



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

URN: 142214

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

Date: 26 April 2023

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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

- Leaders and governors have reviewed the mission statement so that it is a key influence on the school's daily work and understood by the entire community.
- Pupils and staff appreciate fully the wealth of prayer spaces around the school and its grounds.
- There is a strong sense of family community, with relationships between pupils and adults valued by all. Pupils say, 'Our teachers love, respect, and care for us'.
- The principal is a strong and inspirational role model for staff to aspire towards in terms of leading and helping pupils to plan prayer and liturgy.

- Catholic Social Teaching is developing well in some subjects, subsequently enriching the curriculum.

What the school needs to improve:

- Embed Catholic Social Teaching across all subjects, so that the entire curriculum is delivered through a Catholic lens.
- Provide levels of challenge that meet the needs of all pupils in religious education lessons.
- Develop the role of governors in the evaluation of prayer and liturgy.

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

Pupils are proud to be part of St Mary's and understand that being part of a Catholic community means that 'you treat others with kindness' and look after each other. They actively embrace the opportunities they are given, particularly leadership roles such as 'prayer leaders' and take on the responsibility that comes with these positions seriously. They feel secure at school and show deep respect for each other and for adults. They are confident and articulate when talking about the work they do to support others through fundraising for charity. They recognise the importance of this and that it is their Christian duty to support those less fortunate than themselves. They are able to speak clearly about how the virtues that the school embraces and Catholic Social Teaching impact on their own lives and help them to develop spiritually and morally. Catholic Social Teaching is a strength of the school because of the priority that leaders have recently placed upon it; pupils lead responses to local, national, and global needs. They are aware of world events and the role they play in supporting those affected by them; for example, the recent earthquakes and the need to support those who are without a home because of them. Behaviour around the school is exemplary. Pupils look out for each other in class and in the playground because of the values instilled in them, whether it is a friend in need or someone they rarely speak to.

The new mission statement is firmly rooted in Gospel values and clearly drives the school's daily life. Pupils say the mission 'reminds us how to be good and help each other.' Staff participate in it enthusiastically and contribute readily. They value their roles and work closely as a team, supporting each other; consequently, they are exemplary role models for the pupils in the way they treat everyone. This is a welcoming and inclusive school that ensures all are valued without exception, especially those from other cultures and belief traditions. There is

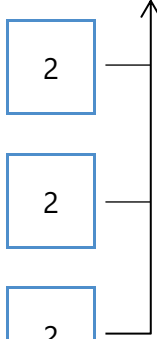
a strong commitment to the most vulnerable; for example, pastoral care is provided for those with additional needs through a nurture group offering personalised support. The physical environment is well-kept with bright, formative displays across the school ensuring it is a vibrant learning environment for all. However, currently, there is no provision of formal chaplaincy.

The principal has a clear vision for the school and articulates it to all in everything she does. Leaders thoroughly understand the school's improvement priorities and embrace new strategies to improve the school's provision further. This means the archbishop's vision for the diocese is fully promoted by leaders. St Mary's works closely with the other schools in the multi academy company (MAC) and values the opportunities this provides greatly. Since the arrival of the new principal, the parish and school are developing a strong relationship in response to the community's needs. The school ensures that parents feel most welcome in school and strives to constantly improve communication; consequently, parents say they understand the school's Catholic mission. The school seeks to support families in any way they can. Staff value the procedures in place to safeguard their physical and mental well-being highly. Governors provide good support to the school in evaluating the Catholic life of the school. The school's self-evaluation is thorough and leads to clear improvement plans. Engaging and frequent staff training from the MAC and the diocese results in staff having a profound understanding of St Mary's mission. There is an effective induction process in place for those new to the school and for those new to Catholic education.

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 show good knowledge and understanding and are developing skills as required in the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*. Most pupils make good progress in religious education; leaders know that particular provision is needed for groups of pupils who are not making sufficient progress. In all classes, pupils are developing as religiously literate people and can use specialist vocabulary when required to articulate their knowledge and understanding, and to reflect spiritually on what they have learnt in ways that are age appropriate. When lessons are well-planned and resourced, pupils are highly engaged, showing curiosity and enthusiasm in asking questions which enhance their learning. Concentration is generally good because teachers' expectations are high; when there is low-level disruption in lessons, most staff swiftly remedy the situation to place the focus back on learning. Pupils show respect for each other by listening to each other when working in pairs or groups. Pupils are able to articulate how well they are doing in religious education, and they know what they need to improve their work because of the quality of the feedback given to them and the subsequent support received in lessons.

