



# DIOCESE OF Arundel and Brighton

## DENOMINATIONAL (S48) INSPECTION REPORT

St Mary's Catholic Primary School

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**School Unique Reference Number:** 144401

<b>Headteacher:</b>	Mrs G. Irvine
<b>Chair of Governors:</b>	Cllr R. Smytherman
<b>Lead Inspector:</b>	Mrs A. Oddy
<b>Associate Inspector:</b>	Mr S. Beck
<b>Inspection date:</b>	14 <sup>th</sup> March 2018

	Previous Inspection: 1
<b>Overall Effectiveness</b>	This inspection: 2

**Catholic Life:** 2

**Collective Worship:** 2

**Religious Education:** 2

## SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

St Mary's Catholic Primary is a good Catholic school because:

- St Mary's is a rapidly improving school offering a caring and inclusive education within a Catholic community.
- A period of considerable challenge and change has led to the establishment of a strong staff team, ably led and inspired by the energised and dedicated headteacher.
- Relationships between all stakeholders are a strength of the school. Pupils and staff work together in a harmonious atmosphere, parents are very supportive of the school and enjoy being part of the school community.
- Pupils feel happy and safe at school. They are kind and caring to each other and know that they have a responsibility to all members of their school community. They trust adults in school to help them with any anxieties. A pupil described the school as, "Warm arms wrapped around you, making you feel safe and welcome."
- The school has used extensive support from the Bosco Trust and diocesan advisers very effectively to establish good systems and procedures and to raise standards throughout the school.
- Governors are committed and conscientious. They are frequent visitors to the school and fully involved in school life. They are determined to support the school in its drive towards continued improvement.
- Much has been put in place to raise standards and establish robust systems and procedures. The school now has the task of sustaining current emerging good practice and building on this for the future. It is clear from evidence gathered during this inspection that the school has good capacity to improve.
- Collective worship and prayer are central to the life of the school. The school offers a wide range of prayer and worship opportunities. These are part of the school day and also part of school celebrations and events.
- The school's programme of collective worship enables pupils to feel part of a worshipping community. Pupils enjoy coming together on these occasions, participating joyfully but also with reverence and respect. All are welcome to school asses. Parents respond very positively to this invitation.
- Pupils are familiar with the traditional prayers of the Church. They are also at ease contributing spontaneous prayers and composing their own prayers for use in school.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Mission Statement is at the heart of the school and is reflected in all aspects of school life.</li> <li>▪ The Catholic life of the school includes all members of the school community. Parents are very appreciative of the Catholic ethos of the school. One described it as, “a lovely school with a great Catholic feel to it.”</li> <li>▪ Pastoral care is a strength of the school, which is very supportive of pupils and their families.</li> <li>▪ The school has good links with the parish, the deanery and the diocese, recognising that it is part of a wider Catholic family. It has benefited considerably from its links with the Bosco Trust.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Pupils enjoy religious education and appreciate its importance to their own lives. They take a pride in their work and are keen to do well.</li> <li>▪ Standards of teaching and learning in religious education are good. Careful planning and interesting activities engage and enthuse pupils and maximise learning opportunities.</li> <li>▪ Comprehensive systems of monitoring and assessment are being introduced. As these are developed and extended they will benefit pupils’ learning and enable the school to evaluate progress.</li> </ul>
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**St Mary’s Catholic Primary School is not yet outstanding because:**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The school needs to ensure that all religious education lessons are at least good or better.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Newly introduced systems of assessment need to be consistently applied throughout the school.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Pupil tracking is not yet sufficiently in place to monitor the progress of individuals or groups.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The school needs to demonstrate sustained improvement over time.</li> </ul>

**FULL REPORT**

**INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

- St Mary’s Catholic Primary School is a Catholic Academy within the Bosco Catholic Education Trust (Bosco CET) It is situated in the Worthing Deanery of the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton.
- St Mary’s is a one and a half form entry school. It takes pupils from 4 to 11 years. The numbers of pupils currently on roll is 285.
- The principal parishes which the school serves are St Mary of the Angels and St Charles Borromeo. 48% of pupils are baptised Catholics.
- 19% of pupils are classified as having special educational needs or disabilities (SEND). This is above the national average. Pupil Premium funding is received for 19% of pupils. This is below the national average.
- 57% of pupils are of minority ethnic heritage, this is well above the national average. 48% of pupils speak English as an additional language (EAL), this is well above the national average.

