



St Marys Catholic Primary School

URN: 148481

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Leeds

18 March 2026 – 19 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

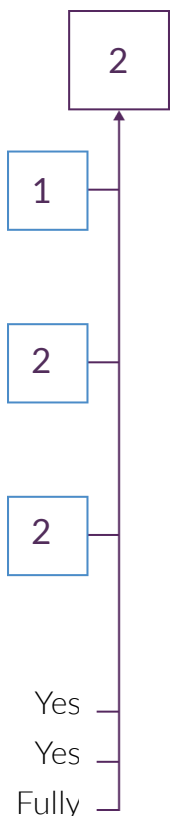
Collective worship (p.7)

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



What the school does well

- The school provides the highest standard of pastoral care for pupils and their families; there is an explicit and practical commitment to support the most vulnerable.
- The behaviour of pupils in lessons and in unstructured times around the school is exemplary; they are happy in school, feel loved and secure and are proud to be pupils at St Mary's.
- The inspirational leadership of the headteacher contributes significantly to the life and mission of the school; he is highly regarded by all in the school community.
- Pupils demonstrate a clear understanding of how well they are doing in religious education lessons and what they need to do to improve their learning.
- The skilful use of scripture and prayerful silence greatly enhances the pupils' experience of prayer and liturgy.

What the school needs to improve

- Develop pupils' understanding of Catholic social teaching so that they can articulate the theology underpinning their charitable and community work.
- Leaders should ensure that teachers routinely plan for incisive questioning which seeks to extend learning in religious education lessons enabling pupils to deepen their learning.
- Ensure that pupils are able to reflect on their experience of prayer and liturgy and can say how it impacts their everyday lives.

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

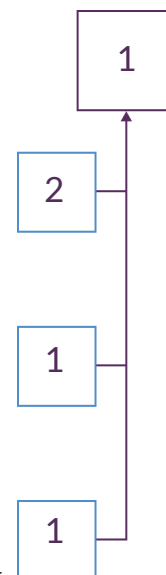
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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



The mission statement, “We live, love and learn together with Jesus as our guide”, is present in all aspects of the school’s life and work. It is known, lived, and enacted by pupils and other community members; it is the golden thread that weaves its way through all aspects of school life. Pupils have a strong sense of self-worth, feel valued and loved in school and as such develop a strong sense of moral purpose and live by the virtues the school promotes. Behaviour in lessons and in unstructured times is exemplary; pupils feel safe and secure in the knowledge that they can turn to adults to help them if they are feeling vulnerable in school and can do so in confidence. Pupils show respect for themselves and others, especially those of other faiths including studying Hinduism, Islam and Judaism. Pupils’ understanding of Catholic social teaching is developing and although they undertake chaplaincy roles in promoting it, they are not secure in their knowledge and understanding of the theology underpinning their actions. Many of their actions around Catholic social teaching are adult led; opportunities for pupils to show initiative and take the lead in these activities are limited.

The school’s mission is widely known and valued across the community, and all stakeholders are inspired by it. The sense of community is strong; the school goes the extra mile for its most vulnerable families and everyone is welcomed in a spirit of generous hospitality. Those involved in the school at all levels are proud to be members of St Mary’s community. A member of staff commented, “We’re not just a school, we are a family!” Staff are exemplary role models for the pupils. The highest level of pastoral care for pupils is provided. Outreach protocols for the most vulnerable pupils and families are exceptional and this is embodied in the actions of the Family Liaison Officer and those who work alongside her. Christ is at the

centre of all that the school does in promoting its mission and as such it has a significant impact on the faith of the pupils. Pupils happily engage in chaplaincy roles but these are emerging and their impact is not yet fully embedded. Opportunities for ongoing spiritual formation of staff are limited. Pupils value their learning in relationship and health education, but their ability to say how this impacts on their daily lives is underdeveloped.

