

St Mary's Catholic Primary School

URN: 151037

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Shrewsbury

18–19 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

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 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

1

Compliance statement

- The school is fully compliant in relation to the general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishops' Conference. For instance, it dedicates at least ten percent of its teaching time to the teaching of religious education.
- The school is fully compliant with the additional requirements of the diocesan bishop. For instance, it uses one of the diocesan's nominated schemes for the teaching of relationships, sex and health education and it used the diocesan nominated schemes for the teaching of religious education.
- The one area for improvement from the last inspection has been fully addressed. For instance, by the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are confident and skilful in planning and leading celebrations of the word.

- What the school does well

- The upholding of the dignity of the human person is at the heart of this inclusive school.
- The school's mission, 'Shine from the inside out' is known, understood and lived by all stakeholders.
- Leadership, at all levels, including pupils, is outstanding.
- Pupils are fully engaged in their religious education lessons, they are keen to learn, and their behaviour is very good.
- As a result of effective modelling by staff, pupils greet and proclaim the gospel with reverence.

What the school needs to improve

- Although pupils know when they have done well in religious education, feedback from staff is not specific enough to enable them to understand what to do next to make further progress.
- Ensure that the pupils' work is consistently of a high quality across all classes, by the sharing of best practice within 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

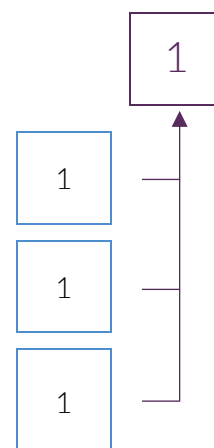
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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 know they are loved and valued as unique individuals in this inclusive school. Faith council members routinely lead tours of the school for visitors, and pupils are rightly proud to belong to St Mary's. Pupils flourish in this school because of the love and care they receive. They know that they are accepted for who they are. Pupils have a deep understanding of the school's mission and values because they are visible and referred to throughout the day. The school's joyful mission song, 'Shine' is universally loved, and gives a clear message of the love God has for each of them. It reminds them of their responsibility to go out and do good. Older pupils can clearly articulate how by Jesus's example, they can make a difference in the world and how their faith influences their decisions and actions. Pupils show great respect for each other and particularly for those with needs different from their own. Pupils show compassion and empathy and have a keen sense of fairness and justice. They willingly apply for and take on leadership roles and can describe the ways in which they have contributed to the opportunities the school provides. They know that they have a voice and that it is heard.

The mission statement is regularly visited and is visible throughout the school, and as a result is known and lived by all. Staff are exemplary role models and recognise their own vocation and their individual responsibility to promote the realisation of the school's mission. The sense of family and community in this school is tangible, and the school goes the extra mile to meet the needs of its pupils. The welcome for all, particularly the most vulnerable, is testament of the school's commitment to its mission. Staff work hard to remove barriers for pupils and their families in unobtrusive ways, so that their dignity is preserved. Pastoral care is of the highest quality; all staff know the pupils and their families extremely well and recognise their dignity as a human person. Break out spaces such as The Hive and the sensory room enable pupils to

regulate and return to their class swiftly. The school's physical environment, both inside and out, is a stunning reflection of the school's mission, and this contributes significantly to pupils being able to 'shine from the inside out'. The school's provision for relationships and sex education fully meets statutory and diocesan requirements.

The headteacher provides dynamic leadership, and her ambition and energy inspire others to be aspirational for the school. All leaders and governors are deeply committed to and passionate about the school's Catholic life and mission. They recognise this as a core leadership responsibility and are united in their drive to give the highest priority to the school's distinctive Catholic identity. Leaders and governors ensure that the principles of Catholic social teaching, particularly in relation to the Church's option for the poor and the promotion of human dignity is at the heart of their decision making. Pupil leadership is developed extremely well, and pupils are able to take on a wealth of responsibilities, including Mini Vinnies, sports leaders, young ambassadors amongst others. This is a strength of the school and as a result, younger pupils aspire to be the leaders of the future. Links with the parish are strong, and the parish priest is a regular visitor to the school. Leaders have forged strong links with the wider community including a local special school and a local nursing home. Leaders and governors are highly ambitious for the school and prioritise its self-evaluation by all stake holders.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

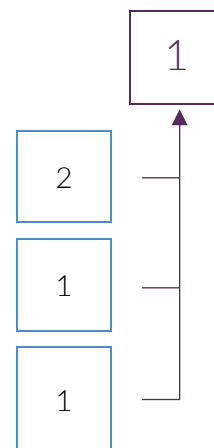
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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 are fully engaged in their learning and their progress is strong from their varying starting points including those with special educational needs. They enjoy their learning, are keen to contribute to lessons and are building up secure knowledge and understanding. Recent work on oracy is beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' confidence in talking about what they have learned in religious education. In lessons, pupils are routinely asked to talk with a partner, and this helps to rehearse what they would like to contribute to the lesson. Pupils are building up an age-appropriate religious vocabulary, but sometimes incorrect spellings of religious words are not checked. When given the opportunity, pupils think deeply and can reflect on what they have learned in their lessons and describe the impact this has on their lives. Their behaviour is very good, and they can work independently, in pairs and in small groups for extended periods. Pupils produce good work that is generally well presented, and in some classes, work is consistently of a high quality. Pupils' attainment is at least in line with their attainment in other core subjects.

