



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

URN: 143638

Carried out on behalf of the **Most Rev. Bernard Longley, Archbishop of Birmingham** on:

Date: 23 March 2023

<b>Overall effectiveness</b> The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school.....	<b>2</b>
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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 to the areas for improvement from the last inspection	Fully

## Summary of key findings

### What the school does well

- St Mary's is a faith-filled, caring Catholic school where all live out the mission. There is a positive school culture with mutual respect between pupils and staff and a strong sense of welcome and pride in the school.
- The executive head teacher and assistant head teachers ensure that the Catholic life and mission of the school are given the highest priority. They have brought about rapid and sustained improvement to the quality of provision in all areas.
- Religious education is very well led by the committed and faith-driven subject leader who ensures staff are carefully supported to improve the quality of learning and teaching.

### What the school needs to improve:

- Develop working practices that enable school leaders to consistently improve the quality of provision and the rigour of accountability in all areas.
- Ensure the written work in religious education enables pupils to demonstrate their depth of understanding fully. In particular, provide more tasks that allow pupils to demonstrate their learning from religion and the Bible and provide more opportunities for pupils to demonstrate their analytical and evaluative skills\*.
- Provide greater capacity for pupils to independently plan and lead worship which they can then evaluate to improve further.

\*When the *Religious Education Directory* is implemented, this will be interpreted to mean that the school provides opportunities for pupils to meet the demands of the 'Respond' and 'Discern' aspects of the curriculum in their written work.

## 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:.....

2

### Pupil outcomes

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

2

### Provision

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

2

### Leadership

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

2

The school's mission statement, *'United together as one family in Christ,'* is well understood and lived out by the community. Pupils of all ages give specific examples of embracing the mission daily. Pupils feel well cared for and valued as individuals and confidently explain how they are unique and special members of the school and the Church. Pupils fully understand that St Mary's is committed to following the example of Jesus, and they make strong connections between their daily lives and the actions and teachings of Christ. A diverse range of activities such as litter picking, 'switch off fortnight', 'stop water waste', the work of the Eco Group and the youngest pupils creating a safe 'hedgehog house' in the school grounds help pupils to care for our common home. Pupils have responded to the demands of Catholic social teaching by participating in a significant project about solidarity with other schools in the multi academy company (MAC); this has helped to begin to embed Catholic social teaching within the curriculum. Pupils organised a cake sale for Ukraine and fundraising for the Turkey-Syria earthquake. Pupils understand they are unique individuals created by God, and they deeply respect the individuality of others. Pupils' behaviour is of a very high standard throughout the school, and they are kind, welcoming, and polite.

St Mary's has a strong sense of community that has developed considerably under the current leadership team. Leaders and governors recognise the need to enable parents and carers to experience more of the school's Catholic life as a community. Staff are genuinely committed to the school's mission. Everyone is treated equally, and there is a culture of welcome towards those from different cultures and faith traditions. Staff are positive role models for pupils and treat them with genuine care and respect. Pupils praise the school's pastoral care and say they

'really know they are cared about.' Leaders have carefully developed the school environment to reflect its Catholic identity and character fully. The school is a dignified and attractive Catholic space in which to learn, work and pray. Chaplaincy provision is strong, and there is a positive relationship with the parish priest. Pupils benefit from experiences such as vocations days, where people from various walks of life and work backgrounds talk about the role of faith in their life and work.

Leaders and governors have a firm understanding of and commitment to the Church's mission in education and keep this at the heart of all their work. Together, they have ensured that Christ is firmly at the heart of the school. Leaders and governors have developed a positive relationship with the local parish to provide regular opportunities for pupils to attend Mass and support parish activities, such as planting bulbs around Our Lady's statue and representing the school and parish by singing carols in Broadway village centre at Christmas. Leaders and governors are witnesses to the Gospels and Catholic Social Teaching in how they run the school. The most vulnerable are prioritised, and there is a culture of charitable outreach with activities such as pupils visiting service users at the local elderly persons' community centre to sing and chat together. Leaders regularly monitor and evaluate the provision and drive forward improvement; this work now needs to be organised more systematically to ensure sustained impact. Governors ensure that the Catholic life and mission of the school is a school improvement priority and hold leaders to account effectively and supportively.

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade:.....

2

### Pupil outcomes

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education.....

2

### Provision

The quality of teaching, learning, and assessment in religious education.....

2

### Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor, and evaluate the provision for religious education.....

2

Pupils are developing secure knowledge, understanding and skills. Religious education lessons effectively support pupils to know and remember more; pupils demonstrate this particularly well through their oral contributions. Pupils have a very good knowledge of Bible stories and how they can interpret them to shape their daily lives, though this is not always reflected in their written work. Pupils are religiously literate and engaged; they speak confidently about their learning in religious education and how it impacts their choices. Pupils concentrate well in lessons because teachers set high expectations and ensure engaging and interesting activities. Pupils' work presentation is of a good standard, reflecting the high status attached to learning in religious education. They participate enthusiastically in lessons, readily answering questions and confidently speaking about their learning and interpretations of Bible stories. Pupils' attainment in religious education is of a good standard throughout the school. It is rapidly improving because of the clear focus and high status that leaders, governors, and staff attach to the subject.

