

St Mary's Catholic Primary School

URN: 138339

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Nottingham

20 May 2026 – 21 May 2026

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 RE

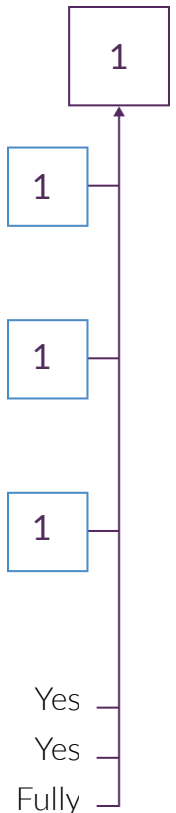
Collective worship (p.7)

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



What the school does well

- Leaders ensure that Christ is always at the heart of St Mary's. They are relentless in the pursuit of this mission and are a source of inspiration for the whole community.
- The commitment of staff to the Catholic life and mission of the school ensures that all children receive the highest standards of care and pastoral support, and there is a strong culture welcome for everyone.
- Pupils show a deep respect for their own personal dignity and that of others, who are made in the image and likeness of God.
- Pupils are highly religiously literate. They are able to make links from their learning to scripture and the traditions of the Catholic Church.
- Leaders, including governors, place the highest priority on inspirational professional development so that all staff understand the centrality of prayer and liturgy to the life of the school.

What the school needs to improve

- Enable pupils to strategically share their views on the school's Catholic life and mission, so that they can play an active role in suggesting and carrying out improvements.
- Ensure lesson tasks and resources provide a range of ways for pupils to record their learning, so that all pupils make strong progress.
- Empower leaders to model effective celebrations of the word for staff so that they understand how to structure, plan and lead high-quality opportunities for prayer.

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

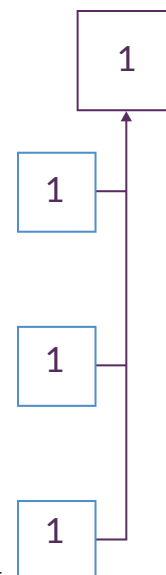
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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 fully live out the school's mission. They are incredibly proud of their Catholic identity and actively demonstrate this within the school, the local community and beyond, making a strong contribution to the school's Catholic life and mission. They show joy and confidence in their faith and feel a strong sense of belonging. Pupils' personal development is supported through a clear focus on school values, with pupils recognised weekly as 'missionary disciples' for demonstrating commitment, responsibility, respect, honesty, resilience, appreciation and kindness. They understand that being part of St Mary's means walking closely with God. Pupils show a deep commitment to caring for others, especially those most in need. This is rooted in their understanding of Catholic social teaching and reflected in their support for a range of charities, both local and global. Behaviour is exemplary, with older pupils naturally supporting younger ones. The school is often described as an 'oasis of calm'. Pupils clearly value chaplaincy opportunities, engaging positively in prayer and reflection.

The mission statement, regularly revisited, sits firmly at the heart of life at St Mary's and is fully embraced by the whole school community each day. It is clearly lived out in both words and actions. As a result, staff consistently go above and beyond in contributing to the school's Catholic life and mission. One staff member encapsulated this by saying, 'St Mary's is a wonderfully warm, loving and kind school - much like Jesus'. This shared commitment creates a strong culture of neighbourly love, where everyone is welcomed and valued, particularly those who are most vulnerable. This sense of welcome is evident in the highly positive relationships throughout the school, including daily interactions with families. There is a genuine commitment to supporting families in practical ways, such as providing food and

uniform, alongside a deeper desire to help them flourish independently: as one parent states, 'The values they teach are meaningful and inspiring, helping children learn how to be kind, caring and to follow the example of Jesus in their daily lives. I am very grateful for all the teachers and especially for our amazing headteacher, whose dedication makes such a positive difference'. Pastoral care is a significant strength. Led by the headteacher, it underpins all aspects of school life. The environment powerfully reflects the school's Catholic ethos through high-quality displays and visible signs of prayer. Spaces are used creatively to support spiritual development, including a dedicated prayer room. Chaplaincy is highly valued, with pupil chaplains undertaking their roles with pride, supported effectively by the lay chaplain.

