



Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection report for Sacred Heart Catholic Voluntary Academy

URN: 138294

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

Date: 20-21 April 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.....	2
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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The school is fully compliant with all requirements of the diocesan bishop	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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 is a welcoming, happy school where the welfare and wellbeing of all children and staff is a priority.
- Leaders are approachable, respected, diligent and committed. Parents value the school and recommend it to others.
- The well-established and experienced governing body strive to ensure that the Catholicity of the school is maintained by fostering strong home, school and parish links.
- The leadership of religious education is recognised by all stakeholders as strong and effective in driving forward school developments.

- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Pupils are religiously literate and talk about how much they enjoy school and being part of the variety of prayer and liturgy opportunities given to them.

What the school needs to improve:

- Enhance and develop the Catholic life and mission of the school by increasing enrichment opportunities for pupils through
 - Involving pupils in programmes and activities which expose them to living out their faith
 - Immersing pupils in experiences which will further support their understanding of cultural diversity
- Embed with staff throughout the school the clear and agreed structure for Religious Education lessons
- Further develop pupils' independence in planning and leading creative 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

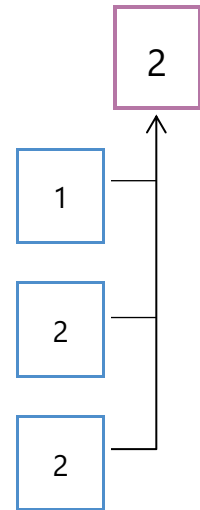
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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' contribution to the Catholic life and mission of Sacred Heart is a strength. Pupils can confidently articulate an understanding of their self-worth and the Catholic virtues of their school. This is also evident in lessons and liturgical prayer. Pupils say, 'We know how to live out our class virtues and be a child of God'. Pupils clearly know how to accept responsibility through their respect for each other: 'We have peer mediators to help us to sort problems so we can apologise and reconcile quicker'. Pupils show respect for the faiths of others, giving them a well-developed sense of the worth of others. They have an awareness of and show care towards the vulnerable of society. For example, the chaplaincy team listened to a school governor and raised money for refugees, providing clothing and food. The pupil parliament decides on fundraising activities. Pupils are regular visitors to the church and learn about it through discussion with the parish priest. They take part in carol services and Masses, involving themselves further in the life of the parish.

The school mission statement, to 'live, learn, love', underpins the Catholic life and mission of the school and this has a visible impact on school life. Staff are positive role models. The opportunity for staff to visit Rome as part of their professional development is an illustration of their commitment to the faith. The physical environment of the school clearly identifies the mission and charism of Sacred Heart. The school is welcoming and staff are keen to develop pupils' understanding of diversity. They have made links with a sister school in the St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Multi-Academy Trust to enhance their work with and understanding of other cultures and traditions. Sacred Heart provides outreach support for the most vulnerable in the local community. All public areas clearly celebrate the Catholicity of the school. The mission statement is a visual reminder in all areas. There are banners celebrating the virtues of the school, with a virtue linked to each year group. The bishop's themes are displayed alongside paperchains created by the pupils to celebrate how they help each other. Pictures of the eco committee, along with the eco award, are in evidence alongside a social justice display. 'Happy lunchtime awards' celebrate the

promotion of good behaviour. Parents value the ethos of the school and several have converted to the Catholic faith as a result of their immersion in school life.

All stakeholders are passionate and committed to embedding Catholic life and mission. Leaders promote, monitor and evaluate the provision closely throughout the year. The creation of a Catholic life committee is an illustration of the school's investment in providing quality provision and a rich experience for its pupils. There are high standards and expectations: leaders, including governors, are striving to continually strengthen Catholic life. The development and progression of staff is prioritised. There is a strong link with parents who have a clear understanding of the school's mission. The strong leadership ensures that there is an accurate evaluation of Catholic life and mission at Sacred Heart. There is a commitment to supporting families, as illustrated through extensive support for home-schooled pupils during the Covid-19 lockdown period. The school works with outside agencies such as Cafod, the local foodbank, and recently-arrived refugees, providing clothing and welcoming them into the community. The parish priest plays an active part in the life of the school supporting Reconciliation and sacramental preparation. The religious education leader presents an update on Catholic life and mission, religious education and collective worship to the governing body at each meeting, as well as information about social justice work. As a result, local governors are well informed and have a clear view of the school.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade:.....

Pupil outcomes

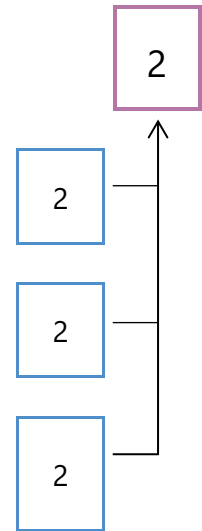
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education.....

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.....



Pupils at Sacred Heart begin school with limited religious knowledge. They make good progress as their understanding and skills develop. Pupils receive a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage; subsequently, they are able to build upon previous knowledge. Pupils achieve well at the end of each key stage, particularly at the end of Key Stage 2. There is evidence of both quality and quantity in pieces of work within workbooks. Pupils are confident speakers: they are articulate and use their knowledge, understanding and skills effectively; they are able to talk confidently about what they have learnt in lessons. Most pupils are aware of the demands of religious life. In the best lessons, discussions between teachers and pupils are rich, providing the opportunity to talk with peers allowing them to extend their conversation and discuss contributions. Pupils speak confidently as a result of their increasing religious vocabulary and understanding of scripture. They say that religious education is not as challenging as Mathematics and English, however most pupils are engaged in lessons. They understand the tasks set and are keen to challenge themselves to achieve their best outcome. Once a task is set, pupils show stamina and concentration. More able pupils produce extended pieces of work: they use the resources and sources well to improve their writing; they are proud of their work which is illustrated by clear and neat presentation. Pupils enjoy religious education, particularly when working with their peers.

