DIOCESE OF LANCASTER EDUCATION SERVICE

DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION REPORT (Section 48)

St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Kells, Whitehaven

DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION REPORT (Section 48)

on

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

School:	**St Mary's Catholic Primary School**
Address:	**High Road, Kells, Whitehaven Cumbria CA28 9PG**
Email Address:	**head@kells-stmarys.cumbria.sch.uk**
School URN:	**112353**
Headteacher:	**Mrs Susan Starkie**
Chair of Governors:	**Miss Nicola Pettitt**
Lead Inspector:	**Mrs Frances Wygladala**
Team Inspector:	**Mrs Rachel Ballard**
Date of Inspection:	**17th November 2021**

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Mary's is a smaller than average Catholic Primary School with 170 pupils and 24 in Nursery. It is situated in the parish of St Mary's, Kells within the Diocese of Lancaster.

Most pupils are of White British heritage, with a small group of children who come from minority ethnic groups. It is an area of very high deprivation with 27.6% of pupils eligible for free school meals, higher than national average.

63.5% of pupils are baptised Catholics with 16.5% from other Christian denominations. There are no pupils from other faith backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is higher than the national average. There are currently five pupils in receipt of support through Educational Health and Care Plans.

Since the last inspection, there have been some staffing changes including four new members of the teaching staff and also a recent change in Parish Priest.

PUPILS	**Rec**	**Y1**	**Y2**	**Y3**	**Y4**	**Y5**	**Y6**	**Total**
Number on roll	25	25	24	25	27	24	20	170
Catholics on roll	16	18	16	18	16	12	12	108
Other Christian denomination	4	4	3	3	8	3	3	28
Other faith background	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No religious affiliation	5	3	5	4	3	9	5	34
No of learners from ethnic groups	1	2	1	1	2	0	0	8
Total on SEN Register	1	3	4	1	1	3	3	16
Total with EHC Plans	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	5

Exclusions in last academic year	Permanent	0	Fixed term	1
Index of multiple deprivation	0.33			

PARISHES SERVED BY THE SCHOOL	
Name of Parish	No of Pupils
St Mary's, Kells	80
St Begh's, Whitehaven	16
St Benedict's, Mirehouse	5
St Mary's, Cleator	4
St Mary's, Egremont	3

TEACHING TIME FOR RE	YR	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Total teaching time (Hours)	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	18.2
% of teaching time	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%av

TEACHING TIME FOR ENGLISH	YR	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Total teaching time (Hours)	8	8	9.5	8	8	8	8.5	58
% of teaching time	30%	30%	36%	28%	28%	28%	32%	30%av

TEACHING TIME FOR MATHS	YR	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Total teaching time (Hours)	8.25	6	6	6	6	6	6	44.25
% of teaching time	31%	23%	23%	21%	21%	21%	21%	23%av

STAFFING	
Full-time teachers	7
Part-time teachers	5
Total full-time equivalent (FTE)	9
Classroom Support assistants	11
Percentage of Catholic teachers FTE	67%
Number of teachers teaching RE	9
Number of teachers with CCRS or equivalent	7
Number of teachers currently undertaking CCRS	2
Chaplaincy staffing	0

ORGANISATION	
Published admission number	25
Number of classes	7
Average class size KS1	25
Average class size KS2	24

EXPENDITURE (£)	Last financial year 2020/21	Current financial year 2021/22	Next financial year 2022/23
Total expenditure on teaching and learning resources	£18,000	£20,000	£22,000
RE Curriculum allowance from above	£1,000	£1,500	£1,000
English Curriculum allowance from above	£1,000	£1,500	£1,000
Total CPD budget	£12,000	£10,000	£10,000
RE allocation for CPD	£2,000	£1,500	£1,500

How the school has developed since the last inspection

At the last inspection, Catholic life was judged outstanding and Religious Education was judged as outstanding, with overall effectiveness judged as outstanding. The Headteacher is still leading the school, ably supported by the Deputy Headteacher, and there has been a change in Chair of Governors.

The Headteacher has acted upon the recommendations from the previous inspection. The leadership team, governors and staff are united in their efforts. The school is successfully engaging parents in all aspects of school life and there are strong links developing with the parish.

The school has an outstanding capacity to sustain this continuous improvement. The dedication of the governors, together with the commitment of the leadership team and all staff, demonstrate the capacity to facilitate this. Despite the difficulties associated with the pandemic, the leadership team have managed to maintain the focus on the Catholic life of the school and drive through the changes required to develop the RE curriculum further.

INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS	**1**
CATHOLIC LIFE	**1**
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION	**1**

KEY FINDINGS

St Mary's is an outstanding Catholic school. It is a welcoming, friendly and inclusive community with a strong family ethos. Pupils clearly enjoy attending the school and they have positive attitudes to learning, deepening their knowledge of their faith throughout their time in school. The school lives out its revised Mission daily '*we grow and learn, walking in the footsteps of Jesus'*. Governors play a significant part in leading the direction of the school in the community. The school goes above and beyond expectations in supporting its pupils and families, especially the vulnerable.

The quality of provision for the Catholic life of the school is outstanding. The commitment from governors and staff to support pupils and families in their prayer life and their growth is a priority. Staff and governors set very good examples, are proud of their school and work hard together. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is outstanding and has a positive impact on everyday life at St Mary's. This can be seen through pupils' responses to each other and to the notion of the common good and justice in the world we live in. Gospel values permeate through school life and pupils are helped to grow in faith.

The prayer and liturgy opportunities offered are outstanding; pupils act with reverence and join in prayers confidently. Pupils focus on relating gospel stories to their lives today and are aware that 'we treat others as we would like them to treat us and we love our neighbours as ourselves'. This was articulated by upper Key Stage 2 pupils during an assembly on 'Community'.

The quality of Religious Education (RE) is also outstanding. Teaching is excellent and pupils are provided with opportunities to deepen their faith, to understand Catholic traditions and practices and progress well in their learning. Teachers have very good subject knowledge in RE and use creative approaches to teaching and learning, enabling pupils to enjoy and achieve well in their RE lessons. Children are able to think deeply and are encouraged to do so, often linking scripture to current issues in society. Leaders and managers have developed their monitoring systems and set priorities for the development of the subject. As a result, progress is good or better for all groups of learners regardless of their starting points. Staff are well supported by the leadership team and the new Parish Priest.

WHAT THE SCHOOL NEEDS TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER

The school needs to continue to develop provision in line with the Religious Education Curriculum Directory and Diocesan guidelines by:

- Developing further links with the parish, using IT when possible to promote inclusive practice.
- Ensuring class Prayer and Liturgies develop to include more spontaneous reflections from pupils.
- Continuing to develop Attainment Target 3 (AT3) and creative ways of teaching RE with the introduction of the new curriculum.

PART A: CATHOLIC LIFE

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

1

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

1
1
1

Inspection confirms the judgement made by the school that pupils make an outstanding contribution to the Catholic life of the school and benefit from it.

Governors, leaders, teachers and support staff at St Mary's are committed to supporting the Catholic ethos of the school and its mission, and this practice is well embedded in the life of the school.

The pupils' knowledge and understanding of the Catholic life of the school is enhanced by their sharing and contributing to many aspects of school life. From the Foundation Stage onwards pupils are beginning to exhibit the ability to share their own faith through whole class Prayer and Liturgy. They are aware that their Catholic faith is different from other faiths and they learn this by sharing similarities and differences of their own faith and learning about feasts and festivals in other world religions, for example the recent celebration of Diwali. This knowledge is enhanced by visits to other local Christian places of worship and also those of other world faiths. Pastoral support for vulnerable children and their families is a priority of the school.

All pupils are assisted and supported in their prayer life and enjoy school Masses and liturgies. Important feasts and themes in the church's calendar are celebrated and pupils learn about being stewards of creation through the Papal encyclical "*Laudato Si'* and the teachings of Saint Francis of Assisi. Each class has a named saint for example, St Patrick in Year 2 – during an observation, pupils were able to discuss the symbolism of the shamrock that St Patrick used to understand the mystery of the Holy Trinity. During a prayer and liturgy in Year 1, pupils heard about the story of the Annunciation and related to how brave Mary was, then went on to share their worries with God and discussed ways to help each other. In Year 5, a teacher led prayer and liturgy focussed on the Feast of Christ the King, pupils understood that Jesus was the Son of God and that his kingdom was heaven. Class prayer and liturgies should now be developed to include more spontaneous reflections from pupils to deepen their understanding.

Pupils are proud to be members of the school and are well behaved. Pupils are aware of the wider global family and were able to say, on the day of inspection, how the needs of others are addressed through fund raising for different charities both locally and globally, including CAFOD, Teenage Cancer Trust and the local food bank.

The Parish Priest, governors, school leaders, teachers and support staff, are fully committed to fulfilling their role in ensuring that provision remains outstanding for the Catholic life of the school. The school has plans to develop further links with the Parish, using IT when possible to promote inclusive practice.

Continued professional development is well planned and effective, and the school's mission statement has been recently reviewed to ensure it is at the heart of everything the school does.

