



# St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Claughton-on-Brock

URN: 119619

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Lancaster

Click to enter start date. – 28 November 2025

## Summary of key findings

### Overall effectiveness

The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school

2

#### 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 curriculum requirements laid down by the Bishops' Conference

Yes

The school is fully compliant with all requirements of the diocesan bishop

No

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

Fully

## Compliance statement

- The school is fully compliant with the general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishops' Conference.
- The school is not fully compliant with any additional requirements laid down by the Bishop of Lancaster.
- The school has responded fully to the areas for improvement from the previous Catholic school inspection.

## What the school does well

- St Mary's is a fully inclusive, joyful school.
- The whole of the school environment is inspirational and welcoming, witnessing the Catholic mission.
- Leaders, including governors, are highly ambitious for the Catholic life of the school.
- Pupils are wonderful ambassadors and are happy and secure in school.
- Parents value the staff's commitment to religious education and the wider life of the school in the community.

## What the school needs to improve

- Widen the participation in self-evaluation of the Catholic life of the school by including pupils, parents, staff and governors so as to further enhance the school's mission.
- Help all pupils know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve by reviewing and refining strategies such as next steps, peer assessment and feedback.
- Improve the consistency of experiences of prayer and liturgy provided so that pupils across the whole school are led to a full, active and conscious participation.

## 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

1

**Provision**

The quality of provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school

1

**Leadership**

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school

1

1

Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the Catholic life of this vibrant school. They confidently share the school's mission statement and explain how it influences their daily lives. This commitment is reflected in their excellent behaviour and the warm, loving relationships they build with each other and with staff. Their happiness and security in school is evident in lessons and around school. The Bible Buddies group meets weekly to reflect on scripture, create resources, and produce displays that enrich the spiritual environment of the school. As a result, all pupils flourish in a faith-filled community. Pupils take a leading role in responding to the demands of Catholic social teaching and take seriously Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato Si'*. For example, they demonstrate care for creation through practical actions, both in school and beyond. They also actively support charitable initiatives through the well-established school CAFOD group, influencing school life and promoting care for the common good through projects such as food bank donations. Gospel values are evident in pupils' daily lives. For example, they show kindness, respect, and forgiveness in their interactions, ensuring that the Catholic ethos permeates relationships, behaviour, and the wider school culture.

The school's mission is clearly understood and actively lived out by all members of the community, creating a shared purpose that permeates every aspect of school life. Parents highly value the commitment of staff, who engage enthusiastically in activities that reflect the school's mission and support the community it serves. This fosters a strong sense of belonging among pupils, staff, and families. Relationships at all levels are rooted in respect and gospel values, creating an inclusive and welcoming environment. Chaplaincy provision is robust, includes staff from the high school and has a significant impact on the spiritual life of the school. A wide range of enriching opportunities, including prayer, reflection and celebration

enhance pupils' faith journey and further strengthen the Catholic identity of the school. All staff are committed to the flourishing of each individual. Pupils spoke to inspectors about how they have been inspired to pursue vocations for the common good, demonstrating the school's success in nurturing spiritual and personal growth. The physical environment is outstanding, reflecting the Catholic character and reinforcing the school's mission and values. Due to small cohorts and mixed-aged classes, Relationships, Sex, and Health Education (RSHE) is very carefully planned and delivered in accordance with statutory and diocesan requirements. This provision supports pupils' moral and spiritual development and aligns with the school's commitment to gospel values.

The executive headteacher and head of school, work actively in pursuit of the school's mission. They collaborate closely with the newly formed federated governing body to ensure Christ remains at the heart of school life. They are authentic witnesses to their faith who inspire staff and the wider community, contributing to a flourishing, faith-filled environment. Through their example of service, they have ensured a thriving partnership between school and parish. Parents value the work of the school, with several families choosing to travel significant distances to be part of this community. Leaders, including governors, maintain strong partnerships so that there is effective leadership across this school and its partner school. The school has stated its intention to join the Mater Ecclesiae Multi Academy Trust and engages with Trust leaders and schools, benefitting from professional development opportunities. Staff wellbeing is a key priority and is successfully promoted, resulting in a harmonious and happy workforce. Leaders support staff in making meaningful links between subjects so that Catholic teaching is becoming embedded across the curriculum. Self-evaluation is accurate and reflective of the school's strengths and areas for development. Widening participation in the evaluation of the Catholic life, including input from pupils, parents, staff, and governors, would further enhance the school's mission.

## 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

2

#### Provision

The quality of teaching, learning, and assessment in religious education

2

#### Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for religious education

2

2

Pupils demonstrate enjoyment of religious education and engage enthusiastically in lessons. Across the whole school they are developing secure knowledge and skills in line with the *Religious Education Directory* (RED). Evidence from the school's tracking confirms that pupils make good progress across all year groups in knowing more, remembering more, and applying their learning effectively. Pupil behaviour in religious education lessons and their attitudes towards learning are outstanding. They have very good relationships with their peers and teachers which enable them to work with focus and purpose, both independently and collaboratively. In lessons observed during inspection, older pupils demonstrated effective recall connecting previous learning to the current topic. Across the year groups pupils are increasingly using subject-specific vocabulary accurately to explain their thinking. Older pupils do this with confidence. Most teachers provide effective support that enables pupils to extend and refine their responses, which deepens understanding and promotes higher-order thinking. The quality of pupils' work is good overall, reflecting secure learning and showing emerging creativity. Whilst many pupils can articulate how well they are achieving in religious education; they are less clear about the precise steps needed to improve further. Strengthening feedback, pupil self-assessment and next steps would enhance progress.

