

Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection report for **Our Lady's Catholic Primary School**

URN: 401263

Carried out on behalf of the Most Rev. Archbishop Mark O'Toole, Archbishop of Cardiff on:

21 - 22 April 2023

Overall effectiveness

The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school.....

3

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.....

2

Religious education (p.5)

The quality of curriculum religious education.....

3

Collective worship (p.7)

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

2

The school is fully compliant with the curriculum requirements laid down by the Bishops' Conference



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



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

Partially

Summary of key findings

What the school does well

- The school is a joyful worshipping community where pupils feel safe and happy.
- Good relationships are a strength of the school, leading to a strong sense of community. Pupils are proud to be part of the school community.
- Pupils clearly understand the mission statement of the school and work hard to live it.
- Parents say this is a warm, safe, friendly school providing an engaging learning environment, with strong pastoral care.
- Leaders and governors are committed to the mission of the church and the success of the school.

This Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection was carried out under canons 804 & 806 of the code of canon law. For maintained schools and academies in England it fulfils the statutory requirements of s.48 of the Education Act 2005. For maintained schools and academies in Wales it fulfils the statutory requirements of s.50 of the Education Act 2005.

What the school needs to improve:

To increase opportunities for professional development and develop teachers' pedagogy ensuring that the quality of teaching of religious education is effective in all classes enabling pupils to progressively develop knowledge, skills and understanding over time.

Strengthen assessment procedures to ensure that marking and feedback are used as opportunities to improve progress and outcomes in religious education for all pupils. (This recommendation is similar to that of 2012 which stated that the school should further develop Assessment for learning to a level that makes an impact upon the learning of all pupils. This means that the recommendation from the previous report was only partially addressed.)

Establish an effective monitoring evaluation and review cycle which accurately informs the schools Catholic Self-Evaluation Document and has a positive impact on raising standards in religious education and collective worship for all pupils. (This recommendation is similar to that of 2012 which stated that all stakeholders should be involved in contributing regularly and consistently to evidence based judgements of self-evaluation. To ensure that the process is embedded and reflects the work of the school consistently resulting in improvement priorities that raise standards and outcomes for all groups of pupils. This means that the recommendation from the previous report was only partially addressed.)

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:.....

2

Pupil outcomes

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

2

Provision

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

2

Leadership

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

2

Pupils are proud to be members of this happy, joyful and inclusive school community where members are growing together in faith, love and knowledge. They feel safe, happy, show respect for others and have a strong sense of belonging. Nearly all pupils understand and willingly contribute to the Catholic mission of the school. They are increasingly aware of their role in promoting social justice and are kind and considerate as they reach out willingly to support those in need for example through the purchase of Cafod world gifts, donations to the local foodbank following the Harvest assembly, organising bed time bags and managing a pop-up uniform shop. Nearly all communicate anti-bullying messages by taking part in Odd Socks day.

A majority of pupils embrace opportunities to support the development of Catholic life at the school. The Worship cabinet encourages the development of prayer and the Eco committee works to guard God's creation collecting litter and planting trees for future generations. As pupils take on these and other responsibilities through involvement in the Senedd, healthy schools and digital leads initiatives, they are developing a sense of vocation as they understand that they are serving others and promoting the values of the school.

The school environment is bright, colourful and well maintained. It celebrates mission and identity through the many outward signs of its Catholic character. The school mission, vision, virtues and values are attractively displayed. Clear messages announce that Jesus Christ is the role model to whom the community should aspire. Staff are committed to the catholic ethos. "They are excellent role models, their faith is evident and permeates through interactions with the children," commented the parish priest who is a regular visitor to the school, offering excellent support for its catholic life. School Masses take place regularly. Staff work as a cohesive team leading to a strong sense of community. They describe "a culture of welcome" "we are one happy family."

