



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

URN: 131418

Carried out on behalf of the Most Rev. Vincent Nichols, Archbishop of Westminster on:

Date: 22-23 June 2023

Overall effectiveness

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

2

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.....

2

Religious education (p.5)

The quality of curriculum religious education.....

2

Collective worship (p.7)

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

2

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

- Pupils respect each other and their exemplary behaviour is a reflection of how they witness the school's mission.
- Staff value the strong support they receive from school leaders and as a result most are confident in their subject knowledge.
- Leaders have forged a strong sense of community where all stakeholders are valued and recognised for their contributions.
- The well-established links with the local parish enrich the prayer life and mission of the school.
- The school's recent work in reviewing the mission statement with the whole community has resulted in a statement known and embraced by all.

What the school needs to improve

- Further adapt teaching and learning to meet the needs of all learners, particularly to reflect higher order thinking skills.
- Plan wider opportunities for pupils to lead and develop the prayer life of the school.
- Embed the principles of Catholic Social Teaching throughout the whole curriculum.

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

Pupils celebrate and live their mission statement in St. Mary's school. They are aware of and rightly very proud of their school's Catholic identity and thoroughly enjoy the leadership roles offered to them. These opportunities encourage them to plan and deliver their actions to support others and promote the Catholic life and mission. Pupils understand that everyone is created equally. They are able to offer many examples from scripture to demonstrate how they try to live as followers of Jesus. Pupils feel happy, confident and secure in school, with one commenting 'I love this school'. Pupils actively seek opportunities to serve those in need. They are able to explain how they help the local foodbank, engage with the elderly in a local care home, and work with the Catholic Children's Society and CAFOD. They have some understanding of the theology underpinning their actions. Pupils show tremendous respect for those of different faiths and none. They have recently welcomed refugees from Ukraine; this is an inclusive school. Pupils highly value and respect the local priest who is a regular visitor, and they are keen to help their community through the local church.

The mission statement 'In Christ we live, we learn, we love' has been revisited and is cherished by the whole community. It is a clear expression of the educational mission of the Church and is widely displayed and fully understood by everyone in school. Staff actively participate in fundraising activities. Events such as the Pentecost Community Evening reflect the life and mission of the school and the service it offers to the community. There is no doubt that this is a good Catholic school. The quality of display is very high and the effect on the visitor is to stop, admire and ponder the insightful messages and attractive artwork. Christ is very evidently at the heart of the school. Everyone is welcomed in a spirit of hospitality, including those who are most vulnerable. Leaders are proactive and place a high priority in ensuring families in need get support. This culture of welcome includes

valuing and supporting those from various cultures and belief traditions, enabling them to live and pray in fidelity to their own commitments. The regular visits by the local priest ensures that the chaplaincy provision is strong. The provision for R(S)HE meets both statutory and diocesan requirements, is faithful to the teaching of the Church and presents a holistic vision of the human person.

Leaders and governors work tirelessly to embed the Church's mission in education and prioritise their roles as guardians of the Catholic life and mission of the school. Governors are very actively involved and know their school well. As a consequence, policies, procedures and significant Catholic signage demonstrate the Catholic identity, charism and mission of the school. Leaders and governors recognise the principle that Catholic schools are at the service of the local Church. Parents' views are valued and welcomed. Of the parents who responded to the survey, most were wholly satisfied with how the school encourages families to come in to celebrate the Catholic life and mission. One of the parents who responded to the survey wrote, 'My child is always looking for ways to live in Christ and will point out ways that we can do the same at home. Well done St. Mary's!' Leaders and governors witness to the Gospel and Catholic Social Teaching in their direction of the school at every level. Their work in this area has not yet expanded to ensure it is given priority across the whole of the taught curriculum. Leaders and governors put into practice the Church's preferential option for the poor by ensuring budget is allocated to support families in need. Leaders respect the dignity of workers and staff reported that their physical and mental wellbeing is well supported. The school's self-evaluation involves accurate monitoring and analysis and is clearly focused on Catholic life and mission. The lesson study approach is used highly effectively to ensure subject knowledge is strong for those new to Catholic education. Because of this and the effective induction programme, staff are confident to participate in, and contribute to, the Catholic life and mission of the school.

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 in St. Mary's Catholic Primary School are developing secure knowledge, understanding and skills that reflect the learning required by the *Religious Education Directory*. Most pupils make good progress in knowing more, remembering more, and doing more when measured against the planned curriculum for each year. As a result, most pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs, achieve well in all age phases and most years. Pupils, relative to their age and capacity, are religiously literate. A pupil when questioned, was able to compare Pentecost with the Christian mission of Nelson Mandela. In the prayer garden a pupil reading from the Old Testament at lunchtime was able to relate the Old Testament story of Daniel to Jesus being condemned to death in the New Testament. They are engaged young people; they use their knowledge, understanding and skills, to reflect spiritually, and to think ethically and theologically. As a consequence, most pupils are aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life. Pupils can speak with confidence about what they have learned in religious education, showing an awareness of key concepts, and using some subject-specific vocabulary. Work is well presented, and pupils use ICT and art effectively in lessons. Engagement is strong and behaviour is exemplary. Most pupils understand how well they are doing, what they need to do to improve, and can articulate how they have made progress. Pupils achieve at least average attainment when compared with other core curriculum subjects.

