



# Mary Immaculate Catholic Primary School

URN: 400722

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Archbishop of Cardiff-Menevia

04–05 March 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

2

#### 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 any additional requirements of the diocesan bishop

Yes

The school has responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection

N/A

## Compliance statement

- The school is compliant in relation to the general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishops' Conference.
- The school has complied in relation to any additional requirements of the diocesan bishop.
- The expectations in relation to the previous inspection's recommendations are not applicable due to time passed since it was conducted.

## What the school does well

- At Mary Immaculate Catholic Primary School there is a strong and lived Catholic identity where pupils clearly understand the mission statement, 'Living and Learning in the Light of Christ', and demonstrate Gospel values in their relationships and daily actions.
- Pupil leadership in the Catholic life of the school is strong, with Faith Ambassadors playing an increasingly influential role in prayer, worship, and service.
- Leadership of religious education (RE) is effective, with the *Religious Education Directory* increasingly embedded and supported through clear planning structures, shared resources, and staff development.
- Pupils demonstrate strong recall of prior knowledge and use subject-specific vocabulary confidently, enabling them to engage in thoughtful discussion and develop strong religious oracy.
- Pupils actively lead and participate in acts of worship and prayer that are reflective, reverent, and meaningful, and that help them connect scripture and faith with their everyday lives.

## What the school needs to improve

- Further embed the *Religious Education Directory* so that learning activities consistently provide appropriate pace and challenge and ensure pupils are given regular opportunities to work with increasing independence, take initiative in their learning, and respond confidently to the expected outcomes.
- Strengthen formative and summative assessment in RE so that teachers accurately identify pupils' understanding and provide clear guidance on how pupils can deepen and improve their learning, enabling more pupils to attain highly.
- Develop a wider range of prayer experiences so that pupils encounter a richer variety of ways of praying. This will deepen pupils' understanding of prayer as raising their hearts and minds to God, helping them grow in attentiveness to God's presence in their daily lives.

## 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

**Pupil outcomes**

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

1

**Provision**

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

1

**Leadership**

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

2

1

Mary Immaculate Catholic School is a joyful, faith-filled community, where a strong, resilient Catholic identity, rooted in Gospel values, is clearly lived. Pupils understand and value the school's Catholic identity and mission and can articulate what 'Living and Learning in the Light of Christ' looks like in daily school life. Pupils are really proud to be part of Mary Immaculate; they are active participants in the Catholic life and mission of the school and can clearly express an understanding that they are valued and cared for as unique persons. Pupils' moral development is strong. They flourish as they actively seek opportunities to grow in virtue and respond to Catholic social teaching. For example, Year 6 organised a Macmillan Coffee Morning to raise funds for those in need, while Year 5 led a whole-school harvest collection for the local foodbank, PATCH. Pupils can clearly articulate ways that they put their faith into action and are motivated to be awarded a 'caught moment' during the Virtues Celebration. The role of the Faith Ambassadors is valued and increasingly influential. These pupils lead prayer, assemblies, acts of worship and charitable action, clearly articulating the theology underpinning their actions. For example, they shared ways that they could be stewards of creation by picking up litter and using less water.

The school's mission statement is highly visible, lived, and regularly revisited, with strong pupil ownership through displays, assemblies, song, and expressive arts. Staff embrace the mission statement and enthusiastically participate in and contribute to those activities which reflect the life and mission of the school and the service it offers to the community. Christ is at the heart of Mary Immaculate and there is a lived sense of community, evident in the quality of relationships and the strong culture of welcome. All staff are exemplary role models for pupils. Through their relationships with each other and the high levels of pastoral care they show for pupils, they

consistently bear witness to the school's Catholic life and mission. The physical environment clearly reflects Catholic identity, liturgical seasons, Catholic social teaching, and the development of virtues. The care and attention given to the quality of the space reflects the dignity of each person and contributes positively to their formation. Vibrant displays, prayer areas, the outdoor grotto, and beautiful artwork offer high-quality opportunities for prayer, reflection, and spiritual development. Provision for relationships and sex education fully adheres to the expectations of the diocese and pupils can confidently articulate what they have learned in these lessons.