- In recent years the school has faced considerable challenge and change. The current substantive headteacher was appointed in January 2018.
- 10% of curriculum time is allocated to religious education in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

#### **WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

- Develop and embed recently introduced systems of assessment and pupil tracking in order to meet the needs of all pupils and to provide evidence of pupil progress.
- Continue to raise standards of teaching and learning in religious education so that lessons are all securely good or better, utilising the support of the Bosco Trust, the deanery and diocesan advisers and appropriate CPD opportunities.

## CATHOLIC LIFE

### THE QUALITY OF THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

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

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### **The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school is good because:**

- The Mission Statement is central to school life. It has been recently reviewed following consultation with pupils, governors, parish priest and parents. It is clearly displayed around the school, reminding pupils that it is 'the centre of all we do at St Mary's'.
- Evidence from Pupil Voice and from pupils interviewed as part of this inspection indicates that pupils have a good sense of belonging to a Catholic school and feel part of the school family. This is reinforced by using, "Remembering we are the family of St Mary's School," to begin every school liturgy.
- All pupils, regardless of their faith background, are welcomed and embraced by the school community. Pupils interviewed as part of this inspection described the school as, "We're all friends in a family", and one pupil spoke eloquently of how she had been welcomed and included when she joined the school, even though she spoke no English at that time.
- Pupils are encouraged to live out Gospel values in their daily life at school and beyond. 'Shining Light' awards recognise pupils when they are seen to be 'living like Jesus'. A creative series of rewards such as a non-uniform day for the pupil and a friend, or tea with the headteacher, encourage and enthuse pupils. Pupils are proud to get these rewards and talk about them enthusiastically.
- Pupils are given responsibilities which contribute to the school's Catholic life. A liturgy team and Spirituality Council are involved in planning school worship. House captains and vice house captains welcome visitors and give them tours of the school. They are happy to serve their school and are conscientious in their roles.
- The school and parish links are developing well. Classes attend Mass weekly on a rota system and each term a Mass or liturgy is held at St Mary of the Angels Church to which all parents and parishioners are invited. 'Honorary grandparents' from the parish are invited to school events and also visit school to support groups of pupils with their learning. A parent commented on how much she welcomed the close links with the parish.
- Pupil behaviour during this inspection was excellent. Pupils were pleasant and courteous and there was a very calm and welcoming atmosphere throughout the school.
- Pupils interviewed as part of this inspection spoke without prompting about the changes to their school and how it had improved, "Our school has improved and we have improved, we're learning more." Another added, "The school improves every minute. We learn about important things like Jesus and the Mass. We learn lots in a fun way."
- Pupils are encouraged to care for the needs of others. They are active in fundraising for a number of charities, local, national and global.

*(Continued on next page)*

*(Continuation of pupils' contribution to and benefit from Catholic Life . . .)*

- Pupils are aware of being part of a wider Catholic family. The school has good links with the deanery, the diocese and other Catholic schools.
- Pupils know that adults in school are there to help them and that any anxieties will be listened to and addressed. Good pastoral care ensures that pupils and their families are supported and cared for. Support systems include in-school support and working with outside agencies. Pupils spoke warmly of a 'Worry Eater' in each class. This is a teddy bear to which they can take their problems, which are later addressed by a teacher. Pupils also felt that they tried to help each other. One said, 'This school is a community that helps you at any time, in the playground and in class' and another said, 'If you're alone, someone always helps you.'
- Parents actively sought out inspectors to comment on the warm and welcoming school community of St Mary's and the Catholic ethos of the school. They welcomed recent changes and felt the school was making significant improvement. An example quoted was naming classes after saints and celebrating each class saint's feast day, exemplifying the school's Catholic ethos.

