

Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection report for St Mary's Catholic Primary School and Nursery

URN: 119672

Carried out on behalf of the Most Rev. Archbishop Malcom McMahon, Archbishop of Liverpool.

Date: 27th and 28th September 2023

Overall effectiveness

The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school.....

1

Catholic life and mission (p.2)

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.4)

The quality of curriculum religious education.....

1

Collective worship (p.6)

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

1

The school is fully compliant with the curriculum requirements laid down by the Bishops' Conference

✓

The school is fully compliant with all requirements of the diocesan bishop

✓

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

Fully

Summary of key findings

What the school does well

- Leadership at all levels is inspirational.
- Teaching is creative, precise and effective.
- Spirituality is prioritised from an early age to enable pupils to deepen their relationship with God.
- Parish links are highly effective.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning and responses to prayer are exemplary.

What the school needs to improve:

- Standardise the language of assessment, so that it is utilized consistently across the school.
- Following significant building work, fully utilize the whole school environment to continue to bear witness to the Gospel.

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:.....

1

Pupil outcomes

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

1

Provision

The quality of provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school

1

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school

1

St Mary's Catholic Primary School and Nursery is an affirming and welcoming Catholic community. This is evident as soon as you enter the school. The mission, 'With Christ, we live, love, learn and grow' is known, lived and embraced by the pupils and fully endorsed by governors, staff and parents. Pupils at St Mary's wholeheartedly take part in everything the school has to offer, valuing greatly its Catholic identity. They speak confidently about their role, joyfully making a significant contribution. When seeking to lead initiatives which serve the common good, pupils understand clearly that they are following the teachings of Jesus. Examples of this includes their initiation of a book swap and knitting hearts to raise money for Ukraine. Pupils are happy and can confidently articulate how precious they are to God. They feel safe and secure. The respect that pupils show one another at St Mary's is deep and natural. Examples range from sharing their football with younger children in school without being prompted to expressing deep respect for creation and all people globally.

Catholic life and mission provision is outstanding because there is a lived sense of community. The mission statement is a clear and inspiring expression of the educational mission of the Church. It is owned by all, extensively reviewed and supports the formation of pupils. Staff are totally committed to all the activities the school has to offer. Consequently, the school excels at being a deeply rooted Catholic community faithful to the Word of God. Christ is at the heart of this school and its environment is a tangible witness to this. All involved go above and beyond to develop exceptionally supportive relationships. There is a lived culture of welcome, valuing and supporting all without exception. Staff pride themselves on being strong role models and are a consistent witness to their faith from generation to generation. Relationships, sex and health education is rooted in carefully selected scripture. This builds in complexity and allows the pupils to celebrate holistically the whole person and confidently explain what they have learned.

The attentive pastoral care they receive illustrates what it means to be part of a loving Christian school family. Support is explicit in its demonstration of true commitment to the most vulnerable.

Leaders and governors are energised and joyful. They are able to clearly articulate the Church's mission. The Governing Body has a dynamic presence, is highly ambitious and fulfil its strategic role meticulously. Governors support Archdiocesan priorities, lead by example and make a highly significant contribution. Self-evaluation is accurate, analytical and honest which leads to well targeted priorities. Recent induction of new staff alongside engaging continued professional development was highly effective and focused. Parish links with St Mary's parish are well established, fruitful and flourishing. Both school and the parish value the support given by one another. The leaders and governors truly embrace the principle that parents are the first educators of their children. Because of this, the school is highly successful in engaging parents/carers. Parents are overwhelmingly grateful for this support and the mutual respect is of very obvious benefit to all pupils. St Mary's community has a powerful impact upon the personal faith, spiritual and moral development of the children they serve. They understand their role in promoting Catholic Social Teaching and are inspirational witnesses in the respect of dignity of workers. Staff appreciate that family life is honoured. The whole curriculum reflects the richness of Catholic contributions to culture. Every opportunity is taken to develop this further.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade:.....	1
Pupil outcomes How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education.....	1
Provision The quality of teaching, learning, and assessment in religious education.....	1
Leadership How well leaders and governors promote, monitor, and evaluate the provision for religious education.....	1

Pupils at St Mary's consistently achieve the best possible outcomes and make consistently good progress in all year groups and phases, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and disabilities. Excellent subject knowledge is acquired over time and high levels of religious literacy were observed as pupils confidently discussed key concepts using subject specific vocabulary. Pupils are deeply invested in their education and as a result can reflect with insight and curiosity. Independent learning is embedded and consequently pupils concentrate exceptionally well for long periods of time without direction. Creativity and individuality are celebrated. Work across the school and without exception is of a consistently high quality and presented beautifully. Pupils reported that they enjoyed their religious education lessons and appreciate the efforts of staff to make them interesting and varied. Celebration of effort is consistent across the school. Self-Assessment strategies are embedded into all subjects and therefore pupils from a very young age can confidently articulate what they have learned. Pupils enjoy religious education, are highly motivated, know when they are doing well and are committed to improvement. The trend of above average attainment has been sustained over time.

