

St Mary's & St Patrick's Catholic Primary School

URN: 401080

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Archbishop of Cardiff-Menevia

15–16 January 2025

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

Religious education (p.5)

The quality of curriculum religious education

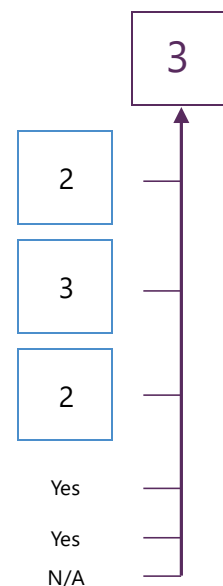
Collective worship (p.7)

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

The school is fully compliant with the general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishops' Conference

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

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



Compliance statement

- The school is fully compliant with the general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishops' conference.
- The school is fully compliant in relation to the requirements laid down by the Archdiocese.
- The expectations, in relation to the previous inspection's recommendations, are not applicable due to time passed since it was conducted.

What the school does well

- The behaviour of pupils and their positive attitude towards their learning are excellent. They are ready to learn.
- Leaders and governors have worked hard to create a strong, cohesive and welcoming Catholic community which has greatly benefitted pupils and staff.
- The manner in which the Pupil Profile virtues have been embedded into the life of the school is impressive. They are a key part of the school's work to help pupils to respect all people.

What the school needs to improve

- Refine and extend curriculum planning to ensure that the ambitious expectations of the *Religious Education Directory* are fully met in all classes.
- Strengthen assessment procedures, including questioning, marking, and feedback, to ensure that pupils have the opportunity to attain highly and that they understand what they need to do in order to improve.
- Create a robust system to monitor, evaluate and review (MER) the school's work in all three inspection areas. It should involve all relevant stakeholders and result in the identification of clear priorities and plans for improvement.

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

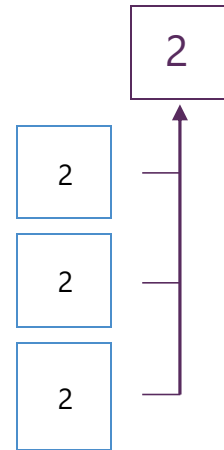
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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



The children at St Mary's and St Patrick's are proud to be pupils at the school. They understand the demands and challenges involved in living out the school's mission statement. The children at St Mary's and St Patrick's are proud to be pupils at the school. They treat one another with respect and they are very welcoming to visitors, greeting them with a smile and kind words. They understand the challenges involved in living out the school's mission statement. This is particularly impressive given that only 20% of pupils are baptised Catholics. They are happy in school, and they feel safe; the responses to the parental questionnaire, issued as a part of the inspection, confirm this. They have a good sense of 'fair play' which they put to good effect within the school and externally. Pupils have raised money for good causes such as Cafod, and they have donated items to support the local foodbank. They do not, however, play a central role in the decision-making process related to these good works. Pupils benefit from the way in which they learn about other religions and they understand that they should all be respected, and that all people are equal. The behaviour of pupils both in class and around the school site is excellent and they are a credit to their families and to the school's staff. This is a particularly strong factor in the Catholic life of the school. The children are appreciative of the pastoral care provided.

Staff show a strong commitment to their roles in implementing the school's mission statement. They take part enthusiastically in activities which reflect the life and mission of the school, for example, they participate fully during times of collective worship. Staff provide positive role models for pupils. Therefore, a strong Catholic community has been established. This is highlighted, for example, by the way that all children are welcomed into school and by the particularly caring approach applied to those who are most vulnerable. The way staff have created such a strong Catholic community, given

the high proportion of non-Catholic pupils, is a particular strength of the school. The environment is very clearly Catholic in nature. Good work in relation to weaving the virtues of the school's Pupil Profile into its life is in evidence; promoting, for example, the notion of being 'grateful and generous'. The school's work to develop pupils' moral and spiritual development is good. Staff make appropriate use of the materials prescribed by the archdiocese to deliver Relationships and Sex Education (RSE).

