



Summary of key findings for Parents and Pupils

- The overall effectiveness is outstanding.
- The Catholic nature of the school permeates all aspects of school life, recognises the uniqueness of the individual and encourages pupils to develop their gifts and talents to the full.

“St Mary’s is a beacon of excellence, a light for all to see”

- Worship in various forms is a vibrant and daily feature of the school.
- There is a high level of commitment from all staff to the pursuit of excellence and this work is supported by rigorous whole school planning, evaluation and review. As a result of outstanding teaching, pupils achieve highly in Religious Education.
- Collective Worship is outstanding.
- A wide range of opportunities are offered to pupils to explore their relationship with God, individually and as a worshipping community, within and beyond the school.
- High quality liturgies throughout the year are prepared by pupils and staff and provide uplifting and memorable experiences.

“The Catholic Life of the school is outstanding”

- There is a strong sense of belonging, manifest in the outstanding quality of relationships. A climate of tolerance and respect, emanating from the Gospel precept of love of one’s neighbour, ensures that those from different social, cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds live and work in harmony.

“The school prides itself on its inclusivity”

- The headteacher, staff and governors are committed to a flourishing Catholic ethos which nurtures and supports pupils on their faith journey and provides opportunities for them to thrive and develop.
- Religious Education is outstanding.

“Pupils thoroughly enjoy Religious Education and are totally committed to their learning”

- Teaching is often outstanding and never less than good.
- The leadership of the department is outstanding and the striving for excellence is shared wholeheartedly by the department.
- The senior leaders and governors are actively involved in monitoring the work in Religious Education.

Catholic Life

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

- The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.
- The vast majority of pupils from year seven to year thirteen have a deep experience of belonging and are enthusiastic members of the vibrant Catholic community. Pupils demonstrate a clear commitment to the school and enjoy and benefit from an outstanding Catholic community.

“Pupils are actively encouraged to develop their gifts and talents to the full”

- Pupils are at the centre of shaping the mission and ethos of the school. They contribute to it in a planned and systematic way and to the school’s evaluation of Catholic Life.
- Pupils are actively aware of the needs of others and seek justice for all, as demonstrated in fund raising activities such as Soup Friday to support CAFOD.

“The quality of relationships is a very special feature of this diverse community. Both pupils and staff express a sense of real joy at living and working in a climate so imbued with the Gospel values of tolerance, respect and love of one’s neighbour, clearly visible in the excellent behaviour and good manners of pupils”

- The vast range of opportunities for personal support and development is embraced by the pupils. They are happy and confident, developing spiritually and emotionally to become responsible members of the community.
- Pupils are actively encouraged to value themselves as unique individuals with abilities to learn and achieve and to value everyone else in the community as being of equal worth, with much to contribute to the life of the school.
- A high level of respect is given to every member of the community which is evident in movement around the buildings, in the dining hall and behaviour in classrooms.
- Every individual in the school community is highly valued.

“Pupils, including those who are not Catholic, celebrate their own religious identity and beliefs, whilst at the same time deeply valuing and respecting the Catholic ethos of the school”

The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the School

- The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.
- The aims of St Mary’s school, with their emphasis on understanding the Catholic faith, love of the values of the Gospel and support for pupils from whatever faith background, are a clear and inspiring expression of the educational mission of the Church. This is re-enforced by the prayer life of the school which centres on a weekly theme derived from the previous Sunday’s Gospel.

“The quality of relationships is a significant strength of the school. St Mary’s prides itself on being a caring school, a happy place, where order and respect for others underpin the everyday life of the school”

- Invitations for pupils to develop spiritually and deepen their personal relationship with God are a central feature of the life of the school.
- The school regularly contributes its support to the wider Catholic community.
- Pastoral leaders, the SENCO and her team, the lay chaplain, tutors and support staff all play a huge part in ensuring outstanding care for the most vulnerable pupils, both in policy and practice.
- The highest standards of moral and ethical behaviour are promoted through the clear and consistent communication of the school’s expectations and are embodied in the school’s aims.
- High standards of behaviour are rooted in the teachings of the Church and embody personal responsibility and the need for justice and also facilitate healing and reconciliation.