The headteacher's leadership is highly regarded by parents, staff and pupils and it contributes significantly to the life and mission of the school. He sets the tone for the school by his quiet, calm and self-assured manner, and his witness to gospel values ensures the school fulfills its mission daily. Relationships with parents are highly developed and they have complete trust in the school; stakeholders work together to build the sense of community and value greatly the school's mission to bring the message of the gospel to all. One parent commented, "The school has a strong sense of community where Catholic values are clearly lived out." Parish links are strong and the parish priest is a well-known, loved and highly respected member of the school community. The induction of new staff and those new to Catholic education are highly effective under the purposeful leadership of the religious education leader. Governors are passionate and committed to promoting the Catholic life and mission of the school. Opportunities for pupils to engage in the evaluation of the school's mission are limited. Planning for different subject areas to work together to support the understanding of the Catholic curriculum is currently underdeveloped.

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

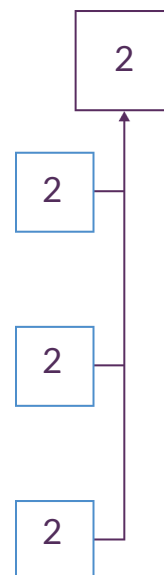
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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



Pupils enjoy their religious education lessons and readily engage in them, making enthusiastic and purposeful contributions. Pupils make good progress over time from their starting points and attain well in religious education, including those from different vulnerable groups. In the best lessons, pupils achieve a deeper understanding of their learning, work independently and produce high quality written work, especially in some older pupils' classes; however, this is not yet consistently applied across school. In some lessons, expectations are too low and as a result progress is hindered. Pupils' behaviour for learning in lessons is very good and they listen attentively and respond well to teachers' questions. However, questioning that seeks to deepen learning further is underdeveloped and pupils rarely ask questions in any religious education lessons. Pupils show a clear understanding of how well they are doing in lessons and can say how to improve their learning and demonstrate ways that show they are making progress. Time for pupils to reflect on their learning in religious education and how it might impact on everyday life are not yet embedded. Opportunities for pupils to extend their learning and respond to it creatively and in an individual way are also limited.

Teachers are confident in their subject knowledge and have a good understanding of how pupils learn in religious education lessons. Teachers are committed to the value of teaching religious education and communicate this effectively to their pupils. A wide range of activities, some of which are very creative, are planned across school and as a result pupils engage in lessons readily and state that they enjoy their learning. However, these are all adult led and opportunities for pupils to take the initiative in learning are limited. Classroom routines

enable pupils to work independently and consequently behaviour for learning in religious education lessons is very good. Teachers provide effective feedback to pupils which enables them to improve their learning and pupils know what to do next to make good progress. Resources including the allocation of staff are used well to enhance learning opportunities; teaching assistants provide effective support for learning in all lessons. Effective questioning that seeks to deepen learning and take pupils to the next level are present in some lessons but this is not yet fully embedded in all classes. Opportunities for pupils to spend time reflecting on their learning are also not routinely provided.

The recently appointed leader for religious education is very clear in his vision to improve standards in this subject. Working alongside the highly experienced deputy headteacher, they set the standard for teaching and learning in religious education and are widely respected within the school community. As a result of robust and purposeful leadership, effective monitoring, evaluation and feedback, teaching is never less than good. Leaders ensure that there is core parity between religious education and other subjects in the curriculum and resources are allocated accordingly. Leaders and governors ensure that the full requirements of the *Religious Education Directory* are met. The planned curriculum is well developed and meets the needs of pupils. Leaders plan effective continuing professional development opportunities for staff to help them grow in their role as Catholic educators including provision for career entry teachers and those new to Catholic education so that all know what is expected of them in teaching religious education. Teaching assistants are deployed in a very effective way to support children with additional needs. Governors' ability to support ongoing monitoring and evaluation is underdeveloped, therefore their impact on school self-evaluation is limited. Leaders do not routinely plan for enrichment opportunities for pupils or staff.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

