



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

on

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

**School:** De Lisle College: A Catholic Voluntary Academy

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**School URN:** 138298

**Headteacher:** Mr Christopher Davies

**Chair of Governors:** Miss Katherine Cohoon

**Inspectors:** Mrs Brenda Carson  
Mr Paul Martin

**Date of Inspection:** 20 March 2014

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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 one day inspection, the inspectors observed 9 Religious Education lessons, one of which was a joint observation with a member of the leadership team. Inspectors also observed Acts of Collective Worship in 2 year group assemblies and daily prayer in 4 form groups during their 'Learning4Life' lessons.

Meetings were held with the headteacher, the leadership team, the department leader for Religious Education, governors and trust directors; including a priest from one of the parishes. Discussions were held with the college chaplain, students, a learning mentor and 2 newly-qualified teachers. Informal conversations were held with many other members of the community including the 'De Lisle News' team and students before school and at break times.

The inspectors scrutinised a range of documents and examined the work in students' Religious Education books.

## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

De Lisle College converted to become a Catholic Voluntary Academy on 1 July 2012. It is part of The Blessed Cyprian Tansi Catholic Academy Trust along with 5 Catholic primary schools: Holy Cross School, A Catholic Voluntary Academy, Whitwick; Sacred Heart Catholic Voluntary Academy, Loughborough; St. Clare's School, A Catholic Voluntary Academy, Coalville; St. Mary's Catholic Primary School, A Catholic Voluntary Academy, Loughborough and St. Winefride's Catholic Voluntary Academy, Shepshed.

De Lisle is a larger than average-sized secondary school. Parents choose to send their children to the college from across the whole of North Leicestershire and in some cases, from neighbouring counties. Students join the college from over 40 different primary schools, 7 of which are Catholic primary schools and 11 parishes.

Most students are from White British and Other White heritage backgrounds. A few come from various other heritage groups, mainly from mixed or Asian and Asian British backgrounds. The number of disabled students or those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The number of students at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is also below average.

Most students speak English as their first language. Very few students are at an early stage of learning to speak English. The number of students for whom the college receives the pupil premium (additional government funding for particular groups, including those known to be eligible for free school meals) is below average.

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## INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

**OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS**

**1**

**CATHOLIC LIFE**

**1**

**COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

**2**

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

**1**

### KEY FINDINGS

De Lisle is an outstanding college where its Catholic mission and vision is shared, actively promoted and practised by governors, staff and students. The leadership team, under the direction of the headteacher has a clear vision and ambition for the continued development of the college. Governors and the leadership team work with rigour to implement, monitor and adjust plans.

The Catholic Life of the college is outstanding. A strong vision and ethos is evident from students through to governors and The Blessed Cyprian Tansi Trust board directors. There is a pride in and dedication to the mission of this college by all stakeholders. 'Parish Ambassadors' is a new initiative which has begun to reap rewards in the form of more effective links between the parishes and the college. Students are committed to improving the lives of others as demonstrated by the sponsored Lenten sporting efforts and the impact that the Joe Humphries Memorial Trust group has had across Leicestershire. Relationships with one another and with adults in the college community are testament to the positive effect that the college has on students' lives.

Collective Worship is good. Students benefit from Collective Worship but reliance on the skills of adults and older students has led to many younger students taking a more passive role in worship. Provision is well planned with daily worship that utilises the Diocesan Prayer Book and follows the liturgical year. Students can articulate their experiences of developing ideas and taking active roles in planning and leading year group liturgy and worship.

Religious Education is outstanding. The Religious Education department contributes significantly to leading teaching and learning across the college. Learning and progress for most groups of students is good with some making outstanding progress. This is as a result of good and sometimes, outstanding teaching. Outcomes at the higher GCSE grades are outstanding and the need to improve grades for sub-groups has been addressed by leaders and managers. Current data indicates that measures implemented to support the progress of pupil premium students is having the desired impact and the gap for other sub-groups has reduced.

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## WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- Embed the Parish Ambassador initiative.
- As a result of the monitoring and evaluation of Collective Worship; instigate actions so that all students are enabled to become more effective leaders of, and engaged participants in, Acts of Worship.
- Continue to narrow the gap in achievement for all groups of students in Religious Education.

## 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 extent to which students contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the college is outstanding. Students develop a strong sense of belonging from the earliest days with the excellent work which is carried out on identity and their class shields - developed and then shared at the Welcome Mass. Students who have joined the college mid-year indicate that they are well supported for induction and they were full of praise for the students and staff of the college as was a Year 13 student who stated, 'I'm not a faith student but I recognise and value the feeling of belonging that I know my friends at other schools do not share'. Parish Ambassadors have developed a striking confidence and have clear ideas about their role and its impact upon both the college and individual parishes. This was verified in conversation with a priest from one of the parishes and by other students who said they were now more aware of parish activities than they used to be. In a meeting with post-16 students one commented, 'what's behind the school are Catholic morals and preaching of the Church's message which gives you the faith to help each other in school and others in the wider community'. Great value is placed on visits to the Briars, Mount Saint Bernard's Abbey, diocesan events and the trip to Rome. Students appreciated the work they did with the Prince's Trust and the impact that this had on the college community as reported in the 'De Lisle News' on the college website.

