



DIOCESE OF
SHREWSBURY

DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION REPORT:

**THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL
AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

School: St Mary's Catholic Primary School
Address: Coronation Crescent
Madeley
TF7 5EJ

Tel No: 01952 388255

URN: 123556

Headteacher: Mrs S Griffiths

Chair of Governors: Mrs J Payton

Date of Inspection: 26 June 2019

Inspectors: Mrs R Moores
Mrs J Walker
Mrs K O'Hare (shadowing)

Our Mission Statement

Jesus said: ‘Love one another as I have loved you.’ These words are at the heart of our school family.

Within our Catholic community, where prayer, liturgy and reflection are an important part of our daily life, the Christian values of friendship, compassion and forgiveness are shared with all.

As Catholic Christians, we are guided by the values of the Gospel and the beliefs of our own faith tradition. At the same time, we are respectful of the beliefs of others. We celebrate achievement in all aspects of school and home life – everyone is unique and a child of God.

SCHOOL: ST MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL, MADELEY

DATE OF LAST INSPECTION: 7TH JULY 2014

JUDGEMENT FROM PREVIOUS INSPECTION: GOOD

AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT FROM PREVIOUS INSPECTION

- Continue to develop robust systems for the monitoring and assessment of Religious Education.
- Continue to develop assessment procedures to support greater differentiation, particularly for more able pupils.

PROGRESS MADE WITH AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT FROM THE PREVIOUS INSPECTION

There has been much progress since the last inspection and Leaders and Governors are committed to ensuring provision for Religious Education continues to improve:

- There is now a clear timeline in place for monitoring and evaluation procedures and standards in Religious Education have risen since the last inspection.
- The recently reviewed Marking Policy helps pupils to identify the areas where their work can be improved.
- Teachers' use of Learning Objectives, 'I can statements' and 'Driver' words have improved the quality of provision in Religious Education lessons.
- Leaders and Governors have rightly given high priority in the School's Improvement Plan to Religious Education and the recent introduction of a 'Homework Offer' features Religious Education tasks which are increasingly being selected by pupils.
- The school now invites parents in every two weeks to class assemblies where the work covered in Religious Education lessons is shared.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS: how effective is the school in providing Catholic Education.

2

This is a good Catholic school.

The above judgement on overall effectiveness is based on all the available evidence following the evaluation of:

CATHOLIC LIFE

2

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

2

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

2

Summary of key findings:

- St Mary's is a good Catholic Primary which fully lives out its Mission Statement of 'Love one another as I have loved you'.
- The Headteacher, ably supported by the Assistant Headteacher, provides strong and inspiring leadership for the school.
- Team work and a sense of community are at the heart of the work of this school - all are welcomed and nurtured as unique and valued members of this inclusive community.
- Governors, Staff, pupils and parents fully appreciate and value the Catholic life of the school.
- Pupils enjoy their Religious Education lessons, especially where a wide range of creative strategies are used, and make good progress.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils and are clear about the priorities of challenging the more able pupils; pupils' behaviour is excellent.
- Governors and leaders know their school and are clear about what they need to do to continue improving.
- Resources are targeted appropriately for Religious Education and the Governors are committed to ensuring appropriate professional development opportunities are available for all staff.
- Priority is given to daily prayer and pupils are reverent and respectful when praying; they sing joyfully and respond confidently in acts of Collective Worship.
- Staff are becoming more skilled in helping pupils to plan and lead acts of Collective Worship.

What the school needs to do to improve further

- Prioritise the recruitment of a new Religious Education Co-ordinator to fill the current teaching vacancy so that the current leadership of the school is further strengthened in its drive to improve provision for Religious Education.
- Ensure priority is given to creativity in the Religious Education curriculum so that pupils are actively engaged in all lessons and respond with interest and enthusiasm.
- Review chaplaincy provision to ensure a wider range of opportunities are provided to help pupils and staff to contribute to the continuing development of the Catholic Life of the school.
- Review current provision for personal relationships' education (RSE) and update resources in line with Diocesan guidance.
- Ensure Collective Worship is shaped by and closely linked to the Church's liturgical year so that pupils have good experiences of the Church's liturgical life.
- Consider the creation of a 'Sacred Space' to further enhance the Catholic ethos and identity of the school.

Information about the Inspection

The Inspection of St Mary's Catholic Primary School was carried out under the requirements of the Education Act 2005, and in accordance with the Shrewsbury Diocesan Framework and Schedule for Denominational Inspections approved by the Bishop of Shrewsbury. The inspection reviews and evaluates how effective the school is in providing Catholic education. This process begins with the school's own self-evaluation and the inspection schedule follows the criteria set by the National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers (NBRIA 2017).

