

St Marie's Roman Catholic Primary School

URN: 105335

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Salford

04–05 December 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 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

2

Compliance statement

- **St Marie's RC Primary School** is fully compliant with the general normal for religious education laid down by the Bishop's Conference.
- This school is fully compliant with the additional requirements of the diocesan bishop.
- This school has fully addressed all previous areas for improvement.

What the school does well

- The Catholic life and mission of the school are outstanding in every regard and the whole school community actively lives out its Catholic life and mission.
- Leaders and governors have created a caring, nurturing, and thriving family school with strong relationships and pastoral support for pupils, parent and staff.
- Catholic social teaching is outstanding, resulting in pupils who excel in their knowledge and understanding of living out the Catholic faith.
- Teachers have secure levels of subject knowledge and provide questions that enable pupils to draw on their prior learning.
- Prayer and liturgy are central to school life, offering inclusive, joyful celebrations of faith.

What the school needs to improve

- Develop pupils' understanding of what they need to do improve their work in religious education by providing more focused feedback.
- Plan and adapt tasks in religious education to ensure that all pupils, especially those with higher prior attainment in every class, maximise their learning outcomes.
- Provide opportunities for all pupils to plan, lead and evaluate prayer and liturgy within their classroom and within prayer spaces in 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

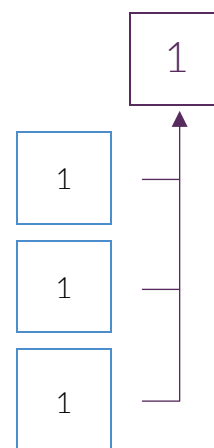
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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



St Marie's Roman Catholic Primary School is welcoming and nurturing. Everyone understands and embraces the school's mission statement, 'We are Jesus' Hands and Feet,' and His inspiring message is lived through their actions and behaviours. Pupils feel loved and cared for within St Marie's. One pupil commented, 'This school enables us to be the best we can be.' Pupils demonstrate high standards of behaviour, treating each other with dignity and respect. There is a culture of mutual respect for all and relationships are built on celebrating their uniqueness. The school is an oasis of calm and respect with an evident sense of belonging. Pupils confidently articulate how to treat others with dignity. They highly value leadership roles such as Caritas Ambassadors and Eco-Laudato Si Team and speak positively about their impact at local, national, and global levels. Each class lives out the mission statement through their charity work, which is driven by the children. A pupil said, 'It is an honour to help others.' Prayer leaders have a strong presence within school and pupils regularly volunteer to celebrate the Word of God.

The school is at the heart of the community, and pupils speak enthusiastically about how Catholic social teaching supports them in living out their mission. Pastoral support is given high priority, and the school proactively engages imaginatively and thoughtfully to support the most vulnerable with dignity. Staff are fully committed to the mission and enthusiastically contribute to activities such as the Helping Hand Shed, as a service to others. Staff shared, 'At the heart of it is the child.' Pupils say they are honoured to help and do things for others, as this is living like Christ wants us to do. The school environments are of an extremely high standard, reflecting the Catholic identity and providing an array of enriching areas which enable pupils to learn, reflect, and grow both spiritually and morally. The school and parish work in collaboration and partnership. The parish priest is a regular visitor to the school, supporting pupils to experience Mass, celebrate the Word, and provide sacramental preparation. Parents spoke highly of the school in all respects. One parent stated, 'The school has enabled me to support my family, and

I feel respected.' Staff embrace opportunities to support one another, and they value the positive relationships within the school.

Leaders and governors ensure that Christ is at the heart of all they do. They are mindful of the dignity of the human person when making difficult decisions. Together, they embody Catholic leadership to ensure the vision and mission of the school are permeated throughout. The dedicated headteacher, supported by a passionate SLT, works to ensure that the school policies are aligned with the vision and mission. Staff members value the commitment by leaders to support and guide them in their role. One staff member said, 'They make our school like heaven on earth and show that they are loved by God.' Parent and school partnership are strong, resulting in high levels of parental engagement, which is valued by all. Leaders work closely with the diocese to further develop knowledge and expertise. Parish links are continually flourishing and the parish priest is a welcome visitor to school working in partnership with leaders by closely delivering the Sacramental Programme and Reconciliation preparation. Governors are passionate about their role in supporting and challenging leaders to fulfil their duty to provide high-quality resources and training. They are actively involved and engage proactively in decision making to ensure that St Marie's school thrives.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

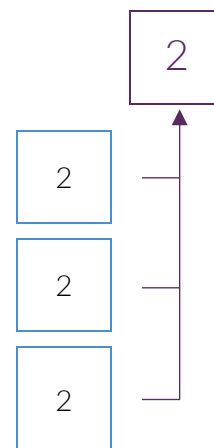
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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



Leaders and governors ensure the curriculum faithfully expresses the Religious Education Curriculum Directory. Pupils' knowledge of religious education is secure in most classes due to the good levels of knowledge from staff. Pupils enjoy their lessons and are motivated to do their best. They talk enthusiastically about their learning and engage well, speaking confidently and making appropriate contributions when asked. They are able to interpret how learning within their religious education lessons relates to their own lives. Due to the high importance teachers place on scripture within lessons, pupils are able to analyse the Word of God. They know and understand various Bible stories. Pupils make good progress from low starting points, and the development of opportunities to 'check in' enables pupils to activate prior knowledge. In the best lessons, support for vulnerable pupils is good, and pupils are given opportunities to work collaboratively at the start of lessons. As a result, levels of independence are steadily growing. Creative learning methods are used well, and pupils demonstrate their understanding of new knowledge, subsequently showing improvement over time; however, this is inconsistent in some classrooms. Behaviour in lessons is exemplary, with all pupils on task and actively engaged in learning. In Early Years, the pupils show notable independence in their learning and can think for themselves, sharing in creative ways. Pupils enjoy discussing their learning and welcome the opportunity to improve. Some struggle to explain how to progress further because the feedback they receive does not always make this explicit.

