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Dear Parents and Carers,

I am absolutely delighted to share St Mary's Ofsted inspection report with you following our inspection on 30 June 2026.

Under Ofsted's new, more detailed inspection framework, the school was judged to meet the expected standard in every area inspected, with safeguarding standards also fully met. This is a fantastic achievement and follows our strong Catholic Schools Inspectorate report in the summer term. Together, the two reports celebrate the quality of education, care and Catholic life that our children experience at St Mary's.

Most importantly, the Ofsted report captures beautifully what it is like to be a child at our school: "Pupils feel known and valued in this small, welcoming school. They embody the school's values to believe, achieve and flourish."

Inspectors recognised that our children enjoy being part of the St Mary's community and feel safe, secure and supported. They highlighted the strong relationships that exist across the school, including our whole-school buddy programme, which ensures every child has a trusted friend to turn to. Older pupils take pride in caring for and guiding our youngest children, helping them to settle quickly, develop confidence and feel that they belong.

The report also celebrates the positive behaviour and attitudes of our pupils. Children conduct themselves well, treat others with respect and understand that mistakes are opportunities to reflect, learn and grow.

Inspectors found that children achieve well and are prepared successfully for the next stage of their education. They recognised our engaging classrooms, purposeful curriculum and the tailored support provided for pupils with SEND and those facing barriers to learning or wellbeing. Our youngest children were found to make a successful start in a carefully designed early years environment that develops their curiosity, independence, language and confidence.

The report also reflects the richness of life at St Mary's beyond the classroom. It celebrates our educational visits, sporting opportunities, residential experience, nurture support, charitable work, Mission Team, prayer garden, eco-council, Happiness Heroes and Wellbeing Warriors. These opportunities help our children to become confident, compassionate and responsible young people who care for one another and the wider world.

We are particularly proud that attendance has remained above the national average for the past three years and that persistent absence is very low. This reflects how much children enjoy coming to school and the strength of our partnership with families.

Ofsted has identified clear next steps relating to handwriting, times-table knowledge, SEND processes and governor monitoring. We welcome these recommendations and have already begun work to address them as part of our continued commitment to improvement.

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This report is a tremendous tribute to our wonderful children, whose kindness, enthusiasm and pride in their school shone throughout the inspection. It also recognises the dedication of our staff and governors, who have kept the children's best interests at the heart of every decision during a period of considerable change.

Thank you to our parents, carers, parish and wider community for your continued trust, encouragement and support. You are an essential part of what makes St Mary's such a special school.

We are incredibly proud that both Ofsted and the Catholic Schools Inspectorate have recognised a school in which children are known, valued and encouraged every day to Believe, Achieve and Flourish with Christ.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Maria Coulthard
Headteacher