



St Mary's Catholic Primary school

Rowden Hill, Chippenham, SN15

Telephone: 01249 46023

e-mail address: admin@st-marys-pri.wilts.sch.uk

DfE Number: 8655208

URN: 109252

Headteacher: Mr P Bacon

Chair of IEB: Mr M Milliard

**Canonical Inspection under Canon 806 on behalf of the Diocese of Clifton
and inspection of Denominational Education under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005**

Date of inspection: 27th/28th February 2020
Date of previous inspection: 5th/6th February 2015

Lead Inspector: Mrs A Barrett
Additional Inspector: Mr F Toner

Description of school

St Mary's is a smaller-than-average Catholic primary school which serves the parish of St Mary, Chippenham. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholic is 77%, with 9% from other Christian denominations and 3% from other faiths. The remaining pupils are from families who have not declared a faith.

The proportion of pupils who have a SEN statement or an educational health and care plan is below the national average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well below the national average and those speaking English as an additional language is below the national average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support from the pupil premium is well below the national average.

Since the last diocesan inspection in February 2015 (when the school was deemed to be good), the school was placed in special measures following an Ofsted inspection in July 2018. The governing body was replaced by an Interim Executive Board (IEB) in November 2018. The focus of this group is to ensure that mechanisms for school improvement are in place and that the school is on a secure journey to achieve an Ofsted grading of good. A special measures monitoring visit took place in April 2019 and concluded that the leaders and managers were taking effective action towards the removal of special measures.

There has been a high turnover of headteachers and teachers in the last three years along with a significant drop in pupil numbers which has presented financial challenges. The IEB appointed an experienced interim headteacher to serve from September 2019 for two years. The new RE subject and chaplaincy leader took on this role in September 2019. Within the whole teaching body, the percentage of Catholic teachers is 50%.

The school benefits greatly from the support provided by the diocese, the local authority (LA) and its partnership with other schools in the Camino Catholic Schools Partnership.

Overall effectiveness of this Catholic school (summary statement)

Grade 2

- There is a strong sense of community at all levels. This is evident in the quality of relationships that exist between adults and pupils in this welcoming, supportive, inclusive Catholic school.
- Prayer is central to the life of the school and is at the heart of every school celebration.
- Leaders and the interim executive board (IEB) are fully committed to preserving and developing the Catholic life of the school, seeing it as a core leadership responsibility.
- The new headteacher, in liaison with the leadership team, has made a significant impact in promoting and supporting the Catholic life of the school and the teaching of RE.
- The strong staff morale, engendered by the headteacher, contributes significantly to the supportive relationships between staff and pupils and is a huge strength of the school. The

commitment of staff to the Catholic life of the school is evident in their 'going the extra mile'.

- Teachers are fully committed to the teaching of RE. They are enthusiastic and highly motivated individuals who have a genuine desire to develop and improve their knowledge and pedagogy.
- Staff promote good standards of behaviour within a calm learning environment and provide excellent role models of mutual respect and forgiveness for pupils. As a result, the behaviour of pupils is exemplary.
- Overall, pupils make good progress in religious education (RE) and demonstrate an enthusiasm for their learning.
- The new RE subject leader, working in close liaison with the headteacher and deputy head, provides effective support and training for staff in relation to the teaching of RE and the school's Catholic and prayer life.
- The school has effective strategies in place for engaging parents.
- Links with the parish are exceptionally strong.

The capacity of the school community to improve is good

Despite the school's extremely turbulent and challenging period during the last three years, there is a real sense of green shoots and growth at this stage in the school's journey, which bodes well for the future. There has been a noted improvement, for example, in staff morale and parental engagement since the appointment of the interim headteacher in September 2019.

