



DIOCESAN CANONICAL INSPECTION REPORT

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL, RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Sacred Heart Catholic Voluntary Academy

Southcliffe Road, Nottingham, NG4 1EQ

School URN:	138813
Inspection Date:	27 November 2019
Inspectors:	Mrs Fionuala Boucher and Mrs Catherine Murphy

Overall Effectiveness	Previous Inspection:	Good	2
	This Inspection:	Good	2
Catholic Life:		Outstanding	1
Religious Education:		Good	2
Collective Worship:		Good	2

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

Sacred Heart Catholic Voluntary Academy is a good Catholic school.

- Sacred Heart Catholic Voluntary Academy is a place where all members of the school family are highly valued and nurtured. The school's Catholic identity shines through in the relationships fostered within and across the community. Pupils, staff, parents, local governors and members of the parish, alongside members of the Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi-Academy Trust are deeply committed to the school's success and development.
- Religious Education in the school is good. Pupils are positive about their learning. Leaders and local governors know the school well and recognise the improvements made since the last inspection; they are confident in their identification and commitment to the 'next steps' to further improve teaching and learning in this area. Teachers generally have good subject knowledge and are ably assisted in classrooms by highly effective teaching assistants.
- The Catholic Life of the school is outstanding. The school's mission, to consider 'What would Jesus do? Do what Jesus did!' is the principle which underpins all that takes place within the school. This is well-understood by pupils, who say, 'We are disciples of Jesus and we follow in his footsteps to make the world a better place'. Pupils are proud to be part of Sacred Heart School: they speak warmly of their peers, teachers and wider members of the community. Pastoral care for all is of the highest quality; senior leaders are positive role models.
- Collective Worship is good. Pupils participate in and respond well to worship opportunities and benefit from an increasing range of experiences, such as meditation, the celebration of Mass, whole-school and class-based liturgy. Leaders and local governors ensure that Collective Worship remains high profile. The assistance and expertise of the lay chaplain places the school in a strong position to further develop in this important area of school life, enabling pupils to have greater independence when planning and leading worship.

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- Sacred Heart Catholic Voluntary Academy became part of the newly formed Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi-Academy Trust on 1 September 2018, having formerly been part of the Pax Christi Catholic Academy Trust.
- This average-sized, one-form entry school has a pupil population of 233, including those within the nursery provision. The school is regularly over-subscribed.
- The school serves the parishes of Sacred Heart and St Bernadette's, Nottingham.
- In terms of the faith background of pupils, 88% of pupils are baptised Catholics, 6% are from another Christian faith group, 3% are from another world faith and 4% have no religious affiliation.
- Few pupils have additional or special educational needs and/or a disability (SEND). 2.5% receive SEND support and less than 1% have an Educational Health and Care Plan (EHCP).
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils for whom the pupil premium provides support is 11% - this is below the national average. The pupil premium is additional government funding to support pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- There have been a number of staffing changes since the last inspection, including the recent appointment of a new deputy headteacher and an assistant headteacher. The headteacher was appointed from within the school in September 2015.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

■ Catholic Life:

Further develop provision for the Catholic Life of the school by:

- Strengthening chaplaincy provision;
- Enabling pupils to take a more influential part the monitoring and evaluation of the school's Catholic Life.

■ Religious Education:

Sharpen systems for marking, feedback and assessment so that these:

- Align more closely with the school's marking and feedback policy;
- Show a clearer picture of pupils' in-year progress for Religious Education across the school.

■ Collective Worship:

Empower pupils to take greater ownership of Collective Worship by:

- Extending opportunities for pupils to plan and lead liturgy with increasing independence;
- Clarifying the expectations for each year group in respect of pupil-led liturgy, so that progression is evident in the development of pupils' skills and expertise.

CATHOLIC LIFE

THE QUALITY OF THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL	1
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- The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.
- The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school.
- How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school.

