



St Mary's Catholic Primary School

URN: 105818

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Salford

22–23 May 2024

Summary of key findings

Overall effectiveness

The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school

1

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

1

Religious education (p.5)

The quality of curriculum religious education

1

Collective worship (p.7)

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

1

The school is fully compliant with the curriculum requirements laid down by the Bishops' Conference

Yes

The school is fully compliant with all requirements of the diocesan bishop

Yes

The school has responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection

Fully

What the school does well

- As soon as you enter the building, you feel Christ's presence in the welcome, the environment, and warm relationships. Children and staff are known and loved at St Mary's.
- Scripture is at the heart of religious education. In all lessons and in collective worship, pupils are able to articulate clearly how the word of God speaks to them and influences their everyday lives.
- The pupils throughout the school have a deep and profound understanding of the liturgical year.

- The scene is set beautifully for children to experience the awe and wonder of God's work through the care and attention to detail in the planning of collective worship. An air of reverence permeates these moments of reflection.

What the school needs to improve

- Ensure that the work in books reflects the quality of teaching, the oral responses that the children consistently give, and the devotion to God that is evident in school.
- Finalise summative assessment systems and embed them consistently across the school.

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

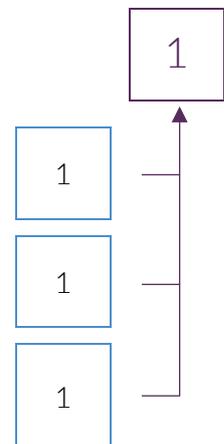
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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



Pupils at St Mary's have a deep understanding of their distinctive Catholic identity and have risen to the challenge of their mission to 'change the world forever'. As a result, they embrace their personal responsibility to care for the common home. The enthusiastic Laudato Si Team have visited a recycling centre, engaged in litter picking activities and planted trees in school and in the wider community. Pupils at St Mary's say they are happy and feel loved. They show a deep respect for their own personal dignity and that of others. Behaviour in lessons and around school is exemplary. Pupils talk confidently and articulately about the Catholic life and mission of the school and clearly have a great sense of pride in their community. There are many opportunities for pupils to take a leading role and respond to the call of Catholic social teaching. For example, the Mini Vinnies have supported Middleton foodbank, raised money for Springhill Hospice and spent an afternoon talking to and playing games with the residents at a local care home. Chaplaincy is highly valued at St Mary's with one pupil commenting, "It is definitely an honour to be a member of the Gift Team."

The mission statement and recently reviewed vision statement are the anchor for everything that takes place at St Mary's. They are known and lived by the whole community. From the moment you enter the building, it is evident that you are entering a Catholic community. Displays are of an exceptionally high quality and are designed with loving care that reflects the ethos of the school. Catholic traditions and practices are clearly embedded into everyday life. Staff embrace the mission statement fully. They willingly give their time to live out the mission beyond the school walls. Pupils proudly explained how they fill bags for life with essentials, including socks and blankets, to be distributed each week by a member of staff who volunteers for a homeless charity in Manchester. Christ is at the heart of this loving community. Every interaction

with children and families embodies kindness and respect for the dignity of the individual. The embedded culture of welcome demonstrates that the school values its diverse community. During the beautiful crowning of Our Lady, children presented images of Mary celebrating their heritage and were invited to pray in their own language. Staff provide the highest level of pastoral care for their families. The dedicated and compassionate children's welfare officer has been successful in securing grants for families facing difficulties and signposting them to appropriate agencies for support. Provision for relationships and health education is carefully planned and meets statutory and diocesan requirements.

All stakeholders have been actively involved in the co-production of the renewed vision statement so that it truly reflects the school with Christ at its centre. The school and parish work closely together offering mutual support to one another and as a result, serve the community extremely well. Parents spoke very positively of the school working together as partners and consequently relationships between them are strong. Leaders and governors are inspirational witnesses to the Gospel. They ensure resources are targeted effectively. One governor commented 'inclusion is key to everything we do.' This was observed in the 'Oasis' provision where highly skilled staff were deployed to support children with complex needs to access the curriculum. The governors lead by example and are highly ambitious for the Catholic life and mission of the school. They celebrate what the school does well and can clearly articulate the impact of actions taken. Pupils' opinions are listened to and they have a strong voice in the planning, action and evaluation of the Catholic life of their school.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

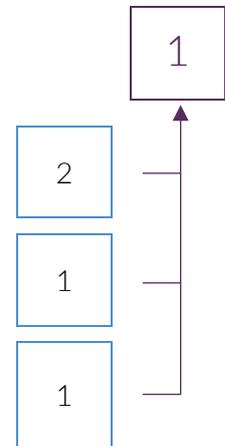
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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



The children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get off to a flying start. They settle quickly and thrive in the quality of care and nurturing relationships. Lessons are carefully planned and resourced and as a result children achieve well and develop secure knowledge. This was evident in both Reception classes where children listened attentively to scripture before using carefully selected props to retell the story of Pentecost. The feeling of joy in the room was tangible when the bubble machine was unveiled to celebrate the birthday of the Church. As children move through the school they make good progress in knowing more and remembering more against the planned curriculum. Pupils have developed a strong knowledge of scripture which is a central to all lesson. All pupils know and understand the rhythm of the liturgical year extremely well. Their ability to verbalise their knowledge and understanding of the Word of God is excellent. Pupils speak fluently about what they learn in religious education lessons asking incisive questions which indicate a desire to deepen their knowledge. Consequently, they are aware of and can articulate the demands of religious commitment in everyday life. However, to further improve, pupils need to translate this high level thinking observed in all lessons into work recorded in their books.

