



**DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION  
REPORT  
(Under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005)**

**on**

**THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL  
AND  
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

**School:** St Bernadette's Catholic Primary Voluntary Academy

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**School URN:** 138016

**Headteacher:** Mrs J Sulkowski

**Chair of Governors:** Mr P Moran

**Inspectors:** Mrs F Boucher  
Mrs G Willders

**Date of Inspection:** 18 June 2013

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The inspection of this school was carried out on behalf of the Bishop of Nottingham under Canon 806 of Canon Law and Section 48 of the Education Act 2005 in accordance with the Diocese of Nottingham Schedule for Section 48 Inspections. 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 9 Religious Education lessons, 1 Act of Collective Worship and class liturgies.

Meetings were held with the headteacher, the subject leader for Religious Education, governors and the parish priest. Discussions were also held with pupils and parents.

The inspectors scrutinised a range of documents including the School Development Plan, Governing Body minutes, newsletters, reports, RAISEonline, assessment data, teachers' records, the Religious Education subject leader's file, Collective Worship file and examined the work in pupils' Religious Education books.

## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St. Bernadette's is a Catholic Primary Voluntary Academy, serving a community close to the centre of Scunthorpe. The academy serves the Parish of St. Bernadette's, Ashby, covering a radius of 3 miles on the south side of Scunthorpe and the outlying villages.

There are 316 pupils presently on roll. Pupils are drawn from a variety of backgrounds and other faiths and have a wide range of abilities, demonstrating the inclusive nature of the academy.

Since the last inspection, St. Bernadette's has become part of a seven-strong academy trust: 'The North Lincolnshire Catholic Academy Trust'.

There are 5.2% of pupils on School Action, 4.5% on School Action Plus and 2.4% of pupils have statements of Special Educational Needs. 11% of pupils receive Free School Meals; 19% of pupils speak English as an additional and two pupils have severe mobility needs.

St. Bernadette's has a breakfast club in operation every morning between 8am-8:30am, followed by 'Wake Up and Shake Up' exercises to music prior to registration.

Levels of attainment on entry for Religious Education are below average. A small percentage of pupils practise their faith. 13 children, who represent 54% of baptised Catholic children in Year 3 took part in the Sacramental Preparation for First Holy Communion this year.

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## INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

**OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS**

**1**

**CATHOLIC LIFE**

**1**

**COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

**1**

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

**2**

### KEY FINDINGS

- St Bernadette's provides an outstanding Catholic education for its pupils. Leaders and managers, staff, pupils and stakeholders rightly hold the school in high esteem. All aspects of school life reflect a school community which is joined together and passionate about the Church's mission.
  - The Catholic Life of the school is exemplary. The school ethos permeates all aspects of school life and pupils receive excellent guidance and support as they grow and develop in faith. A strong sense of commitment to the school's mission ensures that pupils are prepared to fully contribute to their Christian responsibility within and beyond the school.
  - Collective Worship is of a high standard and is central to the life of the school. All opportunities are taken to maximise the quality of shared worship in order to shape the spiritual and moral development of pupils. In addition to this, the whole school community comes together in prayer on a regular basis, providing a palpable strength in unity.
  - The quality of Religious Education received by pupils is good. They are enthused and engaged in their lessons and have ambition to move their learning forward. Religious Education is not yet outstanding because pupils have fewer opportunities to take ownership of their own learning.
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## WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- Ensure that all groups of pupils are sufficiently challenged by:
    - *Using greater differentiation of tasks in lessons;*
    - *Providing opportunities for pupils to make choices about how to present work in order to demonstrate their understanding.*
  - Devise a more systematic approach to monitoring and evaluation by:
    - *Ensuring that monitoring tasks are analysed so that conclusions can be drawn about further areas for improvement;*
    - *Including all areas of Catholic education in the monitoring cycle and the School Development Plan;*
    - *Ensuring that governors are fully involved in monitoring and evaluation processes.*
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# CATHOLIC LIFE

## THE QUALITY OF 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.
- 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 quality of the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.

Pupils are proud to be members of the St. Bernadette's community. They are open about school life and practices, talking freely and enthusiastically about their sense of belonging. Pupils contribute significantly to the Catholic Life of the school in a variety of ways, as seen in their welcome to visitors and the respectfulness shown throughout the working day. The Catholic Life of the school is evidently at the heart of the school's ethos and mission; as a result, pupils' spiritual and moral development is outstanding.

Staff are fully committed to the Catholic Life of the school, which is evident in relationships at all levels and can be seen through the care and attention given to providing a high quality learning environment. There are high standards of behaviour, rooted in Gospel values. Parents and other stakeholders are overwhelmingly positive about the school; they speak highly of the many opportunities in which they are invited to be involved in the Catholic Life of the school, for example receiving regular invitations to Acts of Worship. 'I have no complaints at all; the school is wonderful!' is a common response.