Teachers and support staff show a high level of subject knowledge and often direct learning through effective questioning skills. Where questioning skills are used most effectively, pupils are able to move on in their learning at a rapid rate and this increases their motivation. All staff are committed to the concept of religious education as a core subject at St Mary's and understand the role it plays in supporting pupils' spiritual and moral development; consequently, time is allocating for reflection and contemplation in lessons. Teachers' planning follows the diocesan strategy and is usually informed by regular assessment. Pupils show their secure knowledge by completing the tasks teachers set; however, as these are predominantly written activities, those whose reading and writing are not secure are at a disadvantage

compared to their peers. Because teachers have a good knowledge of how to teach well, there are strong relationships and effective classroom management procedures in most classrooms. Support staff are deployed most effectively when supporting individual pupils with specific needs or directed to support larger groups of pupils in a classroom. They show highly effective questioning skills.

The school uses the diocesan strategy to ensure good coverage of the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*. This also ensures leaders organise the curriculum so that pupils build on their prior learning. Leaders and governors ensure that the subject has parity with other core subjects in terms of funding, resourcing, and training. The school takes advantage of the high-quality training offered through the MAC and by the diocese to ensure that all staff remain current in their skills and knowledge. The subject leader is well-supported by the MAC's 'RE Hub' and the diocesan adviser. She has a clear vision for developing the subject and is highly motivated to achieve this vision. She is much valued and respected by all who work with her and the impact she has made on learning at St Mary's is universally praised. The 'RE Hub' is highly valued by the staff, not just in terms of teaching and learning, but also in terms of well-being, and for the support it gives in sharing resources, planning, and identifying and sharing best practice. Whilst leaders ensure that teachers' planning is usually matched to the age and needs of the pupils in each class, this is not always the case. Their self-evaluation is accurate and leads to clearly identified improvement priorities to further develop the subject.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade:.....

1

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

1

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for collective worship

1

Pupils engage well with prayer and liturgy, demonstrated through their participation and reverence; their prayer and song are enthusiastic and confident. Pupils enjoy opportunities to pray traditional prayers and silent, reflective prayers for themselves and their own needs, as well as for others. This begins at the earliest age with children in the nursery praying together. Pupils recognise they can respond to world events through prayer; for example, following a whole school prayer meeting, a pupil was inspired to lead a classroom prayer for those who suffer from hunger in the world. However, not all pupils are able to speak about how prayer shapes their thoughts about themselves and the world around them. They show a detailed understanding of the liturgical year and how it shapes the prayer life of the school. Pupils work well with others to prepare and lead classroom prayer. The use of the diocesan planning framework ensures that these are well-constructed and engaging. Furthermore, it ensures that there is always a 'go forth' message resulting from the worship which encourages pupils to be inspired into action by their prayers. Pupils reflect on the weekly liturgy, but do not yet have a secure understanding of how to improve the quality of the prayers they design themselves.

Prayer and liturgy are embedded into school life. Staff appreciate the opportunity to pray regularly and make use of the prayer tables with pupils in each classroom and around the school as well as in the prayer garden outside. Formal prayers are said daily and there is time for spontaneous prayer, reflecting the richness of Catholic prayer tradition. Because of the broad provision offered, and the importance placed on prayer, pupils value the well-cared for spaces dedicated to prayer. There is an established routine for prayer including Gospel assembly and Mass in the church with parishioners and governors on a weekly basis. Older pupils confidently undertake ministries in these liturgies through reading from the lectionary. Artefacts and resources are carefully chosen and used creatively to ensure that all present are able to participate. Where pupils need support

this is given sensitively and appropriately because staff have a secure understanding of the Church's liturgical norms. Staff are developing confidence to plan and lead prayer because the principal provides an inspiring role model for them. Prayer spaces in classrooms are age-appropriate incorporating Bibles, candles, crucifixes, crosses, and statues as well as examples of pupils' own prayers. The school works hard to secure flourishing links with the parish and pupils' families, securing a high participation rate in the Lent liturgy, for example.

The school's prayer and liturgy policy is a useful document that outlines expectations clearly and is supportive to staff in preparing prayer and liturgy in class. Masses and liturgies are timetabled effectively to ensure that pupils are offered the opportunity to receive the Eucharist weekly and the Sacrament of Reconciliation during Lent and Advent. The principal is an exemplary role model in leading prayer and is a key figure in continuing to raise staff confidence in leading well-planned and engaging worship with pupils. Staff are also supported through training by the MAC and the diocese. Leaders and governors ensure the parish and school work closely together so that the school is a key part of part of the church's mission in the parish. Monitoring and evaluation of prayer and liturgy is planned by the MAC leading to effective actions to move the prayer life of the school forward, though governors' role in monitoring prayer is not yet fully developed.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Mary's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	142214
Full postal address of the school	Wharf Lane, Brewwood, Staffordshire, ST19 9BG
School phone number	01902 850261
Name of head teacher or principal	Jenny Lockley
Chair of governing board	Kenneth Wilson
School Website	www.stmaryscatholicprimaryschoolbrewood.org.uk
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	The Painsley Catholic Academy
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	July 2016
Previous denominational inspection grade	1

The inspection team

Dawn Summers-Breeze

Lead inspector

Kerry Cox

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