



## DIOCESAN CANONICAL INSPECTION REPORT

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL, COLLECTIVE WORSHIP AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

# St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Ashlawn Drive, Boston, Lincolnshire, PE21 9PX

<b>School URN:</b>	120615
<b>Inspection Date:</b>	16 March 2017
<b>Inspectors:</b>	Mrs Anita Blake and Mr Anthony Harrison

<b>Overall Effectiveness</b>	Previous Inspection:	Good	2
	<b>This Inspection:</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Catholic Life:</b>		Good	2
<b>Collective Worship:</b>		Good	2
<b>Religious Education:</b>		Requires Improvement	3

## SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

### St Mary's Catholic Primary School is a good Catholic school.

- The pupils at St Mary's demonstrate caring attitudes towards each other. They are respectful and well behaved in lessons, living out the aims of the school mission statement in the way they play and relate to one another throughout the whole school environment.
- St Mary's is an inclusive community. It lives out its Catholic values of 'Love, Hope, Truth, Peace and Forgiveness' with care and consideration for all.
- Leaders have been successful in ensuring that the school's Catholic Life remains at its core. The positive impact of this work, including the policies and procedures which underpin the school's practice, now needs to be monitored and evaluated more systematically in order to build on and further enhance the provision for Catholic Life.
- Collective Worship reflects the distinctive Catholic ethos of the school with all members of the community having opportunities to come together and experience a range of Acts of Worship.
- Parents have a positive view of the school and appreciate that it has been through a period of significant change in staffing and membership of the governing body. They recognise that the school is in a stronger position and value its mission and the support it gives to their children.
- Standards in Religious Education are inconsistent. Pupils make progress over time although this is variable and difficult to confirm as assessment in Religious Education is not accurate. Systems of monitoring lack the rigour needed to ensure that all pupils produce enough work of sufficient quality.

## FULL REPORT

### INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- St Mary's is an average size primary school. There are 209 pupils on roll.
- The school serves the parish of St Mary, Our Lady of the Rosary, Boston.
- Since the last inspection, there has been a significant turn-over of staff with a new headteacher and new staff taking up posts throughout the school.
- St Mary's works with another local Catholic school, St Norbert's in Spalding to support the development of Religious Education.
- 72% of the pupils on roll are Catholic; 22% are of other Christian backgrounds; 3% are from other faith backgrounds and 3% have no religious affiliation.
- 62% of the pupils at St Mary's have English as an additional language. 12% of pupils receive additional support for special educational needs and/or a disability and 4% are eligible for support through pupil premium funding.

### WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- Raise standards in Religious Education by:
  - Ensuring that assessments of pupil outcomes are accurate with programmes of moderation within the school and with other schools in the diocese.
  - Ensuring that the coverage of each topic in the *Come and See* programme is in line with diocesan guidelines in relation to the number of quality pieces of work completed by each pupil.
  - Ensuring that high expectations for the presentation of pupils' work in Religious Education are evident and consistent throughout the school.
  - Further engaging pupils with a more creative approach to Religious Education where there is minimal use of worksheets as a method of recording.
- Ensure that the accuracy of the school's self-evaluation is acted upon in a more timely fashion by the Religious Education subject leader with the support of the senior leadership team; to ensure that:
  - The impact of Collective Worship and Catholic Life is reviewed and built upon systematically.
  - The standards of work and pupil outcomes are at least similar, if not better, than those of other core subject areas across the school.
- Develop the role of governors to monitor and hold the school's leaders to account by:
  - Ensuring that a robust system of monitoring is established with a focus on an accurate understanding of expected standards in Religious Education including the quality and quantity of written work for each topic.
  - Ensuring that a robust system for the monitoring of Collective Worship and the Catholic Life is in place that evaluates the current standard and leads to further improvement.

**As Religious Education has been judged to 'require improvement', the school will receive a monitoring visit within one year of the publication of this report.**

## CATHOLIC LIFE

THE QUALITY OF THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL	<b>2</b>
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- The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.
- The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school.
- How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school.

