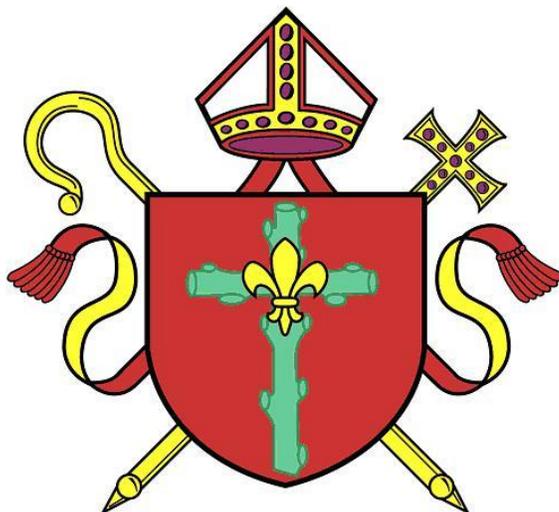


DIOCESE OF NOTTINGHAM INSPECTION SERVICE



SECTION 48 INSPECTION REPORT (Section 48, Education Act 2005)

The Becket School, A Catholic Voluntary Academy
The Becket Way
Wilford Lane
West Bridgford
Nottingham
NG2 7QY

5 December 2012
(Autumn Term 2012)

URN: 137409

SECTION 48 DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION REPORT

School:	The Becket School, A Catholic Voluntary Academy
Headteacher:	Mr J McGeachie
Chair of Governors:	Rev Christopher P Thomas
Date of Inspection:	5 December 2012
Inspection Team:	Mrs BM Carson & Mr P Martin
URN:	137409
Overall Grade Awarded:	1

Common grading scale for all inspection judgements	
Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Description of the school

The Becket School is an 11 - 18 mixed Catholic comprehensive school serving a wide catchment area. It is very popular and heavily oversubscribed: for 2012, there were 496 applications for 166 places. The school has 1076 students on roll, of which 239 are in the Sixth Form. The school draws students from a broad range of socio-economic backgrounds. Since the last inspection, the school has relocated onto one site on Wilford Lane and converted to become an academy on 1 September 2011. A new headteacher started at the school in September 2012. The school draws students from the Catholic population of the southern parts of the city of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. It serves the parishes of West Bridgford with Cotgrave, The Meadows, Thorneywood, Clifton, Stapleford, Keyworth and Radcliffe-on-Trent. Students come from the following 5 Catholic feeder schools: St Edmund Campion (West Bridgford), St. Patrick's (The Meadows and Wilford), Our Lady and St. Edward's (Thorneywood), Blessed Robert Widmerpool (Clifton) and English Martyrs' (Long Eaton). Other students are: Catholic children not attending feeder schools; other Christian denominations and a very small number from other world faiths. The average ability profile of

students on entry is slightly above local and national averages and the school's catchment includes areas of social deprivation and an area of relative economic prosperity. About a sixth of students are known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding); this is average. Less than 3% of students are supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs; this is below average. Approximately a sixth of students are supported through school action, which is above average. The school has received a number of prestigious awards including Healthy Schools and the International School Award. It is a member of the Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Chamber of Commerce. The school meets the current government floor standards which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

Overall effectiveness

Outcomes for students, the provision for Catholic education, the effectiveness of leaders and managers and the school's capacity for sustained improvement are all judged to be outstanding.

Overall effectiveness	Grade: 1
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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the plans to deliver 10% RE curriculum time at Key Stage 3, from January 2013, are realised.
- Realise plans to further promote strong and positive relationships in the wider community.
- Embed the consistency of quality written feedback across the Religious Education department so that all students clearly know how to improve their work further.
- Improve the level of differentiation in some teaching of Religious Education.

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

The pursuit of excellence in Catholic education is clearly evident in The Becket and has led to exceptional improvement. Self-evaluation is accurate at all levels and is grounded in sophisticated tracking, monitoring of provision and analysis. The governors, senior leadership team, Head of Religious Education department, Lay Chaplain and other leaders and managers inspire the school community to work towards an ambitious vision of excellence. Relationships are excellent and belief in the school's mission and success runs through all levels of staff and the wider school community. Processes for managing the performance of staff and for their professional development are used exceptionally well. The Religious Education department takes a lead in whole school improvement and this is a real strength.

