



# St Mary's Catholic Primary School

URN: 102529

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Archbishop of Westminster

22–23 May 2024

## 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

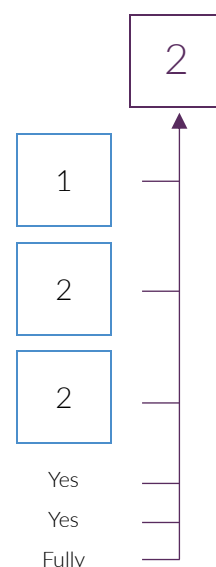
#### Collective worship (p.7)

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

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



## What the school does well

- The school is a strong community of faith, celebrated through its flourishing partnership with the parish.
- School leaders and governors clearly articulate the Church's mission and ensure that Christ is at the heart of the school.
- The school's mission statement, 'living and learning, inspired by our faith' is lived out by the pupils, who actively embrace opportunities to lead and serve.
- Pupils are provided with a variety of ways of praying and have frequent opportunities to plan and lead prayer and liturgy.
- Teachers provide pupils with many creative opportunities to present their learning in religious education, using a variety of forms of expression.

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## What the school needs to improve

- Embed Catholic social teaching in order to develop pupils' ability to respond to the call to serve.
- Ensure that the planning of religious education lessons maximises the learning potential for all groups of pupils.
- Enhance the quality of prayer and liturgy so that pupils may experience spirituality on a deeper level, leading them to full, active, and conscious participation.

## 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**

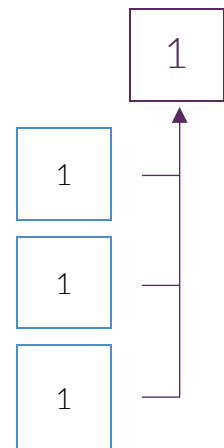
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

**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 at St Mary's know, understand and live the school's mission: 'living and learning, inspired by our faith'. Pupils actively participate through membership of the 'growing in faith' team (GIFT) and the 'Laudato Si' group, seeking opportunities to grow in virtue, pursue the common good and serve those in need. One of the duties of the GIFT team is to help younger pupils in planning liturgies. A member of the team explained, 'I enjoy sharing my faith with others and teaching them how to be part of God's family'. Pupils talk positively about the difference they make to their local, national and global communities, and they understand the theology underpinning their actions. Opportunities to serve include making donations to the local food bank, and the Felix Project, as well as fundraising for Cafod and Mary's Meals. During Lent, each class sponsors a chosen charity. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary, showing a deep respect for their own personal dignity and that of others. Pupils can clearly express the understanding that they are made in the image and likeness of God, and they are confident about expressing their relationship with Him. Even the very youngest children in the school can demonstrate their growing faith. A Nursery child observed, 'The Holy Spirit is always with you and never lets you down.' Pupils demonstrate a deep respect for others, strengthened by a programme of learning about other faiths throughout the year for all pupils from early years to Year 6.

St Mary's excels at being a Christ-centred, harmonious community. Parents speak warmly of the welcome provided to all families. One parent stated, 'St Mary's is a very special place to be for both the children and the parents.' A member of staff commented, 'We are a loving, caring and welcoming school.' Staff embrace the mission of the school, which is encapsulated not only in their relationships with each other, but also in the highest levels of care and nurture they provide for all pupils, particularly the most vulnerable. The school environment bears effective witness

to its Catholic identity, with central displays focusing on the principles of Catholic social teaching, in addition to other areas, which give pupils the opportunity to see themselves as part of a Catholic community, inspiring them towards aspirational goals in fulfilling God's mission. The school is active in finding ways to celebrate the presence of those from various cultures, as evidenced by the centrally displayed prayers for refugees and the mission to write prayers about racial justice, placed on the school gates to share with the community. The provision for relationships, sex and health education is carefully planned and meets all requirements. The programme is well-resourced and promotes a holistic vision of the human person.