Ensuring that Christ is at the centre of the school is fundamental to the work of leaders and governors. They consistently uphold the bishop's vision for the diocese, placing a strong emphasis on the key themes of encounter, discipleship and mission. Partnership between the school and the parish of St Paul and St Mary's continues to strengthen. Regular involvement from the parish priest, alongside shared Masses and important liturgical celebrations, is helping to build a clear and unified vision between school and parish. Leaders and governors model the principles of the gospel and Catholic social teaching. They ensure that resources are directed to those most in need. Governors show strong ambition for the school and are fully involved in a structured process of monitoring and self-evaluation that both supports and challenges leaders. While pupils contribute positively, opportunities for them to share their views more strategically and lead improvements are underdeveloped. The curriculum is firmly rooted in Catholic social teaching, with strong links across subjects centred on scripture, supported by regular, high-quality staff development.

Religious education

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 key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

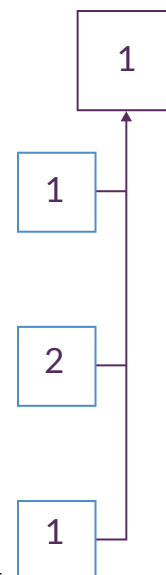
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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



Pupils are developing strong knowledge, understanding and skills in religious education, with some exceeding expectations. Progress is consistently good across the school, and in some cases stronger, particularly in pupils' ability to retain and recall learning. Pupils in upper Key Stage 2 and the Early Years Foundation Stage demonstrate especially strong recall of prior knowledge and Catholic traditions within a language-rich curriculum. This enables them to speak confidently and competently about their learning, showing impressive religious literacy. Pupils are enthusiastic about religious education and show a clear desire to deepen their understanding. This is true for all groups, including those with additional needs, who make strong progress from their starting points. Pupils confidently use bible stories to explain their thinking and enjoy participating in class discussions. Work is generally of good quality and well presented, although there are limited opportunities for pupils to express individuality and creativity. Pupils engage actively in lessons, showing high levels of concentration, collaboration and sustained focus. They remain fully involved in their learning for extended periods, contributing to their enjoyment of religious education and exemplary behaviour. Through clear and consistent feedback, pupils are increasingly aware of their progress, with achievement in religious education being in line with other core subjects.

Teachers demonstrate strong subject knowledge and teach with confidence, supported by clear whole-school expectations that enable them to communicate the curriculum effectively. In the strongest lessons, planning is detailed and carefully matched to the intended learning outcomes. However, consistency is not always evident, and at times learning lacks precision,

which can limit pupils' full understanding of lesson objectives. While some variety in tasks from the *Religious Education Directory* is evident, most activities are written. Pupils express a desire for a wider range of ways to record their learning. In effective lessons, pupils are well supported to develop their knowledge, though occasionally tasks are overly scaffolded, limiting opportunities for independent thinking and extension. Teachers regularly check pupils' understanding through retrieval activities and targeted questioning, helping pupils to acquire and retain knowledge effectively. Assessment takes place at least half-termly through planned tasks. Pupils take pride in their religious education work, supported by regular praise and consistent feedback that helps them understand their progress. Teachers enhance learning with quality resources, including a focus on analysing religious artwork. Teaching assistants provide highly effective support, particularly for specific pupils, contributing positively to learning across the school.

Leaders and governors ensure the religious education curriculum fully meets the requirements of the *Religious Education Directory*. It is carefully adapted to be accessible and meaningful for all pupils, including those with the greatest needs. The curriculum is thoughtfully planned and sequenced, with a strong focus on scripture, Catholic social teaching and the development of religious vocabulary. Staff value the school's clear commitment to high-quality professional development within school, across the Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi-Academy Trust and offered by the diocese. This shared approach ensures all staff feel involved and supported in delivering effective religious education. The subject leader is highly effective and inspirational, with a clear vision for the subject's development. She works tirelessly to support colleagues and to ensure that this vision is realised across the school. Enrichment opportunities in religious education are extensive. Pupils benefit from access to the prayer room, regular visits to St Mary's Church and learning experiences at The Briars diocesan youth centre. These opportunities deepen pupils' understanding and engagement. Staff contribute actively to the *Catholic School Evaluation Document*, ensuring self-evaluation is thorough and effective. The link governor for religious education works closely with the subject leader, supporting strategic planning and reviewing progress to drive continuous improvement.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