The inspector reviewed in detail the following aspects:

- 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 pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education
- How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship
- The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school

- How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education, Collective Worship and the Catholic Life of the school.

The inspection was carried out by two inspectors over one day:

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in five classes.
- An example of Collective Worship was observed, led by a group of Year 5 pupils.
- Discussions were held with the Headteacher who is currently the Religious Education Coordinator, the Assistant Headteacher, two governors, pupils, and a recently qualified member of staff.
- A sample of pupils' Religious Education workbooks and Collective Worship Big Books was scrutinised from every class, along with the Religious Education Coordinator's file and files for the Catholic Life of the school, Religious Education and Collective Worship.
- The school's website was checked for further evidence.
- A range of documents was made available and scrutinised including the Diocesan Self Evaluation Form (DSEF), the School Development Plan (RAP), attainment and progress data, school policies and Minutes of governing body meetings.
- Tracking data was scrutinised and discussed with the Headteacher and Assistant Headteacher.
- Displays around the school and in classrooms were also noted.

Information about this school

- St Mary's is a one form entry Voluntary Aided Catholic Primary School, catering for 4-11 year olds. The school has an annual admission number of 30, and there are currently 196 pupils on roll – 71 pupils are baptised Catholics.
- St Mary's School is situated in an area of significant social deprivation and 35% of the school's pupils are in receipt of the Pupil Premium Grant.
- The school serves the Parish of the Good Shepherd.
- A very small number of pupils transfer to the Holy Trinity Academy because of distance and transport costs.
- Both the Headteacher and the Assistant Headteacher were in post at the time of the last inspection.
- The Headteacher, who was the Religious Education Co-ordinator at the last inspection, has recently taken on this role once again.
- Staffing includes a full time equivalent of eight teachers and eleven support staff. Two teachers and five support staff are Catholic. No teachers hold the Catholic Certificate of Religious Studies (CCRS).

Full report – inspection judgments

CATHOLIC LIFE

The Catholic Life of the school is good.

2

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school	2
The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school	2
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision of the Catholic Life of the school	2

- All pupils value and appreciate the Catholic Life of their school and they fully live out the school's Mission Statement: 'Love one another as I have loved you.'
- Pupils enjoy school life and they feel loved and nurtured, as one pupil explained: 'If things don't go well at home children are helped to feel better.'
- Pupils respect one another and actively reflect the Gospel values of love and forgiveness – their behaviour is excellent.
- High standards of behaviour are promoted and achieved in a calm, affirming environment.
- Pupils are increasingly taking on more responsibilities such as being Ambassadors in Year 6 and being members of Mini Vinnies and would benefit from an increase in opportunities being provided.
- All pupils are encouraged to understand their responsibilities towards others and they regularly raise funds for others, such as: CAFOD, the local Foodbank, Education for the Deprived in India and other national charities.
- Pupils are keen to participate in activities that contribute to the Catholic Life of the school and as the school's chaplaincy provision develops a greater range of opportunities, including retreats, should be offered.
- Prayer focus areas are evident within the school environment but need to have a higher profile within classrooms and to reflect both the Church's liturgical year and the units being studied within 'The Way, the Truth and the Life'.
- Pupils benefit enormously from the outstanding pastoral care and support they are given – staff and governors know their pupils well – as one staff member expressed: 'The ethos of love, respect and a fresh start runs through everyone'.
- Pastoral programmes and those for the teaching of Personal, Social and Health (PSHE) are well taught but the programme for Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) should be reviewed and updated in line with Diocesan guidance.
- The strong sense of community is tangible within the school's ethos and all within the school work well as part of a team – the quality of all relationships within the school is outstanding.

- Provision for spiritual and moral development is good and staff recognise its importance – as one member of staff explained: ‘I am proud to be part of the children’s religious journey’.
- Staff and governors are excellent role models and lead by example as experienced during the act of Collective Worship during the inspection.
- Parishioners are very proud of their school and regularly attend school Masses.
- Leaders have a clear vision for the school and are passionate in their aim for ‘...prayer to be more at the heart of the children’s development’.
- Leaders are currently reviewing the school’s website to ensure it fully captures the distinctive Catholic identity of the school.
- The senior leadership team leads by example and provides strong and nurturing support.
- Governors are passionately committed to the work of the school and provide very effective challenge and support.
- The Parish Priest is a very regular visitor to the school and is highly supportive of the school’s mission.
- Relationships with Parents are very strong and they are warmly welcomed to the school and kept informed of their children’s work in Religious Education.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Religious Education is good.