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

“How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding”

- The leadership of the headteacher is inspirational for the whole school community. His example energises leadership at all levels and permeates this prayerful community. Governors, staff and pupils speak unreservedly of the Catholic ethos as the prime motivator of the success of the school.
- The provision for the Catholic Life of the school is given the highest possible priority by leaders.
- The governors are pivotal to the Catholic Life of the school. They are passionate about the school’s mission, provide support and challenge wherever necessary and ensure the Catholic Life is well resourced and identify opportunities for pupils to work in local parishes.

Collective Worship

How well pupils respond to and participate in the school’s Collective Worship

- How well pupils respond to and participate in the school’s Collective Worship is outstanding.
- Very large numbers of pupils respond positively to a huge range of opportunities offered to explore their relationship with God, individually and as a worshipping community within and beyond the school.
- The vast majority of pupils participate in high quality liturgies throughout the Church’s year and regularly prepare and lead acts of worship.
- Tutor group led assemblies are inspirational as seen in a year ten assembly on the theme of ‘Give us this day our daily bread’, providing a medium of expression to deepen spiritual awareness.
- The experience of living and working in a praying community has had a profound and visible effect on the development of pupils.

“There is a deep sense of respect for different faiths and pupils are at ease in sharing prayer with those of different faiths”

- Pupils have made a powerful witness to the difference a community of prayer has made to their own sense of identity, security and growth.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship

- The quality of provision for Collective Worship is outstanding.
- Collective Worship is central to the life of the school for pupils and staff.
- Excellent resources to interpret and portray the theme are provided weekly for tutors by the lay chaplain, helping to stimulate prayer and reflection.
- Prayer and worship is an integral feature of the life of the school.

“The search for excellence extends to the time, thought and effort put into ensuring outstanding provision for Collective Worship which has a clear purpose, message and direction”

- The chapel located in the centre of the school is visited by pupils and staff to engage in private prayer and reflection.

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

- How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship is outstanding.
- Leaders and managers demonstrate a high level of skill and commitment which secures meaningful and quality Collective Worship for the community.
- The respectful and willing participation of pupils in the many opportunities for worship is testimony to the high quality provision, regular monitoring and effective evaluation of Collective Worship.
- New staff receive induction on the school’s Catholic ethos from the headteacher and all staff are encouraged to attend retreats and diocesan events.

“Rigorous monitoring and evaluation is a hallmark of the school”

Religious Education

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education

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

“There is an outstanding attitude to learning which was evident in all lessons observed during the inspection”

- Expectations are always high.
- Lessons proceed without interruption and pupils are enthused and challenged.
- In 2015, 94% of pupils made 3 levels of progress, key stage two – key stage four, rating this as outstanding. Attainment is equally impressive: 89% of pupils gained A*-C with 43% recording A*-A.

The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education

- The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education is outstanding.
- The outstanding outcomes in Religious Education are only to be expected given the outstanding teaching and assessment evident within the department.

“Teachers communicate high expectations, a passion for the subject and excellent subject knowledge”

- Homework is regularly set, helping to consolidate pupils’ learning and stretching and challenging the most able.
- Planning and assessment are rigorous, fit for purpose and contribute significantly to pupil progress.

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

- How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education is outstanding.

“The self-evaluation of Religious Education by leaders and managers is a coherent reflection of rigorous monitoring, searching analysis and constant self-challenge informed by best practice in Religious Education”

- The leadership of Religious Education is informed by a high level of expertise and commitment with a relentless focus on improvement.
- The imaginative and stimulating Religious Education curriculum is skilfully designed to match the full range of pupil needs and to ensure highly effective continuity and progression in learning.
- The thorough scrutiny across the department ensures pupils of all abilities are carefully monitored and intervention made to aid learning and progress.