Leaders and governors make a highly significant contribution to the Catholic life and mission of the school. They rightly see the school as a source of inspiration to the whole community and are highly ambitious about its contribution to the lives of the people it serves. They ensure that all policies reflect the Catholic mission of the school and have prioritised investment in this area, so that resources are targeted to support those in greatest need. The leadership team show their commitment to the principles of Catholic social teaching through the provision of a planned curriculum in this area. Leaders and governors work closely with the diocese, attending training and enthusiastically responding to diocesan policies and initiatives. Leaders are highly committed to the further development of all staff, offering regular, well-planned development opportunities focusing on Catholic life and mission. Leaders and governors recognise the parish as being central to the Catholic life of the school, and there is a flourishing partnership with the local parish. The school chaplain is a regular visitor to the school and school Masses are well-attended by parents, staff and pupils. One parent commented, 'The link with our parish church is very strong and it is a joy to be part of it.' The school has a vibrant parental engagement strategy comprising weekly newsletters, ensuring that parents are kept well-informed about key events in the Catholic life of the school.

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

### Religious education key judgement grade

**Pupil outcomes**

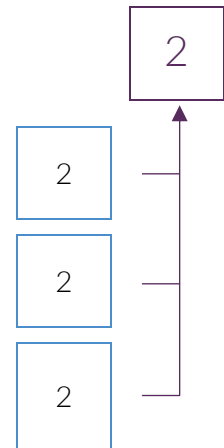
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

**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 developing secure knowledge, understanding and skills in religious education, reflecting the learning required by the *Religious Education Directory*. The ‘think, pair, share’ strategy is used effectively during each lesson to revisit prior learning and reinforce new learning. Pupils demonstrate a good knowledge of scripture, which is integral to lessons. The focus on oracy has enabled pupils to think critically and express themselves articulately, using religious vocabulary to express their point of view, share knowledge and ask and answer questions. For example, pupils in Year 1 were able to explain that, inspired by the Holy Spirit, the disciples needed to speak different languages 'to spread the word of Jesus to different countries' and 'to tell everyone that Jesus is the light of the world.' The class ‘big question’ books are a testament to enquiry-based learning. Pupils’ behaviour during lessons is excellent and they clearly enjoy learning in the subject. They can relate learning in lessons to their own lives. They can work both collaboratively and independently, ensuring good progress in lessons. However, it is important to ensure that adult support and resources are used most effectively so that all groups maximise their learning success. Achievement in religious education is at least as good as in other core subjects. Creative learning methods, evidenced in class creativity books, enhance pupils’ engagement and allow them to explore their learning through a variety of media including art, music, drama, poetry and dance. Pupils are very proud of their religious education books and can recall their learning over time.

Teachers are committed to developing their subject knowledge, and they value the influence religious education has on the moral and spiritual development of pupils. As a result of well-planned, regular professional development, through diocesan courses and support from the religious education subject leader, headteacher and school chaplain, teachers have grown in confidence in delivering the scheme of work’s content. Scripture is used as a focus in lessons and

pupils are encouraged to link its message to their daily lives. Teachers' questioning encourages pupils to delve deeper into their theological understanding to maximise learning. However, in order to deepen their learning experience, pupils now need to be regularly offered the space and time for reflection during lessons. Pupils' books are well-presented and are a testament to the use of creativity in the lessons. Pupils are also given many opportunities to explore their learning using hot-seating, letter writing, art, dancing and singing. Dedicated spaces for reflection and prayer, available in the classrooms and throughout the school, promote pupils' growing spirituality. Pupils' achievements are celebrated in whole-school assemblies, and their work is proudly displayed in classrooms and corridors. One parent commented that her child 'hasn't stopped talking about God and all the important concepts he has learned in religious education.' Feedback is consistent and developmental so that pupils understand what they need to do to make progress in their learning.

Leaders and governors have ensured that the religious education programme faithfully delivers the curriculum set out in the *Directory*. They have ensured that religious education enjoys a parity with the other core subjects in terms of staff training, resources, and accommodation. The religious education subject leader ably supports staff in planning and delivering the scheme of work so that, over time, sustained improvement in the quality of teaching and learning has occurred. Staff speak appreciatively of the generous support and the 'open-door' policy provided by the subject leader and headteacher. A member of staff commented that the subject leader 'works tirelessly to inspire our faith to ensure a comprehensive and engaging religious education.' Thorough planning sessions secure coherence across the ages and phases of learning and additional adults in class are effective in supporting vulnerable pupils. In speaking about the impact of religious education lessons, one pupil explained that his learning 'helps me understand about Jesus and have a deeper faith in Him.' Action plans are shared with governors so that priorities are implemented, and the impact analysed. The parish priest and school chaplain visit the school regularly, providing a clear and strategic vision for development. Regular monitoring by the school leaders and governors results in accurate self-evaluation which leads to good outcomes for pupils.