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**The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school – good**

- The school values of *Love, Hope, Truth, Peace* and *Forgiveness*, which stem from the school mission statement have been shaped by the whole community and enhanced by pupils' contributions. Pupils respond positively to these values and live them out in their daily lives.
- The behaviour of pupils is good overall, they have positive attitudes to each other. Pupils appreciate the needs of others, particularly helping those with English as an additional language and those with learning difficulties. All at St Mary's feel welcomed and included in the school community. During lessons, pupils were observed helping and supporting each other to aid and overcome barriers to learning.
- Pupils have the opportunity to take on roles of responsibility such as: House Captains, School Councilors, Liturgy Team Leaders, School Ambassadors and Playground Buddies. They respond well to these opportunities and relish the chance to help each other. Pupils embrace these opportunities and respond positively to them, enhancing relationships and living out the school's ethos and its mission.
- Pupils understand and appreciate the importance of liturgical celebrations throughout the year. They are proud of their Catholic identity. St Mary's is a highly inclusive school where, as a grandparent said: 'All are made to feel valued'.
- Pupils are extremely proud of their school. They value themselves, as individuals and as members of the community. As one pupil stated, 'We like to learn about each other'. They are respectful of the school environment, including the prayer focus areas and the outward signs of the school's Catholic identity; these are tasteful and appropriately displayed throughout.

### **The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school – good**

- Pastoral programmes, such as Personal, Health and Social Education (PHSE) and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) are sensitive to pupils' needs whilst adhering to the teachings of the Catholic Church. Pupils respond well to this provision and the opportunities provided.
- The school's values are highly visible throughout; they are displayed in classrooms, shared spaces, in books, and are a constant point of reference throughout the school. Members of staff are committed to these values and share the vision of the leadership team. This was evident in their interactions with all pupils, including those with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs and/or a disability. All pupils were treated with dignity and respect. Members of staff are a living example of the Gospel values from which the school bases its mission.
- The school celebrates its Catholic identity through exhibiting enriching and engaging displays and through the use of appropriate artefacts. There is an appropriate mix of traditional and child initiated displays that celebrate the ethos of the school and the pupils' creativity.
- Support is evident for all pupils. Policies are built on Gospel values and are inclusive and supportive. These policies and systems help to nurture all pupils including those who are most vulnerable. The school community is a living witness to its mission and Catholic identity.
- Members of staff at St Mary's feel valued and supported. They display a deep commitment to the community and its ethos. In doing so, some choose to travel a distance to be part of the school community. Members of staff who are not of a Catholic background are supported in their acquisition of knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith.
- The school's behaviour policy is rooted in Gospel values, with peace and reconciliation being at the core. Incidents of poor behaviour are minimal because of the caring, supportive ethos of the school and the pupils' positive response to this. This is because the school communicates its high expectations of behaviour with clarity to pupils as well as to parents and carers. Where need is identified, the school is quick to provide support and positive role models to encourage the best possible behaviour from its pupils. Members of staff act as excellent role models who take their lead from the school's senior leaders.
- The school continually seeks to develop links with the parish community; sacramental preparation takes place after school –within the school building, and a parish catechist works alongside a member of staff to support this work. This is valued by pupils, parents and parishioners alike.

**How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school – good**

- Leaders and managers are passionate about the school's Catholic identity and are committed to living out its mission. They act as positive role models of the school's values to staff members, pupils, parents and the wider community.
- The relationship with parents is largely positive; they are made to feel welcome and valued as part of the community. Parents recognise that though the school has been through a period of significant change, the school has always maintained its Catholic identity. They support the Catholic ethos of the school and are proactive in joining its friendly, family feel. In turn, parents appreciate the friendly and supportive approach of the staff and the school's leadership team.
- Although the governing body has been through a period of substantial change, governors have been committed to the Catholic Life of St Mary's. They are beginning to hold the school to account, however, a more systematic approach to monitoring and evaluation now needs to be embedded.
- Although some monitoring of the Catholic Life of the school takes place through analysis of parent and pupil questionnaires and from learning walks, these need to be evaluated more thoroughly along with other types of monitoring activities in order to draw up relevant action points from which the impact should be recorded. The recently established spirituality working party has yet to have an impact on the Catholic Life of the school.

## COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP	2
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- How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship.
- The quality of provision for the Collective Worship.
- How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship.

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### How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship – good

- Pupils at St Mary's act with reverence and respect within a range of Acts of Collective Worship. They pray in a variety of ways, from traditional prayer to moments of silence and spontaneous prayer. A Year 2 celebration showed that children were comfortable praying spontaneously using rich and personal liturgical vocabulary. During a whole school Act of Collective Worship, the sense of occasion and spirituality experienced was further enriched by all the pupils singing hymns enthusiastically.
- Children use *Let us Pray* resources to prepare and organise their own liturgies in classes. They have a good understanding of the 'gather, word, response and mission' aspects of liturgy and are comfortable to express the mission. They have regular opportunities to lead worship within class. However, this aspect of Collective Worship could be enhanced with a greater variety of prayer opportunities to develop a deeper understanding of all aspects of prayer; including times for contemplation and reflection through meditation and silence.
- Most pupils have a good understanding of the Church's liturgical year. During the inspection, the appropriate liturgical colours were used and pupils were also aware of the season when selecting readings.
- By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are able to express a deeper understanding of prayer and how it guides all aspects and moments of a person's life. They shared views that they can pray at any time in any place, but especially enjoyed praying in church and in 'beautiful places'.
- Pupils are respectful of each other during child-led liturgical experiences. They listen carefully and respond appropriately. All pupils are provided with the opportunity to lead liturgy in their classes, however, more opportunities for all pupils to experience planning and leading aspects of whole school and wider community liturgies now need to be developed.

### **The quality of provision for Collective Worship – good**

- The school day is punctuated with prayer, at the start and end of the day and before meal times. Prayer is valued by the wider school community. Governor and staff meetings open with a prayer. Members of staff are provided with regular opportunities to pray together.
- Prayer focus areas are well resourced with pupils able to use artefacts appropriately to enhance their liturgical experiences. Pupils spoke positively about the opportunities to undertake worship and the experiences that help enrich their lives.
- Collective Worship reflects the distinctive Catholic ethos of the school. All Acts of Worship have a distinct theme and are linked to the Gospel. For example, choices linked to the parable of the Good Samaritan were used appropriately to help enhance pupils' sense of the divine in line with the age and stages of their development. Masses are also linked to the *Come and See* programme and take place weekly.
- Parishioners and parents are warmly welcomed to attend Mass and liturgical celebrations. They appreciate the warmth of the welcome received at these events and enjoy taking part.
- The parish priest works closely with the teaching staff to develop liturgical worship. He acts as a point of reference when planning Masses and he supports the members of staff in their development and understanding. Through weekly contact with the pupils at Masses, the parish priest oversees pupils' response to these opportunities: 'Children are engaged and well prepared', he affirmed. There is evidence of good interaction between pupils, the parish priest, parishioners, parents and members of staff at all levels.

### **How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship – good**

- Senior staff have a clear understanding of how to plan and provide meaningful Collective Worship. They have been out to visit other schools in order to improve and enhance their own provision.
- Through his weekly Masses, the parish priest works closely with the leader for Collective Worship to evaluate pupils' responses and engagement in Collective Worship.
- As part of the current school improvement plan, the leadership team has correctly identified that training for Collective Worship is required and they plan to share best practice with an outstanding school in the diocese. The impact of this is yet to be embedded.
- Although leaders conduct some monitoring of Collective Worship as part of the self-evaluation process, they need to ensure that this is systematic and that it takes account of all stakeholder views to ensure impact and improvement in the quality of provision.
- Governors have the opportunity to monitor Collective Worship and there is some evidence of this. However, this needs to be more evaluative in order to lead to improvement.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION	<b>3</b>
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- How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.
- The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education.
- How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.