Parental questionnaires praise the school for its Catholic ethos, moral values, prayer life, pupil and standards of education. Pupils relate well to peers and respond to restorative practices embedded at the school. As an inclusive community; pupils are able to express their own personal religious and cultural identity and beliefs. Pastoral support is strong. A range of outside agencies work with staff ensuring pupil wellbeing. Provision for Relationships and Sex Education meets diocesan requirements but lacks progression across the school.

Leaders and governors are deeply loyal and committed to the mission of the Church. They have created a cohesive staff team with a strong sense of Christian community and an emphasis on the importance of the traditions of the Catholic Church. Leaders and governors support the bishop's vision for the diocese. Regular reports from the head teacher on the Catholic life ensure the governing body is well informed. The link governor for religious education works closely with school leaders sharing her skills and expertise. She is keen to work alongside school staff to further develop self-evaluation processes which are currently under-developed and lack accuracy. Strong links with the parish exist and staff actively support sacramental development programmes and participate in parish ministries. Regular visits to the parish church enhance teaching and provide opportunities for pupils to ask questions about their faith. Pupils attend Mass during the week and on holy days of obligation. The school is currently developing their new curriculum incorporating restorative approaches, Catholic pupil profile virtues, rights respecting school approaches, Catholic social teaching and global goals into their plans. Induction procedures are in place but few staff benefit from professional development at archdiocesan courses.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade:.....

3

Pupil outcomes

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education.....

3

Provision

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

3

Leadership

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

3

Many pupils have positive attitudes towards learning. They are developing knowledge, skills and understanding and becoming increasingly religiously literate. Meditations observed indicate that many pupils are developing in their ability to reflect spiritually. Nearly all pupils can recall the events of Holy Week and know that Jesus rose on Easter Sunday. Many can produce diary entries imagining they were on the road to Emmaus and could share thoughts on how the disciples felt when they realised that Jesus had joined them. Many are attentive during lessons and settle to tasks quickly.

Many pupils enjoy their learning and engage well in discussion with their partners. A majority can work independently. They recall simple facts in response to teachers questioning but were unable to give extended answers without prompting and did not use subject specific vocabulary. In around half of lessons pupils presented as passive learners lacking in enthusiasm for set tasks. A minority took part in discussions not related to the lesson. Most pupil books indicate that outcomes are below those expected for their age and not in line with that of other core areas. Assessments are inconsistent limiting progress and attainment. Few pupils use peer and self-assessment in religious education.

Most teachers have appropriate subject knowledge however few staff have participated in Archdiocesan training to develop effective pedagogy in religious education. As a result teachers use a limited range of strategies to develop and enhance teaching and learning. Teacher's expectations of pupil achievement is too low, the pace of learning slow, tasks lack appropriate levels of challenge and differentiation. Pupil books indicate that too few tasks enable pupils to develop the expected knowledge and skills necessary to progress. Teacher

feedback to pupils does not always help them to understand what they need to do in order to improve their work. Assessment across the school is inconsistent and not linked to planning or used to measure pupil progress and identify the next steps in learning.

Creative activities, for example decorating banners to celebrate the Easter message and using the Easter garden to promote learning outdoors are effective in supporting the youngest pupils to recall the Easter story; however there are few examples of classes across the school taking part in creative or purposeful outdoor learning activities in religious education. Christian Meditation and the Examen take place regularly. These opportunities nurture and support the development of most pupil's spiritual life.

Leaders and governors ensure that resources for religious education comply with the Bishops' Conference requirements for the teaching of religious education. A range of statutory policies including policies for religious education and collective worship are in place; however there is no job description in place for the subject leader. Leaders and governors are committed to the development of religious education. The link governor is developing a positive working relationship with leaders at the school. Regular reports from the Headteacher ensure the governing body is aware of developments in Catholic life, collective worship and religious education at the school. However, governors and school leaders have not yet developed robust systems and processes for self-evaluation. As a result; over time leaders have not monitored the school's work in religious education robustly.. Important shortcomings in teaching and learning have not been identified on the school development plan or actions put in place to address them. This has led to standards in religious education for most pupils not being comparable with other core subjects. The role of the subject leader for religious education is under-developed and does not involve effective planning of improvements to teaching and learning in religious education. Opportunities for professional development are limited.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade:.....