Leaders and governors are able to articulate the Church's mission in education and work hard, for example through the schools' policies and procedures, to ensure that the distinctive Catholic culture of the school is protected and developed as a priority. The governing body is well informed and knowledgeable, and the link governor for RE, who visits the school regularly, is fully committed to his role and is ambitious in ensuring it provides the best possible Catholic education and care for pupils and staff. Leaders and governors seek to work well with the local parish. For example, one governor spoke passionately about his facilitation of sacramental preparation in the parish, and the parish priest visits the school at least half-termly to celebrate Mass. Leaders work well to develop partnerships with parents with one parent commenting, 'Mary Immaculate is a special school. You can feel it when you walk through the doors', and the new 'Catholic life at Mary Immaculate' website contributes well to the sharing of learning and faith with the local community. All staff regularly receive professional development, making good use of diocesan training opportunities and resources, and leaders have worked well to effectively embed the Pupil Profile virtues and Catholic social teaching principles. Further opportunities for all stakeholders, including pupils, to evaluate the school's provision and outcome of Catholic life and mission would further enhance the school's work in this area.

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

### Religious education key judgement grade

**Pupil outcomes**

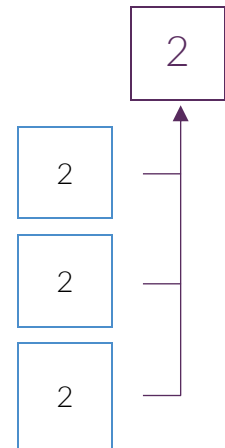
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

**Provision**

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

**Leadership**

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



Pupils at Mary Immaculate Catholic School demonstrate secure and developing knowledge and understanding in religious education (RE). They are becoming increasingly religiously literate and are able to apply their knowledge and skills with growing accuracy and confidence. Lessons provide regular opportunities for spiritual reflection, ethical thinking, and theological exploration, helping pupils understand their faith and its relevance to their daily lives. Across the school, pupils show strong recall of prior learning, can make effective links between scripture, church teaching, and real-life situations and refer to the Catholic social teaching principles and the Pupil Profile virtues when discussing moral, social, and ethical issues. Older pupils demonstrate a well-developed understanding of Lent, confidently discussing prayer, fasting, almsgiving, and repentance. Their vocabulary—such as almsgiving, liturgical calendar, sacrifice and consequence—is becoming more secure and is used appropriately in context. When lessons maintain pace, pupils remain engaged and show genuine interest in their learning. One pupil commented, “I discover new things and it’s intriguing.” Many pupils show developing theological understanding, for example, explaining clearly the connection between the Last Supper and the Mass. Pupils’ work is of a good standard and is well presented. However, pupils have a limited understanding of how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.

Teaching in RE is supported by good subject knowledge, appropriate to the phase being taught, with most teachers demonstrating clear understanding of the content at their phase. They are committed and enthusiastic, have embraced the expectations of the *Religious Education Directory*, and are developing a progressive and age-appropriate curriculum. They work collaboratively to create engaging and inclusive learning experiences, using high-quality resources. Teachers provide pupils with opportunities to present their learning using a variety of forms, including role play, artwork, digital technology, and outdoor learning, all of which enhance pupils’

enjoyment and provide meaningful opportunities for pupils to explore how their faith shapes their attitudes and behaviour. They use higher order questioning effectively, helping pupils deepen their explanations, reasoning, and critical thinking. This was evident during inspection when pupils described Lent as a time to “turn to God and reflect on our sins”. Good pedagogy and high expectations are evident in most classes, particularly when asking pupils to recall prior learning and use key vocabulary accurately. To further strengthen provision, learning activities need to provide consistent challenge and pace, allowing pupils more opportunities to work independently, take initiative, and respond confidently to the expected outcomes. Although written feedback is used with older pupils, this practice is not yet consistent across the school. Strengthened assessment procedures in RE would support teachers in identifying understanding more accurately and in offering clearer guidance for improvement.

Governance is a strong feature of the school. Leaders and governors ensure that the school curriculum for RE is a faithful expression of the *Religious Education Directory*. They ensure that professional development opportunities are regularly available, supporting staff confidence and subject knowledge. The knowledgeable and committed subject leader for RE has guided staff effectively through recent curriculum changes by providing clear planning templates, modelling of good practice, and training opportunities. Leaders’ and governors’ self-evaluation of RE is informed by thorough monitoring, analysis, and self-challenge. This results in strategic action taken by the school which leads to good outcomes. Self-evaluation processes are in place and draw on monitoring carried out throughout the year. These provide leaders with an overview of strengths and areas requiring development. Governors play an active and visible role through learning walks, book scrutiny, and discussions with staff, helping ensure Catholic teaching and values remain central to Mary Immaculate’s mission.

