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DIOCESAN BOARD FOR INSPECTIONS

CANON LAW 806 FINAL INSPECTION REPORT INCORPORATING SECTION 48

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

St Mary's Menston Catholic Voluntary Academy
Bradford Road Menston West Yorkshire

School URN

139351

Date of S48 inspection and
OE grade

20-21 June 2019
Outstanding Grade 1

E-mail address

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Chair of Governors

Mrs Diane Gaskin

Headteacher

Mr Darren Beardsley

RE Subject Leader

Mrs Catherine Collard

Date and grade of last S48
Inspection

April 2014
Outstanding Grade 1

Section 48 Inspector/s

Mrs Meg Baines
Mr Christopher Devanny

INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection Grades: 1 is Outstanding, 2 is Good, 3 Requires improvement in order to be good, 4 is Inadequate

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS: how effective is the school in providing Catholic Education.

1

The above judgement on overall effectiveness is based on all the available evidence following the evaluation of:

CATHOLIC LIFE

1

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

1

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

1

Summary of key findings:

This is an outstanding Catholic school

- St Mary's is a deeply committed and caring Catholic community, characterised by outstanding leadership and dedicated staff, united in wholeheartedly witnessing to the Catholic mission of the school.
- Almost all pupils at St Mary's are committed to the school's mission. They are actively involved and benefit greatly from their participation in the Catholic Life of the school. Pupils know how the school's mission relates to them in their own lives.
- Pupils speak highly of the chaplaincy provision. The school offers opportunities for pupils to be actively involved in Catholic Life on a formal basis through the Faith in Action Group, The Global Warriors and more recently through the St Vincent De Paul Group, and on an informal basis through the many fundraising events organised.
- Leaders and governors have ensured that the Catholic Life, Religious Education and Collective Worship of the school have the highest priority in its strategic improvement planning.
- Improvement planning is thorough and accurately identifies strengths and areas for development.
- The governing body is highly ambitious for the Catholic Life of the school. It is strong and leads by example. They challenge, support and monitor the Catholic Life and are passionate about it. They themselves participate in many of the school's Catholic Life events.
- The provision of continuing professional development for Catholic Life, Religious Education and Collective Worship of the school is a key leadership priority.
- The quality of Religious Education is outstanding.
- Attainment in Religious Education is consistently outstanding. Progress over time is outstanding.

- The quality of teaching in Religious Education is outstanding.
- Pupils enjoy their learning. They concentrate well, they demonstrate excellent levels of engagement and their work is purposeful, of significant depth and well presented.
- The quality of Collective Worship is outstanding.

What the school needs to do to improve further.

- Review the school's mission statement in conjunction with the curriculum review to bring a clarity of purpose to the school's vision and mission.
- Integrate Character Education and the virtues throughout the curriculum.
- Ensure that the Religious Education curriculum at Key Stage 3 is allocated 10% curriculum time.
- Strengthen and sustain greater participation of pupils in Collective Worship by providing regular opportunities for them to plan and lead.

Information about this inspection

The Inspection of St Mary's Menston was carried out under the requirements of the Education Act 2005, and in accordance with the Leeds Diocesan Framework and Schedule for Section 48 Inspections approved by the Bishop of Leeds. The inspection reviews and evaluates how effective the school is in providing Catholic education. This process begins with the school's own self-evaluation and the inspection schedule follows the criteria set by the National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers (NBRIA 2017).

The inspector reviewed in detail the following aspects:

- The extent to which the school has addressed the points for improvement from the previous Section 48 inspection.
- The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.
- The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school.
- How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision of Catholic Life of the school.
- How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education.
- How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.
- How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship.
- The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school.
- How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship.

The inspection was carried out by 2 inspectors over 2 days:

- Meetings with governors, the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, including pastoral leaders, Religious Education (RE) leader and assistant leader for RE, lay chaplain, middle leaders, Special Educational Needs coordinator, pupils, staff, Catholic Care worker and parents.