Leaders and managers are deeply committed to the mission of the Church and are inspirational role models for the whole school community. Self-evaluation of the Catholic Life of the school is of a good standard. A strength of the school is that leaders and managers, including governors, regularly reflect on their work. They now recognise the value in developing monitoring and evaluation of the Catholic Life of the school in future development plans.

# COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

## THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

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- How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship.
- The quality of provision for Collective Worship.
- How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship.

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The quality of Collective Worship is outstanding.

Pupils show reverence and participate fully in the school's Collective Worship. Pupils are now regularly preparing and leading Acts of Worship (an area of improvement identified in the last inspection) which has significantly raised standards in this area. During whole school worship, pupils share their knowledge of prayer and liturgy using a wide range of media and, as a result, all pupils actively engage in a prayerful experience. The school recognises that pupil led Collective Worship needs to be embedded further; nevertheless, the school rightly celebrates the high level of engagement and enjoyment shown by pupils.

Collective Worship is central to the life of the school and prayer is firmly incorporated into the daily routine. A whole school plan is formulated to reflect the liturgical calendar and important local, national and international events; these encompass the needs and abilities of all class groups. The introduction of liturgy boxes in every class, and the practice of pupils preparing focal points in every lesson, has raised the profile of and engagement in Collective Worship. A variety of prayer styles, artefacts, music and images are used to positive effect culminating in opportunities to celebrate, be still, pray and reflect upon our relationship with God and each other. Children relish these occasions.

Leaders and managers have expert knowledge of how to plan and deliver high quality Acts of Collective Worship; this is now impacting positively on provision and outcomes for pupils. All staff highly value the professional development delivered by the Diocese and have taken full advantage of these opportunities at diocesan and multi academy trust level. This has resulted in a rise in confidence and competence of staff and places Collective Worship firmly in a place of importance, as articulated by leaders and managers. This is further evident in the frequent participation of parents, governors and other stakeholders in school celebrations of all kinds. Establishing a strategy for evaluating the findings from monitoring the quality of Collective Worship will ensure that a more rigorous and systematic approach can be undertaken in the future.

# 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 and assessment in Religious Education.
- How well leaders and managers (including governors) monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.

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The quality of Religious Education is good.

A large majority of pupils demonstrate deep levels of concentration and application during Religious Education lessons; behaviour for learning is at least good and often outstanding. Pupils have a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of scripture, the life of the Church and how Christians should live their lives; they talk confidently and respectfully about other faiths. Almost all pupils, given their low starting points, make rapid and sustained progress over time. School data indicates that by the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, all groups of pupils reach a standard of attainment above the diocesan average. Pupil achievement is therefore outstanding.

Teaching is at least good throughout the school with evidence of outstanding practice, as teachers have secure subject knowledge, growing expertise and a willingness to incorporate creativity into lessons. In the best sessions, teachers engage pupils in brisk paced, innovative learning which enables pupils to demonstrate a depth of knowledge. Teaching assistants are deployed skilfully and contribute significantly to pupils' learning. Regular assessment and moderation, involving partner schools and the diocesan primary adviser, is having a positive effect on overall standards. Pupils are aware of individual targets for Religious Education and are ambitious to exceed these. Increased opportunities for pupils to manage their own independent learning, through effective differentiation, will provide the level of challenge required to support a move from good to outstanding in this area.

Leaders and managers conduct a good range of monitoring activities and know the school's strengths. The headteacher can articulate areas for development clearly; together with the Religious Education subject leader, she demonstrates a high level of expertise resulting in Religious Education having a prominent profile in the school. This makes a positive contribution to the moral and spiritual development of pupils, which is evident in discussions with pupils and stakeholders, scrutiny of workbooks and visual displays. Staff have been well supported in establishing the new 'Come and See' scheme for Religious Education and as a result, the curriculum matches pupils' needs well. Religious Education compares favourably with other core curriculum subjects in relation to curriculum time and resources. The school meets fully the requirements of the Bishops' Conference. Whilst leadership and management of Religious Education is good, the analysis of the results of monitoring is not

specific enough to provide a firm, measurable basis for self-evaluation and forward planning. The governing body is supportive and now needs to engage more fully in school self-evaluation in order to hold the school more rigorously to account for all aspects of performance in Religious Education.

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## WHAT INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS MEAN

Within the report, the following grades are used:

<b>Grade 1</b>	Outstanding
<b>Grade 2</b>	Good
<b>Grade 3</b>	Requires improvement
<b>Grade 4</b>	Inadequate

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

<b>Grade 1</b>	Outstanding	The school is a highly effective Catholic school. Pupils' needs are exceptionally well met.
<b>Grade 2</b>	Good	The school is an effective Catholic school. Pupils' needs are met well.
<b>Grade 3</b>	Requires improvement	The school is not yet a good Catholic school, it is not inadequate however, there are aspects that require improvement.
<b>Grade 4</b>	Inadequate	There are features in need of urgent and immediate attention. The school is not meeting the basic minimum requirement for adequacy. The school will receive a monitoring visit within twelve months.

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