

# St Mary's Catholic Primary School

URN: 151022

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Archbishop of Liverpool

25–25 June 2025

## 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

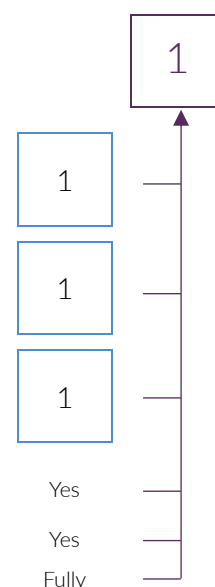
#### Collective worship (p.7)

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



## Compliance statement

- The school is entirely compliant with the Bishops' Conference curriculum requirements for Catholic life and mission, religious education and collective worship.
- The school meets any additional requirements of the Archbishop of Liverpool.
- Areas identified for improvement in the last inspection have all been addressed.

## What the school does well

- The headteacher's leadership and vision for Catholic life and mission is inspirational and tangible throughout the school. This is ably supported by her dedicated leadership team, governors and the Pope Francis Catholic Multi Academy Trust.
- The mission statement is central and at the core of all that the school undertakes.
- Pupils are religiously literate and can clearly explain their successes and next steps in religious education because of the school's feedback policy.
- The school offers a unique spiritual environment utilising both outdoor and indoor spaces for prayer that lead hearts and minds to God.
- Catholic social teaching is well understood by pupils, who can clearly explain its principles and how to apply them in their daily lives, showing a lived commitment to the values of justice, compassion, and service.

## What the school needs to improve

- Implement and rigorously monitor the new Religious Education Directory across the school, ensuring consistency, progression, and high-quality teaching and learning in religious education.
- Increase the use of pupil voice in prayer and liturgy by providing more structured opportunities for reflection upon and evaluation of acts of worship.

## 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



St Mary's Catholic Primary School is rightly proud to be 'a small school with a big heart.' The school places Gospel values, Catholic social teaching, and a strong sense of family at the centre of its mission. Pupils can articulate how the Catholic mission is lived daily through their relationships with others and this contributes to a calm, nurturing environment where respect and kindness are central to school life. This has been most clearly demonstrated through the introduction of prayer and mission leaders, who carry out their roles with a genuine sense of passion and can connect service to their own lives. Pupils put their faith into action by participating in initiatives that support the provision for Catholic life by raising awareness and funds for important charities such as Cafod and Macmillan Cancer Support. Pupils relate their actions to the principles of Catholic social teaching and talk confidently about their local and global charity outreach. One pupil gave an example of going litter picking at the beach, linking this to the concept of caring for our common home. Pupils and staff highly value and appreciate the school's chaplaincy provision, which is provided by the Pope Francis Catholic Multi Academy Trust.

The committed and inspirational headteacher, supported by her dedicated team, fosters a strong sense of community that is genuinely lived and felt throughout the school. Pupils at St Mary's know they are safe and loved. Staff provide the highest level of pastoral care for the pupils, and this is recognised by the parents. One parent commented, "Our children feel safe in this lovely and little community." The mission statement is known and culminates in the strong culture of welcome with Christ at its centre. One pupil shared, 'We live our mission statement through showing love to others and living out our Catholic values.' The school environment and grounds bear witness to its Catholic character that supports the spiritual development

throughout the community. Internal prayer spaces are well-resourced, thoughtfully maintained, and reflect the rhythms of the Church's liturgical year, offering pupils and staff meaningful opportunities for stillness and prayer. All members of the school community support its inclusivity, rooted in the Catholic mission to love and respect the dignity of every person as a child of God. The relationships, sex and health education curriculum is carefully mapped out and rooted in the teachings of the Church and therefore fully compliant with archdiocesan requirements.

Leaders and governors are enthusiastic and effective in promoting the Catholic life of the school. They speak with pride and energy about how well their pupils engage with the school's mission. The self-evaluation is honest and accurate, reflecting rigorous monitoring, searching analysis and realistic self-challenge, that is clearly and explicitly focused on the Catholic life and mission of the school. All diocesan policies and initiatives are responded to and reflect the school's Catholic identity. Leaders work hard to develop a flourishing partnership between school and the local parish. Support from governors is strong, with regular visits to school that offer challenge and support. Staff well-being is a priority, and this is appreciated by the staff. They speak of being 'one staff body', reflecting a strong sense of unity to the school's Catholic mission and values. Questionnaires and parents' meetings show an overwhelming support for the school and the service that it provides. Leaders and governors are involved in the evaluation of the school and regularly meet with staff and pupils. Pupils have a voice in school development and are encouraged to identify areas of strength and those requiring improvement. They are included in bringing about that improvement.

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

### Religious education key judgement grade

#### Pupil outcomes

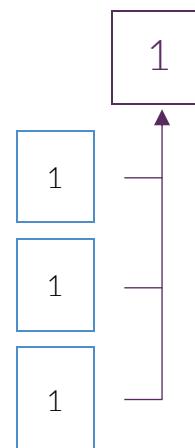
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

#### 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



Strong pupil achievement in religious education is evident across all year groups. Pupils demonstrate clear progress in religious education by deepening their understanding and retaining what they have learned over time. Pupils make meaningful connections between biblical texts and their own lives. For example, one pupil confidently explained the parable of the lost sheep, using appropriate religious vocabulary and reflecting on how the story calls us to be witnesses of Jesus' love. Each lesson elicits prior knowledge, and pupils make links across topics and age phases. Pupils work independently and can take the initiative for their own learning when given the opportunity to do so. They are actively engaged in their lessons and readily respond to opportunities for reflection. Pupils appreciate that their teachers encourage independent thinking, collaborative discussion with peers, and whole class sharing to deepen their understanding. Pupils take pride in their learning and in their understanding of what they need to do to improve and how they have made progress. Consequently, they achieve well and at the same level as other core curriculum subjects.