Teachers have excellent subject knowledge as a result of well-planned professional development. Planning is linked to current assessment and knowledge of the pupils so that lessons consolidate and extend the learning. However, further work needs to be completed to ensure summative assessment systems are embedded consistently across the school. Teachers use questions skilfully to identify precisely where pupils are in their understanding during lessons. This was observed in a lesson in lower Key Stage 2 where the teacher's questioning of the power of The Holy Spirit led a pupil to explain, 'The Holy Spirit can make us feel like we can do anything and makes us unstoppable.' Careful consideration is given to ensure children have

the opportunity to respond creatively through art, drama, and music to enrich the curriculum. Inspectors observed a deep commitment and high expectations for religious education lessons but this is not always evident in the presentation of work in pupils' books. High quality resources throughout the school are used very effectively to optimise learning. In a lesson in upper Key Stage 2, items were presented in a box and in groups pupils were challenged to consider their meaning and how this linked to the feast of Pentecost.

Leaders and governors ensure that the curriculum is well-designed, appropriately resourced and is a faithful expression of the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*. Leaders and governors have prioritised religious education ensuring it is the core of the core of St Mary's curriculum offer. They have secured high quality professional development that has empowered staff and is clearly having a positive impact within the classroom. The acting subject leader has been working closely with the substantive leader for several years and as a result has a shared vision for outstanding teaching at the school. Leaders have carefully adapted the chosen scheme of work to provide a bespoke sequenced curriculum building on prior learning that meets the needs of all the pupils. Leaders have produced a lesson design for the teaching of religious education that is used effectively throughout the school with a strong focus on retrieval of prior learning. Governors play a crucial role in the self-evaluation process. As a result of their first-hand knowledge of the school, they effectively hold leaders to account.

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

1

Provision

The quality of collective worship provided by the school

1

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for collective worship

1

1

St Mary's provides a range of opportunities for prayer and liturgy for pupils to participate respectfully, reverently, and joyfully. The liturgical year is hugely important in the life of the school. In the early years, children were able to explain that Pope Francis' vestments were red to celebrate the feast of Pentecost. This progressed in Key Stage 2 where pupils could articulate the change from Eastertide to Ordinary Time and how the colour green represented growth and hope. Pupils have an excellent understanding of the wide variety of ways of praying that are part of the Catholic tradition. Pupils throughout the school were able to reflect upon scripture meaningfully and suggest ways in which the Word of God influences their lives. Children in Nursery held a personalised prayer pebble close to their hearts and were encouraged to think about what Jesus would do. In a prayer and liturgy session in Key Stage 1, pupils had prepared a beautiful focal point. Prayerful silence gave pupils the space to mediate on sacred scripture allowing them to reflect on how this inspired them to be a good friend. Time is set aside each week for pupils to work collaboratively to plan and prepare opportunities for high quality prayer and liturgy. Pupils in upper Key Stage 2 are able to evaluate the quality of what they have planned and express ideas on how they can be improved.

Prayer and liturgy is integral to the pupils' daily routines. Sacred scripture is like a golden thread running through the heart of the school. The carefully chosen pieces of scripture for the weekly podcasts reflect the liturgical year and are an invitation for the wider community to join the pupils in prayer. Staff including senior leaders are highly skilled in supporting children to lead prayer and liturgy. A wide range of resources including music and lighting sets the scene for prayer and liturgy to enhance the experience for the pupils. In all collective worship observed, pupils from the youngest to the oldest were invited to open their hearts and let the scripture speak to them. School makes excellent use of the space. All classes have prayer spaces which are attractively decorated and shared areas are cared for with beautiful artwork and images on display. The school has thoughtfully planned how to work with families to include them in the

prayer life of the school. The chapel choir performs once a month on a Saturday evening and is highly valued by parishioners. The parish priest visits the school regularly and told inspectors, 'The school want me in and I want to be involved. The school and parish are working hand in glove to pass on the faith.' As a result, the partnership between the school and the parish is flourishing.

The school prayer and liturgy policy is well formulated and fit for purpose. Leaders have been instrumental in providing high quality internal and external professional development for staff. Staff speak highly of this training and value the support given. Leaders are highly effective in facilitating planning of prayer and liturgy and as a result, prayer and liturgy is engaging and of a consistently high quality throughout the school. For example, in Key Stage 1, prayer leaders confidently led worship selecting pupils to respond to scripture and relate this back to how they could be 'an even better friend like Jesus.' Leaders and governors ensure that the artefacts and resources school have gathered for worship reflect and celebrate the cultural heritage of the whole school community. Leaders and governors regularly review the quality and impact of prayer and liturgy as part of the school's monitoring cycle. Pupil voice is paramount in this process.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Mary's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	105818
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	3543312
Full postal address of the school	St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Wood Street, Langley, Middleton, Manchester, M24 5GL
School phone number	01616437594
Headteacher	Sarah Bollado
Chair of Governors	Margaret Hyde
School Website	www.stmrc.co.uk
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	N/A
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Voluntary Aided School
Admissions policy	N/A
Age-range of pupils	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	6 th November 2015
Previous denominational inspection grade	Good

The inspection team

Mary Garvey	Lead
Mylene McGuire	Team
Carl Mclver	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