



St Mary's Catholic Primary School

URN: 140774

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Diocesan Administrator of Plymouth

29-01 March 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

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

1

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

2

What the school does well

- Pupils have a strong understanding of the need and duty to look after others, they recognise that 'when we help people, all can live the way God wants us to' (quote from a pupil).
- Parish links with the local parish churches and the Abbey are strong with parishioners supporting the school, for example, the recent coffee morning organised by the Mini Vinnies for older parishioners was of huge benefit to both old and young.
- High quality displays around the school including in the classrooms shows what the pupils do to help others and makes the school a vibrant learning environment.
- Pupils are highly engaged and enjoy their religious education lessons; this leads to them making valuable contributions to whole class discussions.
- All pupils are involved in the planning and delivery of high-quality prayer and worship across the school, with age-appropriate contributions, good use of scripture and pupils' own prayers.

What the school needs to improve

- Provide religious education tasks that enable pupils to fully demonstrate their knowledge and understanding.
- Provide effective feedback in books consistently across the school to ensure that pupils know exactly what they need to do to improve their work.
- Ensure that pupil evaluation of prayer and worship is consistent across the school and used to enhance worship in class and whole school.

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

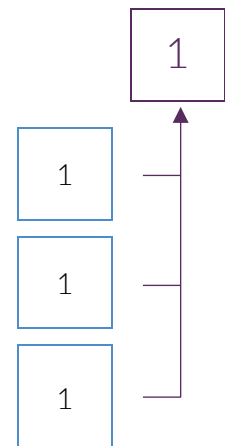
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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 have a clear understanding of the need to help others. They are happy, confident, and secure due to the strong relationships with adults and with each other. They understand we are all different and unique and are loved by God. They know it is their duty to care for the environment and for those in need and expect to do this. They actively look for opportunities to help others, for example, collecting toiletries for refugees, the war on waste project, supporting numerous charities and being Fairtrade ambassadors. The Mini Vinnies group have produced cards and gifts for local parishioners at Christmas and Easter and have invited them in for a highly successful coffee morning. Pupils have a clear understanding of Catholic Social Teaching (CST) and can talk about it with appropriate vocabulary. They understand the messages from Pope Francis in *Laudato Si* and *Fratelli Tutti*. They have good knowledge and understanding of the school virtues and can say how to live them out in their everyday life. Their behaviour is exemplary, and they show respect for all. Pupils enjoy learning about other faiths and recognise that it is invaluable. Pupil chaplains are proud of their role and are respected by others. They lead prayer and worship and are seen as 'cool' role models throughout the school.

The mission statement is revisited annually with pupils and governors and is highly visible around the school, particularly in the beautiful stained-glass window in the hall. Staff readily embrace the Catholic life of the school in many ways including enabling pupils to support each other through mental health ambassadors. There is a strong sense of community, with staff and pupils going the extra mile to support others locally, nationally and globally. The school is well supported by the parishioners and priests from the Abbey, for example, support for pupil chaplains and the Mini Vinnies group. Staff are exemplary role models leading to pupils feeling secure and showing exemplary behaviour themselves. Bespoke support is in place for those pupils with specific needs as the school seeks to provide for a rapidly growing number of pupils with needs. Beautiful artwork around the school shows that pupils' work is highly valued and provides a rich stimulating Catholic learning environment for the pupils. Displays show how much pupils are doing to support others and care for their common home. The Relationships programme is Catholic centred and the school tailors' sessions to provide bespoke support for pupils according to their needs, age, and abilities.

Leaders have a clear vision for Catholic life and mission, and Christ is clearly at the heart of the school. Diocesan advice, guidelines and training are accessed and followed. The headteacher supports other schools for the diocese and further afield. Most parents are supportive of the Catholic ethos of the school including those who are not Catholic recognising that the school supports pupils' spiritual and moral development. The school has worked hard to ensure that Catholic Social Teaching is embedded throughout the wider curriculum for example, looking at the issue of slavery when studying the Romans and linking work in Geography with Fairtrade. The staff are a strong team and feel well supported by each other and leaders in the school. The headteacher feels well-supported by the priests from the Abbey and the governors, particularly the Chair. Governors are well-informed about the school and can offer challenge and support. They are fully involved in the monitoring and evaluation of the school through the CAST schedule of accountability, which ensures rigour. Pupil voice is considered in the self-evaluation of the Catholic life of the school. Staff take advantage of a range of training offered by the diocese and in-house. Those new to the school can access a comprehensive induction process which clearly outlines the expectations of support for the Catholic life and mission of the school.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

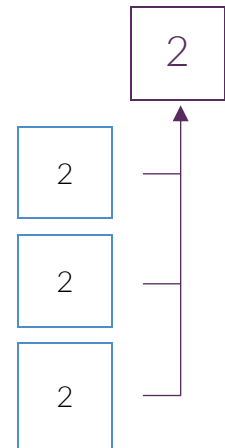
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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



Pupil behaviour in religious education lessons is good with most pupils showing high engagement and enjoyment. This leads to good concentration which enhances their ability to work well independently and in small groups. Some effective questioning by teachers and teaching assistants deepens pupils' thinking and extends their learning in class. Scripture is well-embedded and used appropriately, for example, unpicking part of Luke 6 enabled pupils to demonstrate how they could deal with people shouting or hurting them. From Year Two upwards pupils use the bible regularly in lessons and are able to find references swiftly. They are able to use age-appropriate religious vocabulary in responses which enables them to make confident contributions to discussions. Pupils are able to ask questions to enhance their learning. Pupils with specific needs are well supported in classes. The most effective religious education class books recorded pupil voice around big questions and is a valuable assessment tool. However, there are some inconsistencies in the recording of work across the school, for example; expectations in terms of written work is very different in religious education books compared to English books; tasks are not always enabling pupils to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding and provide enough challenge; feedback in books does not always provide pupils with a clear picture of how well they have done and how to move on. Where self-assessment is being trialled in the school it is making a positive difference to children's progress. Attainment is in line with or better than other core subjects in the school and is shared with parents.

