the Catholic life of the school, ensuring that inclusive practice is embedded consistently across all areas of provision.

Leaders are supported in their professional development, with staff encouraged to complete National Professional Qualifications to further strengthen leadership capacity. This collaborative and outward-facing approach has driven positive, measurable improvement, with academic outcomes - particularly in reading and mathematics - now in line with national averages. Leaders articulate a clear, ambitious vision through the school improvement plan, ensuring all staff are aligned in their commitment to achieving the best outcomes for every pupil.

Staff wellbeing is a clear priority and is supported through an open-door culture where staff feel listened to and valued. Staff reported that practical measures make a meaningful difference to their work-life balance, including an allocated wellbeing day, flexibility to attend their own children's school events and tailored support for single parents. Additional wellbeing initiatives, such as shared breakfasts and biryani evenings, contribute to a strong sense of community and appreciation. Staff also value the option to complete PPA time at home, as well as the structured supervision provided by the local authority for EYFS staff and Designated Safeguarding Leads, with optional sessions available to other staff each term.

The presence of four trained mental health first aiders further strengthens the support network, ensuring wellbeing is embedded in daily practice. These approaches reflect a leadership team that is attentive, proactive and committed to creating a nurturing and respectful working environment.

Governors provide rigorous and constructive challenge, playing a crucial role in ensuring leaders remain accountable and that school standards continue to rise. During the assessment day, two governors outlined their work and demonstrated a strong, active involvement in school life. Each governor is linked to specific subjects and meets regularly with subject leaders, feeding back to the full governing body with clarity and precision. Minutes of governing body meetings show that actions are followed up diligently.

Governors described the school's distributed leadership model positively, noting how staff are empowered to lead initiatives and drive improvement. Day-to-day insights are strengthened through feedback from the staff governor, ensuring triangulation of views. Governors also participate in training, such as Makaton sessions, and attend learning



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walks and celebrations both in school and at church, demonstrating their commitment to the school's inclusive ethos and continuous improvement.

Next Steps:

- Continue to embed and promote a positive culture with the new senior leadership team. Ensure leaders at all levels clearly articulate and embed a shared vision that promotes inclusion and high standards.
- Continue to develop leaders' deep knowledge of curriculum and best teaching practises to enhance educational leadership.
- Continue to strengthen governance frameworks to provide ethical oversight and hold leaders accountable for decisions and school performance.
- Continue to build leaders' capacity to anticipate and address barriers to sustained improvement through innovation. Maintain rigorous monitoring of compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements to safeguard school quality and pupil welfare.



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Element 3 - Curriculum – Structure, Pupil Engagement and Adaption

The school improvement plan places a strong emphasis on embedding and monitoring the newly developed curriculum across all key stages, ensuring that wider opportunities such as trips and visits are meaningfully integrated to enrich learning. The curriculum has been carefully designed to reflect the needs of all pupils, with a clear focus on addressing gaps in learning and ensuring that teaching is adaptive, ambitious and inclusive. This includes enhancing challenge for higher-attaining pupils while providing effective scaffolding for those who require additional support.

Early impact is already evident. Changes to reading provision have resulted in outcomes now in line with national averages, supported by a consistent approach to phonics where books closely match the taught sounds. Engagement with the English Hub has strengthened practice further, enabling leaders to identify strengths, address gaps and refine action plans. In mathematics, the subject lead speaks with clarity and passion about embedding bespoke arithmetic teaching across all year groups and implementing adaptive approaches for lower-attaining learners. Emerging data reflects the positive effect of this work.

Everything that happens at St Anne's RC is driven by the commitment to make the lives of pupils, families and the wider community the best they can be. Central to this is a planned and progressive curriculum, rooted in the school's Catholic mission and centred on God, which acts as the key vehicle for realising this vision. The curriculum is intentionally designed to support the mission of *making tomorrow a better day*, shaped around the unique needs, backgrounds and experiences of the pupils. Through this thoughtful and responsive approach, the school ensures that every child is equipped with the knowledge, skills and values they need to flourish both now and in the future. Intervention work is well structured and purposeful. Each teaching assistant holds responsibility for a specific area of delivery, such as speech and language or emotional literacy support and has received targeted training to develop expertise in their allocated area. This ensures a strong professional understanding of a wide range of needs. Precision teaching is used effectively across the school to improve fluency and accuracy in identified target areas.

