



Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection report for Sacred Heart Catholic Voluntary Academy

URN: 138081

Carried out on behalf of the **Right Rev. Patrick McKinney, Bishop of Nottingham** on:

Date: 29-30 March 2023

Overall effectiveness

The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school.....

2

Catholic life and mission (p.3)

How faithfully the school responds to the call to live as a Catholic community at the service of the Church's educational mission.....

1

Religious education (p.5)

The quality of curriculum religious education.....

2

Collective worship (p.7)

The quality and range of liturgy and prayer provided by the school.....

2

The school is fully compliant with the curriculum requirements laid down by the Bishops' Conference

✓

The school is fully compliant with all requirements of the diocesan bishop

✓

The school has responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection

Fully

Summary of key findings

What the school does well

- Sacred Heart Catholic Voluntary Academy is a good Catholic school where pupil behaviour is exemplary.
- The area of Catholic life and mission is outstanding. Leaders are driven and there is a feeling of warmth throughout the school. The promotion of the faith is central to all decision making; pupils and families benefit from outstanding care and support. Sacred Heart is truly a community school and seen as a hub of support.
- Religious education is good. Pupils enjoy their lessons. They listen and work hard in a happy atmosphere supported by teachers and teaching assistants. School leaders are focused on continuing to improve delivery and outcomes.

- Collective Worship is good. Prayer is central to the daily routine. Pupils enjoy leading liturgical prayer in their classes. Leaders, including governors and staff are driven to ensure the best outcomes for each pupil. The school maintains strong links with the parish.

What the school needs to improve:

- Improve pupil outcomes across the school in religious education by ensuring that pupils:
 - have sufficient time within lessons to produce extended pieces of writing
 - can interpret sources and make links more consistently, giving reasons for actions and linking these to Christian life
- Increase opportunities for pupils to take more ownership in whole school liturgical prayer

Catholic life and mission

How faithfully the school responds to the call to live as a Catholic community at the service of the Church's educational mission.

Catholic life and mission key judgement
 grade:.....

Pupil outcomes

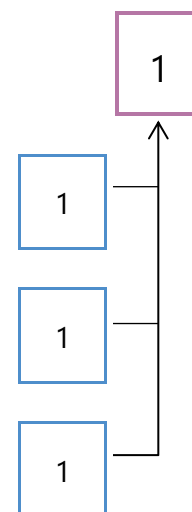
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

Provision

The quality of provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school



Pupils understand and follow the school mission statement: 'We believe that God's spirit is at work in everyone in our community. We will provide an environment of hope, joy, and fulfillment in which skills to fulfil God's desires for us, as unique individuals, are cultivated.' This is lived out on a daily basis. Pupils feel welcomed and valued. They say that they, 'feel calm with Jesus' and, 'we are kind and helpful to each other'. Pupils are a credit to the school: their behaviour and respect for each other and staff is tangible; they recognise the rich diversity within the school and say that, 'Sacred Heart welcomes people from all religions'. Pupils understand their role as stewards within the world. They are happily involved with the school's eco team, raising money for local and global charities. They speak clearly about how new pupils are made to feel part of the school family. If there are any disagreements, they understand the need to discuss issues and feelings to ensure reconciliation. They say that they, 'follow Jesus' footsteps and learn how to be like Jesus and a better person'.

Pastoral care is outstanding. The recent covid-19 pandemic saw the school reach out and support the local community and become a hub for families. The commitment of staff to the most vulnerable illustrates the investment in missionary discipleship. Pupils are cared for and the needs of families are carefully addressed. The provision of accommodation, furniture and food are illustrations of the community support on offer. All adults are polite and welcoming. The well-established breakfast club ensures that pupils receive a healthy start to the day. Sacred Heart welcomes all pupils and celebrates all languages and cultures. The multi-faith prayer room reflects inclusivity. The school environment has vibrant Catholic displays; visitors are welcomed at the entrance of the school, where a central focus of the school's patron is found; corridors showcase inspirational leaders and British values. The correct liturgical colours are displayed throughout the environment. The Bishop's themes are evident in every class. All these elements, together with the displays of Mary, the joyful mysteries of the rosary and the

celebration of saints illustrate, celebrate the Catholic ethos of the school. The school provides outreach to families providing mindfulness and language courses, which are gratefully received. There is a strong link with the local parish: weekly Mass is attended by two classes from the school on a rotational basis, securing a positive link between home, school and parish.

