

St Mary's Catholic Primary School

URN: 123556

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Shrewsbury

11 March 2026 – 12 March 2026

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 RE

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

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Yes

Yes

Fully

What the school does well

- There is a tangible sense of family and welcome in this happy and inclusive school.
- Relationships at all levels are a strength, and pastoral care for pupils and staff is outstanding.
- Pupils show great respect for each other and their behaviour is exemplary.
- Strong subject knowledge in religious education and creativity provided in lessons result in high engagement of pupils.
- Pupils' knowledge and understanding of scripture is impressive and they can explain how it impacts positively on their lives.

What the school needs to improve

- Develop regular and robust monitoring and evaluation processes for the school's Catholic Life and Mission, Religious Education and Collective Worship that involve all stakeholders and lead to continuous improvements.
- Introduce extended writing in religious education lessons in order for pupils to apply their knowledge and understanding of scripture and religious concepts.
- Provide a wide range of opportunities for pupils to experience prayer in different forms that are part of the Catholic tradition in line with the expectations of the Prayer and Liturgy Directory.

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

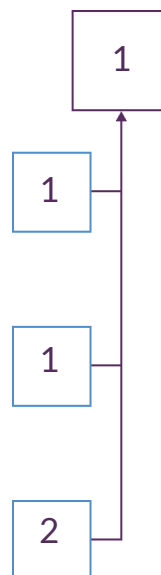
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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 are proud to belong to this inclusive school and can articulate its distinctive Catholic ethos. They know and understand the school's mission statement and as one pupil says, it means 'we pass the love on'. Older pupils can give examples of how their faith influences what they say and do. They also have a good knowledge of their patron and can link this to their own lives, as evidenced by this comment, 'God has a plan for all of us.' Pupils know they are loved and valued as unique persons and they show great respect for each other and for those they do not know. This is shown by the welcome they give to new pupils, as well as through their work for a range of charities. Pupils willingly take on a range of leadership roles and take their responsibilities seriously. They know that if they have ideas, adults will listen to them. Pupils can explain how they have led initiatives such as writing letters to ask for donations, thereby taking ownership of putting their faith into action. They have a keen sense of justice and can recall the principles of Catholic social teaching, giving examples from their learning in religious education.

The sense of welcome and family is tangible at St Mary's, and this is recognised by the pupils, as one pupil says, 'We like to think of ourselves as a family.' Staff, including non-teaching staff, know their pupils extremely well and will offer support to families at the earliest opportunity. One staff member says, 'We know every inch of them.' As a result, pastoral care is outstanding. All staff are exemplary role models for pupils and relationships are strong. One recurring theme is that pupils are 'wrapped up in love' as soon as they join the school. Staff are proud to work at St Mary's, and fully committed to implementing the school's mission and vision. They will go the extra mile to include others, for instance, working with the council to

provide refugees with coats and shoes and thereby upholding the dignity of all. Staff commitment is inspirational, yet understated, and as the school recognises, there is a culture of quiet love and gospel witness. Staff can give many examples of how they have acted for and walked alongside their families. The school's physical environment clearly celebrates the school's Catholic ethos. Displays and sacred areas are beautifully kept, reflecting the school's ethos and their commitment to the dignity of each person. Relationships, sex and health education is fully compliant with diocesan and national guidance, and any additional materials used are thoroughly checked to ensure that these are delivered through a Catholic lens.

Leaders recognise the dignity of all who learn and work here. This makes the school a joyful place where all feel valued. Staff morale is high because of the focus that leaders and governors place on their pastoral care and well-being. Staff turnover is low, but nonetheless, there is a well-planned induction programme for new staff. The headteacher provides committed and energetic leadership, and she is very ably supported by the leadership team. The chair of governors and the parish priest, who is also a governor, are regular visitors to the school, and know the school very well, and therefore can both challenge and support leaders. Catholic social teaching is beginning to be embedded but more explicit links need to be made in subjects beyond religious education. Although monitoring and evaluation activities related to the Catholic life and mission of the school take place, these do not fully involve all stakeholders and are not rigorous enough to lead to improvement.

Religious education

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 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

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Pupils say they enjoy their religious education lessons and are building good knowledge and skills in relation to the *Religious Education Directory*. They generally take pride in their work and are fully engaged in their lessons, often making insightful connections between what they are learning to the scripture they already know. They enjoy the creativity on offer in lessons such as the use of drama, contemporary and traditional artwork to make links to scripture and hymns linked to the theme, but opportunities for applying their knowledge and understanding in extended writing are limited. This means that they are not deepening their understanding as much as they could. Pupils are building up a rich religious vocabulary right from the start and throughout the school. They are clearly used to repeating key religious words and phrases to commit these to memory. For example, in Early Years, the children repeat 'Hosanna means save us'. Pupils are also able to articulate how what they have learned in religious education shapes the way they treat others. For instance, Year 6 pupils, using images of Jesus washing the disciples' feet, show good knowledge of artistic intent, demonstrating their ability to understand scripture and how it links it to their daily lives. Their behaviour in lessons is exemplary, and pupils are able to work independently without an adult. Attainment in religious education is at least in line with other core subjects.

