

# St Mary's Catholic High School



*“St Mary’s Catholic High School  
continues to be a good school”  
Ofsted Jan 2020*



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## Committed to the highest standards

We have the highest expectations for all of our pupils and fully recognise the individual talents and gifts that each brings to their learning. We are fully committed to ensuring that all pupils achieve to the best of their abilities.

To promote high levels of achievement every pupil works towards aspirational individual targets. We believe that all pupils should take responsibility for their own learning and be supported in setting challenging personal goals so as to fulfil their potential. Targets are set at the beginning of each academic year making use of a range of assessment information.

Pupil progress is assessed regularly throughout the school year and the results are monitored by senior staff.

Parents are kept well informed of their child's progress by a series of formal reports throughout the school year. Parents will receive written feedback, either in the form of interim reports, which monitor the children's current level of performance against their end of year targets, or by the annual school report in which staff comment on progress made throughout the year.

There is also an annual Parents' Evening for all year groups and parents are encouraged to contact school if they have any concerns about issues relating to pupil progress.



## Our pledge to each child and their family

We support families in the education of their children in accordance with the principles and teachings of the Catholic Church. Our aim is to promote the personal development of every child. We want to ensure that the spiritual, intellectual, practical, artistic, social and physical gifts of our pupils are nurtured and developed.

Parents/carers sign a home-school agreement centring on the responsibilities all parties share ensuring each pupils' wellbeing and social development. We are rightly proud of the very strong Pastoral provision at St Mary's.

At the heart of our mission is the desire to bring to our pupils a knowledge and love of Christ and of our Catholic faith, liturgy and traditions. This in turn shapes their values and can be used as a guide for life. Our approach to teaching and learning is intended to stimulate pupils' curiosity, imagination and creativity. Our aim is to develop keen minds in young people who know that their individuality is valued. We also want to ease the disadvantages that some children experience as a result of personal circumstances, learning difficulties or physical disabilities.

St Mary's provides a variety of opportunities for contact and co-operation between parents and the school. We want every child at St Mary's to feel happy, safe, and stimulated. Consistently, pupils who leave St Mary's tell us of their very positive experience of high school and the outstanding support they have received over time.



## Christ at the centre

St Mary's exists to provide a Catholic education for all pupils, to help them develop their life to the full, so that faith may have its true and proper place in their lives. We strive to place Christ and his teachings at the centre of all that we do. The school supports each pupils' spiritual journey in a wide range of ways including daily collective worship, regular celebration of Mass, offering the Sacrament of Reconciliation during Advent and Lent as well as days of reflection.

St Mary's chaplaincy team is a real strength of the school. They are involved in many aspects of school life. Retreats are organised for all students on a rolling programme by the school's Chaplain and the RE team. These residential opportunities give pupils time for spiritual reflection and are also great fun. Many Year 9 pupils act as Guardian Angels to Year 7 pupils offering support to them and acting as spiritual witnesses to our Catholic school.

St Mary's values the strong partnership linking school, home and parish. Priests visit the school regularly celebrating the Eucharist with smaller groups in the Chapel, with year groups in the Drama Theatre and in whole school services at St Mary's Church. Many students take lead roles in Liturgy throughout the year. A number of students minister in their parishes and speak at Masses during Advent and Lent. Each year, the school celebrates various Liturgies in the parishes ranging from our Advent and Lenten Liturgies to the celebration of the Sacraments of the Catholic Church.



We encourage our students to support others on a local, national and international basis. Our students have an outstanding record of raising money for charities and each year group have their own nominated charity. Numerous other fund-raising events run throughout the year including fun runs, cake sales and talent shows.



## **Stretch and challenge**

All pupils at St Mary's, regardless of ability, are pushed to achieve their full potential in every way. We call this 'stretch & challenge' and this is evident in lessons but also beyond the formal curriculum so that the concept of life-long learning is fostered, so as to encourage them to question, and so as to motivate them to have the courage and determination to be thoughtful and active members of our local, national and global community. We aim to provide a curriculum which is appropriate to the needs and abilities of all of our pupils, whilst teaching in a way that enables each child to reach the highest level of personal achievement and to thrive socially and emotionally.

Stretch and Challenge opportunities at St Mary's seek to nurture and develop individual talents and thus increase the learning potential of all pupils. The primary provision for stretch and challenge is present in each lesson and teachers are required to prepare for this as a core responsibility in their work. As a result teachers provide work that is challenging allowing the pupil to extend their learning. This may include deeper learning experiences or a wider breadth of materials. Students are encouraged to use online school resources and library texts to develop their own interests across their subjects.

## Learning support and SEND

The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Department (SEND) caters for pupils' needs alongside mainstream classes, ensuring all pupils receive a high quality, individually tailored curriculum. The Department has, or can call upon, the expertise needed to address a range of pupil specific requirements, including specialist intervention teachers, behavioural specialists, pupil mentors and counsellors, medical staff, an educational psychologist and a family support worker alongside an effective team of teaching assistants.

We recognise that every pupil is a very special and unique individual and we work hard to ensure every possible supportive measure is put in place to ensure they achieve their full potential.





## **Horizons beyond the classroom**

Throughout their time at St Mary's, we prepare our pupils for life beyond school when they will live and work with others in adult life. We do this by providing a friendly, ordered and business-like social environment within the care of a supportive community.

We cultivate in our pupils an understanding of rights and responsibilities, respect and tolerance of difference; sensitivity towards the feelings and apprehensions of others and an active obligation to social justice. We want to stimulate them to be effective citizens who positively contribute to the wider community.

Alongside their academic development, pupils are encouraged to develop a range of skills and qualities which are highly valued by training providers and employers. These include the ability to demonstrate initiative, responsibility and resilience, as well as the skills required for cooperating successfully in teams and groups. Learning is a lifetime activity. Being able to adapt promptly and positively to changing circumstances is a skill which is vital in the work environment our pupils will be entering.



**Ofsted**

**Good  
Provider**



### **School Mission Statement**

***Our Mission is to educate the young people entrusted to our care in a Catholic , Christian way that ensures that each one is valued and cared for and achieves the best of which he or she is capable.***