Teachers at St Mary's have high levels of confidence when teaching religious education. They are deeply committed and communicate this highly effectively to pupils. Planning reflects precise knowledge of individual children and lessons consolidate and extend pupils' knowledge. As a result of careful and current planning, pupils learn effectively and use what they have learned in other contexts. Questioning is consistently skillful, and tasks were adapted appropriately and only when necessary due to the culture of high performance. St Mary's has an ethos of celebration, all pupils engage enthusiastically with tasks set. Praise and feedback are relevant, affirming and specific which leads to pupils clearly knowing what to do to improve. Teachers at St Mary's have an acute understanding of the impact of religious education and recognise its important place in the spiritual

and moral development of their pupils. They challenge pupils to consider wider implications and provide focused time for reflection in lessons. Lessons are devised using a wide variety of forms of expression to ensure that all pupils excel. High quality resources, motivate pupils to do their best. Other adults are used extremely effectively to support and challenge all pupils and are very well prepared for lessons.

The school confidently and effectively delivers the *Come and See* programme. It is implemented with fidelity and complemented creatively in all key stages using quality resources imaginatively to bring the subject alive. Religious education has full parity with other core subjects. This parity is evident in timetabling, marking, staffing and resourcing. Leaders and governors ensure that continued professional development is ongoing, supportive and relevant. The experienced subject lead has an unequivocal and inspiring vision of outstanding teaching and uses his high level of expertise to ensure outstanding teaching across the school. He shares his expertise humbly and willingly with clarity and kindness. Leaders at St Mary's have made significant contributions to the Archdiocese and cluster schools. The curriculum is clear, sequential and is introduced with increasing demand to ensure progress of all learners. Thoughtful planning meets the needs of different groups of pupils, ensuring each phase of learning is enriching the phase before. Self-evaluation at St Mary's is astute and highly focused. Monitoring and analysis are used strategically, which in turn leads to outstanding outcomes.

Collective worship

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

Religious education key judgement grade:.....

1

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

Prayer experiences planned and shared at St Mary's engage pupils deeply and lead them to full and active participation. There is a tangible quality to the prayerful silence and insightful responses. Evaluation is built into liturgical celebrations to enable pupils to recognise quality and depth of experience. Pupils demonstrate excellent understanding of the liturgical year and have a vast array of prayer experiences to draw upon. Scripture, silence, reflection and liturgical music are used well to develop the prayer life of the school. Appropriate to their age and stage, pupils at St Mary's work collaboratively with their teachers and other pupils to plan creative and effective prayer experiences. Pupils can articulate how to improve these experiences next time. Prayer is discussed with ease and children talk naturally and in detail about what helps them. Pupils appreciate the vast and varied opportunities to pray at St Mary's and they use these to demonstrate discipleship.

Well planned prayer and liturgy is integral to gatherings at St Mary's. Daily prayer is engaging, reverent and respectful and is naturally embedded into the rhythm of school life. These prayer experiences reflect the prayer life of the Church. Well-chosen scripture passages, art and visual images are thoughtfully selected to ensure that all involved can actively participate. The school offers a range of liturgies throughout the year including a Welcome Mass at the beginning of the school year, Mass to celebrate the Epiphany and the distribution of Ashes in Lent. There are also many opportunities throughout the year to celebrate Mass as a school family. The headteacher, senior leaders and teachers are inspiring role models of exemplary practice and expertly support the development of pupil led prayer and reflection. Prayer spaces around the school, both inside and outside are used creatively and imaginatively. Focus for worship tables in classrooms are owned by the pupils and cherished. Senior staff have systematically planned opportunities to pray

with families and this is greatly appreciated by parents and carers. Parish links are sustained, sincere and flourishing.

The school's policy on prayer and liturgy is carefully and thoughtfully formulated. It has recently been reviewed and is used as a reference point. Leaders have a developed understanding of the growing levels of participation required in prayer and liturgy. They implement a confident strategy which build up pupils' skills over time. This is an efficient process which, again over time, enables pupils to plan effectively and to evaluate their prayer experiences. Opportunities to celebrate the Eucharist are regularly offered both at school and in the parish. The school's liturgical calendar clearly identifies holy days of obligation and provides opportunities for the sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist to be celebrated by the pupils and their families. All staff are committed to the ministry of the parish, and all play their part in bringing this about. Resources for prayer and liturgy are of a high quality. The strategic provision in the school budget is generous and reflects the commitment leaders and governors have in sustaining high quality prayer experiences for their school community. Prayer and liturgy are regularly evaluated and the voices of pupils and the whole school community are valued and considered.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Mary's Catholic Primary School and Nursery
School unique reference number (URN)	119672
Full postal address of the school	Hornchurch Drive, Chorley, PR7 2RJ
School phone number	01257 262811
Name of head teacher or principal	Patrick Smyth
Chair of governing board	Kath Smith
School Website	www.chorleystmarys.lancs.sch.uk
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Not Applicable
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age-range of pupils	3-11
Trustees	Archdiocese of Liverpool
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	27 th September 2016
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

The inspection team

Julia Ashton	Lead inspector
Joanne Harrison	Team inspector
Katherine Daley	Shadow Lead Inspector

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

