CATHOLIC SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

THE NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE INSPECTION OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS, COLLEGES AND ACADEMIES

St Mary & St Peter RC Primary School

URN: 142737

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of East Anglia

30 September 2026 – 01 October 2026

Summary of key findings

Overall effectiveness

The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school

2

Catholic life and mission (p.3)

How faithfully the school responds to the call to live as a Catholic community at the service of the Church's educational mission

1

Religious education (p.5)

The quality of curriculum religious education

1

Collective worship (p.7)

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

2

The school is fully compliant with the general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishops' Conference	Yes
The school is fully compliant with diocesan directives	Yes
The school has responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection	Fully

This Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection was carried out under canons 804 & 806 of the code of canon law. For maintained schools and academies in England it fulfils the statutory requirements of s.48 of the Education Act 2005. For maintained schools and academies in Wales it fulfils the statutory requirements of s.50 of the Education Act 2005.

What the school does well

- The executive headteacher and head of school ensure that Christ and children are always at the heart of the school.
- Staff are exceptional role models for pupils and provide high levels of pastoral care.
- Pupils feel valued, cared for and happy: they show exemplary behaviour, attitudes to learning and respect towards each other.
- Pupils are enthusiastic, engage well and enjoy their religious education lessons.
- Leaders and staff ensure that religious education lessons and the whole religious education curriculum are thoughtfully and imaginatively planned.

What the school needs to improve

- Ensure pupils remember core theological knowledge and make connections in their learning so that they make consistently good progress.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to reflect on and provide feedback on the prayer life of the school so that their contribution is used to inform future developments.
- Broaden the range of worship and prayer opportunities offered to the school community to deepen spiritual engagement with the rich tradition of prayer in the Catholic tradition.

Catholic life and mission

How faithfully the school responds to the call to live as a Catholic community at the service of the Church's educational mission.

Catholic life and mission key judgement grade

1

Pupil outcomes

1

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

Provision

1

The quality of provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school

Leadership

1

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school

Pupils at St Mary and St Peter truly live out and bear witness to the school's Catholic mission. They flourish in this deeply caring and inclusive community because they know they are valued and cared for, explaining that 'all teachers will help us and keep us safe.' They demonstrate a strong respect for their own dignity and that of others, understanding the importance of treating each other with kindness and compassion; behaviour is exemplary. One parent commented, 'My children have a very good understanding of God and his values and I think that is displayed in the children's behaviours to one another.' Pupils relish the opportunities for pupil leadership and readily take responsibility for supporting others. Library monitors willingly give up lunchtimes to read with younger pupils, play leaders dedicate their breaktimes to supporting younger children and the Eco Committee actively promotes stewardship through initiatives including selling tomatoes they have grown and water conservation projects. The Mini-Vinnies are proud of their roles and have led many charitable endeavours, including raising money for the local foodbank and sending Christmas gifts and messages to care home residents. Although they have some knowledge of the principles of Catholic social teaching, most pupils are unable to fluently make links between these, the school's mission and their actions.

Christ is clearly at the heart of this school community. There is a deeply embedded sense of belonging and shared purpose which is understood and lived by all. Staff speak warmly about the school's mission, describing how they work collaboratively to support one another and ensure the best possible outcomes for pupils, saying that, 'we all want the best for them and we celebrate their successes.' Through their words, actions and relationships, they

consistently demonstrate the values they seek to foster in pupils, using the mission statement actively to support pupils in understanding expectations and making positive choices. Pastoral care is a significant strength of the school. Leaders have established highly effective support, including the Lighthouse Room, regular pastoral sessions with identified pupils linked to Gospel values and support for families experiencing hardship through initiatives such as food bank referrals, clothing vouchers and a winter coat scheme. Leaders work proactively to ensure that no pupil is disadvantaged, terming it their "poverty-proof enrichment curriculum". The interior and exterior physical environment consistently celebrates the ethos and witness of the school, and is respected and cared for by all.

