



St Mary Magdalen's Catholic Primary School

URN: 102909

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Most Rev. John Wilson, Archbishop of Southwark

27–28 November 2024

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

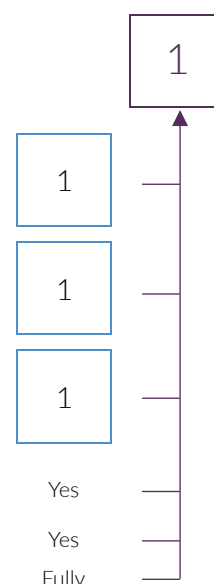
Collective worship (p.7)

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



Compliance statement

- Religious education is taught for a specified portion of each repeating cycle, and this constitutes 10% of the taught curriculum time therefore the school is fully compliant with the general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishops' Conference
- The school is fully compliant with the requirements of the Archbishop
- The school has fully addressed the area for improvement of the previous inspection by ensuring assessment in religious education is in line with other core subjects

What the school does well

- Pupils are confident in planning, leading and evaluating prayer and liturgy
- Pastoral care is outstanding. All pupils feel that staff genuinely care for their wellbeing and development
- St Mary Magdalen's is a highly inclusive, joyful welcoming family loved by God
- Links between the school and the parish are exemplary
- Pupils are religiously literate and confident in sharing their knowledge and understanding in religious education

What the school needs to improve

- Create greater opportunities for pupils to engage in extempore prayer which can be shared with the whole community.
- Engage with neighbouring Catholic schools in sharing good practice to support the implementation of the *Religious Education Directory*
- Ensure Catholic social teaching principles are deeply rooted across the curriculum so that pupils can draw connections in their lives

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

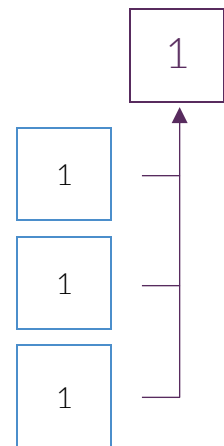
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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



St Mary Magdalen's is a warm, welcoming school which celebrates its distinctive Catholic identity. Pupils are very confident about relating the mission statement, fully understand and embrace it, stating 'it gives me understanding of how I should behave at school.' Pupils describe the Catholic social teaching as it 'teaches you life lesson values.' They gave an example of subsidiarity stating, 'we believe everyone should have a say and we can start a spark to ignite the whole world.' The enthusiastic pupil chaplains can articulate their purpose which includes leading on charity work, for example, RSPCA, Downs Syndrome and the Life Boats. They stated, 'globally we raise for Cafod.' and do this 'because we believe in God'. Pupils feel safe and know they should 'speak to a trusted adult' if they have a concern. They know they are cared for as unique, and in the image and likeness of God. For example, older pupils act as buddies looking after younger pupils, 'because it shows you care.' Pupils have a deep sense of respect for pupils of other faiths and none. A parent who is not Catholic, stated 'We have been welcomed into the school. It is a warm, welcoming and supportive community'. Pupils highly value the involvement of the parish priest and behaviour throughout the school is exemplary.

The regularly revisited school's mission statement, based on Ephesians is encapsulated in 'deep roots, kind hearts, big dreams.' It is clear, inspiring and rooted in the Gospel and is known and lived by all members of the community. Most parents know and are supportive with one stating that 'we specifically chose St Mary Mags for the Catholic mission.' Christ is the core of the school community as shown by the very warm welcome received by all and by the joyful caring relationships prevalent in the school. A pupil stated, 'all the teachers believe we can do things, they believe in us, it makes us then believe in ourselves.' Teachers say, 'we all work together as one family.' Pastoral care and staff wellbeing are great strengths acknowledged by staff who stated, 'we are there for each other at all times.' The relationship with the parish is exemplary. The parish priest visits the school regularly, giving

support to pupils and staff. A parent stated that their child, 'always enjoys when he visits the classroom, recognises him and they have a conversation.' Parents are involved in relationship, health and sex education through questionnaires and the programme is well planned using Ten:Ten resources, which meets statutory and diocesan requirements.