The school's capacity for sustained improvement	Grade: 1
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PUPILS

How good outcomes are for pupils, taking particular account of variations between different groups

Standards are very high in all Key Stages in Religious Education. At Key Stage 4, the number of students achieving A* - C has risen from 68% in 2010 to 92% in 2012 and is now significantly higher than the national average. Students in the Sixth Form who studied Philosophy and Ethics (Religious Studies) exceeded ALIS targets A*- B and A*- E in 2011 and 2012. It is clear that there has been a seismic change within the department over last two years since the new head of Religious Education was appointed. A range of key actions focusing on teaching and learning, student progress, tracking, assessment and team work have been the key in driving the department forward resulting in outstanding learning and progress for all students including those with learning needs. Students *really* enjoy their learning and demonstrate enthusiasm and interest in tackling even the more challenging activities presented.

Progress is good in each Key Stage for different groups and is outstanding in Key Stages 4 and 5. Concentration levels are high and students demonstrated resilience when tackling challenging concepts and activities as evidenced in a Year 12 lesson on sexual ethics. Students use opportunities to extend and improve their learning exceptionally well.

A real strength of this school is the responsibility that students take, under the direction of an inspirational Lay Chaplain, for shaping activities with a religious character in the school and the wider community, including linked Primary Schools. The evening Advent Service, led by the student Chaplaincy Team, for parents, students, staff and charity representatives was an outstanding example of student led worship. Exceptional use is made, during Form based Acts of Worship, of the 'Be Inspirational' website in which student involvement, in creating and leading vibrant worship, encourages whole school participation. There are many examples of students taking responsibility within the school eg. the Buddy system for supporting Year 7 students is well received and older students take responsibility in talking to Year 7 classes about this scheme. Older students also support Year 7 with the 'reading partners' scheme.

The views of students from all backgrounds are encouraged and respected. Students who have joined the school at different points can articulate the welcome they received and feel that they belong to this community. Comments such as, 'Since coming to The Becket I am a different person: I feel I have grown up in both my studies and my faith', and 'Every Form is like a family: We all help and support each other', sum up commonly held student views. Vulnerable students are assisted to develop their self-esteem and are supported exceptionally well; for example in The Damascus Centre. Behaviour around the site, between lessons, at break and lunchtime, demonstrated high levels of respect for self, property and others. Many students took advantage of the drop-in activities provided by the Lay Chaplain, at lunchtime, in the school chapel.

Inspectors examined evidence of student involvement in evaluating and improving the Catholic life of the school. Students are overwhelming positive about their school.

How good outcomes are for pupils, taking account of variations between different groups

Grade: 1

LEADERS AND MANAGERS

How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life of the school and plan improvement to outcomes for pupils

The school's leadership is deeply committed to the Church's mission in education and have taken decisive actions to secure improvements. The new headteacher has a strong vision for the development of the Catholic life of the School and for improving outcomes for students. This vision has been clearly articulated to students, parents/carers, staff and governors and there is clear evidence that the community shares this vision and can witness to its impact.

The leadership and management of Religious Education were judged to be outstanding. The Religious Education Leader of Learning, line managed by the headteacher, closely monitors all aspects of the department. A more rigorous process of self-evaluation of Religious Education provision including, for example, the quality of teaching and learning has been implemented since the last Section 48 inspection. Effective evaluation of course content and student outcomes resulted in a switch to an alternative and more appropriate GCSE syllabus and schemes of work. The school has been able to meet the increased demand for places on the Key Stage 5 Religious Studies course reflecting the excellent results in Key Stage 4.

Development Plans and minutes from governor and staff meetings demonstrate that the Catholic mission of the school is a priority. The appointment of key staff has secured the vision and the actions of the community witness to the impact of these developments. Self-evaluation at all levels is rigorous and has been effective in securing improvement. Staff and students understand the school's mission, share its purpose, and are keenly and actively involved in shaping and supporting it. Leaders and managers have in place worthy, planned, activities that enable students to reach out beyond the school family so that they can experience the diversity of the community in which the school is situated. There is good participation in parish activities, with students in uniform taking an active role in the liturgy on Youth Sunday and other occasions. Involvement in the work of Emmanuel House, a drop-in centre for vulnerable adults, was celebrated during the inspection. Exciting plans to extend opportunities further were articulated by staff and students.

