

# St Mary's Catholic Primary School

URN: 148166

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Leeds

21–22 May 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

1

#### Religious education (p.5)

The quality of curriculum religious education

2

#### Collective worship (p.7)

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

2

The school is fully compliant with the general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishops' Conference

Yes

The school is fully compliant with any additional requirements of the diocesan bishop

Yes

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

Fully

2

## Compliance statement

- St. Mary's is fully compliant with the general norms for religious education that are laid down by the Bishops' Conference.
- The school is compliant with all additional requirements of the Bishop of Leeds.
- The school has met all recommendations that were made in the previous inspection.

## What the school does well

- The mission of St Mary's Catholic Primary school, 'Loving, Laughing and Learning in the Light of the Lord', is known by all and this vision is embraced by all members of the school community.
- The Religious Education Curriculum is well planned and delivered with a creative approach ensuring the needs of all pupils, including the most vulnerable, are met.
- Strong teaching and learning take place in the early years ensuring that pupils make a strong start to their religious education.
- The school environment embraces the school's Catholic character and the care and attention given to all areas ensure the Catholic identity of the school is vibrant and welcoming.
- The pupils of St Mary's are exemplary in their behaviour, attitudes to learning and the respect they show to others.

## What the school needs to improve

- Ensure the consistency of skilful questioning to engage pupils and maximise learning for all.
- Provide consistently high-quality feedback so that all pupils know how well they are doing and are provided with opportunities to grow.
- Review systems that are currently in place to support planning of worship and prayer so that it is consistently creative and varied.

## 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

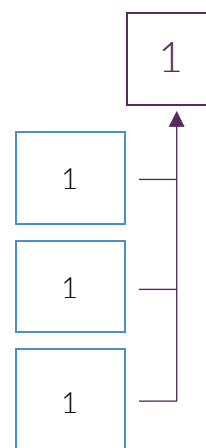
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

#### 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 benefit greatly value from the Catholic life of the school and from the commitment shown by all staff to provide a full and rich Catholic life experience. All pupils understand that they are unique and are made in the image and likeness of God. Alongside their school mission, the school focuses on three Catholic virtues inspired by Mary, faith, love and kindness. These are central to the way of life of the school that pupils respond to on a daily basis. These virtues are celebrated weekly with all teachers leading a weekly virtues assembly. In celebration assembly, children are recognised for living out these virtues within their school family. Pupils enjoy taking leadership roles in the school and are given a range of opportunities to shape both the day-to-day life and the future of their school. As a result, they grow as stewards of their community, living out the Gospel values and actively contributing to the Catholic life and mission of the school. Pupils are engaged in responding to Catholic social teaching and can discuss the links to the actions they take in today's world. They are passionate about the environment, and led by the eco council, they have a keen sense of social justice and understand that they are part of the global community. Pupils highly value the chaplaincy provision and are eager to lead, contribute and participate in all aspects and as a result they develop into kind, caring and articulate young people with a deep sense of love and respect for all.

The mission statement, 'Loving, Laughing and Learning in the Light of the Lord' is clear and regularly revisited and pupils can explain clearly what this mission means in 2025 in their daily life and within their local community. Staff are clearly committed and there is a tangible sense of community and welcome felt by visitors into the school. Senior leaders make strong links with the parish to further strengthen the Catholic life of the school. The parish priest is highly supportive of the school and a regular visitor who supports the pupils with their faith development. Staff are role models for the pupils and for each other, evident in the high level of pastoral care they give the pupils and each other. They are committed to the most vulnerable

within the school and the local community, ensuring a community where equality and diversity are promoted. Pupils appreciate the work that the staff do for them, and they speak highly of the opportunities to explore their faith. They appreciate each other and this culminates in outstanding behaviour and attitudes towards each other evident throughout the school.

All school leaders, governors and the Bishop Konstant Catholic Academy Trust ensure that the Catholic life of St Mary's is given the highest possible priority. They actively promote the bishop's vision for this diocese. The religious education team have a robust system in place for monitoring school events to quality assure and ensure that they are successful in engaging with parents and carers for the benefit of all pupils. The governing body provides appropriate support and challenge to the school leaders and, as a result, the Catholic life and mission of the school is strengthened, ensuring that Christ's teachings remain central to all aspects of school life and that pupils and staff are nurtured in a community of faith, service and spiritual growth. Policies and structure are in place within the school and trust which provide highest levels of pastoral support for staff for physical and mental wellbeing. All leaders ensure staff training and professional development is planned for and staff speak highly of the support in place from Bishop Konstant Catholic Academy Trust.

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

### Religious education key judgement grade

#### Pupil outcomes

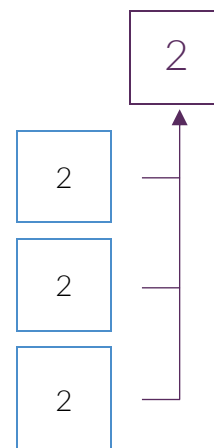
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

#### 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



Pupils enjoy religious education lessons at St Mary's and, as they progress through the school, their knowledge, skills and understanding of religious concepts and scripture are developed. This, coupled with the high expectations of all staff, has created a learning environment where all pupils can speak confidently and articulately about the work they have covered. When working independently, pupils are focussed and they make the strongest progress when they are given the opportunities of challenge within their work. Pupils produce good work which shows signs of creativity and this is modelled well and displayed to encourage other pupils. Reflection time is built into most lessons which gives pupils an opportunity to contemplate and better understand spiritual concepts, thus further developing their religious literacy. Where teaching is at its strongest, focused questioning ensures that all pupils are challenged enabling greater progress to be made. The progress made by all groups of learners is good, a consequence of consistently good or better teaching. Pupils' enjoyment of lessons and the excellent relationships established with staff ensures that they are fully engaged and that behaviour is of a high standard.