Most teachers are confident in their subject knowledge because leaders engage in half termly training sessions and lesson study linked to the religious education syllabus. Most teachers use effective questioning during lessons to identify where pupils are in their understanding. Pupil effort

is often celebrated leading to good levels of motivation. Feedback in books is variable and as result not all pupils understand what they need to do to make progress in their learning. This is more evident for the most able learners. On occasion, when challenge activities are provided in lessons, activities do not always provide opportunities for the most able learners to delve deeper into the topic being studied. Where challenge is considered in lesson planning, questions are sometimes provided for all pupils to complete as an extra task. Higher level thinking opportunities are not always considered. Teachers provide pupils with opportunities to present their learning using a variety of forms of expression to meet their differing needs. In a Year 1 lesson observed, the teacher used the outside area effectively to demonstrate the parable of the mustard seed. Pupils were engaged thoroughly in the planting and watering, and used the reflective time provided to consider the learning from this parable. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils eagerly responded in groups to quotes from Nelson Mandela and effectively linked these to the Kingdom of God. Good quality resources, including other adults, are used effectively to optimise learning for most pupils. There is good use of scaffolding to enable learners with special educational needs to access learning.

Leaders and governors ensure that the school curriculum for religious education is a faithful expression of the Directory. Leaders and governors ensure that religious education is comparable to other core curriculum subjects, in terms of professional development, resourcing, timetabling, staffing and accommodation. A significant portion of the school budget is reserved to provide half termly training in religious education. Leaders plan the curriculum to provide sufficient opportunities for learners to progress sequentially through the subject content. They ensure that pupils are provided with engaging enrichment activities that enhance learning. During this inspection a visiting CAFOD representative guided pupils on a 'refugee walk'. Pupils also participate in visits to a Hindu Temple and the Jewish Museum, and welcome outside speakers to run workshops on Islam. Leader and governor self-evaluation of religious education is informed by thorough monitoring and analysis, and there is some evidence of self-challenge. This results in strategic action taken by the school leading to good outcomes.

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 well to the experiences of prayer and liturgy provided by the school and enjoy writing their own prayers. They participate independently, for example by going to the prayer garden at lunchtime. In the prayer garden they reflect in silence and join in community prayer and singing with confidence. During an assembly, one child accompanied the pianist on the violin playing 'Amazing Grace' for all to join in. Pupils understand a variety of ways of praying that are part of the Catholic tradition. They are adept at using scripture, symbol, silence, meditation, reflection, and liturgical music to enhance liturgy. Pupils can recognise and articulate the ways in which prayer and liturgy influence and are influenced by both the curriculum and the wider life of the school. Their prayers focus on world events such as the recent earthquake in Syria and Turkey. Pupils helped deliver a liturgy and wrote prayers to focus the community's thinking on the plight of refugees. Pupils are not yet adept at planning their own liturgies and have limited experience of leading prayer and liturgy that they have planned themselves.

Prayer is a part of daily life for pupils and staff. Some traditional prayers are said daily, and pupils have learned the Lectio Divina and the Examen, although these prayers do not yet form part of their daily practice. Pupils value outside prayer spaces and use the prayer garden highly effectively as a quiet space. Seasonally appropriate scripture passages are central to prayer and liturgy. The refugee assembly focused on Matthew 25: 'whatsoever you do for the least of my brothers' was chosen to help pupils identify how scripture leads to action. However, pupils are given roles in assembly and in prayer and liturgy, rather than having a role in the planning. Staff, including senior leaders, are models of good practice to other staff and pupils as participants in and leaders of prayer and liturgy. Pupils and relevant staff regularly use their gifts to enhance collective worship. The school works well with local parishes and the local priest celebrates prayer and liturgy regularly in school and invites parents to attend. Families that responded to the survey stated that they value being included in the

prayer life of the school.

The school's policy on prayer and liturgy is accessible and useful to relevant staff when preparing

prayer and liturgy. Leaders, including governors, have worked to ensure pupils participate reverently and effectively during prayer and liturgy. They have planned the school calendar and timetable to set aside opportunities to celebrate the Eucharist, particularly at key times in the liturgical year and at significant moments within the life of the school. The local priest offers the Sacrament of Reconciliation during Lent. He is a very important visitor to the school and is highly valued by the entire school community. Leaders understand a variety of ways of praying that are part of the Catholic tradition and the curriculum exposes pupils to a range of Catholic prayers. Leaders, including governors, recognise the importance of prayer and liturgy when setting budgets and allocating resources such as time, staffing, and facilities. There are many beautiful artifacts in school that staff and pupils use to enhance the experience of prayer and liturgy for all.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St. Mary's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	131418
Full postal address of the school	Canterbury Rd., Kilburn NW6 5ST
School phone number	0207 624 1830
Name of head teacher or principal	Bridget Pratley
Chair of governing board	Peter Keane
School Website	www.maryscps.brent.sch.uk
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Click or tap here to enter text.
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age-range of pupils	3-11
Trustees	Diocese of Westminster
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	December 2019
Previous denominational inspection grade	Good

The inspection team

Evelyn Ward	Lead inspector
Daniel Keane	Team inspector
Tim Hallett	Shadow 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