The new headteacher, and his leadership team, have worked closely with the experienced IEB to ensure that the focus on implementing the Ofsted Post Inspection Action Plan (PIAP) has not detracted from sustaining the school's Catholic character. Indeed, the headteacher has been determined to ensure that the school's RE, Catholic and prayer life are at the heart of all whole school action planning, and staff are energised by this drive and vision. Consequently, the capacity for the school to improve is currently good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide opportunities to enable pupils to plan and lead prayer and worship with confidence. This should include developing their understanding of contemporary approaches to prayer, using scripture, religious artefacts and liturgical music. This should be accompanied by ongoing support and training for teachers.
- Fully develop and embed the work of chaplaincy across the school, ensuring that there are regular opportunities for more pupils to take on positions of responsibility and leadership in the Catholic life of the school and in the wider community.
- Implement a more formal system for monitoring, evaluating and reporting on the provision for the RE and prayer life of the school and the impact of actions taken to further improve these aspects.

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

- Pupils benefit substantially from being members of this strong, inclusive Catholic community which has exceptionally close links with the parish. They have a strong sense of pride in their school, readily participating in activities which promote the school's Catholic life and mission.
- Pupils confidently articulate what is involved in belonging to a Catholic community, demonstrating that they are alert to the needs of others, both within and beyond the school, and that they are willing to support those who are less fortunate.
- Pupils respond positively to those opportunities provided by the school to engage in its Catholic life and mission. They enjoy participating in whole-school events to raise money for local homeless charities, fundraising for CAFOD and participating in Odd Socks Day to raise awareness of bullying. A previous tradition of involving Year 6 ambassadors in serving lunch to the elderly in the church hall as part of Kittie's Café has recently been reinstated, with plans to extend this further.
- Overall, there is a clear willingness on the part of pupils to independently engage with the school leadership to make the school a better place. This has included campaigning for improvements in the school's playground and outdoor play areas. The most recent initiative is to establish an eco-council to address recycling issues. This lends itself well to the school's plans to explore Catholic Social Teaching (CST) in greater depth so that it can be used to frame the actions of the school, both within and beyond its immediate community.
- The involvement of pupils in reviewing the school's mission, through agreeing a set of values, has proved very effective in helping them to reflect on and develop the school's Catholic ethos. This is an example of leaders' commitment to extending pupils' contribution to evaluating the school's Catholic life. These opportunities could be extended further to include, for example, conducting audits on how the school reflects its Catholicity in the visible signs around the building and reviewing worship and chaplaincy provision.
- The behaviour of pupils is exemplary. They are considerate and quick to praise others. This is evident in the classroom and in school assemblies, in which they are encouraged to share their talents and skills. The calm learning environment is due, in no small part, to clear routines and procedures within and outside lessons, and to teachers' consistent application of the school's behaviour policy. The new leadership team is visible at key times in the school day and places a high value on ensuring that parents are kept fully informed so that they can support the work of the school.
- Chaplaincy has grown since the last inspection but should be developed further. Many pupils are unaware of the school's provision for chaplaincy as only a minority participate in it and do not play an outgoing and visible role in the school community. Chaplaincy opportunities should be further developed and made available to a much larger group of children. Currently, there are limited opportunities for this small team to contribute to the school's Catholic character. There are, in effect, more opportunities provided through participation in

other groups, such as the school council, to contribute to the development of CST across the school.

- Pupils take full advantage of the opportunities the school provides for their personal support and development. They are encouraged to be confident, articulate young people. They say that they are happy and feel safe at school and that 'there is always an adult to talk to'.
- Pupils respond positively to opportunities for their class to be actively involved in planning and leading whole school assemblies and class and whole school Masses.