2

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education	2
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education	2
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education	2

- St Mary's Catholic Primary School serves an area of high need and most pupils' attainment on entry into school is below the national average.
- Most pupils make good progress in relation to their low starting points.
- Data is captured every term and analysed to ensure those who are not making sufficient progress are identified and actions are taken.
- Pupils enjoy lessons and are becoming more religiously literate – leaders have rightly identified the need to focus on extending pupils' vocabulary to improve understanding.
- Most pupils are engaged in lessons, especially where more creative activities are provided, but during some lessons observed pupils were passive learners and tasks lacked creativity.
- Most pupils are interested and enthusiastic during Religious Education lessons and they respond well when they are challenged to extend their learning and work more independently – this is an area that school leaders have recognised as an area for development across all phases.
- Attainment is good with most pupils working at age-related expectations and there is an improving trend.
- The quality of work, both in class and written work is generally good and pupils take a real sense of pride in their Religious Education books.
- Teachers plan lessons that are linked to prior attainment and recognise the importance of using 'Driver Words' and 'I Can Statements', however the lesson planning scrutinised during inspection lacked consistency.
- Teachers are generally confident in their subject knowledge and have a good understanding of how pupils learn, therefore pupils make good progress over time and within lessons.
- Good quality resources, including interactive whiteboards, are used very effectively within lessons.
- Generally support staff are used effectively but on occasions independent learning is inhibited because of an over-reliance on teaching assistant support.
- Good quality feedback within books helps pupils to understand what they need to do to improve.
- Teachers' use of questioning is generally effective and has been a focus for school improvement.
- Achievement and effort are noted and celebrated so that pupils are encouraged to persevere.

- Leaders and governors have ensured that the Religious Education curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference.
- Leaders and governors are clear about the requirement of 10% Religious Education curriculum time but need to review coverage to ensure that time is used more effectively to optimise learning.
- Leaders and governors have a clear vision for teaching and learning and have developed good practices for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school.
- The appointment of a teacher to take on the important role of leading Religious Education would help to secure this vision.
- Leaders and governors have accurately identified areas for development and have planned strategically to achieve their aims.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Collective Worship is good.

2

How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship	2
The quality of provision for Collective Worship	2
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship	2

- Pupils are reverent and respectful during Acts of Collective Worship; they sing joyfully and are keen to participate and they are clearly happy to be part of a praying community.
- The Act of Collective Worship attended during the inspection was led confidently by Year 5 pupils and the variety of approaches to prayer included scripture and traditional and contemporary prayer; reference to the liturgical year would have enhanced provision, as would the inclusion of a 'Going Forth' activity.
- Pupils regularly lead Acts of Collective Worship and are increasingly more involved in independently planning Collective Worship; consideration should now be given to the creation of opportunities for pupils to evaluate experiences of Acts of Collective Worship.
- Those supporting pupils in leading Collective Worship should ensure that pupils are more familiar with the different elements of an Act of Collective Worship: Gather, Listen, Respond, Go Forth and thought might be given as to how best address misconceptions in responses within pupil-led worship so that pupils' misunderstandings are corrected.
- Pupils have some understanding of the Church's liturgical year and its seasons and feasts but would benefit from greater priority being given to this when leaders are planning Collective Worship opportunities.
- Pupils benefit much from living as part of a faithful, praying community and they are being helped to develop well spiritually and morally: 'Our mission statement is to "Love One Another" and that's what we do in school – we take care of each other.'
- Pupils learn appropriately about other faiths and they have a well-developed sense of respect for those whose faith backgrounds are different to their own: 'We learn about Islam and how they pray.'
- Collective Worship is clearly a very important part of the life of the school and praying together is a daily experience for pupils – the development of a dedicated prayer space would increase opportunities for pupils to participate in voluntary Acts of Collective Worship.
- Planning for Collective Worship has a clear sense of purpose and message and is given appropriate priority by leaders and governors.
- Staff are becoming more skilled in helping pupils to plan and lead Collective Worship but would benefit from further training to increase their confidence.
- A growing range of opportunities is being provided to involve parents and carers more in liturgy and worship, resulting in an increasing attendance of parents on such occasions and this is a strength of the school.

- Governors are committed to improving provision for Collective Worship and ensure resources are prioritised.
- Regular in-house training and some Diocesan training has been provided for all staff but further opportunities for professional development would enhance provision.
- Leaders and governors work together with great dedication to improve liturgical formation for all within the school community.
- Governors are deeply committed to the mission and vision of the school and are providing effective challenge and support.