



DIOCESAN CANONICAL INSPECTION REPORT

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL, RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

St Charles' Catholic Voluntary Academy

Bosworth Road, Measham, Swadlincote, Derbyshire, DE12 7LQ

School URN:	146105
Inspection Date:	19 November 2018
Inspectors:	Mrs Ann King and Mrs Fionuala Boucher

Overall Effectiveness	Previous Inspection:	Good	2
	This Inspection:	Good	2
Catholic Life:		Outstanding	1
Religious Education:		Good	2
Collective Worship:		Outstanding	1

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

St Charles' Catholic Voluntary Academy is a good Catholic school.

- St Charles' Catholic Voluntary Academy is a Christ-centred place where all members of the community 'pray, love and learn together as one school family'. The Catholic ethos permeates through the school's positive relationships, policies and practices so that all are valued and supported, including those most in need. Parents are overwhelmingly positive and appreciative of all that the school does. Pupils are happy and settled, eager to share their thoughts and views about school life, saying, 'We are all like one big family! We come together and we pray together...everyone is kind to you'.
- The Catholic Life at St Charles' is outstanding. Pupils are immensely proud of their school, demonstrating exemplary behaviour at all times; they take full advantage of opportunities provided. The clear mission of the school is cherished by the committed staff team, ably supported by effective local governors. Highly successful strategies are in place to engage with and inform parents and carers about the Catholic Life of the school.
- Religious Education is good. Pupils are developing strong religious literacy and show engagement in lessons: a strength is their excellent behaviour for learning. Most teachers are secure and confident in their subject knowledge: they now need to encourage pupils to write at greater length in lessons. Leaders and local governors demonstrate an unwavering drive for high academic achievement: actions plans, monitoring activities and evaluation reports confirm this commitment.
- Collective Worship is outstanding. Pupils are enthusiastic about planning and leading liturgy. They convey a deep sense of respect for other faiths and are inspired by opportunities to deepen their understanding through focussed work and visits to places of worship. Staff are committed to helping pupils develop their skills: in order to further improve this aspect, they have embraced new and innovative styles of delivery, which need further embedding. Leaders and local governors are visible and inspiring models of outstanding practice.

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- St Charles' Catholic Voluntary Academy has been part of the St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Multi-Academy Trust within the Diocese of Nottingham since 1 September 2018.
- The school is smaller than average in size and serves the parishes of Our Lady of Lourdes, Ashby de la Zouch, and St Charles' Borromeo, Measham.
- There are 126 pupils on roll. 58% of pupils are baptised Catholics; 21% of pupils are from other Christian denominations; less than 1% of pupils have another world faith; 17% of pupils have no religious affiliation.
- The school population is mainly White British; 18% of children speak English as an additional language (this is slightly below the national average).
- 14% of pupils receive school support due to their special educational needs and/or disability. 2% of pupils have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) to cater for their specific additional needs (this is below the national average). No children are currently in the care of the local authority.
- 12% of pupils are in receipt of pupil premium funding, which supports pupils in overcoming barriers due to disadvantage (this is below the national average).
- A new headteacher has been appointed since the last diocesan canonical inspection; she joined the school in September 2014. A new chair of the local governing body was appointed in September 2018.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

■ Religious Education:

To improve the teaching of Religious Education to outstanding by:

- Increasing the consistency of the quality of teaching and learning across the school through sharing the best classroom practice;
- Ensuring that further attention is focussed on differentiating learning tasks to the needs of all groups of learners, in every class, including for the most able;
- Providing opportunities for pupils to write at length throughout the school so that by the end of Key Stage 2, pupils can regularly produce extended pieces of work.

■ Collective Worship:

To further develop and enrich the provision for Collective Worship by embedding the revised approaches gained from recent training undertaken at the Briars so that liturgy includes:

- A wider variety of methods and styles of prayer, including contemporary and spontaneous prayer;
- Increased movement and action during the delivery of planned worship.

CATHOLIC LIFE

THE QUALITY OF THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL	1
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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 governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for 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 – outstanding

- Pupils contribute immensely to the ethos of the school, observed in their conviction and respect for their school.
- Pupils are very keen to participate in the charity work undertaken by the pupils and staff. They opt to lead cake sales, hold tuck shops and sponsored events to raise funds enthusiastically for the Macmillan Trust and CAFOD.
- Pupils who visit the Briars develop personal skills and increase confidence in articulating their beliefs. They show a keen interest in using music and drama in their key stage liturgies.
- The chaplaincy team is very passionate and takes on its role with enthusiasm, wearing chaplaincy badges with pride.
- Pupils confirm that in the school, 'We are all one big family that pray together' and that 'we want to help the children learn more about Jesus'.
- Pupils regularly engage with the parish through their participation during weekday and weekend services and often lead in the parish Masses: three pupils have recently undertaken the role of altar server. They have a huge respect for their faith and this is evident in the openness to reconciliation.