Leaders are driven in their delivery of the Catholic faith and mission. They actively promote and evaluate their practice; systems are in place to monitor Catholic life and mission. All stakeholders are fully invested in the promotion of the Bishop's themes of encounter, discipleship and missionary discipleship. The commitment to the support of families make Sacred Heart a special place, valued by the local community. It supports families to find shelter and furnish their homes as well as providing food. Leaders support the 'Open Hands' charity, which provides emergency support and care to people living in poverty. On a wider basis, leaders coordinate fundraising for the earthquake victims of Turkey and Syria, Cafod, Rainbows, and Fitness in Schools, as well as supporting the Lourdes Fund at the feeder high school. Governors and the parish priest know the school well: they are supportive and critical friends. Parents say that, 'Sacred Heart is concerned about our welfare and is like a family'. Senior leaders, including governors, are overly modest in their self-evaluation as Catholic life and mission is of the highest quality at this school.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement
 grade:.....

Pupil outcomes

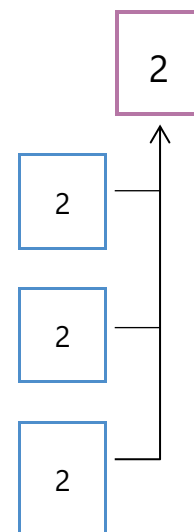
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education.....

Provision

The quality of teaching, learning, and assessment in religious education.....

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor, and evaluate the provision for religious education.....



Nursery provision provides a strong start which is built upon firmly: pupils arrive at the school with very little religious knowledge. Pupils enjoy their lessons because they are well planned and engaging. Activities are varied and age-appropriate; in the early years they are interactive. There are a range of engaging activities including role play, art and craft tasks, together with scripture detective work, which lead to the quality of writing being good. Work is clearly differentiated and pupils are set tasks based on their abilities. Pupils do not have enough time in lessons to write extended pieces of work capturing all the relevant links as well as all their thoughts and ideas. Pupils are on task and enthusiastic in lessons. They say, 'We enjoy religious education lessons because there is always a clear focus'. They listen attentively and work with each other collaboratively. Behaviour for learning is strong and there is clear respect between pupils and teachers.

Teachers are knowledgeable; lessons are well planned and there is a corporate approach to the ordering and teaching of each lesson. There is a uniform delivery of diocesan planning and initiatives. The 'Come and See' programme of study is followed implicitly. The teaching of relationships, sex and health education is evident and effective throughout the school. Sacred Heart covers other faiths in the curriculum well and all are mindful of the wide cross-section of faith beliefs in the school. The use of diocesan driver words, 'I can...' statements, 'the big question' and reference to the 'head and heart and cloud' symbols give focus and structure to pupil's learning, allowing them to express their thoughts and beliefs clearly. Activities are developed to consolidate and build upon previous learning. Pupils have access to bibles and reference lists of relevant scripture are made available in all topics. For lower ability pupils, teaching assistants scribe verbal answers to capture pupils' thoughts and ideas. Work is scaffolded; modelled examples support learning by boosting confidence; mixed ability pairing encourages deeper conversation. Pupils work well with each other and respect the ideas of others. Pictures and visual aids help pupils to access and

understand scripture. Teachers ensure that pupils take pride in their work, so that they present it well in workbooks. Teachers provide resources and scripture links; they encourage pupils to refer to prior learning and to make links to current work. Teachers use visual aids and open-ended questioning, but this does not allow pupils time to extend their written outcomes or promote independent writing opportunities. Teachers consistently follow the marking policy. Teaching assistants provide helpful and targeted support.

The leadership team is driven and focused in ensuring teaching and learning is monitored, reflected upon and improved. Staff have received relevant diocesan training and teachers new to the school have been closely supported and mentored. Early career teachers attend specific diocesan training, as do those new to Catholic schools. The religious education leader is a strength of the school. Leaders have worked hard to ensure that all previous action points have been fully addressed from the last inspection. 'Non-negotiables', in terms of delivery, have been established and are being embedded. There is a corporate look to 'working walls' for religious education, with the current topic being displayed to support and celebrate current teaching and learning. Internal moderation is regularly undertaken and external moderation by the diocese validates the accuracy of assessment tasks. Learning walks, 'book looks' and pupil voice all inform future planning and improvement.