- Examination of school and department documentation including school improvement plans, policies, monitoring and evaluation records, planning and assessment files.
- Observation of 9 RE lessons in Key Stage 3 and 4
- Scrutiny and evaluation of pupils' written work in Key Stage 3 and 4. Analysis of student work in the Sixth form. Examination of teacher assessment and written feedback.
- Observation of Collective Worship in a Year 9 assembly and in 4 form groups.

Information about this school

- St Mary's Catholic Voluntary Academy is a Catholic secondary school within the Bishop Wheeler Catholic Academy Trust (BWCAT). It converted to academy status in March 2013.
- St. Mary's received Teaching School status in October 2015 and National Support School status in June 2017.
- The school offers Initial Teacher Training in a number of subjects and offers Subject Specialism Training in Mathematics, Physics and Modern Foreign Languages addressing teacher shortages in these subjects.
- There are 1247 pupils on roll including 257 in the Sixth form and 98% of pupils are baptised Catholic. The majority of pupils come from the school's five Catholic feeder primaries within the BWCAT: St Joseph's Otley, St Joseph's Pudsey, St Mary's Horsforth, Sacred Heart, Ilkley and SS Peter and Paul Yeadon.
- Pupils' attainment on entry is above the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for support through pupil premium funding is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the special educational needs and disabilities register is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have education health care plans is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have English as an additional language is below the national average.

Full report - inspection judgements

CATHOLIC LIFE

The Catholic Life of the school is outstanding

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.	1
The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school	1
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision of the Catholic Life of the school	1

- Almost all pupils at St Mary's Menston are committed to the school's mission. They are actively involved and benefit greatly from their participation in the Catholic Life of the school. Pupils know how the school's mission relates to them in their own lives. High levels of involvement in Catholic Life events such as the 50 pupils preparing to go to Lourdes on pilgrimage this year and their treatment of each other on a daily basis illustrate a commitment to their faith.
- Pupils embrace their faith and show a deep respect for themselves and for others in their community. They speak confidently about their experiences on retreat and on pilgrimage. "We believe that if we pray to God he will help us". Pupils' behaviour is excellent in and out of the classroom. They are able to listen to their peers, show understanding, tolerance and, when called for, forgiveness. They spoke confidently about their faith, charitable contributions and prayer life.
- Almost all pupils are aware of what it means to be part of a Catholic school community and they eagerly embrace the opportunities offered to celebrate and serve it. This happens through a variety of charitable works, retreats, Diocesan events and fund raising in school, in parishes and beyond. An example being the Year 12 involvement with an orphanage in South Africa, Bambisanani. Students fund-raise to travel to South Africa and once there they work in the school and orphanage.
- Pupils speak highly of the school's chaplaincy provision. The school offers opportunities for pupils to be actively involved in Catholic Life on a formal basis through the Faith in Action Group, The Global Warriors and more recently through the St Vincent De Paul Group, and on an informal basis through the many fundraising events organised. Retreats are arranged for all year groups. Pupils spoke of the spiritual growth they felt during retreat.
- Pastoral support is a strength of the school. The lay chaplain has a role which includes pastoral support, she sees this role as seamless; it is a role appreciated by pupils and staff. Pupils are aware of what support opportunities and facilities the school offers. During this inspection the Catholic Care team were in school sensitively supporting staff and pupils at a difficult time.
- School offers a well-planned Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) programme along with specialist taught Relationships and Sex Education (RSE). Pupils enjoy these lessons and appear confident in their own stage of physical, emotional and spiritual growth.
- Pupils understand what it means to have a vocation and can give examples of when they have served the school or community. Almost all pupils showed confidence in

expressing their pride in their school. They deeply value and respect the school's Catholic tradition. A large number of pupils are actively involved in their parishes. One parish has 25 altar servers who may be called on to serve at Mass in school.