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### How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education – requires improvement

- Pupils enjoy Religious Education. As one pupil said, 'I like learning about Jesus'. Another stated, 'Although I am not a Catholic, I really enjoy RE'. They appreciate that the teaching in Religious Education impacts on their daily lives and that Jesus is a role model to help us to become the best we can be.
- Behaviour throughout the school during lessons is a strength. Pupils show a high level of respect to members of staff and to each other. Teachers demonstrate a good level of knowledge and understanding for Religious Education. However, pupils had no understanding of their current levels in Religious Education or their targets for ways to improve their work.
- Religious Education assessment information presented for the last three years shows that pupils arrive at St Mary's below age-related expectations for Religious Education. By the end of Key Stage 1, they are in line with diocesan expectations with no group of pupils falling behind. Progress over time remains broadly in line with diocesan expectations by the end of Key Stage 2. However, inaccuracies in the information presented, stemming from inconsistencies in formative and summative assessment procedures throughout the school call into question the overall validity of this data.
- Assessment in Religious Education is inaccurate. There is insufficient evidence in pupils' books to support and validate teachers' judgements of attainment in Religious Education. Lack of moderation in the academic year 2015/16 has meant that staff do not have an accurate understanding of the *Levels of Attainment in Religious Education*. The Religious Education subject leader and senior staff are working with the Religious Education SLE (Specialist Leader in Education) to deepen the understanding of the *Levels of Attainment in Religious Education*, but this has yet to be embedded. Consequently, teachers are not using driver words appropriately in their teaching and feedback which is leading to learning not progressing at a fast enough pace.
- The presentation of pupils' work varies markedly throughout the school. At its best, it is neat and reflects a pride in the content. However, there are a number of examples when this is not the case. Standards in Religious Education do not match those in English, mathematics and science; this is inconsistent with the expectation that Religious Education is a 'core' subject of the curriculum in a Catholic school. Pupils are not given opportunities to write at length or at sufficiently regular intervals in Religious Education. In some topics, there were not enough pieces of work to match diocesan guidelines. Teachers use the 'I can' statements to assess an end of topic level, but they fail to engage pupils in this process and as such, there is a lack of pupil self-evaluation.

### **The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education – requires improvement**

- Feedback throughout lessons and in pupils' books is constructive and consistent throughout the school. Pupils respond to green for growth with polishing purple comments in their marking. However, in many cases, this process does not take the learning forward as the inaccurate and irregular use of driver words does not help to identify pupils' next steps for learning or how their work could be improved.
- The *Come and See* programme has been clearly embedded into the Religious Education curriculum. However, there is a lack of creativity in lessons throughout the school as many tasks that are planned do not lend themselves to pupils being able to undertake work to enable them to display and extend their knowledge and understanding in a variety of ways that are challenging to their thoughts and individual needs. For instance, in some classes there is an over-reliance on the use of worksheets, and the impact of this is a restriction on pupils' opportunities to learn and create independently.
- There is insufficient work in pupils' books. For some topics, there were only two pieces of recorded work when the expectation is a minimum of four to six pieces of quality recording within each topic. This calls into question the school's compliance with the episcopal requirement to devote 10% of the weekly timetable to the study of Religious Education.
- There are positive relationships observed throughout the school, teachers and teaching assistants work hard to support learning. Vulnerable pupils are supported particularly well by adults to enable them to access the curriculum at their level. Pupils will also support each other in lessons – especially when helping overcome barriers to learning and communication. In one instance, a pupil with English as an additional language supported another pupil from a different country to access the learning by explaining the task in-hand.
- A lack of challenge was evident in pupils' books and during visits to lessons; this is restricting pupils' progress in Religious Education. Many activities that pupils are asked to do are too similar, giving little scope for pupils to use their imagination and creativity. In turn, learning is not scaffolded well enough or differentiated for all pupils to achieve to their full potential.
- As teachers' assessment of Religious Education is inaccurate, they are unable to plan effectively for the next stage of pupils' learning. The use of driver words in lessons and feedback is not consistent or effective as it is not being pitched at the correct level. This has been identified by the school as a key issue for action.