The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the college is outstanding. Staff and students buy into the mission of the college and students recognise the dedication of staff with many comments detailing how staff go the extra mile for students. 'Teachers don't just teach they do a lot more and are very passionate about their work. We are very grateful for all their support'. Students are happy, know where to go for support and feel safe at De Lisle. There has been a noteworthy reduction in fixed term exclusions, with the belief in the individual

and forgiveness and reconciliation evident as strong features of pastoral care. The chaplain is clearly seen as a support to students and staff and Meditation Monday is widely appreciated. A member of the leadership team has the brief for staff welfare which confirms the commitment to all in this college. Break-times are enjoyed by students and the meal provision is appreciated, 'Great food at good prices'. The chapel is at the heart of the school and is a special space.

Leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the college to an outstanding level. Governors are actively involved in ensuring that De Lisle is a thriving Catholic college. They are well informed through the work of the Pupil and Personnel Committee to whom the chaplain reports on the Catholic Life of the college. Along with Trust directors; they have a significant impact upon the drive for excellence that permeates all levels of leadership and management. There is a pride in the outreach activities which includes a parent forum and structures to engage the 'hard to reach'. Governors spoke with enthusiasm about the Catholicity of the college and of the spirit of well-being and community at De Lisle which they summed up in three words: 'Share; Support; Serve'. There is drive and capacity, at all levels, to move forward those areas that are not yet outstanding.

## **COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

### **THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

<b>2</b>
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- How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship. 

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- The quality of provision for Collective Worship. 

2
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- How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship. 

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Students' response to and participation in Collective Worship is good. Students appreciate that De Lisle is a community of prayer and speak of this giving them a sense of identity. Year 10 students drew great strength from this as they came to terms with the death of a peer last year. They were encouraged to turn their grief into something positive which has resulted in their commendable work for the Memorial Trust. During the inspection, there were two year-group Acts of Worship: a Year 9 Act of Worship and a Year 11 Mass. Year 9 students acted respectfully during the Act of Worship, organised by members of the Student Council, however their response to joining in formal prayer was limited throughout what was a good and meaningful Act of Worship. During the Mass, attended by Year 11, more students could have joined in the formal prayers and responses. Students were confident in reading during the assembly and were ably supported by post 16 student leaders. Post 16 students talk positively about their involvement in Collective Worship and how they sometimes take the lead in prayer in both whole year liturgies as well as in form groups. They can describe opportunities they have taken to lead the sixth form community in prayer and reflective thinking on moral issues.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship is good. Students have the opportunity to compose their own prayers but generally there is an over-reliance on adults and on

materials provided for them. The Diocesan Prayer Book is a valuable resource but care should be taken not to restrict student independent learning and leadership. A number of form 'daily prayer' opportunities were observed by inspectors during the 'Learning4Life' sessions. One class of Year 7 students reflected, with keenness and understanding, on why their Catholic community should support the sport relief charity, whilst a Year 8 group was effectively challenged to explore their values through debating the statement 'charity begins at home'. In a Year 10 class, there was a greater reliance on adult prepared materials, with one student reading the prayer. Since the last inspection, students have become more involved in the delivery of Acts of Worship, particularly at Key Stage 4.

Leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship to a good level. Liturgical and spiritual development is seen as a priority in the professional development of school leaders and all staff. Quality time is devoted to it within the college and across the Academy Trust resulting in staff confidence and building of community as expressed by the newly qualified teachers and learning mentor interviewed during the inspection. Leaders and managers promote and monitor the provision for Collective Worship. However, the impact as a result of monitoring and evaluation of Collective Worship needs to be strengthened so that students are enabled to become more effective leaders of, and engaged participants in, Acts of Worship. One student expressed this by saying that Acts of Worship could be more interactive with students feeling more involved.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

### **THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

<b>1</b>
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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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Students enjoy their work in Religious Education, show enthusiasm and are very rarely off task, they make outstanding progress over time and achieve above diocesan and national levels. A very small number of students do not make as much progress, especially in the lower ability band and the department is working effectively to address this. The work being pioneered on pupil premium students has had a remarkable impact on their progress and achievement over the last year and the gap is narrowing quickly.

Teaching in Religious Education is mainly good or better and over time, makes an outstanding contribution to student outcomes. Teachers across each of the key stages were observed to use a range of teaching styles and often innovative strategies, such as 'the mantle of all knowledge' and role play, to good and often outstanding effect. 'Marketplace' activities enabled deep thinking and quick gathering of information. Team teaching in Year 12 creatively enabled students to process, reason and rank key issues of philosophy and ethics in response to identified 'muddle'. Safety was a strong feature of lessons and behaviour for learning was exemplary. Lesson objectives and assessment tasks were

effectively differentiated to meet the needs of most students. Relationships between teachers and students were seen to be very positive within an atmosphere of praise, mutual enjoyment and motivation. Where assessment is outstanding, written feedback on work is helpful in helping students to identify how to improve their work further. Students are afforded the time to address this advice and to secure their progress. There is effective peer and self-evaluation in addition to insightful teacher marking. Students know their targets and are aware of how to improve. Support for the development of literacy is a strong feature of every lesson. Assessment, recording and reporting systems are outstanding with all stakeholders effectively informed.

The leadership and management of Religious Education were judged to be outstanding. Staff, in particular the department leader for learning in Religious Education and the chaplain who supports the work of the department effectively are involved in diocesan training and meetings. The diocesan baseline task was evidenced in Year 7 books. The headteacher, senior leaders and the Religious Education learning leader monitor the progress of all students using an effective tracking system and intervention strategies are employed to address underperformance. A rigorous and thorough process of self-evaluation including, for example, the quality of teaching and learning is contributing to improved outcomes. The department is well resourced and recognised as a lead department within the college. It meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference fully, across all key stages including the sixth form.

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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.