During the assessment day, a range of targeted interventions was observed, demonstrating the school's commitment to early, focused support. The day began with a Clever Fingers session, where pupils requiring fine-motor development engaged in structured activities while also benefiting from pastoral check-ins and a calm, nurturing start to their morning, including toast. A highly focused mathematics precision-teaching intervention was also observed, showcasing how short, targeted sessions can rapidly build pupils' confidence, motivation and fluency. In addition, an Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) session provided pupils with the opportunity to explore and articulate their emotions in a safe and supported environment, helping them develop strategies for managing "big feelings" effectively.



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Next Step:

- To embed, adapt and further develop the curriculum, to ensure it consistently supports and challenges all pupils. Leaders are committed to refining and strengthening a purposeful curriculum that enables every child to thrive academically, personally and spiritually.



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Element 4 - Teaching and Learning – Learning Environment, Planning Resources, Pedagogy

At St Anne's R.C. Primary School, teaching and learning are anchored in a carefully sequenced curriculum that reflects the school's Catholic vision and commitment to inclusion. Designed to ensure progression, depth and breadth, the curriculum enables pupils to develop essential knowledge and skills in a structured and purposeful way. Teachers work collaboratively to strengthen subject knowledge and refine pedagogical approaches, using clear explanations, analogies and examples to make learning accessible and engaging for all. The school consistently delivers Quality First Teaching, with lessons that are well organised, purposeful and responsive to the diverse needs of learners. Staff maintain high expectations and adapt their teaching to ensure full participation and sustained progress. Inclusive classroom practice is supported by ongoing assessment and robust monitoring systems, enabling teachers to identify emerging needs early and implement timely, tailored interventions.

Learning environments are nurturing, well organised and designed to promote independence. Pupils are encouraged to take risks, think critically and learn from mistakes. Scaffolded tasks, high-quality modelling and targeted questioning support pupils in deepening their understanding and becoming increasingly independent learners. Early literacy is prioritised through the consistent teaching of systematic synthetic phonics, alongside explicit instruction in reading, writing and oral language across the curriculum. Professional dialogue and reflective practice are central to the school's culture of continual improvement. Staff regularly analyse learning, address misconceptions and refine teaching strategies to ensure pupils build secure and progressively complex understanding that can be confidently applied across subjects. This commitment to reflection and improvement is embedded within a supportive, faith-inspired ethos.

Learners remain actively engaged throughout lessons due to a balanced approach combining content-rich instruction with opportunities for discussion, guided practice and independent application. Teachers employ a range of research-informed strategies—including clear modelling, structured questioning and appropriately challenging tasks—to promote deep learning and positive behaviour. Lessons build effectively on pupils' prior knowledge while maintaining high aspirations for all. This consistent, inclusive approach ensures that every pupil, including those with SEND and those learning English as an Additional Language, remains motivated, involved and able to achieve strong progress. The school's effective teaching, well-structured learning environments and proactive support systems together demonstrate a clear commitment to maximising progress and removing barriers to achievement.

Next Step:

- To further strengthen the quality of teaching and learning by continuing to provide high-quality, evidence-informed CPD. Although significant improvements have been made to the learning environment over the past year, there remain specific areas that require further development to ensure consistency and excellence across the whole school.



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Element 5 - Assessment

St Anne's R.C. Primary School uses assessment systematically and skilfully to secure strong progress for all learners. Staff make effective use of prior attainment data to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding, enabling them to design targeted, purposeful and responsive learning opportunities. This data-driven approach ensures that teaching meets pupils' individual needs, prevents gaps from widening and supports the development of automaticity in key concepts and skills.