b) The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school

- The school's mission statement clearly reflects the educational mission of the Church and is at the heart of all that it does. The school's six core values, based on its mission statement, were developed in collaboration with staff, pupils and parents in September 2019. They are presented in a way that the children can apply to their everyday life. This has been highly effective in refreshing and uniting the whole school community in their understanding of the school's mission. Consequently, there is a real sense of ownership and commitment to these values which underpins all that the school does.
- The school's core values and the liturgical year together shape the central theme for the school's weekly worship programme and are followed up by teachers in their class assemblies. Parents are also kept apprised of the worship themes in the weekly newsletter. Inspectors were impressed with the clear linkage and thoughtful planning of these worshipful assemblies which are valued by all members of the community and make a significant contribution to their spiritual development. This approach to school worship is commended as a model of good practice.
- There is a clear sense of community at all levels which is evident in the quality of relationships that exist between adults and pupils in this welcoming, supportive, inclusive community. Staff promote good standards of behaviour, and they are excellent role models of mutual respect and forgiveness for pupils.
- The school environment clearly reflects its Catholic identity and ethos through obvious signs of the school's Catholic character. The school's mission statement, values and hallmarks of a Catholic school are displayed in all classrooms. All classrooms have a focal prayer area which reflect the themes of the term in both RE and the liturgical year. The beautiful displays in and around the school are vibrant, child-centred and supportive of the school's Catholic life. Children are immensely proud of the 'reflective' artwork that they have been involved in creating during the lunchtime club run by the headteacher and which are prominently displayed in corridors.
- The school actively promotes good standards of behaviour that reflect Gospel values and is attentive to the pastoral needs of both its pupils and staff. The strong staff morale, engendered by the headteacher, contributes significantly to the supportive relationships between staff and pupils and is a huge strength of the school.
- The commitment of staff to the Catholic life of the school is evident. There is a real sense of staff 'going the extra mile'. For example, all staff attend the children's First Communion, irrespective of their own faith background as they respect and value this important event for the child and their family.

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- The school has initiated actions to develop its work in relation to the Year of Communion through seeking to promote service beyond the school and to engage with the school's wider community. The headteacher and RE team are currently involved in projects for further planned engagement with St Mary's Church, Kittie's Café, music and movement with the local residential home, food donations to the local food bank and engagement with CAFOD appeals.
 - Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE), and Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) are planned to reflect Catholic teachings and principles. The school is in the process of updating these programmes so that they are in line with the new diocesan and DfE guidance. Care should be taken to ensure that planning allows sufficient time for parents to be consulted and for staff to be trained in using new resources.
 - Leaders are updating the RE, Collective Worship and RSE policies so that these fully reflect the school's current practice in these areas. The intention is to develop an overarching policy so that the spiritual work of the school is a thread that runs integrally through school actions.

c) How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school

- Leaders and the IEB are fully committed to preserving and developing the Catholic life of the school, seeing it as a core leadership responsibility. Indeed, two of its four main strategic objectives relate to this i.e. 'ensuring the clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction of St Mary's' and 'maintaining the Catholicity of the school'
- The new school leadership team have successfully worked to agree a common set of values which flow from the school's mission statement, are firmly rooted in Gospel values and which are central to all that the school does. These have been developed in collaboration with staff, pupils and parents.
- The focus on implementing the Post Inspection Action Plan (PIAP) has not detracted from the new leadership team maintaining a sustained focus on the school's Catholic character. Indeed, the new headteacher and leadership team have worked closely with the IEB to ensure that this aspect remains at the fore of everything it does. The collaborative identification of the school's values, as mentioned above, was a clear priority for school improvement within the PIAP and spearheaded by the new headteacher.
- Consequently, the drive for improvement in relation to the school's Catholic life is a key focus. Staff are energised by the new leadership's drive and commitment to sustaining and enhancing this important aspect of the school's life. The headteacher updates the IEB on a regular basis relating to those aspects pertaining to its Catholic life, as and when appropriate. It is recognised, however, that a more formalised programme for monitoring and evaluating the Catholic life, alongside RE and Prayer life needs to be established in order to plan for further improvements.
- Leaders and the IEB engage in diocesan policies and initiatives and are effective in promoting the Bishop's vision throughout the school. The school has initiated actions to develop its work with respect to the Year of Communion that seek to promote service beyond the school and to engage with the school's wider community. The new headteacher, in liaison

with the RE team has been proactive in promoting these aspects, ensuring that they are carefully woven into the school's prayer life and the RE curriculum.