Strong subject knowledge is displayed by staff, which enables lessons to be linked to prior knowledge. Pupils can use the feedback provided by their teacher to articulate how well they have achieved in an individual lesson. However, they cannot consistently articulate what they need to do to improve their learning over a series of lessons or a unit of work because this is unclear to them. Teachers follow a clear systemic format for articulating what pupils know and remember through questioning; however, questions are not clearly targeted to maximise learning. Classrooms are stimulating and enhance learning experiences, therefore enabling pupils to make good progress. Although a creative and inclusive approach is used within the

school, raised expectations for high-ability pupils should be carefully planned for and delivered. Teachers and support staff ensure that the religious education provision is effective and central to school life. Teachers provide high-quality resources that enrich and include everyone, and the religious education design captures the love of practical learning. Time is given for pupils to develop both spiritually and morally.

Religious Education is given high regard by leaders to ensure that it is prioritised and faithful to the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*. Leaders and governors ensure that high regard is given to religious education through its appropriate allocation of time and parity with other subjects. Leaders and governors have a clear vision for teaching and learning within religious education ensuring that it is sequenced and builds upon prior knowledge. The subject leader is proactive in her approach and has a clear vision of how to improve teaching and learning and has already developed a range of self-assessment techniques. Leaders ensure that the subject content is planned to enable all learners to participate through creative approaches and enrichment; and through self-evaluation, recognise the relentless pursuit of excellence. There is a good grasp of religious education provision in the school which is underpinned by monitoring activities, and school recognises that to enable all pupils to achieve their full potential, there must be greater consistency across year groups. Governors are involved in the self-evaluation of religious education, which results in strategic actions to improve outcomes.

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 well in whole school prayer and liturgy. They engage with reverence, confidently joining in acts of prayer and worship, and all pupils demonstrate confidence and commitment to carrying out their ministries. There is a deep commitment to the provision of collective worship to ensure that this reflects the Catholic character of the school. Scripture is evident in all experiences of worship, and from this, pupils see prayer as central to their lives. There is a clear structure to all worship, and age-appropriate prayer is provided. Well-chosen resources, alongside music, drama, and singing, are successfully interwoven into the provision for collective worship, creating a physical presence. A Key Stage 2 boy shared his gifts and talents by playing the piano during whole school worship to lead well-constructed prayer. There is clear progression for pupil leadership throughout the school, beginning in early years with children in Nursery and Reception setting up their class altar and focal table. Prayer leaders plan, lead, and evaluate prayer using sacred spaces outside the classroom, such as the 'grotto,' an area provided for spiritual growth and development. The next step is to further provide opportunities for all pupils to plan, lead, and evaluate prayer and liturgy both within classrooms and around the school.

The school policy for collective worship clearly shows progression through the school and provides a rich diet of prayer, both formal and spontaneous. There is a well-developed daily pattern of prayer within the school, which is embedded and embraced by all. This centrality to school life ensures that significant moments in school and parish are planned and celebrated. School staff have engaged in high-quality CPD, which has enabled them to develop confidence and knowledge to lead prayer. Parents welcome the opportunities to be partners in the prayer life of the school and spoke highly about the sacramental programme and in-school *Stay and Pray* sessions. Displays and focal points around the school are outstanding and enable pupils to engage thoughtfully in prayer. In a moment of stillness, a pupil in Year 1 spontaneously prayed aloud, saying, 'I will pray more and make friends to help the world.'

School leaders prioritise prayer, and together they have worked in partnership with the parish priest to ensure that all parents feel welcome and can participate fully in prayer sessions. The school's policy enables all staff to understand how to plan and deliver high-quality collective worship. Masses take place in school and church. The committed governors have ensured that there is a naturally embedded daily pattern of prayer to ensure that careful consideration is given to deepening the prayer experience of every child in an age-appropriate way. The school is well-resourced, and time is appropriately allocated to prayer and liturgy. Staff welcome the quality professional development that they have received, and this enables them to develop their confidence and uphold high standards within the school. Older pupils are good role models and relish the opportunity to guide and support around the school. Monitoring and evaluations by leaders are clear, showing impact and areas for development. Resourcing of a dedicated space in school for collective worship has already been identified as a development area and this will complement the sacred spaces already in place and used effectively.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Marie's Roman Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	105335
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	3513324
Full postal address of the school	St Marie's Roman Catholic Primary School, Edward Street, The Mosses, Bury, BL9 0RZ
School phone number	01617643204
Headteacher	Glynne McRae
Chair of governors	Victoria Berry
School Website	www.stmariesrcp.co.uk/
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	N/A
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Voluntary Aided School
Admissions policy	Non-selective
Age-range of pupils	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	April 2017
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

The inspection team

Mrs Vannessa Knowles
Mrs Joanne Butterworth

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