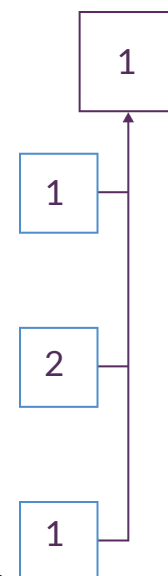
How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

Provision

The quality of collective worship provided by the school

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for collective worship



St Mary's provides a wide range of rich and varied opportunities for prayer and liturgy, which pupils engage with enthusiastically and confidently. They can clearly explain how these experiences shape their understanding of themselves, others and their faith. This strong foundation begins in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where children participate confidently, and continues to develop across the school through effective pupil ministry. This is the result of well-planned provision by leaders, enabling pupils to take on liturgical roles with growing understanding and skill, while consistently showing respect and reverence. Celebrations of the word are well-structured and regularly modelled effectively by leaders. Pupils demonstrate strong skills in reflection, including silent prayer, appropriate gestures and confident reading of scripture. Their knowledge of scripture is well developed, allowing them to engage meaningfully with the messages shared during celebrations. Pupils also have a clear understanding of the Church's liturgical year and how this is expressed through prayer and worship. Pupils take responsibility for planning and leading prayer, often independently, showing creativity and confidence. Many pupils voluntarily participate in prayer opportunities, such as leading the Rosary. They understand the impact of prayer on their lives and behaviour, with one child remarking 'Praying helps us become closer to God and helps us be better Christians, like St Carlo Acutis'.

Prayer and liturgy are central to the life of the school and form part of the daily routine. Pupils welcome this, with one stating 'I feel calm and safe when I pray'. Scripture is always a central part of each gathering, and passages are selected with thought for their suitability to the time of the year or the theme of the worship. Senior leaders model participation with

pupils and have an understanding of the norms of the Church and how to plan and lead prayer with pupils: however, this expertise is not always evident within class-based celebrations of the word. The school makes good use of the spaces available to provide prayer spaces within classrooms and elsewhere, such as the well used dedicated prayer room. Increasingly, staff use the parish church as well. The school works hard alongside the parish priest to ensure that parents feel welcome in school and in the parish, with one parent saying, 'I feel blessed to have such a community involved with my children's development and spiritual growth'. A strategy document to support the delivery of prayer and liturgy has been designed to help staff. It is a logical and thorough strategy for building up pupils' skills, and relevant information to increase knowledge and understanding, though this is not consistently embedded across the whole school. Holy days, important feasts and sacramental celebrations in Advent and Lent, are given priority in the school's schedule. Opportunities for all pupils are carefully planned across the year, with the support of the parish priest, so that the whole school community celebrates the Eucharist regularly.

Leaders place the highest priority on inspirational professional development for all staff, and staff value this provision because it involves them all. As a result, all staff understand the centrality of prayer and liturgy to the life of the school, and leaders and the lay chaplain are highly skilled and well supported to lead it. Where members of staff are able to provide celebrations of the word that are engaging, these are of a consistently high quality and are accessible, meaningful and relevant for the whole community. Prayer and liturgy are enhanced using quality resources. Self-evaluation of prayer and liturgy includes involvement from staff and governors. It is well formed and influential in a continued drive for improvement.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Mary's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	138339
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8923313
Full postal address of the school	Beaconsfield Street, Nottingham, NG7 6FL
School phone number	0115 915 1799
Headteacher or Head of School	Kerry O'Neill
Chair of Governors	Olusegun Oluwole
School Website	www.stmaryshysongreen.com
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Our Lady of Lourdes CMAT
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Academy
Admissions policy	Non Selective
Age-range of pupils	3 - 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	21 November 2019
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

The Inspection Team

Andrew Monaghan Lead

Bernadette Nesbit

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