



St Marie's Catholic Primary School

URN: 149315

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Archbishop of Birmingham

29–30 January 2025

Summary of key findings

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

1

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 general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishops' Conference

Yes

The school is fully compliant with any additional requirements of the diocesan bishop

Yes

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

Fully

Compliance statement

- This school fully complies with the general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishops' Conference.
- This school is fully compliant with the additional requirements of His Grace.
- This school has fully addressed all previous areas for improvement.

What the school does well

- There is a welcoming, calm, and purposeful atmosphere. Pupils are happy and loved, resulting in a strong sense of community.
- The school provides the highest level of pastoral care and has positive relationships at all levels.
- The strong leadership team, supported by the multi academy company (MAC), has a determined and clear vision for Catholic education, leading to rapid improvements in all areas.
- Teachers plan various creative activities, resulting in pupils being engaged and enjoying their religious education learning.
- Staff are proud to work at St Marie's, and leaders prioritise their well-being.

What the school needs to improve

- Routinely challenge pupils to demonstrate their knowledge of religious sources when responding to teachers' questions.
- Empower pupils to become proactive in responding to the demands of Catholic social teaching.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to routinely evaluate the quality of the prayer and liturgy they have planned so that they identify how to improve them in the future.

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

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 at St Marie's embrace the distinctive Catholic identity of their school and proudly describe it as 'a community where the teachings of Jesus are central to everything we do'. They are proud to be part of this Catholic community. This understanding is reflected in the exceptional confidence and happiness of all within the school, where pupils and staff feel valued and cared for. Pupils clearly understand and respond to the demands of Catholic social teaching and actively participate in caring for those less fortunate, participating in fundraising activities provided to them such as a Macmillan coffee morning organised by the Mini Vinnies, Cafod's Big Lent Walk, and foodbank and Harvest collections. Pupils understand and embrace the principles of Catholic social teaching, understanding that they 'help us to follow in Jesus' footsteps and be a good person.' An annual 'culture week' enables pupils to share and celebrate the variety of religions and faiths within the school. Consequently, there is a culture of deep respect where everyone is valued. One pupil explained how 'We must care like Jesus' because of its our mission. Through dedication to promoting Catholic values and chaplaincy activities, all pupils thrive spiritually, academically, socially, and emotionally.

The school's recently reviewed mission statement, 'We ASPIRE to love, live and learn, united as one family in the light of Christ', is meaningful, relevant, fully understood and lived out by all pupils and staff. It is embraced by all with enthusiasm and consistency because it underpins and permeates every aspect of school life; it inspires everyone. This is evident in the excellent relationships across the school, where pupils and staff feel listened to and every voice is heard. There is a real sense of community and family within St Marie's, which is a joyful and supportive community where everyone is generously welcomed. Staff describe how 'The school's heartbeat is our Catholic life and mission; we are a team, and we support each other'. Pastoral care for all

pupils is strong and led by a dedicated pastoral leader who supports vulnerable families exceptionally well. Pupils know they are cared for by adults, especially pupils with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) and those experiencing need. The care and effort put into the high standards of display around the school are witnesses to and an effective celebration of the school's Catholic identity and mission.

Leaders and governors are highly committed to the school's Catholic life and mission and prioritise it. The determined vision of leaders and governors, supported by the MAC, has resulted in rapid and secure improvements. Leaders are highly ambitious for St Marie's and critically evaluate its Catholic life and mission, resulting in well-targeted and practical improvements. Leaders and governors put the school's mission at the core of everything they do. For example, this is reflected by the investment made into various types of staff training relating to Catholic life; consequently, staff are highly committed to it. Leaders engage exceptionally well with parents, the parish, and the wider community; they constantly explore ways to develop this. For example, parents attend the weekly celebration assembly in the parish church, celebrating 'our gifts from God.' Parents are proud to send their children to St Marie's. Elements of Catholic social teaching are woven into curriculum areas, but this is not yet fully developed. Staff's well-being is a top leadership priority, and staff speak strongly about the support provided to them by leaders and governors. This enables them to perform their roles effectively and contributes significantly to creating a happy team.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

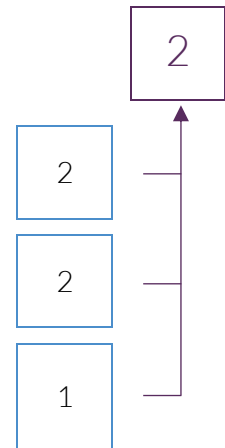
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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 make good progress in religious education lessons, and this is demonstrated in pupils' work during lessons. Religious education lessons have a clear structure consistently embedded across the school. This enables pupils to recall prior learning, ensuring they know and remember more. As a result, pupils confidently articulate what they have learnt, demonstrating secure knowledge, understanding, and skills, and use appropriate religious vocabulary relevant to their age. Pupils respond well to opportunities for reflection, and many link learning in lessons to their own lives, the school's mission, values, and virtues. However, pupils do not always respond in great depth as they do not always refer to sources of religious authority in their answers. A purposeful and calm learning atmosphere across the school enables pupils to engage well in learning. Pupils enjoy their religious education lessons and are enthusiastic about them; consequently, their behaviour in lessons is good. Pupils work well independently and in collaboration with peers, especially during discussion work. Teachers and support staff recognise that religious education is at the heart of the curriculum and communicate this effectively. This means pupils demonstrate a real pride in their work, which is always presented well.