- The school mission statement, "With Christ at the centre of all that we do," is an effective expression of the educational mission of the school. However, the mission statement is well known only to lower school pupils while more senior pupils and students identify the mission of the school variously with the beatitudes, gospel values or a slogan about providing a world class education. Consequently, leaders need to bring clarity to the school's mission statement to aid a unity of purpose.
- Staff are committed fully to the implementation of the school's mission. They pray together and plan for their own continuing formation. Leaders are committed to developing the school's mission in education and do this through highly effective and well-planned Continuous Professional Development (CPD) on Catholic Life for staff which also frequently has 'mission' as its focus.
- Genuine and strong relationships exist across the school and underpin the school's key mission tenets. It is a school where inclusivity and tolerance offer a sense of security and support for all.
- St Mary's is a warm and welcoming school to visitors. There are many visible outward signs of Catholicity effectively promoting the Catholic character of the school. The well-used Chapel is at the heart of the school.
- Staff engage with their pupils in a respectful way, modelling and thereby promoting the highest standards of behaviour and respect. Provision is in place for personal and moral development. The creation of a programme of virtues and character education will be established in the ongoing curriculum review.
- The school provides many opportunities for the moral and spiritual development of the whole community. Retreats include visits to Soli House, Lourdes, Holy Island and Walsingham. Excellent relationships exist between school and the various parishes. Lay chaplaincy is thoroughly embedded. The lay chaplain is available for 1-1 support if needed.
- Policies and procedures for pastoral care are effective and reflect Diocesan guidelines. There is a commitment to the most vulnerable in school. The school's behaviour policy reflects this; "In all cases involving SEND or vulnerable pupils, there will be reasonable adjustments applied, based on their needs."
- The culture of Catholic Life at St Mary's is such that it pays equal attention to the pastoral needs of members of staff, ensuring that these needs are met.
- The provision of PSHE and RSE are appropriate to age and stage and celebrate Catholic principles and teachings and both are under review in the current whole-school curriculum review. The assistant head teacher with responsibility for Catholic Life is responsible for RSE. PSHE is line managed by the assistant headteacher with responsibility for student welfare, care and support. This demonstrates the school's commitment to this area of school life. RSE is currently taught by a specialist team and is under review nationally.
- A measure of the school's commitment to the Church's mission in education is reflected in the make-up of the senior leadership team. There is an assistant headteacher with responsibility for Catholic Life and RE. The headteacher is line manager for Catholic Life and RE. There are also two governors who are links to Catholic Life and RE. The continuous development of the outstanding Catholic Life of St Mary's is viewed by leaders as a core leadership responsibility. Governors are very effective at holding the school's leadership to account.

- Outstanding practices and procedures for self-evaluation and monitoring exist in the form of St Mary's Evaluating Catholic Life document. This takes evidence from senior leaders, staff, pupils and parent voice questionnaires and provides the drive for development, based on well-targeted improvements, which continue to enhance the Catholic Life of the school.
- CPD is highly effective. St Mary's has played a significant role in developing diocesan subject networks. The school is a National Support School and a key partner of the Teaching Schools in the Diocese. They proudly describe themselves as a provider of faith based initial teacher training. Other CPD focuses on induction and ongoing formation of current staff.
- Parents speak highly of the school and the Catholic Life it exudes. The school has effective methods of communicating with parents through weekly newsletters, emails, social media and phone calls. Parents have a thorough understanding of the school's mission and are supportive of it: "the school has not only provided an education but installed values and a way to live your life which inspires others and makes a difference".
- The governing body is highly ambitious for Catholic Life of the school. It is strong and leads by example. They challenge, support and monitor the Catholic Life and are passionate about it. They themselves participate in many of the school's Catholic Life events.
- St Mary's is a confident, outward facing school, happy to share its outstanding practice and mindful of its role to serve the common good in its community and beyond. The school is at the forefront of actively supporting the Bishop's vision for the Diocese.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Religious Education is outstanding

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education	1
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education	1
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education	1

- High standards of progress are achieved by pupils within RE consistently over time. RE is, alongside English, the top performing core subject in the school. Almost all pupils make good progress in each key stage, with many achieving outstanding progress. Trends over time indicate that the progress pupils make in RE is significantly higher than both national and diocesan averages. Between 2016-2018 pupils' average point score in Religious Studies (RS) at GCSE was +0.70 above the national average and +0.65 above the diocesan average. The most recent results at GCSE show a continuing trend of significant progress in RS with pupils' achieving an average point score of +0.62 above the national average compared to an average of -0.24 for all diocesan schools. This data demonstrates the consistent achievement of pupils in RS over time, particularly in light of a new, more challenging, RS GCSE that saw the RE Department continue its trend of delivering excellent outcomes for its pupils.