The dedication of the executive head teacher and head of school bear witness to the Church's mission in education. They ensure that Christ is at the heart of every aspect of school life and are a source of inspiration to the whole community. They model this through their daily actions, working alongside staff and pupils and demonstrating that no task is beneath them. Decisions are rooted firmly in the mission of the school, particularly in ensuring that the needs of the most vulnerable are prioritised. Leaders provide exceptionally strong pastoral support for staff, recognising that cared-for staff are best placed to care for pupils. Staff spoke highly of the culture of support, describing regular check-ins, an open-door policy and a genuine sense that everyone is "all in it together". Governors and Trust leaders are highly ambitious for the Catholic life and mission of the school. Their vision of enabling pupils to flourish through a deeper knowledge of Jesus Christ is evident in their strategic leadership. Partnership with the local parish is thriving and the parish priest is a regular and welcome visitor. Parents too are highly supportive, with one commenting, 'We really value the strong Catholic ethos of the school and love that our child will grow in faith, kindness and understanding.'

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

1

Pupil outcomes

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

2

Provision

The quality of teaching, learning, and assessment in religious education

1

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for religious education

1

Pupils enjoy religious education and approach their learning with enthusiasm, with many describing it as their favourite lesson and eagerly sharing their work. They make good progress in knowing more and remembering more, speaking confidently about their learning and demonstrating a secure understanding of how knowledge builds over time. One Year 2 pupil explained, 'It is like steps. I learnt the Creation story in Year 1 and now I am on the next step learning about covenants; when I am in Year 6, I will be an expert.' Some pupils make links between scripture and everyday life. For example, Year 6 pupils discussed the second Creation account and explained how it informs people's actions today through caring for the world. However, making links to previous learning and between key concepts is not consistent across the school; This sometimes prevents pupils from asking incisive questions of themselves and other adults, Pupils' work and presentation is of a good standard and they enjoy a variety of creative and written tasks. They have a general understanding of the marking policy and some pupils can explain how they can improve their work.

Teachers demonstrate a high level of confidence and expertise in religious education, rooted in secure subject knowledge and a clear understanding of how pupils learn. Lessons are planned and delivered with purpose, enabling pupils to engage deeply with religious concepts and make good progress. A range of effective strategies, including retrieval practice, partner discussion, quizzes and oral rehearsal, are used skilfully to strengthen pupils' knowledge and understanding. In a Year 6 lesson, for example, pupils confidently matched the Gifts of the Holy Spirit to their symbols, whilst in Year 4, carefully paced activities and oral rehearsal supported pupils in articulating their learning. Teachers provide extensive opportunities for

pupils to express and apply their learning in a variety of ways such as through drama, debate, discussion and art. In Early Years, thoughtfully planned provision, including opportunities to explore learning through sand, water and clay, was observed, enabling children to share and develop their understanding of God's creation. Questioning is a particular strength. Teachers skilfully assess understanding and deepen thinking through carefully targeted questions such as, "Can you tell me how…?", "Tell me more about that…" and "Can we go deeper?" In the Nursery, planned storytelling, child participation and 'I wonder' questions encourage children to think and share.

The subject leader for religious education has a clear and inspiring vision for excellence which is shared and understood by staff. Through strong leadership and expert subject knowledge, she has established a culture where religious education is valued and continually developed. A significant commitment to professional development is evident, with dedicated time allocated to religious education training and support: a particular strength is the school's close partnership with St Mary's School in Lowestoft and the joint training carried out between staff at both schools. Leaders identify needs accurately and provide highly effective support for staff. Staff speak positively of the support they receive, describing the subject leader as a constant source of knowledge and guidance and expressing confidence in seeking advice when required. Leaders have also supported teachers to develop creative and bespoke curriculum plans which reflect the *Religious Education Directory* and ensure that it is thoughtfully planned to meet the needs of all pupils with the use of skilled adult support, effective adaptations, symbols and widgets, and opportunities for drama and discussion. Governors are kept informed about the quality of religious education and are well supported by the Trust to carry out a range of monitoring activities.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade

2

Pupil outcomes

2

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

Provision

2

The quality of collective worship provided by the school

Leadership

2

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for collective worship

Pupils respond positively and reverently to the experiences of prayer and liturgy provided by the school. They participate confidently in prayer and reflection and sing joyfully as seen in a Key Stage 2 celebration of the word. All acts of worship include the school's candle prayer which is consequently well known and fervently proclaimed. Pupils willingly take responsibility for preparing and leading aspects of worship. Prayer leaders are evident across the school: younger pupils confidently prepare prayer focuses while older pupils lead prayers and facilitate moments of reflection. Pupils speak enthusiastically about this responsibility, explaining, 'Our teacher models how to lead and then allows us to take on different roles.' Some pupils can articulate the impact of prayer on their lives, one explaining that praying together helped him 'feel calm', whilst another shared that he 'felt prayers in his heart'. However, there are few opportunities for pupils to be involved in reflecting on and evaluating the quality of prayer and liturgy. Pupils demonstrate a basic understanding of the Church's liturgical year and can explain how it influences the prayer life of the school, for example speaking about Advent and Lent, recognising the significance of the colour purple, and knowing that October is dedicated to Mary.

Prayer is central to the life of the school with a well-known daily and weekly pattern. The school has adopted a consistent approach to class-based worship, which includes a Gospel greeting, proclamation of scripture and opportunities for reflection, as seen for example in Year 5 prayer time; where pupils calmly reflected on how they could help someone else in school that week, and again in Year 1 where the teacher linked the message of "Love one another" with the principle of stewardship. However the experiences lack breadth and variety.

Staff are positive role models who demonstrate a clear commitment to prayer and liturgy through their active participation and leadership alongside pupils. The school makes good use of the spaces available in order to provide places for prayer, such as class prayer tables, prayer focuses throughout the school and the recently developed spiritual garden. Parents are regularly invited to participate in Masses, while the parish priest plays an active role through the regular celebration of Mass and links with the parish church. One parent commented, “Along with the parish and the family we all work together to support the faith life of my child.”

Leaders and governors ensure that there is a clear annual plan of provision for prayer and liturgy which reflects the Church’s liturgical year. They provide regular opportunities to celebrate the Eucharist and mark significant seasons and feasts, including harvest, Epiphany, Pentecost and the Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul. Pupils also benefit from diocesan celebrations at the cathedral, opportunities for the Sacrament of Reconciliation during Advent and Lent, and participation in devotional practices such as the Rosary during the months of May and October. However, the plans do not include a broad enough range of prayer experiences. Leaders regularly lead collective worship and set an example that is followed by all, as observed for example in a high quality prayer session for the Mini-Vinnies. They support staff and pupils effectively in planning and leading prayer and liturgy, through modelling, coaching and professional development and through collaboration with their partner school. Governors regularly review the prayer life of the school by observing worship and seeking the views of pupils. They also ensure that sufficient funding is allocated to resources for prayer and liturgy and this is seen in all classes and around school.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Mary & St Peter RC Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	142737
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	9263403
Full postal address of the school	East Anglian Way, Gorleston, Great Yarmouth, NR31 6QY
School phone number	01493 445117
Executive Headteacher	Mrs Helen Armstrong
Headteacher or Head of School	Mrs Abigail Goddard
Chair of Governors	Mr Jeremy Gaskell
School Website	www.smspprimary.co.uk
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	St John The Baptist
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Academy
Admissions policy	Non Selective
Age-range of pupils	3 - 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	15 July 2019
Previous denominational inspection grade	Good

The Inspection Team

Michael Lobo	Lead
Veronica Harvey	

Key to grade judgements

Grade	England	Wales
1	Outstanding	Excellent
2	Good	Good
3	Requires improvement	Adequate and requires improvement
4	Inadequate	Unsatisfactory and in need of urgent improvement