Teachers fully understand the impact religious education has on their pupils and therefore, are exemplary role models. They have strong subject knowledge and plan lessons which are well-structured and engaging to meet the needs of the pupils. Tasks are adapted where necessary, and Think Pink provides challenge tasks for those who need it. For instance, in Year

4 when exploring the reactions to Jesus from various groups on Palm Sunday, some pupils are challenged to write their own reactions, others are asked to sort given comments in writing, and others cut and glue given comments. This means that all pupils can access the core learning. Well-briefed teaching assistants support learning extremely well, by engaging in activities with pupils and enabling all pupils to make progress. Open questioning is a strength in lessons, and this gives pupils opportunities to develop their skills of reason. Marking follows school policy but there are inconsistencies in the use of Brain Box, for recalling prior knowledge, and this means that opportunities for knowing more and remembering more, are missed. Teachers routinely plan time and space in lessons for pupils to engage in purposeful reflection, and this gives pupils the opportunity to make sense of the world around them.

The school curriculum is a faithful expression of the *Religious Education Directory*. Leaders and governors ensure that there is parity with other core subjects in terms of timetabling, resourcing, professional development, and remuneration. Leaders and governors also ensure that teachers are provided with high quality professional development through the diocese, the local Catholic cluster and beyond. The subject leader is committed to her subject and she leads by example. As a result, she is highly regarded by all staff, providing willing support for those staff who request it. She, along with other leaders and the shadow religious education lead, ensures that teaching and learning is at least consistently good. Lesson observation formats for religious education are detailed and subject specific, and book looks, analysis of pupil data and in-house moderation take place regularly. However, the areas for improvement identified through monitoring by leaders are not always followed through nor is the impact of actions to address these areas measured.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

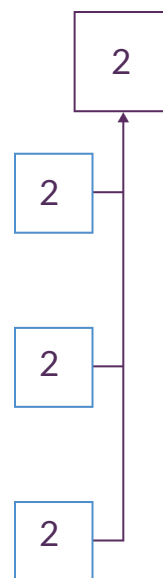
How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

Provision

The quality of collective worship provided by the school

Leadership

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



Pupils say they enjoy taking part in prayer and the liturgical experiences offered by the school. They are reverent and respectful and fully engaged in worship, demonstrating an ability to reflect in meaningful silence. Their knowledge of scripture is extensive, and as one pupil comments, 'scripture teaches us the way that God wants us to live'. However, pupils do not always use Bibles for reading scripture aloud. Pupils have many opportunities to plan and lead celebrations of the word. They know how to prepare a prayerful setting for worship and pupils involved can concentrate because of the calm atmosphere created. Pupils know a range of traditional prayers by heart, and are used to writing their own prayers, often relating them to social justice. The parish priest describes the prayers that pupils write for Mass as 'so real'. Pupils are also invited to pray at key times in the school day, and some pupils are willing to make their own spontaneous prayers, even in a Year 1 celebrations of the word. Pupils can describe parts of the Church's liturgical year and know the relevant colours. Pupils, along with their families, are keen to grow in faith using the family prayer bags.

Prayer and liturgy are clearly central to the life of the school, and staff 'family time', when staff come together to give thanks and pray together, is cherished by all. This weekly, dedicated time supports staff well-being as well their spiritual development. Teachers are extremely skilled in modelling spontaneous prayer, as evidenced in meetings and in classes. Prayers are routinely said at regular points, providing an oasis of calm on busy days. There is a planned progression in the building up of skills of participation, so that by the end of Key Stage 2, pupils can lead celebrations of the word independently. The modelling by adults of proclaiming the gospel with reverence would enhance the school's provision further. Class

prayer spaces have a prominent place in the classrooms, are appropriate to the liturgical year, and are well kept, showing the importance that staff place on prayer. The school has a strong relationship with the parish, and the parish priest says that parishioners love to hear the pupils singing and 'lifting the roof'!

Leaders and governors are committed to ensuring that prayer and liturgy are central to the life of the school, and the strong faith of leaders ensures that prayer is authentic and meaningful. Since the time of the last inspection, leaders have placed a high priority on developing pupil-led celebrations of the word, and as already identified by the school, now need to broaden the prayer encounters of pupils so that they have rich experiences of prayer that are part of the Catholic tradition. Leaders and governors also ensure that holy days of obligation and other significant days such as the Marian feasts are recognised in the calendar. They have allocated funding to provide high quality resources to enhance the school's provision for prayer and liturgy. Leaders ensure that pupils have the opportunity to attend Mass in church throughout the year. Although professional development for prayer and liturgy has been provided in-house, staff would benefit from accessing more high quality opportunities to keep them up to date with national developments in line with the *Prayer and Liturgy Directory*. Pupils are beginning to evaluate prayer and liturgy at an age-appropriate level. Leaders' self-evaluation of prayer and liturgy is accurate, as they do monitor the quality of provision of prayer and liturgy but this needs to be extended to include all stakeholders, including governors.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Mary's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	123556
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8943357
Full postal address of the school	Coronation Crescent, Madeley, Telford, TF7 5EJ
School phone number	01952 388255
Headteacher or Head of School	Mrs Samantha Griffiths
Chair of Governors	Mrs Joyce Monaghan
School Website	www.stmaryscatholicprimarytelford.co.uk
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Voluntary Aided School
Admissions policy	Non Selective
Age-range of pupils	4 - 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	26 June 2019
Previous denominational inspection grade	Good

The Inspection Team

Julie Johnson Lead

Stephen Walsh

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