## Collective worship

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

### Collective worship key judgement grade

**Pupil outcomes**

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

2

**Provision**

The quality of collective worship provided by the school

2

**Leadership**

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

2

2

Pupils respond positively to the prayer and liturgy opportunities provided by the school, participating reverently by reflecting in silence and joining in community prayer with confidence. Opportunities, such as Mass during Advent and on the Feast of Corpus Christi and pupil-led collective worship during Holy Week, help pupils to live the liturgical year. Acts of worship are age-appropriate and engage pupils' interest. In the class worship observed during the inspection, pupils were able to respond to the scripture heard and to consider how the word of God impacts on the way they live their lives. For example, in Year 2, having listened to the Book of Micah, pupils could talk about ways that they could act justly, love kindly, and walk humbly with God. All pupils are supported to plan and lead acts of worship for their peers with the 'gather, listen, respond, and going forth' format. The level of independence in preparing worship increases from the youngest to the oldest pupils, who display confidence in their role. They are clearly proud to share their prayer experiences with one another and were able to describe the impact that their worship has on them, saying, for example, that 'it is a special time to talk to God and to reflect.' However, opportunities for pupils to evaluate the quality of prayer and worship they have planned are limited.

The provision for prayer and liturgy includes well-established routines of daily prayer and pupil-led worship, which reflect the Catholic character of the school. These routines are meaningful, age-appropriate, and follow the cycle of the liturgical year. For example, making links to the Feast of St David, pupils in Year 3 reflected on how they could 'do the little things' as St David asks us to. All staff capably guide pupils in their planning of prayer and worship, which helps them to connect scripture and faith with their everyday lives. There are a wide range of religious artefacts available, which demonstrate the breadth of tradition. The school environment, both indoors and outdoors, is well used with appropriate prayer tables in all classrooms. The use of the school

grotto is a valuable feature, well cared for, and conducive to prayer. Notable examples of displays which support prayer include the 'Let us Pray' board, where Faith Ambassadors can support younger pupils to choose prayers and responses to pray together in the school grotto during play time, and the Lent foci in the school foyer which includes Lenten promises written by the children. Links with the local parish are being re-established, and the school is actively working to improve them. However, prayer and acts of collective worship are nearly always led by pupils and offer participants a limited range of ways of praying. They do not always exemplify the richness of the Catholic tradition or give pupils the opportunity to raise their hearts and minds to God, helping them grow in attentiveness to God's presence in their daily lives.

The school has developed a policy on prayer and liturgy, and all staff have attended recent prayer and liturgy training delivered by the diocese. Leaders, including governors, understand the different levels and skills of participation that are reflective of the age and capacity of pupils. Leaders, including governors, have planned the school calendar to set aside opportunities to celebrate the Eucharist, both in school and in the parish church, at key times in the liturgical year and at significant moments within the life of the school, such as the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception. These opportunities are well attended by parishioners, governors, and families. Leaders support staff to facilitate pupil-planned experiences of prayer which are engaging, accessible, and relevant to pupils. Leaders, including governors, recognise the importance of prayer and liturgy when setting budgets and allocating resources, such as time, staffing, and facilities, and have ensured that the school environment effectively demonstrates the Catholic ethos of the school. Leaders, including governors, have recently reviewed the quality and impact of pupil-led prayer as part of the school's cycle of self-evaluation and planned improvements. Further opportunities for the professional development of staff to plan and lead prayer and collective worship, and to fully understand the requirements of the *Prayer and Liturgy Directory* and diocesan toolkit, would enhance outcomes and provision in this area.

## Information about the school

Full name of school	Mary Immaculate Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	400722
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	6683313
Full postal address of the school	Merlins Terrace, Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire, SA61 1PH
School phone number	01437762324
Executive headteacher	Michael Scale
Head of school	Not applicable
Chair of governors	Patrick Mansfield
School Website	mary-immaculate-catholic-primary-school.j2bloggy.com
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Not applicable
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Voluntary Aided School
Admissions policy	Non-selective
Age-range of pupils	3-11
Gender of pupils	Not applicable
Date of last denominational inspection	29 – 30 November 2014
Previous denominational inspection grade	GG

## The inspection team

Laura Taylor  
Suzanne Williams

Lead  
Team

## 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