Staff are confident in delivering religious education. They have high expectations and ensure that all pupils make progress. Staff are committed to the spiritual and moral development of pupils and reflection time is built into every lesson with pupils participating enthusiastically. Questioning is used skilfully to assess pupils' progress. Work is celebrated, valued, and clear feedback given, which supports next steps in learning. Being part of the Trust enables and provides leaders with opportunities to share good practice and develop the knowledge and pedagogy of the whole staff team. This membership has also enhanced awareness of how ongoing teacher assessment can be used effectively to support pupil progress. Pupils explain the meaning of teacher feedback codes and regularly use marking tables in their books to reflect on their learning and identify areas for improvement. This effective feedback process supports

pupils in taking ownership of their religious education and deepening their understanding of the Catholic faith. Teachers follow the school's marking and feedback policy, recognising and valuing pupils' efforts. The effective use of high-quality resources supports rich and engaging learning experiences for all pupils by encouraging their meaningful reflection. This provision contributes to a vibrant and inclusive religious education curriculum.

Leaders and governors ensure that the curriculum is thoroughly structured and appropriately resourced. The Religious Education Directory is gradually being implemented and already its use with Early Years is successfully laying a strong foundation for pupils' faith development. There is a well-structured timetable of continuing professional development to support staff's ongoing enrichment in religious education, which is fully endorsed and supported by the Trust. The subject leaders have a clear vision for teaching and learning, and their monitoring of religious education is robust. As a result, efficient training and support is given to ensure standards remain high. Continuous professional development is a priority, and religious education is well resourced. There are plenty of opportunities for enrichment within the school. Leaders and governors' self-evaluation is a strength that demonstrates their understanding of school life and how to plan next steps in progress. All members of the community have been involved in the self-evaluation process and school clearly acts upon the advice and support provided by the Trust. Governors are fully informed about religious education and can explain confidently the priorities and next steps. They have a strong understanding of religious education through reviewing pupil's work which enables them to support and challenge effectively.

## 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

A profound strength of St Mary's is the pupils' heartfelt participation and joyful reverence in prayer and liturgy and their use of scripture to support this. Pupils embrace opportunities to pray and do so with enthusiasm. Pupils speak confidently about the different aspects of the liturgical year and demonstrate secure knowledge of the saints they study throughout the school year, including their own patron. This understanding enriches their participation in prayer and liturgy, enabling them to make meaningful contributions and engage with greater depth and reverence. During an observed gathering for prayer and liturgy, a pupil confidently led her peers in the proclamation before the Gospel through song, offering a beautiful and reverent contribution to the act of worship. Pupils undertake a variety of liturgical ministries with confidence, understanding, and skill. A strong example of this is seen in the work of pupil prayer leaders, who independently plan and deliver prayer and liturgy for younger pupils in the outdoor prayer area, selecting and preparing resources with reverence and care. Their passion for this role is evident and older pupils take great pride in guiding and supporting the spiritual development of younger members of this unique community.

Prayer and liturgy at St Mary's is the core element of the school day. Pupils have regular spiritual experiences through celebration assemblies as well as adult and pupil led prayer, liturgy and worship. Planning is effective throughout the liturgical year and links directly to the weekly Sunday gospel. Scripture is chosen to match the liturgical season and pupils are confident to share in its reading. Staff are reverent when using scripture and they participate fully during daily prayer and liturgy. With the introduction of the new Prayer and Liturgy Directory, creative and contemporary opportunities including the use of light for prayer are being introduced across the school. The headteacher has dedicated a lot of time and resources in creating beautiful, accessible prayer spaces which enrich the opportunities provided for the pupils. A dedicated

prayer room is centrally located within the school, providing a quiet and sacred space for reflection, prayer, and spiritual growth for both pupils and staff. Parents feel part of the prayer life of the school and value the opportunity to attend celebration assemblies. These experiences help them feel a strong sense of connection within this Catholic home, school and parish community.

Leaders, governors and members of the Trust, demonstrate how well they know the school and can clearly identify actions for improvement. They have developed an effective policy for prayer and liturgy that is regularly reviewed as part of the self-evaluation process. Its structure informs all staff about how to deliver prayer and liturgy and enables pupils to acquire the relevant skills to lead their own worship. Leaders and governors ensure that the provision for prayer and liturgy is prioritised when setting budgets and allocating resources. The headteacher plays a pivotal role in preparing the pupils to receive the first sacraments. There is a clear plan within the school calendar that reflects the liturgical year and enables the school to come together as an informed community for worship. Prayer and liturgy is carefully monitored across the school, and where appropriate, tailored support is provided. This includes coaching from skilled leaders to ensure that all acts of worship are meaningful, inclusive, and reflective of the school's mission. Staff are provided with opportunities for continued professional development and good practice is shared both in school and within the Trust. The governors are supportive of the process for monitoring and evaluation and the next steps for improvement.



## Information about the school

Full name of school	St Mary's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	151022
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	3433354
Full postal address of the school	St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Back Lane, Crosby, Liverpool, L23 4UA
School phone number	0151 924 4447
Headteacher	Kerry Scott
Chair of governors	Daniel Corbett
School Website	<a href="http://www.stmaryscatholicps.co.uk">www.stmaryscatholicps.co.uk</a>
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Pope Francis Catholic Multi Academy Trust
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Voluntary Aided School
Admissions policy	Non-selective
Age-range of pupils	5-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	13 November 2018
Previous denominational inspection grade	Good

## The inspection team

Karl Landrum	Lead
Joshua Marshall	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