



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

on

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

School: St. Hugh's Catholic Voluntary Academy

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School URN: 120617

Headteacher: Mr G Hughes

Chair of Governors: Rev J Kyne

Inspectors: Mrs J Monaghan
Mrs A Blake

Date of Inspection: 20 June 2013

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 and 1 whole school Act of Collective Worship.

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

The inspectors scrutinised a range of documents including the Self Evaluation Form (SEF), planning documents, assessment and tracking data, Collective Worship folder, feedback slips from parents and children, previous inspection report, monitoring documentation from Senior Management Team (SMT) and governors and examined the work in pupils' Religious Education books.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St. Hugh's Catholic Voluntary Academy, part of the St Gilbert of Sempringham multi-academy trust is an averaged sized school situated in the city of Lincoln, there are 278 pupils on roll with 174 baptised Catholic children (63%). 24% of pupils are from other Christian denominations and 2% from other world faiths. The remaining 11% have no religious affiliation.

The school converted to academy status in May 2013.

The parishes of St. Hugh's and St. Peter and St. Paul are served by the school.

Since the last inspection, major new building work has been completed which has allowed for the new school chapel to be at the centre of the school. St. Hugh's is one of the country's first Fair Trade Award Schools and represents Lincoln City Council as their flagship school, it also has Eco award status.

The percentage of children entitled to free school meals is 9% and there are 46 children including one statemented child on the special needs register, this represents 17% of the school total.

INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

1

CATHOLIC LIFE

1

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

1

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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KEY FINDINGS

- St. Hugh's is an outstanding Catholic school which makes outstanding provision for Catholic education. The school is a very welcoming and inclusive community which upholds the precepts of the common good. Priorities since the last inspection have been met fully and there is a continuous drive for improvements for the good of the whole school community.
- The Catholic Life of the school is outstanding. School leaders and staff have a shared vision with high expectations with regard to the Catholic mission and ethos of the school. Staff are superb role models, they are proud of their school and collaboration is a feature of their work together. Key strengths of the school are the excellent relationships which exist between home, school and parish. Parents participate fully in school life and they have a high opinion of the school community. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is outstanding.
- The quality of Collective Worship in the school is outstanding. Pupils are very well equipped in planning and leading worship and the staff create opportunities for them to do this effectively. Liturgical formation of the staff is given a high priority by the school leaders.
- The quality of Religious Education in the school is outstanding. All teaching and assessment for learning is at least good with the majority of delivery being outstanding. As a consequence and in every aspect, outcomes for pupils in Religious Education are outstanding. Pupils enjoy and value their Religious Education and all groups of pupils make excellent progress.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- Further develop the analysis of the pupil tracking system including attainment of different groups to ensure even higher outcomes for all learners in Religious Education.
 - Ensure that accelerated learning for all groups takes place by giving pupils time to respond correctly to marking.
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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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Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the Catholic Life of the school and benefit greatly from it. They take full advantage of the many and varied opportunities provided for their personal and spiritual development. Pupils are enquiring, imaginative and have a strong sense of their own identity within the school community. They take their responsibilities seriously, seeing their roles as school councillors and prayer monitors, for example, as important because it is about enriching the life of the school through Gospel values. Pupils can discuss their own faith and spirituality with confidence. They know that other people have different beliefs and they show an appreciation and understanding of this. Pupils respond to the needs of others locally and in a world-wide context and show a well-developed awareness of compassion for others. They have a profound sense of social justice. Excellent behaviour is underpinned by outstanding moral, social and cultural development.

The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding. Governors, leaders and staff have high expectations and a shared vision with regard to the school's Catholic mission and ethos. Staff are involved in nurturing and living out the school's mission statement and are fully committed to providing every opportunity to ensure that all children 'deepen their wonder and delight in God's creation'. There is a very strong sense of community evidenced by the quality of relationships between staff, pupils and parents. The school is a happy, prayerful community and its Catholic character is effectively reflected through displays, artefacts and sacred spaces especially the chapel and the new prayer garden designed and created for the Year of Faith. Clear policies and procedures are in place and these provide high levels of pastoral support to all pupils. Behaviour policies are rooted in Gospel values. Effective training both diocesan and in-house, supports staff with new initiatives.

Leaders and managers are outstanding in promoting provision for the Catholic Life and mission of the school. The development of the strong Catholic ethos is key to all they do. St. Hugh's is a very welcoming community where the Gospel messages of care and social justice are seen in action through the work of the Fair Trade group, for example. Leaders provide clear direction for the Catholic Life of the school. Staff embrace and understand the Catholic ethos of the school and are active role models in this aspect of school life. Consequently, pupils are able to articulate the distinctive mission of the school well. There are well-planned and effective systems of self-evaluation including learning walks, work scrutiny and reviews of prayer areas as well as formal lesson observations. The outcomes of these monitoring activities are shared with staff and lead to developments and actions that improve aspects of Catholic Life. Governors make a significant impact and contribution to the Catholic Life of the school. They are actively involved in monitoring and self-evaluation and are prepared to challenge where necessary as well as support.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

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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.