Acts of Worship allow students and staff from all backgrounds the opportunity to examine and express their values and to realise that they can all '*Be Inspirational*'. Religious Education lessons facilitate an attitude of respect for all faiths, mutual understanding and integrity. Students are confident and respectful in expressing and debating views that question beliefs and values.

Governors are active participants in the life of the school, offering challenge and making highly significant contributions to the work, and the Catholic dimension, of the school. They have high levels of expertise, are appropriately disseminated, well organised and thorough in their approach. In regard of statutory and canonical responsibilities, the governing body has robust committee and reporting systems for evaluating effectiveness, keeping the work of the school under review and acting upon their findings to secure improvements for young people.

How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic life of the school

Grade: 1

PROVISION

How effective the provision is in promoting Catholic Education

Observations undertaken by the inspectors, including one paired observation, showed parity with the school's own quality assurance systems with 100% of teaching being good or better and 60% outstanding. Outstanding lesson planning took into account the range of ability and particular learning needs within the class. Relationships between teachers and students are very positive and, along with the use of a wide range of teaching styles and strategies, contribute to students being motivated and interested in their work. Regular assessment tasks coupled with on-going marking and feedback of written work, ensure that most students are aware of the level they are working at and generally know what they need to do to improve. Development of student literacy is very well supported across the Religious Education department with excellent examples of this seen in Year 7 books. There are rigorous assessment systems in place for setting challenging targets for all students and their progress is regularly tracked using individual student progress records.

The Religious Education curriculum is effectively planned to meet the needs of students at differing stages and setting arrangements enable the department to target additional resources for those with particular learning needs. Religious Education, at The Becket, makes a very significant contribution to the spiritual and moral development of all students, as does the school's Sex and Relationships Education programmes which are delivered through Religious Education and Science lessons in accordance with Catholic teaching. The school will be increasing the time allocated to Key Stage 3 Religious Education to 10% from January 2013.

Acts of Collective Worship are exceptionally well planned, overtly central to the life of the school, are student led with staff participation and a key part of school celebrations. Prayer opportunities for staff and students are planned into the liturgical calendar. They provide occasions for adults associated with the students and school to be involved in prayer and deep reflection. The Year of Faith has been fully promoted throughout the school with students and staff. The Religious Education staff, with the support of the headteacher and Lay Chaplain, have taken the lead in this. Regular retreats, including a day for Year 8 led by the Chaplaincy Team, support the spiritual development of each individual. There are not many students with different religious beliefs but these students feel valued and supported in their faith. The student Chaplaincy Team demonstrates wonderful witness to peers on a daily basis and to other generations through public Acts of Worship in parishes and Primary Schools. The Advent Service, which the team led the evening before the inspection, was a truly inspirational evening of challenge and deep reflection. The exceptional quality of Collective Worship is having a profound impact on the students and wider school community and is a real strength of this outstanding Catholic Academy.

How effective the provision is in promoting Catholic education

Grade: 1

Inspection Judgements Summary

Overall effectiveness – How effective the school is in providing Catholic education.	1
How good outcomes are for pupils, taking particular account of variations between different groups.	1
How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic life of the school.	1
How effective the provision is in promoting Catholic education.	1
How good OUTCOMES are for pupils, taking particular account of variations between different groups.	1
How well pupils progress and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.	1
Taking into account:	
<i>pupils' standards of attainment in Religious Education;</i>	1
<i>the quality of pupils' learning and their progress;</i>	1
<i>the quality of learning for pupils with particular learning needs and/or disabilities and their progress.</i>	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school.	1
How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship.	1
How effective LEADERS AND MANAGERS are in developing the Catholic life of the school.	1
How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life of the school and plan improvement to outcomes for pupils.	2
How effectively leaders and managers promote community cohesion.	2
How well leaders and managers at all levels monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan for improvement to outcomes for pupils.	1
The extent to which the governing body provides effective challenge and support for the Catholic dimension of the school so areas needing development are tackled decisively and statutory and canonical responsibilities met.	1
How effective the PROVISION is in promoting Catholic education.	1
The quality of teaching and how purposeful learning is in Religious Education.	2
The effectiveness of assessment and academic guidance in Religious Education.	2
The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum meets pupils' needs.	1
The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school.	1