Teachers understand how pupils learn and have excellent subject knowledge thanks to high quality continuous professional development from within the diocese and beyond and this knowledge is communicated to the pupils extremely well. Teaching is at least consistently good. Well planned, regular retrieval tasks ensure that pupils are revisiting their learning from previous years and committing it to memory. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils and ask challenging questions to check understanding and deepen knowledge. Teachers are extremely well supported by highly skilled and well briefed teaching assistants, who adapt the learning where necessary, and this means that pupils with special educational needs are fully included and have access to the full curriculum. Displays and working walls in classrooms are up to date, and support learning very well. In lessons, teachers regularly plan opportunities for pupils to

pause for meaningful reflection, and sometimes this leads to the writing of prayers. Assessment is regular and ongoing and is based on a range of creative approaches, such as drama, an adult scribing for the pupil, or hot seating. This removes barriers to learning and enables all pupils to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding. The work and effort of pupils is routinely celebrated, and pupils know when they have done well. However, feedback to pupils is not yet specific enough for them to understand how they need to improve and what their next steps are.

Leaders and governors are highly ambitious for religious education and have a desire to continuously improve. Governors know the school extremely well not only because they are kept well informed by the headteacher, but also because they are regular visitors to the school. They both support and challenge the school, and the link governor provides detailed and inciteful reports for the full governing body following her termly visits. Leaders and governors ensure that the religious education curriculum is a faithful expression of the *Religious Education Directory*. They have also ensured that religious education has at least parity with other core subjects in terms of resourcing, timetabling, annual reports to parents and continuous professional development. The subject leader is exemplary in her practice, and she provides excellent support for her colleagues. This support is highly valued by staff. Leaders ensure pupils have opportunities to enhance and enrich the teaching of religious education, particularly for the understanding of other world faiths. Leaders are acutely aware of the needs of all groups of pupils and have ensured that the curriculum is inclusive for all.

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

Pupils are deeply committed to and fully embrace a wide range of opportunities for prayer and liturgy. They can articulate that prayer brings them closer to God, and as one pupil writes, 'I can pray to God with all the love in my heart'. Pupils pray with reverence and in a variety of ways such as traditional and contemporary prayers, spontaneous prayer, silent reflection and quiet contemplation. Throughout the school, they have many opportunities to write their own prayers, and their individual prayer journals are testament to this. This means that by the time pupils reach upper Key Stage 2, they are showing great maturity in writing heartfelt prayers. Pupils are acutely aware of how their prayers can make a difference to the world. Pupils across the school sing joyfully and enthusiastically, by heart and from the heart, and the regular opportunities to sing together as a whole school enriches the sense of family and community. Pupils have an excellent understanding of the liturgical year. As pupils journey through the school, they take increasing responsibility for planning and leading celebrations of the word. By upper Key Stage 2 pupils collaborate with each other to plan and lead meaningful celebrations of the word completely independently.

Prayer and liturgy are clearly central to the life of the school, and they are routinely integral to gatherings of staff or pupils. Staff provide a wealth of opportunities for pupils to pray daily, weekly and at key points of the liturgical year and this shapes the school's culture. Staff realise the impact they have on their pupils, and so are exemplary role models for them in leading celebrations of the word, and in singing traditional and contemporary hymns. They routinely greet and proclaim the gospel with the utmost reverence, and this means that the pupils follow their lead, and do so too. Prayer spaces in classrooms are extremely well resourced, of high quality, and reflect the liturgical year. They are well cared for, showing their high status. Prayer spaces around the school, both inside and out, show imaginative innovation and pupils make

the most of and appreciate these opportunities to pray and reflect. The school regularly invites parents into school to share in the monthly Masses and other celebrations. Prayer at home is encouraged through the use of the resources provided on a regular basis such as the *Wednesday Word*, and *Ten:Ten* newsletter and at key points in the liturgical year, for instance the travelling crib during Advent.

The school's policy for prayer and liturgy is accessible and a very useful resource for staff. School leaders have also prepared progression documents for prayers and for celebrations of the word. This ensures that pupils are building up their skills of participation as they move through the school. Leaders have prepared a comprehensive calendar of Masses, retreats and other opportunities such as the crowning of Mary, the patron saint of the school, which enrich the school's provision. Leaders have the highest priority for developing the prayer life of the school, evidenced by engaging with outside providers such as the Shrewsbury Youth Mission Team, and by developing pupil leaders so that they can, in turn, lead events such as Easter Experience for the other pupils. The Faith council has had a significant voice and input into the development of prayer spaces such as the sensory garden, including working out the budget for the project. This beautiful garden is now tended to by members of the Growing in hope team. Significant funding has been made available to develop the prayer life of the school, including collaborative art works to which every pupil has contributed.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Mary's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	151037
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	3573308
Full postal address of the school	St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Cheetham Hill Road, Dukinfield, SK16 5LB
School phone number	01613684824
Headteacher	Claire McManus
Chair of governors	John Storey
School Website	https://www.stmarysprimarydukinfield.co.uk/
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Corpus Christi Catholic Academy Trust
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Voluntary Academy
Admissions policy	Non-selective
Age-range of pupils	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	6 March 2018
Previous denominational inspection grade	1

The inspection team

Julie Johnson
Siobhan Capey

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