



DIOCESAN CANONICAL INSPECTION REPORT

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

The Priory Catholic Voluntary Academy

Raglan Street, Hill Top, Eastwood, Nottinghamshire, NG16 3GT

School URN:	137909
Inspection Date:	10 June 2015
Inspectors:	Mrs Jane Monaghan and Mrs Mary Hirst

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

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

The Priory Catholic Voluntary Academy is an outstanding Catholic school.

- The Priory Catholic Voluntary Academy presents all that is celebratory in Catholic Life and is therefore outstanding. Pupils have a thorough understanding of the school's vision and mission and they are proud to be members of The Priory Catholic community. Stakeholders hold the school in high regard. The headteacher is truly inspirational; senior staff and indeed all staff ensure that the Catholic Life of the school is given the highest priority.
- Pupils enjoy their learning in Religious Education and readily share their thoughts. 'There's a lot more to Religious Education than people think' and 'We learn about who we are and our religion'. Behaviour for learning is exemplary and pupils work with high levels of understanding. Assessment of pupils' progress in Religious Education is rigorous and monitoring is highly effective.
- The school is a prayerful and worshipping community. The roles of the Collective Worship leader and the lay chaplain have significantly improved pupil-led liturgies since the last inspection. Liturgy is a highly significant part of school life.

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- The Priory Catholic Voluntary Academy is a smaller than average sized primary school serving the parish of Our Lady of Good Counsel, Eastwood.
- The school is part of the St Robert Lawrence Catholic Academy Trust; it converted to academy status in March 2012.
- 66% of pupils on roll are baptised Catholics; 80% transfer to Catholic provision when moving onto secondary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below the national average at 7%.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are supported by additional funding (the pupil premium) is below the national average at 10%.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- Continue to develop the monitoring and evaluation roles of the governing body in relation to the teaching of Religious Education.

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 managers 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' understanding and contribution to the school's mission statement is outstanding. They speak confidently about it, with upper Key Stage 2 pupils articulating highly sophisticated thoughts where they comment on linking it to their vocation. Pupils are involved in formulating and reviewing the mission statement and wholeheartedly embrace 'The Priory a place to learn, have fun, grow and develop in the light and love of Christ'. Pupils readily take on the role of evaluating the effectiveness of the mission statement by being members of the 'evaluation team' where their leadership skills are fostered and developed. Pupils have a strong sense of belonging, with data from a recent pupil questionnaire showing an overwhelming majority knowing what the mission statement is.
- The behaviour of pupils is exemplary; they are alert to the needs of others as demonstrated in their understanding of Catholic social teaching. The outstanding levels of discussion in this area displayed empathy with others and great maturity of thought.
- Pupils are proud to be members of The Priory Catholic family. They recognise the school as being highly regarded in the community. They value the traditions of the school and its link with the parish of Our Lady of Good Counsel, Eastwood.
- Pupils have benefitted from opportunities to find out about other world religions. This was evident in a visit to the synagogue in Nottingham which enabled them to understand the convictions and beliefs of others not of the Catholic tradition.

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

- The educational mission of the Church is fully evident in the school's mission statement. School life is informed by the school's mission where all staff are fully committed to and instrumental in its implementation. The Catholic character of the school is fully enhanced through the splendid working environment. Thoughtful displays featuring themes from the *Come and See* programme, banners from the Year of Faith, photographs of liturgical celebrations all contribute to and reflect the school's mission and identity.
- The school's systems and policies for pastoral care are fully evident with an outstanding commitment to the most needy and vulnerable. The school encourages and promotes parental involvement in the implementation of the Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) programmes which celebrate Catholic teaching and principles.
- The high standards of moral and ethical behaviour are evident in both adult and pupil relationships within the school community. Personal responsibility and justice along with healing and reconciliation are promoted through the school's planning of Catholic social teaching.

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

- The headteacher is a truly inspirational leader and he is justifiably proud of the school's Catholicity. Together with senior leaders and governors, he is both complemented and supported in the task of providing an outstanding vision of Catholic Life in the school.
- Self-evaluation for the provision of the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding. Clear systems are in place for rigorous monitoring resulting in challenging targets being set focussing on continuous improvement. High levels of trust ensure all stakeholders recognise the need to develop and that 'as a Catholic school we cannot stand still'. There is a strong sense of purpose and willingness to move forward.
- An aspect of strong leadership at The Priory is the emphasis placed on working with all parents and carers for the benefit of their children. Parental questionnaires show that families are conversant with the school's Catholic educational mission and are supportive of it.
- Governors' contribution to the Catholic Life of the school is of a high standard and is effective. They exhibit enthusiasm, are passionate and involved in its self-evaluation, they understand their roles and are not afraid to challenge.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP	1
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• How well pupils respond to and participate in the school’s Collective Worship.	1
• The quality of provision for the Collective Worship.	1
• How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship.	1

How well pupils respond to and participate in the school’s Collective Worship - outstanding

- The Priory is a worshipping community, pupils respond with enthusiasm, they engage fully in informal prayers, answering questions, giving opinions and reflecting on aspects of the school’s mission statement. They join in robustly to well-chosen hymns during moments of communal singing.
- All pupils are given opportunities to plan and lead liturgies, there is a timetabled programme of Acts of Worship giving even the youngest pupils experiences of contributing to liturgy. Under the guidance of the Collective Worship leader and the recently appointed lay chaplain, pupils are becoming adept in the use of scripture, artefacts and choices of appropriate music.
- Pupils have a thorough understanding of the liturgical year and plan liturgies reflecting these seasons.
- Pupils have a strong sense of respect for those of different faith backgrounds. Inclusivity is a feature of school life and all are invited to plan and participate in the rich opportunities for liturgy.
- The chaplaincy team and its various sub-committees are very well structured and they are influential in leading liturgies.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship - outstanding