### **The extent to which leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education – requires improvement**

- The subject leader for Religious Education has recently returned to St Mary's following maternity leave. In her absence, many aspects of the role were not fulfilled which has resulted in the school lacking effective leadership in Religious Education for this significant period of time. The subject leader is dedicated and hardworking. She takes part in diocesan training and shares feedback with staff.
- Assessment information for Religious Education is monitored and the analysis of the attainment and progress of pupil groups is evident. However, as the accuracy of assessment across the school is not secure, the analysis is not accurate either. Due to a lack of moderation for the provision of Religious Education, judgements about pupil outcomes in Religious Education are not robust and lack rigour.

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- The school improvement plan has identified Religious Education as a priority and there are plans to improve this aspect of school life. The monitoring of Religious Education is not yet rigorous enough to ensure that sufficient progress takes place although the plans aim to address this as a matter of urgency.
- Governors are actively involved in the school. The parish priest and the chair of governors are regular visitors to the school. The chair of governors has regular conversations with the subject leader for Religious Education and is aware that there is a mismatch between the school's expectations in standards and presentation for English and Religious Education. Governors, however, have not yet addressed the issue of pupils completing enough pieces of work for Religious Education in keeping with diocesan guidelines.
- Good links are being established with one of the Religious Educations SLEs (Specialist Leaders in Education) in the diocese. The subject leader for Religious Education is working with the SLE to moderate pupils' work and to develop teaching and learning. The impact of this collaboration has not had sufficient time to be embedded and therefore the impact of this cannot yet be measured.
- The Religious Education curriculum is well matched to the needs of the pupils and covers most aspects of the *Come and See* programme.

## SCHOOL DETAILS

<b>School Name</b>	St Mary's Catholic Primary School
<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	120615
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lincolnshire

The inspection of this school was carried out on behalf of the Bishop of Nottingham under Canon 806 of Canon Law and Section 48 of the 2005 Education Act in accordance with the *evaluation schedule* for diocesan canonical inspections in the Diocese of Nottingham. The inspection reviews and evaluates how effective the school is in providing Catholic education. The process begins with the school's own self-evaluation and the inspection schedule is in line with the criteria set by the National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers (NBRIA).

During the inspection, the inspectors observed 7 Religious Education lessons and 3 Acts of Collective Worship.

Meetings were held with the headteacher, the subject leaders for Religious Education, the chair of governors and the parish priest. Discussions were also held with pupils and parents.

The inspectors scrutinised a range of documents including reports to the governing body, action plans, the school improvement plan, monitoring forms, assessment data and tracking and parental response forms. Inspectors also examined the work in pupils' Religious Education books.

<b>Chair of Governors:</b>	Mr John McGarel
<b>Headteacher:</b>	Mr Damian Davey
<b>Date of Previous School Inspection:</b>	26 March 2012
<b>Telephone Number:</b>	01205 362092
<b>Email Address:</b>	damian.davey@bostonstmarys.co.uk

## WHAT INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS MEAN

Within the report, the following grades are used:

<b>Grade 1</b>	Outstanding
<b>Grade 2</b>	Good
<b>Grade 3</b>	Requires Improvement
<b>Grade 4</b>	Inadequate

In the context of the whole school, the overall effectiveness grades have the following meaning:

<b>Grade 1</b>	Outstanding	The school is a highly effective Catholic school. Pupils' needs are exceptionally well met.
<b>Grade 2</b>	Good	The school is an effective Catholic school. Pupils' needs are met well.
<b>Grade 3</b>	Requires Improvement	The school is not yet a good Catholic school, it is not inadequate however, and there are aspects that require improvement. There will be a monitoring visit within the next 12 months and the school will be re-inspected within 3 years.
<b>Grade 4</b>	Inadequate	There are features in need of urgent and immediate attention. The school is not meeting the basic minimum requirement for adequacy as a Catholic school. The school will receive an annual monitoring visit and will be re-inspected within 3 years.