Teachers closely monitor prior attainment alongside ongoing formative assessments, meaning that planning is continually adapted to provide appropriate levels of challenge, scaffolding and support. This ensures that all pupils, including those with SEND and those learning English as an Additional Language, receive the teaching they need to make sustained progress. The strategic use of assessment information reflects the school's strong commitment to inclusive education and continuous improvement in teaching and learning outcomes.

Interventions are carefully selected and implemented based on findings from data analysis, ongoing assessments and pupils' rates of progress. The SENCo plays a central role in supporting staff to analyse assessment information, identify specific gaps and select the most appropriate intervention pathways. This collaborative process ensures that support is timely, precise and aligned with pupils' individual profiles.

During the assessment day, a precision teaching maths intervention was observed. The session was short, fast-paced and vocabulary-rich, ensuring that pupils engaged actively with the key concepts being taught. Pupils spoke positively about the intervention, commenting that they enjoyed the extra session because it helped them with their class learning. This pupil voice reflected the effectiveness of the intervention and its impact on confidence, fluency and understanding.

Overall, assessment at St Anne's is rigorous, purposeful and embedded in everyday practice. It provides a strong foundation for high-quality teaching, timely intervention and inclusive provision, ensuring that every pupil is supported to reach their full potential.

Next Step:

- To refine and strengthen assessment systems by reviewing the use of PIVATs (including exploration of the Birmingham Toolkit and Liverpool Diocesan Toolkit), embedding and further developing Smart Grade as it becomes established from September 2025, and continuing to deliver focused training through instructional coaching to enhance the quality and consistency of formative assessment across the school.



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Element 6 - Behaviour, Attitudes to Learning and Personal Development

At St Anne's RC the learning environment is consistently calm, well-organised and purposeful, providing a positive and predictable atmosphere that supports all pupils, including those with SEND. Clear routines and behavioural expectations are modelled and reinforced by all staff, ensuring minimal disruption and maximising learning time.

Consistent language, calm tone and clear non-verbal cues enable staff to manage behaviour effectively, while early, least-intrusive interventions address low-level concerns before they escalate. This approach promotes pupils' self-regulation, resilience and independence, creating a safe and supportive space where every child feels valued and able to achieve their full potential.

The school places a strong emphasis on the holistic development of all pupils, embedding values such as tolerance, cooperation and resilience throughout the curriculum and wider school life. Grounded in the school's Catholic ethos, pupils are encouraged to recognise diversity, demonstrate empathy, and respond to challenges with perseverance and a positive mindset. Through this nurturing and inclusive environment, pupils are supported to make positive choices that contribute to their personal growth and equip them with essential life skills needed for future success.

The school also maintains robust systems for attendance and punctuality, aligned with national expectations. Daily monitoring, prompt follow-up of absences and effective communication with families ensure that attendance remains a priority. Targeted support is provided for pupils at risk of persistent absence, often through personalised plans and close collaboration with external agencies. The pastoral leader plays a pivotal role in this process, offering guidance to families, supporting routines and providing a trusted point of contact during challenging times. This proactive, relationship-centred approach promotes consistency of attendance and benefits pupils' academic and personal development.

Staff receive training to recognise emerging behavioural concerns, and a range of timely, well-coordinated interventions are implemented to address underlying needs. These include personalised support plans, restorative practices, enhanced pastoral input and close engagement with families and external professionals. During the assessment day, the educational psychologist confirmed the effectiveness of this early intervention model, highlighting how rapidly the school seeks support at the first sign of concern.

Overall, behaviour and attitudes at St Anne's RC are a clear strength. The consistent routines, inclusive ethos and strong pastoral systems work together to create a community where pupils thrive academically, socially and emotionally.

Next Steps:

- To continue to promote the development of the whole child by providing pupils with a wide range of enriching experiences that enable them to feel success and grow personally, socially and academically.



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- To introduce and embed an 'Aspirations Week' that showcases positive role models, demonstrating how people from similar backgrounds have achieved success, and to continue developing instructional coaching techniques to further strengthen pupils' attitudes to learning and support their ongoing personal development.