### **The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school is good because:**

- The Mission Statement is at the heart of all school policy and practice and reflects the Church's mission in education. The child friendly summary 'Learning to live like Jesus in all we say and do' is central to school life.
- Staff recognise the importance of the Mission Statement to the school and to them as a staff team. They are supportive of each other and committed to the school community.
- The school provides an attractive learning environment. Displays and artefacts proclaim its catholic identity. Class focal points are beautifully presented, feature pupils' work and are an inspiration to prayer and reflection.
- The school has worked hard to strengthen links with the parish community. Regular meetings with the parish priest, school masses at the parish church and an open invitation to parishioners to participate in school life foster the visible presence of the school in the community.
- The school offers good pastoral care, particularly to vulnerable pupils and their families. A dedicated inclusion team includes three mentors to work with pupils. Play therapy and art therapy are available to support pupils as appropriate. Pastoral care is a strength of the school.
- There is a planned programme of Relationships and Sex Education (RSE). The school uses the 'Journey in Love' scheme across the school in lessons and uses the 'Statements to live by' in assemblies. Teaching is in line with diocesan requirements and the teaching of the Catholic Church. 'Statements to live by' promotes pupils' social and emotional skills and fosters cooperation and a sense of community. The books feature pupils' work and are part of every class focal area.
- The school has high expectations for the behaviour of its pupils and has worked hard to establish clear systems of rewards and sanctions. Pupils are keen to achieve the very imaginative rewards on an individual and class basis. They identify with the school's house system and want to do well for their house. The school behaviour policy reflects the Mission Statement and is based on the values of justice and forgiveness.

**How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school is good because:**

- Leaders and managers are committed to the mission of the Church and to maintaining and developing all aspects of the Catholic life of the school. Monitoring and evaluation of the school's Catholic life is increasingly good and has strong capacity to improve further.
- The governing body consider the Catholic life of the school a high priority and include it as a regular agenda item at governing body meetings.
- The school has an action plan for Catholic life, which includes a monitoring schedule for senior leaders and governors. This identifies areas for development and clear steps to address these. This could now be revisited and reviewed to take account of progress made.
- The link governor is conscientious in her monitoring and evaluation role. Together with the religious education coordinator she monitors the progress of the action plan. This is discussed at governors' meetings and forms part of the headteacher's report and link governor visit reports. She is well informed and continues to be a driving force to effect change and build on progress made. She knows the school well and is proactive and supportive in her approach.
- The Deanery Council members also participate in monitoring the Catholic life of the school.
- The sharing of best practice and coaching sessions with the religious education subject leader and a diocesan advisor have helped staff to improve their practice and subject knowledge. This has resulted in significant improvement in developing the school's Catholic life. The school should now continue to build on this through CPD opportunities.
- The parish priest meets regularly with the headteacher and subject leader, providing much valued input into the monitoring and evaluation of the school's Catholic life.
- The views of parents have been sought at school forums and in parental questionnaires. Results include parents now being invited to participate in class acts of worship termly and materials used in whole school reconciliation available to parents who request them. Parents are appreciative of the school's Catholic life and are happy to be included. Parents spoke of being warmly welcomed into the school family.
- Leaders and managers have introduced good systems of monitoring and evaluating the school's Catholic life. As these become embedded the school is well placed to improve further.

## COLLECTIVE WORSHIP AND PRAYER LIFE

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- How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship and Prayer Life.
- The quality of provision for Collective Worship and Prayer Life.
- How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship and Prayer Life.