2

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

2

Leadership

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

2

Prayer and worship are important to pupils and the life of the school, and offer opportunities for reflection and silent prayer. Class acts of worship take place regularly, they are meaningful, age appropriate and pupils are reverent. Behaviour is good and pupils responded to, and participated in voluntary acts of worship, prayer and meditation well, by singing hymns and joining in prayers readily. A variety of traditional and contemporary prayers are prayed confidently, including a school and class designed prayer. A majority of pupils have experience of planning Collective Worship, using the structured "Gweddiwn" format and resources that they are familiar with. The school now needs to provide greater opportunities for pupils to take a leading role in the delivery of worship throughout the classes. The 'Christian Meditation' and 'Examen' programmes have been implemented throughout the school and can be seen to bring stillness to pupils' learning experiences. Pupils stated they enjoyed class meditation and were able to articulate its influence in focussing and settling themselves. Most pupils are able to reflect on gospel messages in relation to how Jesus expects us to act and treat others. Pupils are at ease when praying together and are developing spiritually.

All acts of worship reflect the Catholic character of the school and all members of the community speak positively about worship opportunities, for example recent Easter assemblies. There are daily acts of collective worship for pupils and staff and they follow a familiar routine structure often including good use of reflective music and images on screens e.g. a flickering candle. The liturgies display a clear purpose, message and direction linked appropriately to the church's liturgical year.

In the whole school assembly observed, there was an orderly and calm entrance of all pupils into the hall. Phase or class assemblies were not seen however, there is evidence of these within QR codes in books and parents enjoy the celebration of Mass and assemblies and are pleased with the opportunities that their children are given to pray. There are reflective displays around the school and the Pupil Profile

Values are displayed prominently and referred to in all classes, the school hall and other key areas. Every classroom includes a focal point for prayer and reflection and helps to reinforce the 'Come and See' topics through displaying artefacts, pupil responses and key words, although some class prayer areas need to be more prominent and engaging.

Adult leaders of collective worship provide good role-models for pupils and ensure that the Gospel stories are at the heart of these occasions and that pupils are encouraged to put the key messages of them into practice in their lives. Diocesan initiatives are followed and training is disseminated by senior leaders and there is a good level of resources for collective worship around the school, including use of the lectionary and the missal in whole-school assemblies. The Collective Worship policy outlines how pupils should plan and deliver age appropriate collective worship. During the inspection however there was insufficient evidence of pupil led worship. The 'Worship Cabinet' pupils group have begun to look at monitoring class worship displays/areas and class collective worship. This is planned to link in with a more formal system of monitoring the quality of collective worship over time, by senior leaders and governors. There is a lack of evidence of prayerful life evident on the school website although the appointed link governor and parish priest are highly supportive of the prayer and worship planned by senior leaders, through a liturgical year calendar.

Information about the school

Full name of school	Our Lady's R.C Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	401263
Full postal address of the school	Miskin Road, Miskin, Mountain Ash, Rhondda Cynon Taff. CF45 3UA.
School phone number	01443 472230
Name of head teacher or principal	Miss Joanne Conway
Chair of governing board	Mrs Pat Newton
School Website	https://www.ourladysrcprimary.co.uk/
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Not applicable
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age-range of pupils	3-11
Trustees	Archdiocese of Cardiff
Gender of pupils	Male and Female
Date of last denominational inspection	10 - 12 December 2012
Previous denominational inspection grade	Adequate

The inspection team

Catherine Power	Lead inspector
Mary Mort	Team inspector
Name of inspector	Lead/team
Name of inspector	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