- The school has effective strategies in place for engaging parents as evidenced in the regular, parent forums, questionnaires and informative weekly newsletters. Parents are invited to attend whole school and class Masses and assemblies, and they value these opportunities. Parents are clear about the school's distinctive nature and the impact of the new leadership in maintaining and promoting this. The IEB, in its transition to a full governing body, is reaching out to the Catholic community to recruit new governors.
- Collaboration with other schools in the Camino Catholic Partnership has strengthened, with the school now engaging more effectively with its partners. This partnership provides valuable opportunities to collaborate on common issues.
- Leaders are committed to ensuring that at least one INSET day each year is set aside to support the teaching of RE or for developing spirituality.

a) How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education

- Overall, most pupils, from their varied starting points, make good progress in each key stage, with no significant variations between groups of pupils. From Nursery through to the end of KS2, clear progression and development are demonstrated through the work in pupils' books and in discussions with them. This is due, in no small measure, to the time spent in joint teacher planning prior to the teaching of each topic and to the support provided by the RE leader. This support, combined with teachers' commitment to the teaching of the subject, has proved effective in energising teachers to develop and grow in their subject knowledge and pedagogy.
- Inspectors were impressed with pupils' enthusiasm to speak about their learning in RE and with their enjoyment of the subject. Pupils demonstrated good levels of religious literacy across the key stages and confidence in using their knowledge and understanding of key religious concepts to reflect spiritually and to think ethically. There is no doubt that the school's strong Catholic ethos, supported by excellent parish links, plays a notable part in supporting the development of pupils' religious literacy.
- Pupils say that they enjoy their learning in RE because 'we do lots of different, interesting activities' and 'because my teacher explains everything so well'. They enjoy the variety of different approaches used by teachers, including paired learning and discussion, music and art and the development of ideas and themes through drama and outdoor learning. They take pride in their work and are keen to improve and develop their knowledge, understanding and skills.
- Pupils demonstrate a real enthusiasm for their learning. They concentrate well in class, are committed to their learning and have a good understanding of how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.

b) The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education

- Teachers are fully committed to the teaching of RE and are 'protective' of the subject, ensuring that quality time is set aside for teaching of the subject. They are enthusiastic and highly motivated individuals who have a genuine desire to develop and improve in their theological understanding and knowledge of RE.
- The support and CPD provided by the RE leader, combined with teachers' commitment to the teaching of the subject and strong promotion of the subject by leaders, has proved effective in energising teachers to develop and grow in their subject knowledge. Consequently, teachers are not only growing in confidence but have a much greater understanding of how pupils learn in RE and of what they need to know. The work done by the previous subject leader in establishing a clear planning framework for progression and teaching in RE is being successfully built on by the current RE leader.
- Teachers communicate high expectations about RE and behaviour, creating a positive and respectful culture for learning.

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- Teachers are effective in planning lessons using the school's agreed scheme (which is based on approved diocesan materials) and are becoming skilled in adapting these resources to match the needs of their class. Teachers employ a range of appropriate strategies, including individual and collaborative work, which are effective in engaging and motivating pupils.
 - Assessment is ongoing and formative. The assessment and tracking of pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills in RE has been a priority for the new leadership team since the start of the academic year. The agreed approach in RE has been modelled on successful practice in English and maths and is built around 'learning ladders'. These were initially undertaken on a lesson by lesson basis and are currently being trialled for RE units as a whole. These ladders are valued by pupils and staff alike and will be reviewed at the end of the trial period to ascertain their effectiveness and how they can be collated to inform teaching across the key stages. It is recommended that the excellent work in this area should be shared, for consideration, with other schools in the Camino partnership.
 - Teachers are effective in linking lessons to pupils' prior learning so that it builds and extends learning for all. They check pupils' understanding, identify misconceptions and adapt their teaching as necessary. Good questioning and the use of sentence-stems encourages children to reflect deeply and find ways to articulate this learning. Additional adults are effectively deployed to support learning for pupils.
 - Celebration of achievement and effort are central to teachers' assessment strategies. Pupils' achievement in RE and other subjects is formally celebrated in assembly on a weekly basis, and in class on a day to day basis, in line with the school's behaviour policy.
 - The headteacher's strong focus on developing experiential learning through providing enrichment opportunities outside of the classroom is to be commended and could be further developed within the teaching of RE. For example, pupils embrace their learning about other faiths, but they would greatly benefit, for example, from visiting other places of worship. It is encouraging to note that the PIAP includes plans to 'better develop children's understanding of other religions and use the school's diverse population to develop children's understanding of the cultures within their school and beyond'. This bodes well for the future.

