



Inspection carried out Under Canon 804 and 806  
and in accordance with Section 48 of the Education  
Acts 2005 and 2011

DIOCESE OF SALFORD

Name of School St Mary's RC Primary School, Mayfield Ave, Oswaldtwistle, Accrington  
BB5 3AA  
Inspection date 11<sup>th</sup> February 2020  
Reporting Inspectors Carl McIver, Louise Frize, Sinead Colbeck

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Type of school	Primary
URN	119660
Age range of pupils	4-11 years
Number on roll	266
Appropriate authority	The Governing Body
Chair of Governors	David Joyce
Headteacher	Laura Wolstenholme
Religious Education Subject Leader	Jason Crompton
Date of previous inspection	12 <sup>th</sup> February 2015
Grade of previous inspection	Outstanding

Explanation of the Grades - 1 = Outstanding, 2 = Good, 3=Requires Improvement, 4 = Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of St Mary's RC Primary School	Overall grade	1
The Catholic Life of the school (incorporating Welcome, Welfare and Witness)	Grade	1
Religious Education (incorporating Word)	Grade	1
Collective Worship	Grade	1

## CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT OF THE SCHOOL

St Mary's is a one and a half form entry Roman Catholic primary school serving the parish of St Mary's in Oswaldtwistle. There are currently 266 pupils on role from Reception to Year 6 and 60% are Baptised Roman Catholic. 17% of pupils are eligible for Pupil Premium which is below local and national averages. There is little pupil mobility in the school. 11% of pupils are on the SEND register and 13% of children have English as an additional language. 66% of the school staff are Baptised Roman Catholic and 3 hold the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies (CCRS). The Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher took up their roles in September 2018, both were existing staff members at the school.

## OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

St Mary's is an outstanding Catholic School. The school is a central point for the whole local community and all are determined to share and witness their Catholic mission and authenticity. This is a happy and welcoming school where all feel valued and welcomed. Parents and pupils express their happiness with the school and highlight the key impact that the Headteacher and all leaders have had upon the school. All members of the school community contribute effectively to the continuous development of the school with skill and determination.

## THE KEY STRENGTHS OF THE SCHOOL INCLUDE:

- The outstanding, authentic Catholic welcome that is offered to all members of the school community and in the wider community.
- The outstanding support and challenge offered by leaders at all levels.
- High quality collective worship enables pupils of all ages to engage with meaningful and insightful prayer opportunities.
- Religious Education is truly at the core of all that this outstanding Catholic school does.

## AGREED AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT

- Pupils to be involved fully in the systematic evaluation of the Catholic Life of the school.
- Pupils to be able to communicate what they have learned in original and creative ways using a variety of forms of expression.
- To further develop confidence in the child-led use of a wide variety of traditional and contemporary ways of praying.

## THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL (incorporating Welcome, Welfare and Witness)

The Catholic Life of the school (incorporating Welcome, Welfare and Witness)	Overall grade	1
Outcomes - The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school		1
Provision - The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school		1
Leadership - How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school		1

Pupils at St Mary's recognise the integral role that their school plays as a member of the local and universal church. They actively promote and enhance the Catholic Life of the school and flourish in their development of virtue, by taking responsibility for the common good and those in need, both in their own school and the wider world. Pupils gladly offer their gifts in the service of others and clearly understand the reasons behind their actions. They took part in 'spreading a Catholic Welcome' in their local community, posting bookmarks through doors and tying messages to lampposts and actively lead, participate and contribute to the school's

chaplains provision. The children have a deep appreciation of authentic loving relationships. This is consistently demonstrated in their positive interactions with staff and visitors to the school.

The mission of St Mary’s is clearly evident in all elements of the school and is lived by all. It is revisited often. This is a school that is deeply rooted in the Word of God. Everyone is welcomed in a spirit of generous hospitality, especially those who are most vulnerable. Scripture and a Catholic culture permeates all aspects of this school witnessing great love, justice, compassion, forgiveness, reconciliation and wisdom. The school environment promotes the deep understanding of Catholic faith, tradition and character. The pupils at St Mary’s have a deep and authentic understanding of their moral and spiritual development and value this highly. They feel loved and supported by the staff in the school and feel extremely safe. This is reflected in the high levels of respect that pupils have for staff and behaviour is consistently excellent. This leads to a school that beams happiness.

Pupils, parents, staff and governors recognise the outstanding leadership from the Headteacher and the positive impact that she has had upon the welcome that all feel upon joining this vibrant school. Leadership at all levels is highly effective and shows a thorough commitment to the ongoing development of the Catholic Life of the school. The subject leader demonstrates an excellent knowledge of the Catholic Life throughout the school and has a carefully crafted action plan and great enthusiasm for further development. The parish priest is a welcome visitor to the school and is held in high regard by all. Governors are very knowledgeable about the school and show a firm commitment to supporting the Catholic Life of the school as an ongoing development priority.