Collective worship

The quality and range of liturgy and prayer provided by the school.

Collective worship key judgement grade:.....

2

Pupil outcomes

How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

2

Provision

The quality of collective worship provided by the school

2

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for collective worship

2

Pupils respond and actively engage in the prayer and liturgy provided by the school. Pupils are respectful and show reverence. They work well with the home-grown pupil chaplains. They are able to include the choir singing, liturgical dance, spontaneous and traditional prayer to enhance liturgical prayer, for example, when venerating the cross. Opportunities for meditation as well as participating in Lectio Divina and Visio Divina add to their spiritual journey. They prepare engaging experiences of prayer, ensuring that there is a focused gathering theme. Attention to mood and setting are evidenced together with the sharing of the word, followed by the opportunity to respond to scripture and to live out a specific mission in their daily lives. Pupils lead and evaluate liturgical prayer and are able to identify next steps for improvement: for example, a Year 5 pupil started a rosary club which has become so popular that there is a waiting list to join. The chaplaincy team are a well-chosen, confident and spiritually aware team capable of taking more responsibility in choosing elements such as pieces of scripture. 'Let us pray' resources are well used to help prepare liturgical prayers.

Prayer punctuates the day and is central to the daily structure at Sacred Heart. The liturgical calendar is followed closely and displays show the correct liturgical colours. Focus prayer tables help to create the right mood and setting; display areas are well resourced with religious artefacts, such as statues, bibles and candles. Staff provide opportunities for all pupils to prepare and lead class liturgical prayer: these times are seasonally appropriate and offer a range of ways of praying that are part of the Catholic tradition. In this respect, staff are models of good practice. Class liturgical prayer folders capture these prayerful experiences and illustrate a pride in the opportunities prepared by each class: however, there are few opportunities provided for pupils to lead whole school prayer beyond the classroom since adults are more frequently in charge. The choir enhances prayer and liturgical prayer. Whole school participation in singing is being re-established and reinvigorated following restrictions brought about by the covid-19 pandemic.

The extent to which leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate this area of school life is good. The policy and plans for prayer and liturgical prayer are fit for purpose and carefully planned. The school calendar allows for the school to celebrate the Eucharist on regular basis, including special occasions and holy days of obligation. The religious education leader shows reverence and passion when leading whole school prayer; she is influential in guiding liturgical prayer so that key times in the Church's year can be highlighted, such as the events of Jesus' road to the cross. Sacred Heart links closely with the parish church, involving school leaders in the sacramental preparation where parents and pupils come together before Sunday Mass for spiritual input. Leaders, including governors, ensure that time and care is taken to welcome pupils of all faiths, and none: this is well considered when planning liturgical prayer and liturgy. Governors check that materials and resources for this important area of school life are well funded so that this worshipping community can flourish.

Information about the school

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|--|---|
| Full name of school | Sacred Heart Catholic Voluntary Academy |
| School unique reference number (URN) | 138081 |
| Full postal address of the school | LE5 3HH |
| School phone number | 0116 2624418 |
| Name of head teacher or principal | Kate Hayles and Alison James |
| Chair of governing board | Edward Hayes |
| School Website | sacredheart.leicester.sch.uk |
| Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable) | St Thomas Aquinas Multi-Academy Trust |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Academy |
| Age-range of pupils | 4-11 |
| Trustees | Nottingham Roman Catholic Diocesan Trustees |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Date of last denominational inspection | 18 January 2016 |
| Previous denominational inspection grade | Good |

The inspection team

| | |
|-------------------|----------------|
| Gregory Hughes | Lead inspector |
| Joanne Green | Team inspector |
| Name of inspector | Lead/team |
| Name of inspector | Lead/team |

Key to grade judgements

| Grade | England | Wales |
|-------|----------------------|--|
| 1 | Outstanding | Excellent |
| 2 | Good | Good |
| 3 | Requires improvement | Adequate and requires improvement |
| 4 | Inadequate | Unsatisfactory and in need of urgent improvement |