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Element 7 - Parents, Carers and Guardians

St Anne's R.C. Primary School is deeply committed to supporting parents and carers as valued partners in their children's education. The school actively engages families through clear, accessible and tailored communication that promotes positive dialogue about learning and encourages strong parental involvement. Recognising the diverse needs within the community, staff provide practical strategies and sustained support to empower parents in nurturing their children's academic, social and emotional development.

A wide range of approaches ensures effective engagement. Families receive regular updates through text messages and social media posts, while workshops delivered by teachers and external agencies offer guidance on learning, wellbeing and school processes. The school's popular coffee mornings featuring guest speakers and opportunities for informal conversation, provide an accessible platform for parents to seek advice, connect with others and deepen relationships with school staff. Targeted homeschool initiatives, including personalised pastoral support from the school's pastoral lead, further strengthen trust and ensure that every family feels valued, understood and equipped to contribute to their child's success. This partnership-driven approach is central to St Anne's RC School's vision of a caring and inclusive school community in which every pupil can flourish.

The school's Inclusion Policy plays an essential role in promoting this shared understanding. It is clearly articulated, easily accessible and written in straightforward, parent-friendly language. This ensures that parents, carers, staff and pupils have a clear understanding of the school's commitment to meeting the needs of all learners, particularly those requiring additional support. The policy reflects the school's core values of respect, fairness and equality, outlining transparent processes for identifying, assessing and supporting diverse needs.

During the assessment day, parents affirmed the impact of this inclusive approach. Two parents of pupils with SEND shared that the school had supported them throughout the EHCP process, communicating clearly and providing reassurance at every stage. Both expressed that their children feel happy, safe and well supported in school - demonstrating how policy, practice and relationships come together to create a community where every child and every family can thrive.

Next Step:

- To strengthen parental engagement by continuing to support parents in developing their confidence and skills in reading with their children at home, further enhancing school communication to ensure all families are reached effectively, and providing staff with high-quality CPD on evidence-based approaches to parental engagement.



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Element 8 - Links with Local, Wider and Global Community

St Anne's RC actively embraces and utilises a wide range of community resources to enrich pupils' learning and broaden their experiences. The school maintains strong links with local organisations, cultural institutions and support services, integrating these into both curriculum content and wider opportunities. This approach ensures learning is meaningful, relevant and connected to pupils' lives beyond the classroom, supporting the school's vision for a well-rounded and inclusive education.

All pupils have equitable access to a diverse programme of enrichment activities, including extracurricular clubs, educational visits and pupil-led initiatives. This provision enables children to explore interests, develop talents and experience success. During the assessor's meeting with pupils, they spoke enthusiastically about the range of clubs on offer, with one child sharing that "everyone can find a club they enjoy or are good at here." This demonstrates the school's commitment to ensuring inclusive access to enriching experiences for all learners.

St Anne's RC School also fosters strong partnerships with other educational establishments, local businesses and community organisations. These collaborations contribute significantly to pupils' personal and academic development by providing opportunities such as visits, guest speakers, community projects and work-related experiences. These partnerships are mutually beneficial and enhance the school's role within the community.

Teaching staff make purposeful use of both local and global contexts to deepen learning. Local history, culture and community initiatives are woven into the curriculum, providing authentic, real-world connections that enhance engagement and understanding. In addition, global perspectives are embedded through teaching and enrichment activities, supporting pupils to appreciate diversity and develop as informed global citizens. The school's 'Picture News' display board further promotes discussion about worldwide events, encouraging pupils to develop curiosity and critical thinking about current issues.

Through sustained engagement, meaningful partnerships and thoughtful integration of community resources, St Anne's RC ensures that its connections with the wider community have a positive and lasting impact on pupils' learning, wellbeing and personal development.

Next Step:

- To strengthen parental and community engagement by tailoring communication to celebrate individual pupil accomplishments, further developing the range and scope of workshops offered during coffee mornings to include activities beyond the classroom, and enhancing links with global partners to provide pupils with meaningful communication and learning experiences with children and communities in other countries.