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The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school – outstanding

- Pupils positively embrace being part of the Sacred Heart school family, demonstrating their commitment to the school's mission to follow Jesus as a role model for life. They relish opportunities to influence the Catholic Life of the school through their involvement in chaplaincy work, the school parliament and the Faith in Action Award.
- Pupils are highly respectful of their peers and all members of the school community. Their behaviour and attitudes are exemplary. Pupils say that their school is 'kind and joyful' and that one of their aims is 'making sure that we are all friends with each other and that we are having fun' each day.
- Pupils are happy and secure in themselves due to the high quality of personal support and development on offer. Spiritual growth is well understood and valued by pupils, who report that 'it feels like one big family when you are praying together'. They recognise that 'everyone is part of God's family'.
- The Catholic traditions within the school are deeply respected by pupils, who can articulate the Catholic Life of the school, appropriate to their age and capabilities. They speak enthusiastically about their links with the parish priest and parishioners; they relish opportunities for attending school and parish Masses, including occasions within their own house groups.

The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school – outstanding

- The school's mission is clearly understood by all: it is alive in the relationships within and between all stakeholders. The HEART values (being **H**ard-working, **E**nthusiastic, having **A**spiration and **R**espect, enjoying **T**ogetherness) permeate the school community and its work, with adults at all levels modelling these values.
- The school environment is dripping with reminders Catholic Life. The placement of artefacts, attractive displays, evidence of charity work and wider school links, photographs and prayer areas all promote Catholic Life and exemplify how this is lived out in the daily experience of all.
- All staff promote high standards of behaviour and conduct themselves in a manner which is mindful of the school's mission, showing mutual respect for all and treating pupils and colleagues with dignity.
- Pastoral care is of the highest standard. The needs of the individual are recognised – child and adult alike; families are extremely well supported, which is much appreciated by parents and grandparents, who say that they would '100% recommend the school to others' because it is 'caring, loving – brilliant!' A parent remarked on the positive impact the school has on his child's behaviour and attitudes.
- Chaplaincy provision is good and developing: the employment of the lay chaplain is boosting opportunities to raise standards further in this area. The school recognises that it now needs to ensure that pupils have greater opportunities to have an impact on monitoring and evaluating the Catholic Life of the school, as well as supporting pupils to gain further independence when leading and planning worship.

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school – outstanding

- The headteacher and leaders at all levels are deeply committed to the Church's mission in education, as seen through their commitment and focus in all aspects of school life. Catholic Life is at the forefront of planning and development at Sacred Heart.
- School self-evaluation is accurate, though often modest. Leaders are unafraid of challenge and self-analysis, leading to purposeful action and, ultimately, benefit to pupils. Monitoring systems have improved since the last inspection, though pupils could begin to have a greater part in this aspect of Catholic Life now.
- Professional development needs are carefully considered so that staff benefit from support and training in order to continually improve Catholic Life within the school. Resources are set aside to ensure that new and established staff can increase their impact on the Catholic Life of the school, drawing on in-house expertise, as well as support from the trust and the diocese.
- The school engages very well with parents and carers, who are extremely positive about all aspects of school life – including the Catholic Life of the school: they feel valued and supported, particularly when invited into school for celebrations and liturgies linked with the Church's seasons.
- Leaders and local governors are highly ambitious for the Catholic Life of the school: there is no complacency in their resolve, since they have a desire to 'keep pressing on, keeping up the momentum!' The Bishop's spiritual themes (to explore encounter with God, discipleship and missionary discipleship) are being followed and experienced at Sacred Heart, reflecting the commitment shown by the school's leadership and their understanding of current initiatives.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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- How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education.
- How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.