Staff have good subject knowledge and this is reflected in their teaching which is at least good. Staff work hard to ensure that the curriculum is well planned and resourced to meet the needs of their pupils and their creative approach to these lessons. Expectations are high and staff are skilled in offering a wide variety of different creative approaches within lessons to assist pupils in meeting these. Planning is linked to pupils' current assessment so that in lessons they achieve well. St Marys provides a strong start for pupils in their foundation stage where expert teachers plan and provide both structured tasks and continuous provision that ensures the pupils engage in purposeful play and clear discussions. Skilled staff ensure that all pupils, regardless of need or ability, are fully engaged in classroom activities and are making good progress. Where lessons are strongest, they include creative teaching strategies including drama, art, use of media and peer collaboration. There are good examples of the school's creative approach and evidence of

progress in lessons through discussions with pupils, in class books and classroom displays. Praise is used to encourage pupils to do their best and this motivates them well. In the best lessons, teachers use questioning skilfully with pupils' knowledge and understanding being developed.

School leaders, governors and the Trust are passionate about the school's provision for religious education. The school team work hard to ensure that the planning and the way the content is presented to pupils is creative and open ended. This is evident in their work and in pupil voice. The leaders of religious education work hard to ensure that the subject is given the highest of priorities. They are all committed to ensure that staff receive high quality training in-house and through the Diocese and Bishop Konstant Catholic Academy Trust. The developments led by the religious education team have been well received by other colleagues and have resulted in teaching that is at least consistently good. The school uses the 'The Way, The Truth and The Life' scheme as a basis for their curriculum and ensure that they provide learners with secure opportunities to progress sequentially through the subject content. The leaders evaluate lessons well and ensure there is a continuous cycle of improvement within the school. The school takes part in both diocesan and trust-level moderation of standards which supports the development of all staff, including those early in their careers. There is a well-planned curriculum for relationship and sex education that meets diocesan requirements.

## 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

2

#### Provision

The quality of collective worship provided by the school

2

#### Leadership

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

2

2

Pupils at St Mary's respond well to the experiences of prayer and liturgy provided by the school. They confidently pray in a range of ways using traditional prayers and can confidently talk about the liturgical seasons. They will participate in, when offered, moments of silent reflection. In Year 2 pupils pray through holding out their hand and silently tracing over each finger whilst thinking of someone that they trust in their lives. At St Mary's pupils work well with other children to plan and prepare engaging experiences of prayer and liturgy. In a Year 4 liturgy, pupils linked the Word, themed around 'worry', to the present moment which enhanced their experience of prayer. Pupils can recognise and articulate how their Catholic identity influences their actions and link this to scripture stories with one pupil stating, 'God taught us to treat others how you would like to be treated.' At St Mary's, pupils value and understand how prayer can impact their lives. One child said, 'I feel good when I pray because if I do something wrong, I can ask God for forgiveness and Mary will untie the knot in my stomach'. Pupils are always engaged, and their behaviour is impeccable. However, sometimes the structure of these experiences is very similar across school, which impacts on how creative they are.

There is a daily pattern of prayer, that reflects the prayer life of the Church and this is appropriately planned and central to the life of the school. The school uses Mark 10 mission to enhance the provision of prayer. Staff are skilled in helping pupils to plan and lead prayer and liturgy and they model by example and the pupils speak positively about how teachers will support them. Scripture is central to collective worship. Traditional hymns such as 'Mary we crown thee' are used to enhance liturgy and children sing these with joy. Children visit church on a regular basis and speak about how going to church is special. The school makes good use of the spaces available and ensure that these spaces are used appropriately and are accessible for children in their own time. The school recognises their diverse character and their 'Nest' room is used as a prayer room for children of other faiths. The school works positively with parents and they spoke positively about how school shares the Wednesday Word resource with them and

sends out newsletters, which include the virtues, so that they can carry on their faith journey at home.

The school leaders regularly lead whole school worship and set an example that is followed by all. Their strong leadership promotes high quality and well-planned collective worship. The school's policy on prayer and liturgy is well formulated with opportunities to pray as a whole school and as individual classes on a weekly basis. However opportunities for staff to pray together are not regular. Leaders, including governors, have planned the school calendar to ensure that those opportunities to celebrate the Eucharist are planned into the liturgical calendar and are significant moments within the life of the school. Leaders ensure that sufficient funding is allocated to resources for prayer and liturgy and this is seen in all classes and around school. Leaders, including governors and the academy council, see collective worship as a high priority in school, and they monitor it effectively to ensure it is meaningful, inclusive, and reflective of the school's Catholic ethos, resulting in high levels of engagement and spiritual development among pupils. They arrange regular continuous professional development opportunities to enhance the confidence of staff through 'Faith Formation' and staff speak highly of the liturgically based training that they have received including the 'Teaching Mass' where parts of the mass and their importance are explained.



## Information about the school

Full name of school	St Mary's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	148166
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8153373
Full postal address of the school	St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Baffam Lane, Selby, YO8 9AX
School phone number	01757 706616
Headteacher	Louise Bird
Chair of local governing body	Suzanne Sweeting
School Website	<a href="http://www.sm.bkcat.co.uk">www.sm.bkcat.co.uk</a>
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	The Bishop Konstant Catholic Academy Trust
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Academy
Admissions policy	Non-selective
Age-range of pupils	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	December 2017
Previous denominational inspection grade	Good

## The inspection team

Angela Spencer  
Laura Wharton

Lead  
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