- Collective Worship is a central and an integral part of school life. The use of high quality resources such as ‘Let us Pray’ and ‘John Burland music materials’ enhance and encourage pupil-led liturgy.
- The school provides many opportunities for parents and carers to join pupils in Acts of Collective Worship and class Masses. Visits to church along with school-based liturgical activities mean that parents and carers can join in fully with the prayer life of the school. There are many favourable comments from different stakeholders in the ‘wonderful worship’ book. This is also a useful tool for evaluating the effectiveness of Collective Worship overall.
- Class teachers and those in the roles of Collective Worship leader, Religious Education subject leader and the lay chaplain are all highly skilled in helping pupils to plan and deliver high quality forms of Collective Worship.

How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship - outstanding

- The headteacher and senior leadership team are inspirational in delivering high quality Collective Worship. All staff have benefitted from the expertise of diocesan personnel, they are open and indeed welcome advice to continually improve their practice which impacts positively on pupils' learning.
- Leaders and managers including the parish priest are highly visible leaders of Collective Worship in School. Canon John Berry is a constant presence, supporting and reassuring both staff and pupils.
- High priority is given to monitoring and evaluating Acts of Collective Worship by leaders and managers as evidenced in the wealth of photographic materials, questionnaires and coordinator reports kept by the school. The school acts on this information which in turn impacts on the rich experiences of Collective Worship.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION	1
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- How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.
- The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education.
- How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.

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How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education - outstanding

- Pupils enjoy Religious Education; they speak with enthusiasm about their learning and can say why they value it. Year 6 pupils say, 'Religious Education is as challenging as English and Maths and at times more so because of the links we need to make with scripture and our lives'.
- Behaviour for learning is outstanding and pupils concentrate and listen well in lessons and Acts of Worship. They work well independently, with partners and in groups.
- Pupils learn exceptionally well and as a result acquire knowledge quickly and in great depth. They are increasingly adept at making links in their learning and this impacts on their ability to think spiritually and ethically. They are excellent at applying this understanding to situations in their own lives and the lives of others.
- A high level of challenge in lessons ensures that all pupils from all groups make at least good progress, a large proportion make better than expected progress. Pupils' religious literacy skills are well-developed; quoting biblical references is very evident in their discussion and work books.
- Standards of attainment in Religious Education are outstanding. Pupils within the school, often from a low starting point, reach consistently high levels for their age. Pupils reach standards that are above diocesan averages at the end of Key Stage 1 and 2 and outcomes have remained consistently strong for almost all groups of pupils over time.

The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education - outstanding

- Teaching and assessment in Religious Education are outstanding. As a result of teaching that, in the majority of cases, is outstanding, pupils achieve very well over time. Skilful questioning extends and develops pupils' understanding.
- Teachers communicate high expectations, enthusiasm and passion about Religious Education to pupils. Teachers have a high level of expertise in terms of specialist knowledge and as a result, they use a wide range of innovative, imaginative resources and teaching strategies to stimulate pupils' participation in their learning, building on prior knowledge in order to secure outstanding progress in Religious Education.
- Deployment of teaching assistants is carefully planned; they have a significant impact on pupils both during direct teaching sessions and when supporting individuals or groups.
- Careful and sustained differentiation of work in all classes ensures that particular needs of almost every pupil are consistently and effectively met.
- Assessment for learning is strong within Religious Education lessons. Peer and self-assessment systems are fully established and these, together with accurate teacher assessment, move learning on so that pupils can reach their full potential. Effective monitoring and evaluation of pupils' work is a key feature of the school's development impacting greatly on pupils' learning.
- High quality marking is consistent, appropriate and has a positive impact on the progress of pupils. Pupils respond in writing to teacher comments and are aware of their 'next steps' in learning.
- Assessment information is used systematically to set targets that challenge pupils and meet individual needs.

The extent to which leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education - outstanding

- Accurate self-evaluation by the school leadership team leads to well-targeted planning and outstanding outcomes for Religious Education.
- The subject leaders for Religious Education and Collective Worship inspire the whole-hearted commitment of other colleagues, they are high profile in the school and are well supported by the inspirational headteacher to continue to strive for the best for all pupils.
- A system of continuing professional development including induction and coaching of new staff has secured consistency in the quality of provision for Religious Education. The cycle of monitoring, including moderation of work is well embedded and effective within the school. Collaborative work with the St Robert Lawrence Catholic Academy Trust has further enhanced this development with future opportunities for in-service training planned. Governors now need to take a leading role in the formal monitoring and evaluation of provision for Religious Education.
- The curriculum in Religious Education is engaging, challenging and creative and meets the full range of pupils' needs.
- Religious Education is well resourced in terms of staffing, capitation and curriculum time. It meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales fully.

SCHOOL DETAILS

School Name	The Priory Catholic Voluntary Academy
Unique Reference Number	137909
Local Authority	Nottingham

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* 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 7 Religious Education lessons and 1 Act of Collective Worship.

Meetings were held with the headteacher, the subject leaders for Religious Education and Collective Worship, the parish priest and the chair of governors. Discussions were also held with pupils, including members of the liturgy team.

Chair of Governors:	Mrs Helen Leatherland
Headteacher:	Mr Anthony Harrison
Date of Previous School Inspection:	11 December 2009
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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 12 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.