Leaders and governors are very committed to the development of a strong and cohesive Catholic community. The headteacher sees this as being at the heart of her role and her admirable work has led to the positive environment, referenced in this report, being established. Diocesan requirements and initiatives are implemented appropriately. Leaders seek to work closely with the parish. A new parish priest has recently been appointed and there is potential for the school-parish links to be further developed, particularly as the church is immediately adjacent to the school. Parents are very supportive of the work of the school and leaders recognise them as the first educators of their children. Currently, there are limited opportunities for parents to be fully involved in the life of the school; this is an area for development. Leaders and governors show high levels of respect for the dignity and well-being of staff. The governors who spoke with inspectors are passionate about their work and they want the best for pupils. They are prepared to challenge and support the leadership team. Currently, there is not a coherent set of processes in place in relation to the way that the school's Catholic life and mission is monitored, reviewed and reported upon. It would be beneficial to produce a document that clearly outlines how this work is to be done, and the roles of the staff and governors involved. In this area, inspectors agreed with the school's own self-evaluation of its work.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

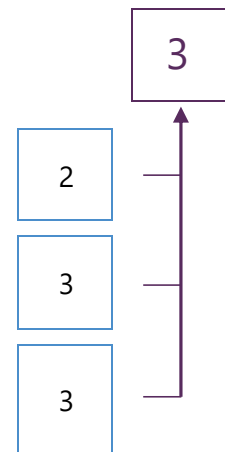
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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



Many pupils can speak well about their learning and they make good use of subject-specific vocabulary. They are able to concentrate well on their learning for extended periods of time, and to work without direct supervision of staff in an independent manner. Their engagement levels are high, and they are ready to learn; they want to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills. Pupils enjoy their learning, and their impressive behaviour allows them to do their best. When learning objectives are challenging, learners respond well; for example, when Year 1 pupils learnt about St Luke being the author of both his Gospel and of the Acts of the Apostles, and when Year 6 pupils studied the role of women as protagonists in the Old Testament, focussing on the role of Miriam in the Book of Numbers. A minority of pupils underachieve due to the level of challenge given to them not being sufficient, and there is variability, across the school, in the quality of their work. A small minority of work is poorly presented, particularly amongst older children. Attainment in religious education (RE) is on a par with that in other subject areas.

The quality of teaching across the school is variable, ranging from good to adequate levels which require improvement. This is also the case in relation to the subject knowledge of staff. Consequently, teachers' use of questioning often tends to be shallow. It does not check sufficiently for the level of pupils' understanding. Marking and feedback acknowledges the achieving of learning objectives, but it doesn't contribute significantly towards pupils knowing what they need to do in order to improve. Planning for RE is disjointed. An ambitious and challenging scheme of learning is in place; however, there are discrepancies between the planned curriculum and the taught curriculum, which often contains brief activities in isolation at the expense of deeper, more detailed and challenging learning experiences, including the development of extended writing for older pupils. There is not a consistently clear link between teachers' formative and summative assessment and the learning

activities that follow. As a result, the range of learning activities provided is not sufficiently broad. This has a limiting impact on pupils' attainment. Teachers and teaching assistants (TAs) work well together. The work of TAs has a positive impact on pupils' experiences. Teachers' work develops pupils' moral and spiritual development well and relationships between staff and pupils are good.

Leaders and governors exhibit positive intentions in relation to the RE curriculum. However, the application of key policies is inconsistent and the marking policy, in particular, requires revision. The curriculum leader, who works closely with the head teacher, has a good and honest understanding of current standards. She has the potential to implement the strategies necessary for improvement. To date, leaders have not ensured that the planning which flows from the *Religious Education Directory* leads to appropriate levels of progression for learners. Improvements are needed in this area to support groups of pupils, particularly the most able. The monitoring of RE has shortcomings: it does not include all relevant stakeholders, and it does not result in clear, detailed and coherent plans for improvement. Leaders have provided good levels of training for staff on curriculum implementation, however, the impact of this is unclear. It has not resulted in the ambitious teaching and learning involved in the planning being visible in pupil outcomes. A clear policy statement on the school's MER work is not in place. It would be beneficial to produce one that clearly highlights exactly which people are involved and the nature of their roles, which are currently unclear.