- In the period 2016-18, almost all groups of pupils made progress in the RS GCSE when compared to national averages. A very high proportion of pupil groups made significant progress. For example, female and male pupils achieved an average point score of +0.73 and +0.67 above the national average. This demonstrates that the quality of learning within the RE Department is such that any gender gaps that exist on entry to the school in Key Stage 3 (KS 3) are targeted and closed by the end of Key Stage 4 (KS 4). The pursuit of positive progress measures for all pupils is the relentless aim of the RE Department to such an extent that numbers that do not achieve a positive progress score are very small indeed.
- A Level teaching is a strength of the department. Combined data for 2016-18 demonstrates that RS at A' Level was a top performing subject. RS has a consistent ALPS score of 2 indicating that performance at RS A' Level is within the top 10% of the national benchmark. In the period 2016-18, RS at A' Level was the most popular A' Level choice among students at St. Mary's.
- At KS 3 (Years 7 and 8) pupil performance is measured using 'National expectation' and an 'Aspirational Target'. Data for the end of KS 3 in 2018 shows that 85.9% of pupils met the national expectation and 47.3% met the more challenging 'Aspirational Target'. This data is evidence of the high expectations and standard of learning at KS 3: this stage of learning is not simply a means of achievement at KS 4 but is a discrete key stage in its own right. The data also reveals that teacher assessment at KS 3 produces valid and reliable standards closely aligned to national assessment at KS 4. This alignment enables accurate targeting of outcomes at the end of KS 4. Almost all pupils are becoming religiously literate through their learning in RE. KS 3 schemes undergo an on-going cycle of review in light of GCSE expectations and cultural changes to pupils' literacy and their misconceptions. Pupils use key subject specific vocabulary in their written work. The RE Department has a focus on key words that ensure pupils can spell, define and use the key words in their written work. It was evident in lesson observations and speaking to pupils that almost all pupils could articulate their understanding of religious concepts using key words accurately and with facility.
- Almost all pupils enjoy their RE lessons. Pupils in KS 3 and 4, as well as students in the Sixth form, spoke with passion and conviction about their RE lessons and their appreciation of RE teachers. Pupils variously said that RE was, "The best subject in the school", and a subject in which, "I know at what stage I'm at and get lots of help so that I know what I need to do next", and many spoke about how in RE "we know we will do well". Pupils described their RE teachers as people who "really do care for us", and a Sixth form student stated "Not just one teacher [of RE] is great, all the teachers are great". These views are widely shared.
- In RE relationships between teachers and pupils are exemplary. Pupil behaviour is very good. They are courteous and consider the needs of others. Behaviour for learning is excellent. In lesson observations and through an analysis of the department's lesson review schedule and pupil voice, it is clear that pupils come to RE ready to engage in their learning, equipped for challenging tasks. Pupils concentrate well, are rarely off task and they enjoy the pace and sequence of learning that all teachers offer. Pupils know they are entering a zone of high expectation, but they have confidence in their teachers. This allows pupils to seek knowledge and understanding and to respond well to the regular opportunities in every lesson to extend their learning through 'challenge tasks'.

