



## St Mary's Catholic Primary School

### *Living and Learning Together – Shining in our Faith*

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am very pleased to share with you the report from our recent Ofsted inspection, which took place on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> February 2026.

#### **What has changed with the new Ofsted Framework?**

As you may be aware, Ofsted introduced a new inspection framework in November 2025. Instead of a single overall grade, the new system uses a "report card" that provides a more detailed, nuanced picture of our school. There are 8 areas that are inspected and individually graded, using a five-point grading system:

- Attendance and behaviour
- Early years
- Leadership and governance
- Personal development and wellbeing
- Inclusion
- Achievement
- Curriculum and teaching
- Safeguarding

One of the other major changes is that the grade "Expected" is now much harder to achieve than the previous grade of "Good." If a school receives "Expected", this is something to celebrate—it means the school is meeting a very high bar. This rise in challenge is partly due to a move away from a "best fit" approach (where inspectors looked at the overall picture) to a "secure fit" model, which means that schools are expected to meet all parts of the criteria in full. As a result, direct comparison between a previous "Good" and a current "Expected" is not appropriate; they are based on different criteria, different expectations, and a higher standard of evidence.

You may also see elements of the report described as "Needs Attention." Ofsted is clear in its public guidance that "Needs Attention" is not a fail, it is entirely normal for schools to have areas that require further development. This wording simply reflects where practice is still embedding or where additional focus is needed. Many schools—no matter how strong—will have such areas, particularly during a period in which the inspection framework has changed so significantly.

If you would like to read more about the changes to the Ofsted Framework you can follow the link: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/698332ffa1758c98acc243d8/Understanding\\_Ofsted\\_Report\\_Cards\\_Easy\\_Read.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/698332ffa1758c98acc243d8/Understanding_Ofsted_Report_Cards_Easy_Read.pdf)

#### **Key strengths of St Mary's:**

We are extremely proud to share that the inspectors recognised the hard work of our entire school community. The report highlights the particular strengths in:

- **Attendance and behaviour**
- **Early Years**

- **Leadership and governance**
- **Personal development and wellbeing**

The report particularly praises our pupils for “behaving well in lessons and around the school” as well as “treating one another with kindness and respect, acting as considerate friends and positive role models.” It also recognizes our staff for their “broad and ambitious curriculum with clear expectations of every pupil” as well as “making decisions in the best interests of all pupils”.

We are also pleased to confirm that **Safeguarding** was found to be ‘Met,’ recognising that we have an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, our pupils are made safer and feel safe.

I would also like to direct you to the section ‘**What it's like to be a pupil at this school**’ which is a true illustration of the things that not only make St Mary's the ‘warm and caring school community’ with a ‘calm and purposeful learning environment’, but also acknowledges that we now provide an excellent curriculum which is having ‘a positive impact on pupils’ achievement’.

#### **Areas for Development:**

The inspectors identified that a three-year trend in ‘*Achievement*’ currently Needs Attention, as well as some consistencies in ‘*Curriculum and Teaching*’ specifically in the way that handwriting, spelling and number facts are taught. We are already working on an action plan to address these areas:

- Targeted interventions and consistent tracking of the pupils, especially at the key assessment points: Early Learning Goals, Phonics Screening Check, Multiplication Tables Check and Key Stage 2 SATs.
- Focussed handwriting sessions, Maths Mastery sessions dedicated to teaching number facts and spelling and phonics sessions can be seen daily across the school.

The staff and governors are entirely committed to building on the strengths noted and addressing the identified areas with pace to ensure the best for our children.

The full report card and detailed findings can be found on our website here: [St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Scarisbrick - Open - Find an Inspection Report - Ofsted](#) Please make sure that you click on the ‘Show’ button on each section of the report card to read the detailed narrative, as they provide important context and explain what inspectors saw in practice.

I want to thank all the staff, governors, and pupils for their continued dedication, and you, the parents, for your ongoing support.

Best wishes,

**Mrs J Preston**

**Headteacher**