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (incorporating Word)**

<b>Religious Education (incorporating Word)</b>	<b>Overall grade</b>	<b>1</b>
Outcomes - How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education		<b>1</b>
Provision - The Quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education		<b>1</b>
Leadership - How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education		<b>1</b>

Pupils at St Mary’s RC Primary School are receiving a high standard of Religious Education. Positive behaviour for learning was promoted across school and children clearly enjoy their lessons and know what is expected of them. Work in Religious Education books is of a very high standard and children are rightly proud of what they have achieved. Children are encouraged across school to ask their own ‘Big Questions’ and to explore their understanding of their own faith as well as that of others. The extensive use of scripture across school and as a starting point for many lessons has ensured children see this as an integral feature of their learning. Pupils are rightly proud of the work they produce.

A clear curriculum plan has been developed, encompassing the Liturgical Year, the ‘Come and See’ Scheme and ‘Caritas in Action’, which the G.I.F.T Team have recently taken responsibility for leading across school, as well as other relevant learning opportunities such as their Eco work, linked to Laudato Si, CAFOD work, Community Resettlement project, and the work of the British Legion. Consequently, pupils are offered meaningful and relevant learning experiences that engage them. Inspectors witnessed high quality lessons that engaged the pupils and enabled them to demonstrate high quality application of religious vocabulary. Where the teaching is strongest, pupils produce work of a very high standard that is equal to that of other core subjects and children respond enthusiastically without fear of failure. Lessons are well planned and are appropriately differentiated so that children at all ability levels make very good progress. The expectation, from even the youngest children, is very high and their confidence in discussing their experiences is clearly evident. The use of Music in Religious Education is being developed well and linked to other learning opportunities. Artefacts and visits, as well as visitors, are used effectively to help children to develop their understanding at a much deeper level.

The Headteacher, with the support of other leaders and the knowledgeable Governing Board, has rightly placed Religious Education at the core of the whole curriculum and its profile is clearly evident throughout the school environment as well as in children’s enthusiastic responses. The dedicated Religious Education subject leader has been well supported in developing his role in school by the Headteacher and has continued to embed and secure existing good practice as well as supporting new staff. Leaders in this school at all levels have an inspiring vision of teaching and learning for Religious Education. Leaders have developed an ambitious and rigorous approach to assessment. This has enabled them to work together as a teaching team to identify high quality assessment opportunities. The subject leader is working effectively with the local Catholic schools to share good practice and plan moderation opportunities.

## COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

<b>Collective Worship</b>	<b>Overall grade</b>	<b>1</b>
Outcomes - How well pupils respond to and participate in the school’s Collective Worship		<b>1</b>
Provision - The quality of Collective Worship provided by the School		<b>1</b>
Leadership - How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship		<b>1</b>

The quality of Collective Worship is outstanding. Members of the GIFT team led a whole school assembly that was appropriately linked to the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes. The pupils were confident and enthusiastic in their delivery, with uplifting music supporting throughout. Collective Worship in classrooms took many forms, with a good balance of scripture, silence, music and prayer. In the youngest classes, pupils were fully engaged in a calm, peaceful celebration. They showed a good understanding and had empathy for others. The children were encouraged to lead some activities as ‘happy helpers’ providing support for their teacher and other pupils. In a KS2 classroom, the children showed great reverence and maturity, reflecting on how they might have communion with God. All pupils sang with joy and enthusiasm throughout the day.

There is an embedded daily pattern of prayer in the school that includes the ‘Daily Broadcast’. Each morning the GIFT team lead prayers throughout the school via a computer link in each classroom. Those leading Collective Worship are skilled and confident and the responses of the children and staff strongly reflects the importance given to Collective Worship in this school. The broadcast begins with tranquil music, the school prayer and a gospel reading followed by a reflection and a hymn. Further evidence of the centrality of Worship in the school was found in the classroom prayer areas and beautiful spaces around the school that display relevant scriptures, religious artefacts and prayerful opportunities. The GIFT team play a major role in the planning, preparation and delivery of Worship at an age appropriate level, which inspires the other pupils to participate with reverence. Pupils also have an opportunity to pray each playtime in the ‘Well-being shed’ where members of the GIFT team are available to support pupils. There was evidence of pupils writing prayers for their own intentions.

Leaders at all levels are highly skilled in delivering liturgically rich acts of Collective Worship. The headteacher is an inspirational role model for the entire school community, leading a strong team of staff and pupils who are well equipped to design meaningful and accessible experiences of Collective Worship. One parent brought video evidence of her child at home, who regularly pretends to be the headteacher, leading her toys in Collective Worship around an altar. Senior leaders and governors work together to ensure that pupil voice is a valued part of the school’s evaluation of worship and this is evident when speaking to pupils, staff and parents.