- Pupil attainment as indicated by teacher assessment and public examinations is outstanding. This has been a consistent feature of RE and GCSE RS for many years. Assessment practice – its protocol, validity and accuracy - is a key strength of the RE department and should be shared across all diocesan schools.
- There was scrutiny of a wealth of pupil and student work during the inspection. Pupil work was well presented and thorough, consisting of lesson notes, assessments and revision materials. The sequence of learning discerned from the analysis of work was clear, wholly consistent with how pupils learn, and of a high standard.
- The scrutiny of RE department records, inspection observations and work scrutiny demonstrate that the majority of teaching is outstanding with no teaching that is less than consistently good. Teachers are highly effective in consistently planning high-quality lessons. They work collaboratively and follow common learning sequences, and due to their individual strengths, each teacher is able to tailor lessons to meet the needs of their pupils and deliver strong learning outcomes.
- Teachers have excellent subject expertise. They are proficient in theological literacy and teach complex theological concepts with flair and an engaging style. Consequently, pupils are inspired to learn and make sustained progress.
- Lessons follow a familiar structure, yet each teacher has the confidence to offer a wide range of appropriate teaching strategies, including reviews of previous learning, use of ICT, individual, pair and group working, and peer modelling of learning. The strong relationships between teachers and pupils was evident in how teachers used their own life experience to enhance pupil learning. In one GCSE lesson, the teacher drew on her own experience of the Hospice movement to engage pupils in a unit of work about the end of life. Teachers are adept in their use of questioning to elicit learning from pupils. In the lesson on the Hospice movement, skillful marshalling of the reciprocal questioning produced a depth of understanding from pupils that made clear the quality of previous learning. In another lesson on conscience, the teacher's expert questioning enabled pupils to show how some decisions we make are truly significant because they have a bearing on one's character and ultimate end.
- Scrutiny of pupil work over time and interviews with pupils demonstrate that high quality feedback to pupils is frequent and an integral part of the learning journey. Marking is thorough, consistent across the department and always focused on the required learning. It challenges pupils to provide further details and to go beyond the expected standard. Pupils respond well to the challenge built into teacher feedback and not only articulate their next steps, but also endeavor to meet them in their written work displaying increasing understanding and independence.
- Achievement is often celebrated. Samples of excellent work are displayed in the RE area and in individual classrooms. There are inspirational words and testimonies from past students that contribute to high expectations and pupil aspirations. Parents spoke of their pride in communications from the RE department praising the work of their children.
- Leaders and governors are outstanding in their commitment to RE. The RE curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference in every respect. The KS 3 programme of study was devised in liaison with the diocese and at KS 4 and 5 the RE Department follows qualifications and courses approved by the Bishops' Conference.
- At present, RE has the required amount of curriculum time in KS 4 (10%) and the Sixth form (5%), but RE at KS 3 has only 8% of the required 10%. However, there are plans in place to ensure that RE at KS 3 receives the extra 2% of curriculum time in September.

- RE has full parity with other core subjects. RE is taught by 7 subject specialists in a suite of 5 classrooms all situated in the same area of school. Financial expenditure indicates that RE has the resources it needs to remain an outstanding department. Leaders and governors understand the need for effective CPD and have enabled RE staff to attend opportunities to develop their subject expertise beyond the regular meetings, especially in relation to the new RS GCSE. This has increased teachers' confidence in the teaching and assessment of the new GCSE. The headteacher is chair of the Secondary headteachers group and works closely with the diocese to ensure that the RE network meetings have a high profile and follow the same structure as other diocesan subject networks. The headteacher has also ensured that the school's assistant headteacher for Catholic Life and RE has the capacity to use her outstanding practice to support other schools in the diocese.
- Leaders and governors' self-evaluation of RE is an accurate reflection of rigorous monitoring, searching analysis and self-challenge. The tools used to monitor RE are well designed and very effective.
- The assistant headteacher for Catholic Life and RE has an inspiring vision for RE. She is an outstanding teacher and consummate professional with a deep personal faith. Her passion and drive, her high level of expertise and reflective capacity has ensured she is at the forefront of developments in Catholic Life and RE within the school and increasingly across the diocese. As well as being a member of the school's senior leadership team, she is also the diocesan Specialist Subject Leader for RE for secondary schools. In this latter capacity, her support for other schools, in liaison with the diocese, is professional, effective and valued by headteachers and her peers.
- The Assistant Faculty leader for RE ably supports the assistant headteacher for Catholic Life and RE and attends regular RE leaders' meetings at Trust level. This allows for effective liaison, sharing and curriculum review with the RE leaders from St. Mary's feeder primary schools.
- The RE Department is an outward facing team filled with highly competent individuals who, first and foremost, serve their pupils and students, explore and explain the faith of the Church, and offer a religious understanding of the world whilst engaged in the pursuit of excellence.
- Leaders ensure that the RE curriculum is imaginatively and thoughtfully planned in the short and long term to enable pupils, appropriately and over time, to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills necessary to demonstrate religious literacy and to perform well at the end of KS 4 and the Sixth form.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Collective Worship is