Teachers demonstrate clear enthusiasm for teaching religious education and have secure subject knowledge. As a result, pupils are enthusiastic and enjoy their lessons because they know their teachers can answer all their questions. Teachers plan various creative activities to engage pupils, such as using religious artwork and role play. Consequently, behaviour in lessons is good. Teachers use questioning effectively during lessons to evaluate pupils' understanding and to encourage pupils to make links between what they are learning about and their own lives. However, this is inconsistent across the school, and there are sometimes missed opportunities for more challenging questions about this to be asked. Teachers have high expectations of pupils

and celebrate their achievements in various ways, including in a weekly assembly, where pupils who have worked well wear a golden tie for the week. This leads to increased levels of motivation and a great sense of pride. The 'saint showcase' homework initiative provided an excellent opportunity for pupils to learn about and celebrate their class saint, ensuring the subject is at the core of the core curriculum by promoting the school's Catholic life. Feedback in lessons enables pupils to understand how well they have done but does not clarify how they could improve their work, meaning pupils are often unsure how to make progress independently. Teachers respond well to pupils' needs and effectively deploy other adults, ensuring that all pupils make progress, especially those with SEND.

Supported by the MAC, the leadership team and religious education lead have high expectations and a purposeful, clear vision. They demonstrate a real commitment to the ongoing development of all staff across the school, who welcome leaders' 'open-door' policy concerning improving religious education. Staff appreciate the support and challenge provided by the deeply committed subject leader. She has led improvements in teaching and learning by establishing a system of feedback to staff regarding their performance. She has ensured new staff receive well-targeted specialist support, including with their planning and opportunities to observe good classroom practice. She receives excellent support from the leadership team, which further reinforces the high standards across the school. This clear vision, focus on high-quality training and collaboration with the MAC enables staff at St Marie's to benefit from sharing good practice. These opportunities, along with a recently introduced coaching-based approach to teaching and learning, have resulted in increased confidence amongst all staff, who are passionate and well-skilled. Leaders and governors ensure that religious education has full parity with other core subjects. Governors know the information they are provided about religious education is accurate because they visit the school regularly to provide support and challenge to senior leaders. This regular, systematic monitoring of standards has led to precisely-targeted and rapid improvements.

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

1

2

Pupils enjoy prayer and liturgy, as demonstrated by their enthusiastic participation and engagement. All pupils engage appropriately with reverence and respect, demonstrating their understanding of prayer's significance. Music effectively creates a calm and prayerful atmosphere, and pupils sing joyfully. Pupils work well with their peers and adults to plan and lead worship. Leadership skills are nurtured through the prayer leaders, who confidently plan and lead prayer following the school's policy. This is yet to be developed to ensure all pupils can plan and lead worship. In the early years, the staff guide the children skilfully in choosing appropriate artefacts to place on the prayer focus table using a liturgy planner. Some pupils are involved in simple evaluations of prayer, but these do not routinely and effectively lead to future improvements. Pupils understand the liturgical year well and how prayer changes throughout the Church's seasons. Prayer is structured and includes a clear message, enabling pupils to understand that worship should lead to action. Younger children are encouraged to reflect on small things they can do that will make a big difference.

Prayer and liturgy are central to the life of the school and prayer takes place as a matter of routine at all key times of the day. The pattern of daily prayer is embedded and is included in all school gatherings. Scripture is given a high focus in worship, and scripture passages are chosen to ensure they align with the appropriate Church season. Pupils participate in various prayer experiences linked to the Catholic tradition, such as the May procession and Stations of the Cross. Great care and attention are taken in setting up prayer spaces around the school, which are attractive and of a high standard, inspiring pupils to pray spontaneously. Pupils take ownership of the prayer spaces by helping to choose relevant artefacts to include. There is a dedicated space which pupils use for prayer and reflection. Parents are encouraged to participate in the school's prayer life through activities such as invitations to a weekly assembly

in the parish church and an Advent assembly, and pupils are encouraged to take home a travelling crib.

Leaders have developed and implemented a well-thought-out prayer and liturgy policy, including a progressive whole-school overview of expectations for pupils planning and leading prayer times, setting out the requirements for each year group. This is used highly effectively by staff to build up levels of participation in pupils leading prayer. Leaders and governors ensure that staff are well supported in leading prayer and supporting pupils through training opportunities provided by leaders and the MAC. Leaders support staff in planning prayer in the classroom, resulting in engaging prayer times. Staff are excellent role models during prayer and liturgy, setting a positive example as leaders and participants. Pupils follow the example set by adults, responding reverently and thoughtfully. All staff members understand the importance of prayer, which is role-modelled by leaders. Leaders see it as a key priority, reflected in the high-quality resources available to the school community. Classes take turns attending Mass weekly and on holy days of obligation. Leaders ensure the liturgical year is well-planned. Regular and rigorous self-evaluation of prayer and liturgy through monitoring by leaders at all levels enables a continuous cycle of well-targeted improvement planning.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Marie's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	149315
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	933598
Full postal address of the school	Merttens Drive, Rugby, CV22 7AF
School phone number	01788 543636
Headteacher	Charlotte Miller (executive principal)
Chair of governing board	Yvonne Brennan
School Website	www.sma.magnificat.org.uk
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Our Lady of the Magnificat Catholic MAC
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Academy
Admissions policy	Non-selective
Age-range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	March 2018
Previous denominational inspection grade	2

The inspection team

Bernadette Corbett	Lead
Joe Bridgewater	Team
Debbie Moran	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