Some teachers are relatively new to the school and have been well-supported by the subject leader and say they feel confident in their knowledge. This is reflected in the consistently good standard of teaching and learning throughout the school. Teachers must be more explicit about the precise knowledge pupils learn in a few classes. All teachers are committed to the value of religious education and communicate this effectively and enthusiastically within lessons. Teachers make particularly effective use of questioning within lessons to challenge pupils and stimulate responses. Leaders have supported teachers to improve the overall effectiveness of assessment, and this is an ongoing priority for development. Teaching is now more closely matched to pupils' previous achievements, but greater accuracy is sometimes

needed. Written tasks do not yet fully capture pupils' religious knowledge and understanding. Pupils are highly motivated because teachers recognise and celebrate their efforts. Teachers understand the impact religious education has on pupils' moral and spiritual development and consequently create space within lessons for reflection and discussion, to which pupils respond positively and enthusiastically. Teachers provide pupils with various creative ways to present their learning, positively impacting their enjoyment and engagement.

Leaders and governors meticulously ensure that the curriculum for religious education reflects the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory* and monitor and evaluate the school's provision. This has positively impacted learning and teaching by identifying teachers' training and development needs, which leaders have addressed. Leaders and governors ensure religious education has a high status by assigning resources, funding and training opportunities at a level that is at least equal to other core curriculum subjects. More systematic monitoring and evaluation are needed to ensure all this valuable work continues to positively and sustainably impact the quality of provision. The subject leader is an expert teacher of religious education and is highly effective in sharing her expertise with others. She has a clear vision and love for the subject and has improved teaching and learning throughout the school to a consistently good standard. The curriculum is well sequenced, and teachers spend time ensuring content is understood and remembered; consequently, pupils demonstrate good recall of what they have learnt. The school works with other Catholic schools locally and across the MAC to moderate religious education standards, helping to improve the quality and accuracy of assessment.

## Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade:.....

2

### 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

Pupils respond very well to prayer and liturgy. They respond to Gospel stories by asking and answering questions and participating enthusiastically. Pupils are reverent and respectful; they understand that prayer and liturgy are times for the school family to come together to praise God. Pupils enjoy the frequent worship opportunities they experience and value them greatly. Pupils are familiar with various ways of praying, such as silent, spontaneous, and traditional. Key Stage 2 pupils speak positively about the impact of guided meditation, which they experienced on a retreat visit. Pupils are enthusiastic about planning and leading their acts of prayer and liturgy but are only sometimes allowed to work entirely independently. Staff must offer pupils greater independence in this respect and the opportunity to evaluate the quality of the prayer they have planned. Pupils connect strongly with what they learn in religious education and what they experience in prayer and liturgy. Even the youngest pupils can explain how they 'go forth' and take what they have encountered in prayer and liturgy into their daily lives, using Jesus as their example.

Regular prayer and liturgy are at the heart of St Mary's. This has a positive impact on the sense of community at the school. The next step is to ensure parents and carers have more opportunities to be included in prayer and liturgy. Pupils and staff encounter a wide variety of ways of praying and worshipping. Scripture choices are seasonally appropriate and are carefully chosen. Leaders provide staff with high levels of support and guidance to ensure prayer and liturgy enables everyone to participate fully and benefit spiritually. All staff are role models of good practice as participants in prayer and liturgy, and school leaders are exemplary role models to all in the way they lead worship. Music and religious art are used well to engage pupils. More opportunities are needed for all teachers to lead prayer and liturgy so their

confidence is developed in this vital area of school life. Staff are skilled at supporting pupils to plan and lead their own acts of prayer and liturgy but must foster greater pupil independence. Staff use the building well to provide attractive and welcoming spaces and a distinctively Catholic environment conducive to prayer and reflection. Signs and symbols of the Catholic faith are used throughout the school, and leaders have worked hard to improve the environment with visibly positive results.

Staff are provided with clear guidance through a well-thought-out prayer and liturgy policy. This helps to ensure consistently good standards of provision. Leaders and governors have carefully planned the school calendar around the liturgical year, and because of this, the various religious seasons are well-known and understood by pupils. Regular opportunities exist for pupils to attend Mass and Holy Days of Obligation, and other significant days for the school, parish and MAC are celebrated. Staff training is given high priority and is provided by school leaders, the archdiocese, and the MAC. Leaders have used these occasions to help staff improve the pupils' response to prayer and liturgy. Leaders and governors recognise the importance of prayer and liturgy and dedicate appropriate time, resources, and funding to ensure high standards. Leaders monitor and review the impact of prayer and liturgy and consider pupils' views. This work has led to sustained improvement, though it is not yet embedded more systematically to ensure continued impact and accountability.

## Information about the school

Full name of school	St Mary's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	143638
Full postal address of the school	Leamington Road, Broadway, WR12 7DZ
School phone number	01386 853 337
Name of head teacher or principal	Jackie Smith
Chair of governing board	Yvonne Brennan
School Website	<a href="http://www.stmaryscatholicbroadway.co.uk">www.stmaryscatholicbroadway.co.uk</a>
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Our Lady of the Magnificat Multi Academy Company
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy
Age-range of pupils	4 to 11
Trustees	Archdiocese of Birmingham
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	May 2016
Previous denominational inspection grade	2

## The inspection team

Mark Hinton	Lead inspector
Teresa Cotter	Team 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