How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship	2
The quality of provision for Collective Worship	1
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship	1

- Pupils act with reverence and are keen to participate in acts of worship. They are familiar with periods of stillness and use these to reflect quietly and silently. They join in community prayer appropriately and with confidence. This is both a feature of year group worship and form time worship. They participate in opportunities to sing, some joyfully, as heard in passing by an inspector, while others sing, but with less enthusiasm.
- Pupils plan and lead worship on a rotation for their year group on a regular basis. Pupils lead this with confidence and a degree of independence.
- Most pupils regularly lead their form time acts of worship. Pupils plan the response to the Word – the scripture readings - by composing prayers to read out on a rotation. These prayers are contained in form group prayer books. Many show a deep appreciation of the love God has for us and show how the events of life are occasions of conscious petition and reflection. However, more opportunities for all pupils to plan whole acts of worship and lead acts of worship are required.
- Most pupils have a good understanding of the Church's liturgical year. When questioned, they gave voice to appropriate themes for particular liturgical seasons and the prayers they compose are sensitive to the liturgical seasons.
- There is evidence from observations and school records that pupils use a variety of approaches to prayer. However, the increasing exposure of more pupils to planning whole acts of worship will facilitate a greater variety of approaches to prayer and liturgy.
- The experience of living and working in a faithful, praying community has a positive impact on the spiritual and moral development of pupils, irrespective of their background. This impact is evident in the very positive relationships pupils have with each other and with the adults with whom they work.
- Praying together is part of the daily experience for pupils and staff. Collective worship is central to the life of the school and forms the heart of every school celebration. Mass is celebrated weekly on a Wednesday lunchtime for pupils and staff, on holy days of obligation, the school feast day, and as a welcome to Year 7, a celebration for Year 11 at the end of KS 4 and a Leavers' Mass for Year 13. All staff celebrate Mass at the beginning of the academic year and there is Mass in school every Tuesday morning and once a term on a Monday after school. The school provides opportunities for the Sacrament of Reconciliation every Advent and Lent and many pupils receive this sacrament. The Lourdes and 'Faith in Action' group lead the Stations of the Cross in Lent.

- The Collective Worship celebrated in school has a clear purpose, message and direction. The resources used and made available are of a high quality, support the planning of acts of worship and reflect a deep understanding of the liturgical seasons.
- Senior leaders and the Lay Chaplain have an excellent understanding of the Church's liturgical year and are passionate about ensuring that pupils have high quality experiences of the Church's liturgical life. The Lay Chaplain is an excellent exemplar of faithful living for pupils and staff borne out of a deep love and appreciation of the centrality of prayer for sustaining the Catholic nature of the school.
- Most senior leaders and the Lay Chaplain have an expert knowledge in how to plan and deliver quality Collective Worship. Leaders at all levels are visible in their modelling of effective acts of worship. The professional development of staff in liturgical formation and the planning of Collective Worship has a high priority. The inspectors analysed a wealth of effective monitoring evidence demonstrating that leaders and governors place the highest priority on the school's self evaluation of Collective Worship.
- St Mary's, Menston is at the heart of the community in this area of the diocese. School leaders are discerning but also unyielding in their pursuit of excellence and success for all pupils, students and staff in their care. Together with the support of its academy council, the school strives to ensure that all receive the best that Catholic Education can offer.