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How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education – good

- In their learning in Religious Education the enjoyment of pupils is visible. By the time they reach Years 5 and 6, pupils can articulate why. They enjoy the variety of interesting activities during their lessons with one pupil commenting that their teacher gives them exciting things to do. A pupil remarked that he liked to have the opportunity to think more deeply about things and that often there is no one way of thinking about a subject. Pupils were able to recognise the use of hearts in their books, as a way of expressing how they feel.
- Most pupils take pride in their work. Standards of presentation have been a recent whole-school focus and improvement is evident through this term.
- The attainment of pupils is improving and work in current books, in most year groups, is in line with age-related expectations. Although pupils have some guidance on how to improve their work, this could be more consistent and could follow the school's own marking and feedback policy more closely.
- During the inspection, pupils across the school were learning about Judaism. Some pupils in Years 5 and 6 were able to recall learning from previous years which has strengthened the knowledge of this faith. By the end of the key stage, most pupils were able to recognise similarities and differences between Judaism and Catholicism and were beginning to make deeper links between key events and practices found in both faiths.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education – good

- The school is working to provide a varied diet of learning experiences, incorporating creative experiences and opportunities to write at greater length. Pupils through the school were able to express their learning about Judaism through role-play, music, food, research and in creative and writing opportunities. Evidence taken from pupils' workbooks suggests that these approaches are used routinely.
- A strength of the school is the deployment and expertise found within the teaching assistants. They ably support groups and individuals, scaffolding learning and giving the most vulnerable pupils access to learning at a level which is most appropriate for them.
- In the most effective lessons, pupils benefit from thorough teacher subject knowledge. This enabled the teacher to provide timely interventions in order to address any pupil misconceptions.

- Where feedback to pupils is most effective, teachers use the *driver words* through the lesson and in written feedback to focus learning on the age-related expectations and what pupils can do to improve their work. This approach, however, is not yet consistent in all year groups.

The extent to which leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education – good

- The teaching of Religious Education meets the requirements in terms of the curriculum and of the time given to the subject. This is borne out by the timetables and also the range of work in pupils' books.
- Religious Education has been a recent priority for staff professional development with the school taking advantage of a variety of sources including from parish priest, the Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi-Academy Trust, the diocese, as well as in-house expertise. Teachers new to the school are well supported by leaders and other colleagues.
- Leaders at all levels have a clear understanding of where the school is in terms of the development of Religious Education and have a united view on what is needed to improve.
- Monitoring by local governors is becoming more systematic in approach, and as they have become more knowledgeable about the expectations, they have become better placed to challenge leaders in both the provision of, and standards in, Religious Education.
- Leaders have begun to identify the progress and attainment of individuals and groups. They have identified where, in recent years, progress for some pupils has been insufficient and are working with teachers to move pupils' learning on. With a new leadership structure in place, the school is well placed to develop this further.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP	2
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- How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship.
- The quality of provision for the Collective Worship.
- How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship.

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How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship – good

- Pupils are eager to participate in Collective Worship and act with reverence; upon entering the whole-school Act of Collective Worship, pupils blessed themselves with holy water placed at points around the hall. Those leading the Act of Collective Worship were able to articulate how it made them feel and also the importance of worship to the school.
- Pupils particularly like seeing their siblings at this time and talked positively about the school's family atmosphere. Pupils could articulate how Collective Worship was a way to share their beliefs with others.
- Pupils also lead less formal opportunities for prayer in their house groups and among their classmates. Pupils described how they begin their Religious Education lessons by turning out the lights, lighting a candle and saying a prayer.
- Pupils are beginning to take a more active part in the creation and preparation of Collective Worship as well as participating. They have an awareness of the Church's liturgical year and how the themes for Collective Worship are consistent with this.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship – good

- Prayer punctuates the day at Sacred Heart and pupils benefit from a variety of approaches including meditation, reflection, as part of Religious Education lessons and end of topic liturgies. Staff are strong role-models as they encourage and support pupils to engage fully with the worship opportunities.
- 'The Sanctuary' provides a space for pupils in time of difficulty to have somewhere quiet and reflective to receive support and a place to pray together. A variety of resources are available to pupils and staff to create a prayerful atmosphere including using music, objects to use in reflection and audio-visual resources.
- Parents are warmly welcomed into school and pupils regularly take home scripture or objects to share with their families. This contributes to the family atmosphere of the school which is greatly valued by parents. As well as whole school Mass, year group and house Masses help to cement relationships among different age groups. The strong links with the parish give pupils the opportunity to share worship with parishioners in a variety of formal and informal opportunities such as reading at Mass or singing in parish events.