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

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St. Hugh's is a vibrant worshipping community where pupils' response to and participation in Collective Worship is outstanding. Pupils have a sound understanding of the elements of worship which was evidenced in the whole school liturgy, discussions with Religious Education monitors and the school's prayer group. Pupils have further opportunities for individual and collective worship in the school's prayer garden, classroom focus areas and the wonderful chapel. School liturgy impacts positively on the prayer life of pupils. They know what constitutes worship and are skilled in using a variety of ways of praying. Liturgical dance is a feature of the school's Collective Worship and enhances further the experience of prayer for pupils. Pupils engage actively and with great enthusiasm to the school's Fair Trade initiatives. They display an appreciation of Justice and Peace issues both locally and nationally. They have a good understanding of the Year of Faith and some children articulated the imagery of 'Living Stones' commenting, 'Living Stones - that's us'. Collective Worship contributes extremely positively to the social, moral and personal development of pupils.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is outstanding and ensures that the spiritual needs of pupils are well met. There is a clear sense of 'policy into practice' where a good range of strategies ensure that Collective Worship is inclusive. Parents, governors and parishioners are invited to attend liturgies - these invitations are clearly valued and parents comment with enthusiasm. The volunteer prayer group and Religious Education monitors demonstrate the process of planning, preparing and leading liturgies to a high standard. Acts of Worship and liturgies are pitched to the age and needs of pupils with appropriate themes based on the 'Come and See' topic, linked to the Year of Faith and the diocesan Living Stones imagery. Planning file documentation shows progression as pupils journey from Foundation Stage to Year 6.

Priests provide support and guidance to the whole school community with the home, school and parish partnership benefitting from this at an outstanding level. Priests lead liturgies in the parish church and complement the 'Come and See' programme by giving instruction on the sacraments. The youngest children up to Year 6 visit church for these opportunities. Leaders model high quality worship at whole school and class level - such occasions are vehicles for promoting the common good. There is provision for a wide range of opportunities for staff and governors to worship together. Leaders ensure staff training in liturgical formation and spiritual development is a priority in the school. Sacramental preparation is another extension of the home, school and parish partnership with staff in a leading role in the parish in this process. Governors are regular visitors and are effective in holding the school to account in its mission to provide Catholic education. The Religious Education subject leader is enthusiastic, highly motivated and professional. She ensures that all aspects of Collective Worship continue to be developed at an outstanding level. The school is extremely well resourced with artefacts,

ICT and programmes of work enhancing the delivery of Collective Worship. The monitoring and evaluation of Collective Worship is informed by feedback from staff, parents and governors and is a priority in the regular review process of school performance.

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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Pupils enjoy Religious Education and say why they value it. One Year 6 pupil said that Religious Education was the most challenging area of the curriculum because 'we really have to think hard'. An overwhelming majority of pupils concentrate well in lessons, work at a good pace and show resilience when tackling demanding tasks. Children start the Foundation Stage broadly in line with expectations for their age. All groups of pupils make outstanding progress as they continue through the school. By the end of Year 2, almost all pupils attain the expected Level 2 and some make even more progress attaining Level 3. By the end of Year 6, levels of attainment are well above diocesan averages as a whole and for all groups of children including those with special educational needs. In 2012, all pupils attained Level 4 which is the age-expected level and a small minority achieved Level 5. Inspection findings show little variation between boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported through differentiated activities and/or additional adult support. Across the school, pupils develop their knowledge and understanding well and are able to reflect on meaning and the impact of this on their daily life.

Teaching and assessment is outstanding. As a result of teaching that, in a majority of cases is outstanding, pupils achieve very well over time. Teachers use a variety of styles and make particularly effective use of ICT to support the curriculum. Teachers support learning with use of videos and relevant resources to ensure high levels of engagement and interest. Pupils are well motivated and eager to participate in their lessons. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and plan lessons to build on prior learning. Assessment information is used systematically to set targets that challenge pupils and meet individual needs. Pupils are consistently involved in assessing their own work and that of their peers. This is carefully overseen by their teachers. Marking is used to engage pupils and they are encouraged to respond to it. There were, however, some cases when errors in responses were not addressed and, as a result, learning did not move on as rapidly as it could have done.

The Religious Education curriculum meets pupils' needs extremely well and fulfils all the requirements of the Bishops' Conference. Leaders have supported staff to embed the 'Come and See' scheme of work and this has been developed in a creative and vibrant way focusing on the needs and interests of the pupils. The curriculum provides many opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development and impacts positively on it. Monitoring, assessment and tracking systems are in place and accurately inform individual pupil areas of strength and future development. The system needs to be extended to include the opportunity to analyse whole cohort, key stage and school data including information about the attainment of different groups of pupils in order to support raising attainment even further for all. Leaders ensure a strong and shared vision for Religious Education. It is at the heart of the school, with all staff informed about priorities identified from a range of monitoring activities. In many cases, staff share in the monitoring activities and these have a direct impact on provision for pupils. The school works effectively with a range of partners and has very successful strategies for engaging with parents and encouraging them to share their views and responses particularly around the Mass and Acts of Worship. Governors make regular visits to the school and have a very sound understanding of the strengths and areas for development. They are involved in monitoring activities and are very supportive of the leaders and staff.

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, there are aspects that require improvement.
Grade 4	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.