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### **How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship and Prayer Life is good because:**

- Collective worship and prayer are central to the life of the school and pupils respond very positively. A planned programme of worship includes celebrations linked to the liturgical year and events in the wider life of the Church.
- School observations and pupil voice demonstrate that pupils are engaged and active participants in collective worship. Pupils interviewed or observed as part of this inspection confirmed this. They are involved in the planning and preparation of collective worship through the Liturgy and Spirituality Councils.
- Pupils recognise and appreciate the importance of prayer in their own lives and know that their prayers can help others. They are familiar with the traditional prayers of the Church and are at ease composing their own prayers and participating in spontaneous prayer.
- Pupils are encouraged to be involved and enjoy being active and responsive participants. Class acts of worship are planned by both teacher and pupils, with older pupils taking increased responsibility in this role.
- The liturgy team works closely with the parish priest and headteacher to plan and lead school collective worship.
- Pupils understand that prayer and worship can take different forms. During Lent they are completing the '40 Acts Challenge' and are thinking about what they can give or do for others. Approaches to prayer also include the use of meditation and Lectio Divina.
- Pupils of all faiths or none are very much part of the school's collective worship, at which all are valued and welcome. Mindful of the diversity of belief of its members, this inclusive community illustrates its commitment to tolerance and respect within the framework of Christian worship. This results in a happy and harmonious worshipping community.
- The act of worship observed as part of this inspection was whole school collective worship led by the headteacher. Pupils were interested and engaged. They responded to questions thoughtfully and sang very joyfully. Staff acted as good role models, participating fully as members of the school community.

### **The quality of provision for Collective Worship and Prayer Life is good because:**

- Prayer is an integral part of the school day. Staff and pupils regularly pray together during the day and at school celebrations.
- Staff meetings, governor meetings and INSET days start with a prayer or liturgy. The school day starts with staff prayer and reflection. This was observed as part of this inspection. Staff appreciated the calm and reflective start to their day and responded very positively.
- A structured programme of masses and liturgies is planned for the school year, ensuring sufficient time to prepare high quality celebrations and to involve pupils wherever possible. These reflect the Church's feasts and seasons, fostering awareness of the traditions of the Church.
- Provision includes offering pupils the opportunity to engage in different forms of prayer and pupils respond very positively. Pupils enjoy quiet reflection and meditation as well as class prayers and writing their own prayers.
- Parents and governors are welcomed and encouraged to participate in the school's prayer life and collective worship. Invitations are also extended to the parish community. Increased attendance indicates the success of the school's outreach to the wider community. Responses to parent questionnaires distributed as part of this inspection indicated that parents would welcome the opportunity to attend school assemblies.
- The liturgy team and spirituality council enable pupils to contribute to school prayer and worship and offer them the opportunity to serve their school and to gain confidence in leading prayer.
- Worship and prayer opportunities nurture and develop pupils' spirituality. The school recognises that many pupils are at an early stage of their faith journeys and seeks to deepen their understanding of prayer and their relationships with God.
- Pupils are encouraged to be part of the wider Catholic community, participating in diocesan and deanery events. An example is the Good Shepherd Celebration at Worth Abbey.
- The school has worked closely with the parish priest and diocesan adviser to ensure high quality provision. Staff have received training to empower them in leading worship.

### **How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship and Prayer Life is good because:**

- The school is committed to high quality provision for collective worship and prayer and is constantly reviewing and evaluating its practice in order to offer meaningful and spiritual experiences for all staff and pupils, including those from other faith backgrounds.
- The headteacher models good practice for staff. A collective worship policy ensures consistency and provides support for staff in planning and leading worship. The school's CPD programme includes liturgical and spiritual development for staff.

- Collective worship and prayer are regularly monitored and reviewed. The religious education link governor has carried out collective worship observations with the religious education subject leader and the diocesan adviser. These help to identify strengths and areas for development and are an essential part of school self evaluation. The results of monitoring are communicated to the governing body, together with recommendations where appropriate.
- Governors are committed to developing the school's collective worship and prayer life, recognising it as essential to their Catholic school community.
- The school has effective systems of monitoring and evaluation newly established and operational. As these become embedded, the school will be well placed to take improvement further. School self evaluation is comprehensive, accurate and evidence based.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

### THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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

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### How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education is good because:

- There is no historical attainment data available for religious education and academic attainment in other core subjects has been low, however the current standard of religious education seen as part of this inspection is good. This indicates that considerable progress has been made.
- Feedback from pupils indicates that they enjoy religious education lessons. They are keen to participate and speak readily about their learning. This is in line with the findings of this inspection.
- Four lessons across two key stages were observed as part of this inspection. Teaching and learning was at least good throughout these lessons and pupil progress was evident. Pupils were interested and engaged. Behaviour for learning was excellent. Strong teaching in Early Years is providing a good foundation to build on.
- The school encourages pupils to make cross curricular links, relate religious education to their own lives and develop independent learning skills. As this is extended and become embedded, it will add further to pupils' achievement and enjoyment.
- The school is introducing systems of assessment and pupil tracking. As these become established they will enable the school to monitor and compare the progress and attainment of individuals and groups and facilitate addressing the needs of all pupils.

**The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education requires improvement because :**

- Newly established systems of assessment and pupil tracking have not had sufficient time to become embedded and all teaching and learning needs to be consistently good or better.
- School monitoring indicates that all teaching is at least 'requires improvement' with some lessons demonstrating a good standard of teaching and learning. Evidence seen by this inspection indicates that a good standard of teaching and learning has been achieved. If this is maintained it will provide a good foundation for further improvement.
- Feedback from book scrutiny, planning scrutiny and lesson observations informs school self evaluation and identifies next steps towards improvement.
- Work in pupils' books is generally well presented and of good quality. The school should now work on achieving consistency across the school and should consider identifying and sharing best practice to facilitate this. Pupils' work indicates good curriculum coverage. It is clear that pupils take a pride in their work and their books reflect this.
- Marking is regular and affirmative. It includes questions to help pupils think more deeply about their learning and improve their work. Self assessment has been introduced to further involve pupils in their learning. These strategies should now be consolidated and made consistent across the school.
- Assessment tasks were introduced at the beginning of the current academic year. These are moderated in school and at deanery level to validate teachers' judgements. Data is now entered on a tracking system, which will enable pupil progress to be closely monitored. The subject leader has provided assessment training for all staff.
- Developing and embedding assessment practices is a key priority for the school. This will ensure that teaching and learning meets the needs of all pupils, enabling them to reach their full potential and identifying support needs. It will also provide a strong evidence base of standards in the school over time.

**How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education is good because:**

- Leaders and managers are fully committed to developing provision of high quality religious education and to raising standards of teaching and learning. The headteacher is currently the subject leader as the post holder is on maternity leave. Extensive support from the diocesan adviser has helped the school establish effective systems of monitoring and assessment and raise standards of teaching and learning throughout the school.
- The headteacher is conscientious in her role and determined to drive improvement in religious education. She has a high standard of subject knowledge and expertise and attends diocesan training to ensure up to date practice. She is providing inspirational leadership which has enthused and motivated the staff team and driven the school's capacity to improve.
- A planned programme of monitoring places religious education on a par with other core subjects. Priorities for each term are clearly set out in the school expectations document, together with a detailed monitoring programme.
- The link governor works closely with the headteacher to monitor provision and practice. They feed back to the governing body, keeping them informed regarding progress on the Action Plan and giving evidence of the impact of planned actions.
- Religious education receives a budget share comparable with mathematics and English. The school has purchased high quality resources to enrich the teaching of religious education; these have been appreciated by pupils and staff.
- As systems of monitoring and evaluation become established and school data continues to be gathered, the school is well placed to build on progress and move forward. This is supported very effectively through the school's partnership with the Bosco Trust. The headteacher recognises and values the support of the Bosco CEO, who has taken a professional and personal interest in the school and given generously of his time and expertise.

# Summary of Inspection Judgements

**How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education.**

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## **Catholic Life**

2

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.

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The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school.

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How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school.

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## **Collective Worship and Prayer Life**

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How well pupils respond to and participate in the schools' Collective Worship and Prayer Life.

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The quality of provision for Collective Worship and Prayer Life.

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How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship and Prayer Life.

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## **Religious Education**

2

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.

2

The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education.

3

How well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.

2