c) How well leaders and governors monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education

- Leaders and the IEB ensure that the religious education curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference. The school follows the approved diocesan programme and ensures that the teaching of other faiths is an integral part of this. This is further enriched by an exceptionally well-planned worship programme which is highly effective, not only in developing pupils' prayer life but in extending and building on their understanding of faith, and Gospel values.
- Leaders and the IEB have a clear focus in their PIAP, on ensuring that curriculum planning 'compliments the school's Catholic tradition' with 'the school's Catholic dimension and values a strong web through all that we do'.
- Leaders have already undertaken a review of the school curriculum, with plans in hand to enhance the curriculum further by exploring how Catholic Social Teaching (CST) can build on

this both within and beyond the immediate school community. This would include consideration of the role of chaplaincy and other pupil groups such as the Eco and School Council. This holistic approach to curriculum development is to be commended and will provide further opportunities for the moral and spiritual development of pupils in a planned and systematic way.

- The new RE subject leader is being effectively mentored by the previous RE leader, enabling her to develop and hone her subject leader skills within a highly supportive context. She is eminently qualified to lead the subject. Together, they work in close liaison with the headteacher and with the music worship lead to ensure a symbiotic approach in all that they do in relation to the teaching of RE, and its Catholic and prayer life. This team approach is a model of good practice and ensures a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement in each of the three areas.
- Since the last inspection the RE subject leaders have established a curriculum coverage matrix that is used by all teachers to ensure progression across the key stages. At the start of each new unit, all staff meet to discuss and plan so that all teachers are aware of the learning to be undertaken in other classes and year groups and can effectively build on prior learning.
- The provision for staff training is good and must remain an ongoing focus for the school. The Deputy Head Teacher and new leader for RE have completed the Diocesan three-day modular training and attend RE meetings with partner Catholic schools. The headteacher regularly attends meetings with the Catholic partnership, and diocesan training and retreats. The new RE leader is building on the good practice of the previous lead by working with teachers to adapt the new diocesan RE resources to the needs of each class. This, as highlighted above, has been embraced by all staff and has had a significant impact on pupils' progress in the subject.
- The RE team, in liaison with the IEB, should next implement a more formal system for monitoring, evaluating and reporting on the provision for RE in order to plan for future improvements.

a) How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's prayer life

- Pupils, irrespective of background, greatly value the opportunities which the school provides to participate in its prayer life. Pupils demonstrate high levels of reverence and respect during times of worship and prayer, which are an integral aspect of the school's day and weekly organisation. Each day is punctuated with opportunities to come together to pray, either as part of whole school or class worship. These occur at the start of the day, before meal times and at the end of the day. Discussion with pupils affirms the value and importance they place on these prayer opportunities, finding them relevant and helpful in their daily lives. This is due, in no small measure, to the importance which leaders and indeed all staff place on prayer.
- Leaders place a high value upon good quality collective worship, which enables both pupils and staff to come together to worship. Pupils and staff relish these opportunities, seeing these parts of the school day as times when they can reflect, explore their own beliefs and moral standpoints. There is no doubt that the experience of living and working in this faithful, prayerful community has a deep and visible effect on the spiritual and moral development of all pupils and plays an important part in supporting their learning in RE and other areas.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the Church's liturgical year, but opportunities to be involved in planning their own worship opportunities are limited and tend to be adult led. This has been identified by the school as an area for development. Pupils' involvement in preparing and leading worship (combined with appropriate training for staff in supporting this) should remain an ongoing focus for the school.
- Pupils value and enjoy the opportunities to participate in class Masses and class assemblies. Just as pupils enjoy and respond so positively when challenged and encouraged to become independent learners in RE, in the same way teachers should not be afraid to 'take the risk' and help them to acquire skills in planning and leading prayer and worship. Again, this is dependent on providing appropriate training for teachers.