The inspirational leadership of the headteacher supported by a strong and passionate governing board ensure that Christ is at the heart of the school. Catholic life and mission is a core leadership responsibility enjoying a high priority in the school improvement plan. Governors 'live and breathe' the school and witness to the mission statement by their involvement with the school. There is a very flourishing partnership with the parish encapsulated in the vibrant relationship which the parish and the school enjoy. This relationship extends beyond the school to the local diocese and another diocese where pupils engaged in a co-missioning ceremony which encouraged them to be missionaries in their daily life. Religious education is at the core of the curriculum, shared planning enables opportunities to make connections between different areas of the curriculum. For example a workshop on the environment helped pupils make links with our common world. Leaders and governors ensure new staff are well supported. Newcomers to Catholic education state they are 'very well supported and enjoy working with their class to enhance the Catholic life of the school.'

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

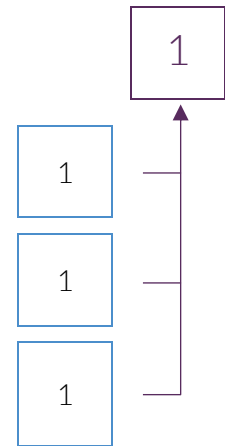
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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 find religious education enjoyable. They spoke of different activities such as drama, art and music and the use of the Bible within lessons which help them to love learning. Pupils know their targets and how to improve and so are developing excellent knowledge, understanding and skills. This is shown in pupils' work which is both of a high quality and high standard equivalent to that of other core subjects. Key strengths include the quantity, feedback and variety of tasks in which the pupils engage. Assessment is in line with school policy clearly identifying next steps. Three-year trend data is strong showing consistently good progress across all groups of pupils and above average compared with other core subjects. Pupils display an excellent attitude to learning and can articulate clearly what they have learnt using specialist vocabulary such as yad, Torah and synagogue. Behaviour in lessons is impeccable as pupils are engaged in lessons and give deep responses to questions. For example, to a question about Jesus as a light in the darkness, a Year 5 pupil responded, 'Hate swallows up the world in darkness then Jesus breaks through the darkness. People can come to Jesus instead of being swallowed up by sin.'

The quality of teaching is good with some outstanding, teachers have sound subject knowledge, and they demonstrate a deep commitment to religious education communicated to pupils. This is supported by parents who stated that their children love religious education. A parent stated, 'my child loves RE. He often comes home and tells us about his lessons, and he understands how his learning translates into loving a Christian life following Jesus' example.' Planning is linked to assessment with lessons consolidating previous knowledge and skilful questioning helps pupils to deepen their learning. Lessons begin with a moment of reflective prayer on the theme of the lesson and pupils understand the impact their learning has upon how they live. A pupil stated, 'RE helps us to be a better person and follow Jesus' footsteps.' Books show that teachers plan so that pupils have extensive opportunities to present their learning in a wide variety such as art, and drama and a widget tool is used very successfully so that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities can

access the curriculum. In addition, the use of self-assessment opportunities with green-pen follow-up ensures pupils clearly understand what they need to do to further progress their learning. The parish priest uses the proximity of the church graveyard as an enriching learning resource supporting teaching on rest in peace and eternal life.