Teachers are confident and knowledgeable. They understand the abilities of pupils in their classes and adapt the religious education lessons so that all pupils can participate and make good progress. Teachers use questioning effectively and regularly; they model good examples of answers; they use praise effectively; their regular verbal feedback allows pupils to understand the next steps to take. Lessons are well planned, have a clear focus and follow the 'Come and See' programme. The use of sentence starters and knowledge grids help to give pupils an initial written beginning upon which to build. Lessons link to hymns and the bishop's themes of encounter, discipleship and missionary discipleship. Resources are available to all classes and 'Chain REaction' displays support pupils by giving a bank of links to support their writing: this is particularly effective in upper Key Stage 2, but is carried out to a lesser degree in preceding year groups. Visualisers are used effectively in lessons to celebrate examples of good work, as

well as highlighting well written passages and modelling quality writing. The school is striving to embed the good work that has been introduced to ensure there is a consistent approach to the teaching of religious education. Staff are complimentary of the clear systems and structures put in place by the religious education leader.

The leadership team, alongside local governors, prioritises religious education and has ensured that there is a corporate system for planning. Learning objectives include progressive targets, allowing pupils to challenge themselves with emerging, expected and exceeding work. The quality of religious education matches the other core subjects. All new staff receive training through the diocese. Leaders ensure that teachers provide a variety of resources and incorporate art, role-play and 'scripture detective' work to engage and enthuse pupils. Monitoring is timetabled and governors are part of 'book looks' and the scrutiny of work activities. Moderation takes place within the school and external validation is sought through close links within the St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Multi-Academy Trust, as well as with the diocese.

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 are reverent and respond well to all the opportunities for prayer and worship, where they participate thoughtfully and joyfully. They live out their class virtues and recognise that they are children of God. They take part in reflection as well as traditional and spontaneous prayer. Pupils enjoy preparing and working as a team, creating liturgical prayer alongside their teachers. Pupils understand the Church's calendar and liturgical colours are correctly displayed in each year group. Pupils enjoy hymn practice and sing enthusiastically in whole school gatherings. Visio Divina and Lectio Divina have been introduced to the Sacred Heart community and the pupils participate with thoughtful reflection. Gradually, pupils are taking more ownership of delivery of this in some year groups. All classes are regular participants in liturgical prayer. In classrooms they plan using the cycle of 'gather, word, response and mission'. They look to live out their mission statement and evaluate liturgical prayers. Pupils work well with their peers preparing liturgical prayers, though adults frequently take the lead. The pupils also enjoy having a rosary club run by the headteacher. The chaplaincy team is active within classes, supporting other pupils and helping the parish priest to prepare for the celebration of Mass. Pupils are well informed about the bishop's themes and the 'Ordo'. The wider pupil body, from across the school, is well placed to build upon these embedded skills and experiences to lead prayer and liturgical prayer, and take increased ownership of this area.

Prayer punctuates the day and is a central part of the school's timetable. Prayer is linked to the liturgical calendar. Prayer and liturgy are established and well planned. There is a prayerful atmosphere throughout the school. Reflective music, the lighting of candles and the arrangement of focus prayer displays help to create spiritual engagement for all present. The school makes good use of classrooms and the main hall to create a conducive space in which to pray. Meditation is introduced in the early years which has benefitted provision and 'deepened the relationship of pupils with God'. Staff support pupils to prepare times of quality worship. Families are welcomed to participate in liturgical prayer. A dedicated room for prayer is planned to supplement the current good practice in place. Staff rightly recognise that pupils need to gain more creative independence when planning and leading liturgical prayer.

The school has a clear calendar for prayer and liturgy. Class gatherings happen weekly and half the school meet every fortnight to pray together. The school follows the liturgical calendar and there is a progression of skills for all pupils. Resourcing is prioritised so that artefacts and materials can enhance times of prayer and worship. Professional development opportunities are made available to staff by the pro-active religious education leader. Holy days of obligation are observed and parents are invited to be part of such celebrations. The school is now inviting the wider community back to school following the absence of this opportunity during the Covid-19 pandemic. Governors and leaders recognise the need to continue supporting staff with quality continual professional development. Senior leaders and the lead lay chaplain help to provide a range of fulfilling liturgical prayers. Resources are readily available, as is training for pupils to deliver and evaluate their work. Leaders and governors regularly review the quality of prayer and liturgy and, as a result, pupil voice is regularly sought. Self-evaluation is a strength and accurately identifies next steps for improvement.

Information about the school

Full name of school	Sacred Heart Catholic Voluntary Academy
School unique reference number (URN)	138294
Full postal address of the school	Beacon Road, Loughborough, Leicestershire, LE11 2BG
School phone number	01509 212204
Name of head teacher or principal	Lisa Atkins
Chair of governing board	Bernard Monaghan
School Website	sacredheart.leics.sch.uk
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	St Thomas Aquinas Catholic 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	13 November 2019
Previous denominational inspection grade	Requires Improvement

The inspection team

Gregory Hughes	Lead inspector
Patricia Chapman	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