Religious education is afforded parity with other core subjects, reflecting its central position within the Catholic curriculum. This commitment is evident in class timetables, where religious education lessons are given priority. Overall, teachers demonstrate secure subject knowledge and communicate the significance of religious education effectively, ensuring pupils understand its value. During inspection, some very good teaching was observed where teachers used skilful questioning, made explicit links to prior learning and provided clear, adaptive explanations that supported progress for all learners. Across the whole school

teachers are becoming confident in using their knowledge of individual pupils to plan and deliver lessons which engage and often inspire them. Teachers combine good subject knowledge with sound pedagogical practice, ensuring lessons are purposeful, inclusive, and well-structured. Pupil effort and achievement are recognised and celebrated, fostering pride and a positive attitude towards learning. Baseline assessments on entry to school enable staff to identify starting points and plan appropriately to meet the needs of all learners. A wide range of resources, including contributions from other adults enriches learning experiences and promotes active engagement. Displays in classrooms reflect current learning, subject specific vocabulary and pupil achievement.

The executive headteacher and head of school share the responsibility for leading religious education, which is well resourced and has parity with other core subjects across the curriculum. The curriculum has been carefully designed and sequenced, to ensure that the required content of the Directory is covered in the mixed-age classes, whilst ensuring development of skills through the curriculum journey. Leaders demonstrate a clear commitment to providing staff with access to high-quality continuing professional development opportunities that strengthen both subject knowledge and pedagogical practice. Governors play an active role in this process, prioritising investment in professional learning to maintain and enhance standards. Beyond the classroom, leaders and governors actively seek opportunities to enrich pupils' experiences through visits, guest speakers, and creative projects, fostering a broader appreciation of faith and culture. Monitoring and evaluation of religious education is rigorous and systematic, with governors fully involved in the process. This collaborative approach ensures accountability and drives improvement. Evidence from monitoring demonstrates a clear impact on pupil outcomes, the quality of teaching, and overall provision. Leaders continually seek to ensure that religious education is at the heart of the whole curriculum, contributing significantly to pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development.

## 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

1

**Leadership**

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

1

1

The prayer life of the school is central to its identity and mission. Pupils respond positively and reverently to opportunities for prayer and reflection, including in class, whole school assemblies and liturgies in church, demonstrating a developing sense of respect and engagement. Their enthusiastic participation in communal prayer extends to leading prayer and liturgical celebrations. This leadership is planned, nurtured and developed across the school, so that by key stage two most pupils are confident and understand their role within the prayer community. Music is used effectively to create a reflective tone, allowing pupils to become engaged immediately, so that times of prayer begin with reverence. Hymns, sung with joy and confidence by both pupils and staff, are regularly used across services. Scripture is appropriately selected to reflect current themes and read with care. As a result, pupils listen carefully, can hear the word of God clearly and are able to reflect appropriately. A significant highlight was the school and parish welcoming the Papal Nuncio as part of the diocesan centenary celebrations. Pupils contributed joyfully, singing in Spanish and embracing the cultural richness of the occasion, which reflected their openness and enthusiasm for faith experiences.

Prayer and liturgy is carefully planned, structured and inclusive, with the rhythm and pattern of daily prayer firmly embedded in school life. Staff and pupils truly value the regular pattern of high-quality spiritual experiences provided, which continually demonstrates the centrality of prayer at St Mary's. Catholic tradition is faithfully woven into the scheduled prayer and liturgy, so providing wide ranging and rich experiences for all members of the school community. Celebrations of the Word are thoughtfully prepared, using appropriate scripture that reflects the liturgical year and deepens pupils' understanding of the Church's seasons and traditions.

Staff commitment to prayer and liturgy is evident and commendable. They demonstrate skill and creativity in planning and leading worship, making excellent use of space to create environments conducive to prayer and reflection. Professional development in this area is a high priority, ensuring that staff are confident and knowledgeable about the centrality of prayer and liturgy within Catholic education. Many staff members volunteer their time beyond the school day for faith-based activities and training, demonstrating a strong commitment to nurturing the spiritual life of the pupils.

Prayer and liturgy are given the highest priority and leaders work hard to develop the skill set of the whole community. The prayer and liturgy policy and supporting guidance documents written by leaders provide staff and pupils with a clear scaffold upon which to plan and deliver reverent acts of prayer and liturgy. Leaders have a clear vision of how to plan to extend the skill of pupils further and are ambitious to ensure progress in pupils. The school's calendar clearly identifies the liturgical year and holy days of obligation. It provides opportunities for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist to be celebrated by the pupils and their families. Resources for prayer and liturgy are of a high quality and reflect the commitment of leaders to sustaining high quality prayer experiences for their school community. Parents value the opportunities provided for prayer such as Mass, and visits. Home engagement is strengthened through initiatives such as prayer bags, which have been highly successful in fostering prayer within the home. Talents within the school are used well to enhance liturgical celebrations, whether through music, art, or drama, further enriching the prayer life and making it accessible and meaningful for all. To improve further, leaders should ensure the quality of prayer opportunities remains consistently high across all year groups.

## Information about the school

Full name of school	St Mary's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	119619
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8883704
Full postal address of the school	St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Smithy Lane, Cloughton-on-Brock, Preston, PR3 0PN
School phone number	01995640258
Headteacher	Sarah Deakin
Chair of Governors	Michael Blair
School Website	<a href="http://www.cloughtonprimary.co.uk">www.cloughtonprimary.co.uk</a>
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	N/A
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Voluntary Aided School
Admissions policy	N/A
Age-range of pupils	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	October 2019
Previous denominational inspection grade	1 Outstanding

## The inspection team

Jacqueline Hampson  
Alison Dodd

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