b) The quality of the prayer life provided by the school

- Prayer is central to the life of the school, is at the heart of every school celebration and is viewed by leaders as the most important vehicle for establishing and promoting the school's mission and values.
- The school has, since the last inspection, maintained its clear focus on providing good opportunities through its prayer life for pupils to develop spiritually, including daily acts of worship and prayers at key points of the day. The Church's seasons and feasts are focal points in the school's life and are enthusiastically celebrated by all.
- Collective worship has been re-energised by the headteacher through the establishment of a weekly assembly which is linked creatively to the 'value of the term' using engaging visuals, music and artefacts. This assembly is followed up by teachers in their class worship and with

parents in the weekly newsletter. In addition, the headteacher and RE subject leader ensure that the Gospel assembly seamlessly links with the headteacher's assembly. These high-quality opportunities for worship play an important part in developing and supporting the school as a strong Catholic community and which all staff attend.

- The school continues to benefit greatly from its strong links with the parish. The parish priest is a highly respected member of the school community and is a regular visitor to the school. The school welcomes the valuable contributions he makes to its Catholic life.
- Pupils are provided with opportunities to work with their teacher in the planning and delivery of assemblies. The week of the inspection provided an excellent example of this in action, with parents attending the Ash Wednesday Mass and the beautifully constructed Year 3 assembly which took place on the following day. In this assembly pupils creatively shared their learning in a variety of subjects, including RE, and participated in child-centred opportunities for prayer.
- Opportunities to develop pupils' understanding of the sacramental life of the church are strong and the parish priest works closely with the school to ensure that school Masses are accessible to all and that pupils are helped to understand and appreciate the importance of symbols, scripture and traditional prayers.
- Leaders ensure that prayer and collective worship are given a high priority in terms of planning, evaluating and resourcing and, as a result, experiences of these are positive and engaging for all members of the community. Worship is carefully planned across the year, weaving in the Church's liturgical year and the school's mission values, and it is adapted to include global and school events. Effective use is also made of CAFOD resources to support the planning of these worship opportunities. Parents are regularly informed of school worship through the school's weekly newsletter, enabling them to follow themes up at home.
- The RE subject leader models how to lead worship in her weekly Gospel assembly, as well as working with individual teachers to provide guidance on how to develop worship in their classes. In addition, the headteacher and RE subject leader liaise with staff on a weekly basis to ensure a seamless link between the messages from the Gospel assembly and other whole school assemblies. The subject leader's modelling helps staff to develop skills in leading quality worship themselves and in helping pupils to do so. This bodes well for the future and is a highly effective way of providing ongoing training for teachers.
- The school continues to provide regular opportunities for pupils to engage in saying the traditional prayers of the Church. However, discussions with pupils suggest that, at times, there is an over dependence on traditional forms of prayer. Consideration should be given to developing teachers' skills in encouraging pupils' understanding of the variety of methods and styles of prayer, including spontaneous prayer.

c) How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the prayer life of the school

- Overall, leaders effectively plan and deliver quality prayer and collective worship, placing a strong focus on reflection and personal growth. They have a good understanding of the Church's liturgical year and are skilled in making these accessible to pupils in a contemporary and child-centred context.