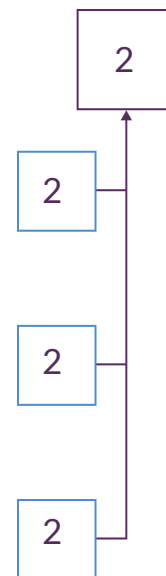
How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

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 enjoy and readily engage in all forms of prayer and liturgy at St Mary's. They are respectful and show great reverence and respect in planned prayer sessions. The quality of prayerful silence, attentiveness and concentration in prayer and liturgy is exemplary as is their enthusiastic engagement in communal singing. Music greatly enhances the pupils' experience of whole school worship and school Masses, led by the outstanding musicianship of the religious education leader, who sets the tone for these joyous celebrations. Pupils engage well with others to plan, prepare and evaluate prayer and liturgy in classes though it is mostly adult led beyond some older classes. Routines for prayer and liturgy are well established and attention to mood, setting and the liturgical year are planned well, greatly enhancing the experience of pupils. However, pupils have a limited understanding of the Church's liturgical year and do not readily relate as to how it influences prayer and worship, without adult direction. Pupils' ability to relate to, and articulate, how prayer and liturgy impact on their daily lives is underdeveloped and limited. However, pupils do understand the importance of prayer and liturgy in the life of the school and engage in it willingly.

There is a well-established daily pattern of prayer in place across the whole school. The provision of worship creates a very prayerful experience for the school community. Well-established routines mean that even the youngest pupils in school know what is expected in terms of their active engagement and participation in prayer and liturgy. For example, pupils make the Sign of the Cross prayerfully and join in with formal ways of praying with reverence; the use of silence and stillness greatly enhances the experience of prayer for pupils. Staff are excellent spiritual role models for pupils. Parents are invited to join

celebration assemblies, seasonally appropriate prayer, and Mass in St Mary's Church. The use of scripture is a strength; staff and pupils proclaim the Word of God so that pupils can reflect on its meaning in prayerful silence. Communal singing adds greatly to the celebration of worship, and pupils enthusiastically exclaim their mission statement in song! The parish priest is a regular visitor to school and he greatly enhances the spiritual life of the pupils. The provision of dedicated prayer spaces in and around school where pupils can go and pray freely in unstructured times is underdeveloped.

Leaders and governors ensure that there is a clear annual plan of provision for prayer and liturgy that, alongside the school's policy statement, enables the school to meet fully the requirements of diocesan policy. The plan reflects the Church's liturgical year and planned events throughout the year including feast days and holy days of obligation greatly enhance the lived experience of the Catholic faith for pupils; however, opportunities for pupils to access sacraments, such as Reconciliation in school, are limited. The religious education leader provides very clear guidance to early career teachers and those new to Catholic education about expectations for prayer and liturgy and this has a positive impact on provision. Monitoring, evaluation and feedback processes are well developed and have created provision which is typically good with some excellent practice where pupils plan, lead and evaluate prayer and liturgy very effectively. However, provision of a progression document for prayer and liturgy is underdeveloped which leads to some practice that does not always match policy. Opportunities for ongoing spiritual formation of staff in understanding the traditions and norms of the Church are limited. Leaders' self-assessment of prayer and liturgy is not always accurate.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Marys Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	148481
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	3823304
Full postal address of the school	Upton Street, Batley, WF17 8PH
School phone number	01924 472273
Headteacher or Head of School	Mr Philip Glover
Chair of Governors	Mrs Kylie Duddigan
School Website	www.stmarysbatley.co.uk
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Blessed Peter Snow Catholic Academy Trust
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Academy
Admissions policy	Non Selective
Age-range of pupils	3 - 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	01 March 2019
Previous denominational inspection grade	Good

The Inspection Team

John Hutchinson Lead

Christopher Power

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