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

2

2

Outcomes in collective worship are good. Pupils respond positively to the prayer and liturgy opportunities provided by the school. They are reverent, well behaved, prayerful, and they sing enthusiastically. Acts of worship are age appropriate and engage pupils' interest. In the worship observed during the inspection, pupils were able to respond to the scripture heard and to consider how the word of God impacts on the way they live their lives. For example, having listened to the parable of the Good Samaritan, pupils were able to share ways that they could love their neighbour. All pupils are supported to plan and lead liturgy for their peers with the gather, listen, respond, and going forth format. They are clearly proud to share their prayer experiences with one another and prayer times contribute to the Catholic ethos of the school. During the pupil-led worship observed, pupils were proud to take part and read well. They used music and singing to enhance the prayerful atmosphere, listened to one another, and were reflective during worship. For example, Year 6 pupils led their time of prayer - focusing on the virtues of being grateful and generous - independently and confidently, and all Year 6 pupils participated reverently. However, opportunities for pupils to evaluate the quality of prayer and worship they have planned are limited.

The provision for prayer and liturgy is good. It includes well-established routines of daily prayer, together with adult-led and pupil led worship, which reflect the Catholic character of the school. They are meaningful, age-appropriate, and follow the cycle of the liturgical year. All staff are good role models who capably guide pupils in their planning of prayer and liturgy. For example, the RE lead delivered an engaging prayer session to pupils in Reception to Year 2 using artefacts, cloths and other resources, with a clear theme about how they can shine Jesus' light today on others by the way in which they behave. The school environment is well used with appropriate prayer foci in each classroom. These areas are well cared for and conducive to prayer. The use of the parish church and grotto, on the same grounds as the school, is a valuable feature. All classrooms have displays which

support prayer and learning. These were recently monitored by leaders and governors and areas of development acted upon. The school prayer book contains a range of formal and traditional prayers used by the school, in English and Welsh. Links with the local parish are being re-established and the school is actively working to improve them. However, opportunities for parents and carers to attend worship are limited.

Leaders promote prayer and liturgy well and are good role models. They have risen to the challenge of providing good quality Catholic prayer and liturgy within the context of having just 20% of pupils who are baptised Catholics. Leaders have ensured that the school environment effectively demonstrates the Catholic ethos and nature of the school, including reflective displays which celebrate pupils' work. Prominent examples include a Pupil Profile Virtues display in the entrance to the school and a corridor display created by the head teacher and the pupils to celebrate the Jubilee Year 2025 Pilgrims of Hope theme. Every classroom includes a focal point for prayer; these are well resourced, interactive, and include pupils' prayers and responses. For example, in Years 3 and 4, virtue trees illustrated the people, places, and things the pupils were grateful for. Leaders have a thorough understanding of the Church's liturgical year, its seasons and feasts, and the necessary skills to develop meaningful themes. However, leaders' work in monitoring and evaluating the provision for collective worship is underdeveloped.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Mary's and St Patrick's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	401080
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	6723311
Full postal address of the school	St Mary's & St Patrick's Catholic Primary School, Monica Street, Maesteg, Bridgend, CF34 9AY
School phone number	001656732349
Headteacher	Nicola Kelly-Fisher
Chair of governors	Neil Scourfield
School Website	www.stmaryandstpatrick.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	29 th September – 1 st October 2014
Previous denominational inspection grade	GG

The inspection team

Lyndon Watkins
Laura Taylor

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