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- Teachers are very effectively inducted into the Catholic life of the school and they value the support provided by leaders. They are acutely aware of the importance of prayer and are keen to improve their skills in this area. They speak highly of the headteacher, deputy head and RE leader who provide them with good role models with respect to their delivery of worship and consider that they are gradually becoming more skilled in planning and leading prayer with their class. Support and training should remain an ongoing focus in this area.
 - Leaders discuss, review and collaboratively adapt collective worship on a weekly basis. The IEB have been involved in reviewing the school's use of collective worship on an informal basis and are aware of improvements that have been made. Monitoring and evaluating the school's provision for the prayer life of the school should be part of a formal programme during the transition period of the IEB to a full governing body.

Summary of Parental Questionnaires

There were parental 50 questionnaires received. They were effusive in their praise of the school and their children's education. Some typical responses included:

'It has a wonderful atmosphere of really caring about the children's whole development, and a strong community feeling'

The sense of community -particularly since Mr Bacon took over'

'St Mary's has a warmth to it-a real community. Members of staff are seen at church regularly and this shows a great example to the children'

'I feel St Mary's has a special community feel. All the children seem happy and well behaved and I feel that they are genuinely known and cared for'

'Its sense of community. I must applaud Mr Bacon who has done so much for this school in such a short space of time. His leadership is second to none'

'We choose St Mary's because it has a wonderfully warm Catholic family feel and has close links with the parish....'

'It is a Catholic school and we would like our child to be led with these values'

'St Mary's has a strong Catholic focus.... The school ethos is high on morals and community spirit and engagement'

'As a Catholic I wanted my children to experience education guided by Gospel values'

'Long standing with good space and teaching environment. Good to see improvements with fencing. Good school trips, friendly staff and excellent teaching'

'The school focuses on the safety and well being of its pupils'

'The staff are all working hard to improve the school and Fr Millett is always involved'

'Lovely staff and my child is doing very well...Good link to the parish and good PTA network'

'Three generations have passed through and there is nowhere else we wanted to choose. The pastoral care in particular is exceptional'

St Mary's has a wonderful community spirit- the children are kind and accepting of each other and this reflects how they are taught and the school ethos .We also love that Mass is often a communal event and that we can be part of it- the children feel comfortable at school because they know that their parents can be involved as well- it really is a wonderful school'

'The children are very well behaved and respectful, and they are very understanding and kind to children who have special needs'

'St Mary's children are kind, thoughtful and polite-this shines through and is in a large part due to the teaching. St Mary's makes Mass and RE so much more accessible to children, their participation and parent involvement really makes a big difference to their understanding and enjoyment'

'Mr Bacon makes clear his vision and aspirations for the school, including in establishing more cohesive links with the parish. He shares what the children have learnt in Gospel assemblies and has done so much in restoring confidence amongst parents'

*'Genuine care of staff who see their roles (whether teaching, TAs or Admin) as vocational'
'Christ centred Catholic education where children are known personally. Strong RE'*

'In school they are learning about religion and enjoying the process thanks to the music and songs they sing during Mass...St Mary's plays a valuable role in breaking down Catholicism into accessible lessons for our children'

'The dedication and passion of the teaching and support staff'

'St Mary's promotes confidence in its Catholic values that results in happy children and staff alike which is displayed distinctively in its commitment to a genuinely all-round education'

'This is a fantastic school which nurtures a good relationship with the parish, thus inspiring profound respect and affection in equal measure. The new head and deputy are really making St Mary's outstanding again!!!'

'The staff all seem to really care about the children. The new head is a wonderful leader and really gets involved with the children's learning (e.g. outdoor education). My child is very happy, safe and secure in this school'

'There have been huge improvements over the last 18 months and this school has been a lot clearer in communicating with parents about progress and direction. The headteacher has been building good links with the parish'

'St Mary's is a brilliant school. Our youngest child is now in Y6 and all of our children have received an excellent education here'

'Since the arrival of Mr Bacon the school feels much more settled. Information is shared daily/weekly. Progress is reported termly. Learning is far more exciting for the children and more hands-on. All staff are working so hard to drive up standards. The Catholic ethos is also being maintained through Gospel assemblies, termly assemblies and class Mass'

'The fostering of kindness is taught well'

'The diversity of pupils adds a multicultural dimension and community feel'