## 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

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

2

Pupils engage reverently during daily prayer times and in moments of quiet reflection. A range of ways of praying is offered to pupils, including meditation, silence, reflection, as well as spontaneous and traditional prayer. Whole-school acts of worship are a testament to the school's identity and mission. Scripture is central to prayer and is used meaningfully to deepen pupils' experience of prayer. Appropriate liturgical music is chosen during liturgies to provide a calm, prayerful atmosphere. Pupils' singing is of a high standard; they readily and enthusiastically sing hymns which complement liturgies. The prayer life of the school follows the liturgical year. The rosary is recited during the months of October and May in a class rota which parents attend. Mass is celebrated regularly on first Mondays, feast days and holy days. Pupils enthusiastically participate in the celebration of Mass, supported by the school chaplain. Pupils work well with others, such as teachers and other pupils, to prepare and lead prayer and liturgy sessions. The GIFT team actively participate in supporting and leading prayer and liturgy throughout the school. A member of the team articulated the importance of their role: 'I can show others how to share love and build the kingdom of God.'

The school is a prayerful community. Prayer supports and nourishes all members of the school community and pupils draw inspiration from the lives of the saints, Pope Francis and other figures from the Church tradition. Designated prayer areas provide a focus for prayer in each class. Pupils can say their daily prayers with confidence and reverence. In answer to the question from prayer leaders, 'Why do we receive the Holy Spirit?' Year 3 pupils were able to offer the following answers: 'So we can be part of the Christian family;' 'So we can be closer to God.' Prayer times are a cherished part of the school's daily life. The school community works hard to recognise the wider Church family and, through its prayer life, helps pupils to develop a deeper understanding of the Gospel message and the call to serve. Music is central to prayer and liturgy

and pupils are eager to contribute their gifts. The school's excellent partnership with the local parish priests ensures that pupils participate in the breadth and richness of Catholic tradition. Staff are excellent role-models for pupils, participating fully, with reverence and commitment, in the prayer life of the school. Class collective worship books record that pupils are given regular opportunities to lead liturgies and understand how to reflect meaningfully on their experiences.

Leaders and governors ensure that pupils in the school are offered a wide range of high-quality, meaningful experiences of prayer and worship. Leaders support staff to lead appropriate prayer and worship through clear guidance in the collective worship policy. Diocesan resources using the four elements (gather, word, response, mission) are used to plan and prepare liturgies, encouraging pupils to 'go forth' in action as followers of Christ. Leaders and governors ensure that the school calendar reflects significant dates in the liturgical calendar, resulting in a wealth of opportunities for pupils to celebrate the Eucharist on holy days and feast days. Parents are welcome to attend assemblies, liturgies and Masses. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is offered during Advent and Lent. Governors prioritise a generous budget for resources, for developing prayer areas, and for providing professional development for all staff. Staff are given the opportunity to attend relevant diocesan courses, deanery meetings and moderation days. Resources are effectively allocated to ensure staff can deliver experiences of prayer and liturgy. As a result, staff are competent in leading prayer and liturgy in the classroom and in whole-school worship. However, the liturgical formation of staff should now be prioritised in order to ensure that prayer and liturgy are deeply meaningful and engaging for all participants. One parent commented, 'I'd like to commend the school's dedication to fostering a vibrant Catholic life and mission, as well as its commitment to providing enriching religious education and prayer experiences for children, parents and the entire community'.



## Information about the school

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|--|---|
| Full name of school                            | St Mary's Catholic Primary School   |
| School unique reference number (URN)           | 102529  |
| School DfE Number (LAESTAB)                    | 3133505   |
| Full postal address of the school              | St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Duke Road,<br>Chiswick, London, W4 2DF             |
| School phone number                            | 02089945606   |
| Headteacher                                    | Elizabeth Keane   |
| Chair of Governors                             | Victoria Santer   |
| School Website                                 | <a href="https://www.stmaryschiswick.org.uk/">https://www.stmaryschiswick.org.uk/</a> |
| Trusteeship                                    | Diocesan  |
| Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable) | N/A   |
| Phase  | Primary   |
| Type of school                                 | Voluntary Aided School  |
| Admissions policy                              | N/A   |
| Age-range of pupils                            | 3-11  |
| Gender of pupils                               | Mixed   |
| Date of last denominational inspection         | February 2017   |
| Previous denominational inspection grade       | Good  |

## The inspection team

Norah Flatley

Amanda Ruthven

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 |