The staff are committed to the teaching of religious education and recognise that it is deeply connected to everyday life. They feel secure in their subject knowledge due to the regularity of training and input for the religious education curriculum. Planning is linked to current assessment, and pupils with differing needs are provided for through differentiation of task, adult support and focused questioning. Lessons refer to the school virtues and Catholic Social Teaching and link with worship. Regular and appropriate use is made of scripture. Effective questioning is in place across the school in lessons, leading to pupils' learning being extended. There are regular opportunities for reflections within lessons to enable spiritual and moral development. Pupils respond well to these opportunities and are able to make good quality contributions to class discussions. They are able to present their

learning in a variety of ways including freeze frames and artwork. A number of quality resources and effective use of teaching assistants, enabling them to support learning where needed, enhances pupil learning. However, tasks do not always match learning objectives, resulting in pupils not being able to show the depth of their learning. Good quality and well-thought-out religious education displays support pupils learning, with key vocabulary for the unit of work, key questions and pupils' work on display.

Leaders of the school have a clear vision for religious education. Self-evaluation has led to accurate and appropriate priorities being identified and the impact of actions so far are evident in the common approach to questioning and use of scripture in lessons. Leaders are fully aware of what they need to do to secure consistent progress across the school. The Religious Education Directory (RED) is covered through the religious education schemes of work used across the school. The scheme used across most of the school enables pupils to make progress sequentially, however the school has concerns that the introduction of the new RED, in two classes so far, has disrupted this sequential learning. There is parity in timetabling, resourcing, and training with other core subjects. Staff feel well-supported due to the regular training on offer which has led to increased confidence in subject knowledge. There are plenty of opportunities for enrichment of religious education through, for example, the support of the priests and attendance at local festivals including REconnect. Self-evaluation follows CAST schedule for accountability ensuring governors are fully involved and fully informed.

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

1

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

1

Pupils participate with enjoyment and enthusiasm in all acts of worship. Their behaviour is exemplary. All join in with responses, prayers, and singing. The Abbey choristers enhance whole school worship with their beautiful singing and provide valuable role models to all pupils who respond with outstanding, prayerful singing. Pupils are deeply respectful and show reverence in listening to others in whole school and class worship. The 'going forth' part of worship enables pupils to follow up their prayer with age-appropriate actions across the school. This enables them to make the connection between prayer and action, and they are able to reflect on this. Pupils understand the different parts of the liturgical year and that the colours of their prayer tables are linked to the priest's robes for that time of year. Pupil chaplains plan worship to share with others. They see their role as 'making it easier for others to pray'. They have researched saints for the All-Saints mass and have delivered an assembly on Laudato Si, making links with pupils work on caring for our common home and helping others. All pupils are able to work alongside others including staff and, use their own ideas to plan and deliver class worship,

Prayer and worship are clearly a central part of school routine. There are planned prayer and liturgy opportunities across the day and throughout the week that are well-embedded, for example some are led by chaplains, some led by the Mini Vinnies, and end of unit class reflections led by all pupils. Class prayer and liturgy is linked to CST each week and also the school virtues. The daily pattern of worship provides a natural, creative balance between routine and spontaneous prayer, including prayers written by pupils. Pupil-led prayer stations set up at different times of year provide opportunities to pray outside and for the pupils to be creative in their prayer. Pupils are provided with a rich variety of opportunities to celebrate worship in different ways and in different places, for example, at the parish churches at harvest and for the crib blessings and the feast of St Petroc. The use of Scripture is used in age-appropriate ways in class worship, for example, the story of the children with Jesus in Mark 10 is linked to subsidiarity, where all have a voice to be heard. Staff are all committed to producing high quality prayer, and their confidence in this, and in supporting the pupils to plan and lead prayer, has increased since staff training and the introduction of a whole school format, which is well-embedded

and ensures consistency across the school. Prayer spaces in classrooms are well-maintained by pupils with age-appropriate artefacts, questions, prayers and pupils' work displayed to support pupil prayer.

The CAST policy provides clear guidance for staff, with a school addendum that outlines a staged approach to expectations of pupil involvement. The school supports the parishes in providing sacramental preparation after school and the headteacher writes regularly for the parish newsletter. Mass is offered regularly in school, as well as other services such as reconciliation, and there are opportunities for pupils to attend mass at all three parishes at different times of the year for different events. These events are well attended by parents and parishioners. High quality training has led to staff confidence in producing high quality worship. Leaders provide good role models for staff and pupils ensuring that class liturgies are well-planned, well-led, and are of a consistent high quality across the school. Pupil chaplains plan liturgies for younger pupils. Class liturgies link with Catholic Social Teaching and school virtues. The governors ensure that monitoring and evaluation is rigorous and leads to insightful and appropriate priorities for improvement. Pupils evaluate worship on a regular basis.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Mary's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	140774
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8783602
Full postal address of the school	St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Buckfast Road, Buckfast, Buckfastleigh, TQ11 0EA
School phone number	01364642389
Headteacher	Nicola Clayton
Chair of Local Governing Body	Lesley Clark
School Website	www.st-marysrc.devon.sch.uk/
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Plymouth Cast
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Academy
Admissions policy	N/A
Age-range of pupils	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	June 2016
Previous denominational inspection grade	1

The inspection team

Dawn Summers-Breeze
Louise White

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