- The parish priest and more recently, the lay chaplain appointed by the Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi-Academy Trust, support staff and pupils in preparing for Collective Worship. The lay chaplain uses a variety of strategies to make worship meaningful to pupils so that they take away a strong message from each encounter.
- The school is well placed to now develop its practice so that pupils are more and more creators of worship as well as participants.

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship – good

- Collective Worship is central to the school's mission and the headteacher provides dedicated leadership along with strong support from other leaders in school, local governors, the lay chaplain and the parish priest. They are united in their assessment of where the school is currently and how they can improve Collective Worship so that it benefits the pupils and families served by the school.
- Collective Worship is monitored by leaders. Local governors provide verbal feedback when they attend Collective Worship and this is an area that could be developed further so that more formal monitoring and evaluation contributes to the work of the headteacher and other school leaders. Pupils have begun to use a simple format so that they can evaluate worship and begin to develop their skills and knowledge in this area.
- Professional development for staff in leading and facilitating Collective Worship is a priority for the school with regular meetings between the school leaders and the parish priest to arrange and assess the quality of Collective Worship in the school. Staff have benefitted from training on different types of meditation, Lectio Divina and Collective Worship training days provided by the Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi-Academy Trust and the diocese.
- The leader for Collective Worship feeds back to staff after attending training. Further work on strengthening the progression of the skills and knowledge of pupils in leading a range of Collective Worship opportunities will result in pupils having a greater degree of ownership and understanding.

SCHOOL DETAILS

School Name	Sacred Heart Catholic Voluntary Academy
Unique Reference Number	138813
CMAT	Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi-Academy Trust

The inspection of this school was carried out on behalf of the Bishop of Nottingham under Canon 806 of Canon Law in accordance with the *Evaluation Schedule* (September 2018) for diocesan canonical inspections in the Diocese of Nottingham. The inspection reviews and evaluates how effective the school is in providing Catholic education. The process begins with the school's own self-evaluation and the inspection schedule is in line with the criteria set by the National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers (NBRIA).

During the inspection, the inspectors observed 8 Religious Education lessons and 2 Acts of Collective Worship.

Meetings were held with the headteacher, the subject leaders for Religious Education, the lay chaplain, the chair of governors and another governor. A telephone discussion was undertaken with the parish priest. Discussions were also held with pupils and parents.

The inspectors scrutinised a range of documents including reports of the local governing body, action plans, the school development plan, monitoring forms, assessment information and parental response forms. Inspectors also examined the work in pupils' Religious Education books.

Chair of Governors:	Mrs Elizabeth Cooper
Headteacher:	Mrs Karen Taylor
Date of Previous School Inspection:	10 February 2015
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WHAT INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS MEAN

Within the report, the following grades are used:

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Requires Improvement
Grade 4	Inadequate

In the context of the whole school, the overall effectiveness grades have the following meaning:

Grade 1	Outstanding	The school is a highly effective Catholic school. Pupils' needs are exceptionally well met.
Grade 2	Good	The school is an effective Catholic school. Pupils' needs are met well.
Grade 3	Requires Improvement	The school is not yet a good Catholic school, it is not inadequate however, and there are aspects that require improvement. There will be a monitoring visit within the next 18 months and the school will be re-inspected within 3 years.
Grade 4	Inadequate	There are features in need of urgent and immediate attention. The school is not meeting the basic minimum requirement for adequacy as a Catholic school. The school will receive an annual monitoring visit and will be re-inspected within 3 years.