The governors, leaders and managers are fully committed to partnerships with the diocesan family of parishes and schools. The school has good links with the primary and secondary schools in the local Catholic cluster. They endeavour to reach out to parents and carers in a variety of ways, for example sharing liturgies virtually, or filmed on Tapestry or SeeSaw. This practice has enabled the Catholic life of the school to have high priority, especially during times of remote learning during the pandemic when, for example, the Easter story and the Stations of The Cross could be celebrated at home with other family members. This has been an improvement since the last inspection. The school engages with other local schools across faith boundaries to strengthen understanding and tolerance.

The quality of provision for the Catholic life of the school is outstanding. St Mary's is an inclusive community with a strong Catholic ethos, where everyone is respected and appreciated and pupils and staff flourish. The head teacher provides clarity of direction for the Catholic life of the school and the spiritual and moral development of pupils. Staff and governors work hard to develop and enhance the school for the benefit of everyone in it. Prayer and Liturgy are central to the life of the school as are the high standards of behaviour that reflect the Gospel values, both of which were clearly evidenced in the Year 5 and 6 assembly, observed on the day of inspection and the teacher led liturgies in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

PART B: RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION	1

• How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education	1
• How well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education	1
• The quality of provision in Religious Education	1

Pupils at St Mary's enjoy RE, are religiously literate and fully engaged in their learning. They are able to remain on task when entering into discussions and when working independently. Through active participation in prayer and liturgies pupils show a thorough knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith.

Pupils develop and apply a range of skills throughout Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 including self-determination and imagination. These are built upon in Key Stage 2, where pupils reflect upon their own scriptural knowledge and are able to apply scripture to current situations for example, when looking at justice in Year 6, pupils understood what was just or unjust in current situations and could bring the teachings of Jesus into their discussions.

Pupil attainment and progress is good and in line with standards in other core subjects. Pupils have a great respect for one another and can discuss their faith and that of others. An excellent quality of teaching and learning was observed on the day of inspection. Pupils were given plenty of time to discuss and reflect upon their learning. Pupils enjoy their learning because teachers make their lessons relevant and interesting. A pupil interviewed on the day of inspection stated they 'liked learning in RE in creative ways, like acting out the story of Joseph in Year 4', another pupil said they 'really enjoyed making bird feeders to celebrate their class Saint, patron Saint of animals – St Francis of Assisi' and another, 'I like learning about God and how to pray, especially in our new school chapel'.

Parents are happy with the school and children's progress is shared with parents in regular reports, alongside other core subjects.

Inspection found that leadership and management in RE is outstanding and that the pandemic has not diminished the vision nor the teaching in RE. The headteacher and RE leader have an accurate view of the quality of teaching and learning through monitoring and evaluation in school. This has been greatly assisted by analysis of the baseline on entry and the measuring and celebrating of progress made by every pupil. Staff feel supported in RE, especially new staff and they all have high expectations of their pupils. Marking is of a high quality and is consistent across the school; it develops deeper thinking with pupils regularly

responding to the teacher's comments. The introduction of 'Wonder Books' has also helped with the development of deeper questioning throughout the school.

Curriculum RE is at the forefront of teaching. Teachers' subject knowledge is outstanding, and it is enhanced with INSET days and opportunities for Continuous Professional Development (CPD) in RE. Teachers deliver RE lessons with passion, during inspection pupils in Reception demonstrated their knowledge of God's creation and could name birds, trees, people that God created. During a lesson observed in Year 3, pupils recorded their work by labelling two very different paintings of the Annunciation, showing their deeper knowledge and excellent progress. Videos posted on Tapestry in Reception, showed the impact of learning about the rosary in school had on a family at home.

Recommendations since the last inspection have all been actioned.

Teaching in RE is excellent and inspection found provision to be of a high standard. The quality of displays around the school is excellent and reflects the pupils' learning, for example COP 26, Judaism and Stations of the Cross. Resources are well used, and pupils were observed using them during inspection.

The RE curriculum meets all the requirements of the Bishops' Conference and is informed by the Curriculum Directory and the Diocesan document 'Fit for Mission? Schools' and Human Relationships and Sex Education (HRSE) directives. HRSE is now being delivered discretely in line with statutory guidance.

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Overall Effectiveness	**1**
Capacity for sustained improvement	**1**
Catholic Life	**1**
• The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.	**1**
• How well leaders and managers promote and ensure provision for the Catholic Life of the school through monitoring and evaluation.	**1**
• The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school.	**1**
Religious Education	**1**
• How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.	**1**
• How well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.	**1**
• The quality of provision in Religious Education.	**1**

	Pupil Outcomes	Leadership & Management	Provision	Overall
Catholic Life	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**
Religious Education	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**