Leaders and governors ensure that the school curriculum for religious education is a faithful expression of the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory* using *Come and See* and the subject leader for religious education engages with extensive professional development provided by the diocese which is cascaded to the rest of staff. The subject leader for religious education has an inspirational vision for teaching and learning in religious education that every teacher should be able to teach of their best for the children, which is shared with colleagues building greater expertise, impacting upon pupils having greater confidence in their learning. The planning of the curriculum is sequential and leads to increasing depth of learning over time. This leads to pupils who are very religiously literate and articulate appropriate to their age and ability. Timetabling, budget and use of assessment illustrates that religious education has full parity with other core subjects. Governors are regular visitors carrying out learning walks, lesson observation and speaking with pupils. Reports from these feed into governors' detailed monitoring and self-evaluation.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

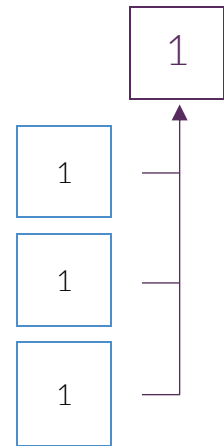
How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

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



Pupils' experience of prayer and liturgy engages them deeply, they behave in a most reverential manner and participate fully. The quality of prayerful silence is excellent. Pupils work collaboratively with others in planning, preparing and leading prayer and liturgy. Year 6 lead prayer and liturgy for Reception and Year 1 using scripture, a PowerPoint they had prepared on the theme and singing a hymn. Pupils can talk about different ways of praying which are part of the Catholic tradition. For example pupils stated, 'we say the Our Father, morning, lunchtime and end of day prayer.' A parent stated, 'the children are encouraged and supported to lead their class prayer and liturgy.' In a discussion with pupils a Year 1 pupil articulated how to plan and prepare an assembly and teachers supported by, for example, preparing a PowerPoint, Year 6 pupils stated that they prepare all their own resources. Pupils readily reflect upon prayer and liturgy and can articulate how prayer impacts upon them. A pupil stated that for him 'prayer can be checking in with God.' Another stated, 'it gives me an understanding of how I should behave.' Pupils like being chaplains and see the importance of the role. One stated, 'I am a role model to other pupils in the school.'

Prayer and liturgy are central to the daily life of the school. It is an alive rhythm which punctuates the day at key points, morning, lunchtime, end of the day. It marks routine gatherings of staff, governors and pupils and impacts upon home life. A parent stated, 'my son comes home singing the hymns he has learnt.' Scripture appropriate to the season is chosen. In one assembly Year 6 pupils used a passage from John's Gospel to reflect upon Christ the Universal King and then gave a short explanation of the passage. Pupils research their own prayers. In Year 5 reflecting on solidarity a pupil had researched prayers on that theme. Hymns both traditional and modern enhance prayer and liturgy as shown by the pupils' enthusiastic and prayerful singing. Prayer spaces and prayer stations are very well looked after, appropriate liturgically, and used to enhance the prayer life of the school. To ensure continued children's participation the parish priest supports pupils in understanding of the new Lectionary. Most parents agreed they are involved in the prayer life of the school and there is a flourishing partnership

with the parish which is greatly valued. A parent stated, 'we are very happy with the strong connection between the parish and the Church' and that there are 'regular Masses at the Church for the whole school community and the priest knows our children well.'

The school's policy on prayer and liturgy is carefully formulated, regularly reviewed and fit for purpose. All staff agreed it was useful to them when preparing prayer and liturgy. Pupils behave with reverence and respect, and all are included. For example, pupils of other faiths who share in the Old Testament would read as part of a time of prayer. The school calendar is planned to include opportunities for Mass on holy days and at special times of the school year such as the beginning of term and the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Governors are very involved in prayer and liturgy attending for example class-based Mass and talking with pupils about their role within the preparation. They ask searching questions of the leadership team, the views of pupils are regularly sought, and this feeds in to the regularly reviewed quality and impact of prayer and liturgy which forms part of the school's cycle of self-evaluation.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Mary Magdalen's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	102909
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	3183309
Full postal address of the school	St Mary Magdalen's Catholic Primary School, Worple Street, London, SW14 8HE
School phone number	002088766679
Headteacher	Martin Brannigan
Chair of governors	Christopher Hopkins
School Website	www.st-marymagdalens.richmond.sch.uk/
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	N/A
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Voluntary Aided School
Admissions policy	Non-selective
Age-range of pupils	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	June 2018
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

The inspection team

Stephen C Horsman
Michelle Wilson

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