The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school – outstanding

- The mission statement is clearly embedded across the school, clearly visible on policies, pupils' books and displays.
- The commitment of staff is evident as they are excellent role models. Many attend Mass at St Charles' and have taken on the role of catechist and other supportive roles. The parental questionnaire shows that 100% of parents agree that the staff of St Charles' care about their children and that the spiritual life of the children is well nurtured and developed.
- The Senior Leadership Team is ambitious and the pupils are challenged to be 'the best they can be'; they 'live and breathe' their faith. The Religious Education subject leader also attended the *Adoremus* Eucharistic Congress in Liverpool over two days and she was inspired by her encounter with Christ.
- The school environment is awash with displays that spread the Good News, including information about their class saints, Our Lady, prayers and mission statement. The vision and values of the school are proudly displayed, promising 'We will leave St Charles' with...' for example, '...Christ in our hearts', '...having achieved our best', '...showing care and love for all'.
- The school has adopted 'Journey in Love' as a scheme for Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and this is reflected in the RSE policy. Staff have benefitted from the training by Sister Dorothy and made a strong start to embed this throughout the school. Parents are encouraged to engage with the school in the teaching of RSE: this is evident in the completion of evaluation forms by parents following an information evening.

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school – outstanding

- The headteacher regularly communicates the Catholic ethos of the school through regular newsletters which include the 'Statements to live by' for the week and a weekly reflection including quotes and ideas from Pope Francis, Scripture and CAFOD.
- Local governors and the headteacher recognise the significance of continuing professional development: two members of staff have completed the Bishop's Certificate for Teachers course, Teachers New to Catholic Schools and various other opportunities offered by the diocese.
- The passion and enthusiasm of the Religious Education subject leader and associate governor is evident in the sustained work to continue in strengthening the links between the parish and school.
- Local governors participate in and organise their own annual retreat day where they are able to plan strategically for the future, reflect upon their roles and enter into a dedicated time of personal spiritual growth.
- The headteacher and local governors have formed a working party which actively monitors the Catholic Life and Collective Worship of the school. The introduction of a 'chant club' enables the pupils to learn how to respond in a Latin Mass and use Taizé-style singing to enhance times of prayer and reflection.
- The previous parish priest worked with the headteacher and local governors to improve the links with the parish. One initiative was to raise the profile of the headteacher within the parish: the headteacher regularly presents reports about the school at Mass which is well received by parishioners. The relatively new parish priest has introduced Benediction and meditation within the school in which the pupils respond enthusiastically and with a sense of awe and wonder.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION	2
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- How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education.
- How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.

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How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education – good

- Pupils evidently enjoy their lessons in Religious Education. They apply themselves conscientiously, from the youngest ages, and are keen to do well. Behaviour in lessons is exemplary, with no lost learning time.
- Pupils demonstrate increasing religious literacy: they have good subject knowledge, can use relevant, age-appropriate vocabulary in context and are reflective in their learning. Pupils speak and write thoughtfully in lessons.
- Pupils complete a good volume of work in lessons and sequences of lessons across the school. In order to reach an outstanding outcome, they now need to increase the length and quality of pieces of written work in order to better reflect their knowledge and understanding and reach higher levels of attainment and progress.
- Progress in Religious Education is good for most groups of learners, including those with additional needs. Further differentiation of tasks will help to secure and maximise the progress of all pupils. Leaders are rightly targeting more able pupils to ensure that an increased proportion reach a level of greater depth by the end of the school year.
- Pupils can make links between their work in lessons and their day-to-day lives, such as the link between promises made at Baptism and our own promises to God, our friends and families. Pupils are enthusiastic when learning about other faiths and recognise that 'it is good to know how other people live their lives' and that, when thinking about world faiths, 'we all believe in God!'

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education – good

- The majority of teaching is good with lessons planned well to accommodate the needs of each cohort. Teaching Assistants enhance provision and are highly visible in lessons, ably supporting individual and groups of children.
- Where teaching is of the highest quality, teachers are confident to pause the lesson in order to direct learners, address any misconceptions and check pupils' understanding. This results in pupils making better progress in lessons and over time.
- Collaborative working is a strong feature of Religious Education lessons at St Charles'. Pupils apply themselves well to these learning opportunities and benefit from paired and group working in oral and written tasks.
- Teachers use success criteria and agreed marking systems to support pupils in improving their work. This results in some success; by ensuring that pupils have opportunities to write at greater length more frequently, progress and attainment can be optimised.
- Good questioning techniques are used to challenge and probe in class discussions. Pupils are encouraged to think deeply, reflect and wonder in order to develop their theological thinking.
- School data over the last two years shows that Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 end of year outcomes are at least in line with, or above, diocesan averages. In-year assessment and tracking has been developed; staff use the end of year expectation documents to ensure that their assessment is in line with diocesan guidelines.

The extent to which leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education – outstanding

- Leaders and local governors ensure that the curriculum for Religious Education meets fully the requirements of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.
- The headteacher's and subject leader's skills and knowledge are such that they are able to quality assure the accuracy of the data and the quality of teaching and learning in Religious Education across the school.
- Improvement for the monitoring and evaluation of classroom practice in Religious Education was a target from the last diocesan inspection. This has been achieved through the introduction of a full monitoring system, involving local governors, and more effective continuing professional development for staff. This has had a positive impact on data, which has strengthened under this new system.
- The subject leader for Religious Education is passionate and committed; she has an inspiring vision for the school to reach outstanding standards in teaching and learning. Committed to her own professional development, she attends relevant training days and disseminates her learning as part of her leadership role, positively influencing colleagues. As an associate governor, she effectively presents data and relevant reports to the local governing body.
- Leaders and local governors are cautious in their self-assessment of their impact on Religious Education. They are well placed to further develop Religious Education in the school to work towards an outstanding outcome.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP	1
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- How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship.
- The quality of provision for the Collective Worship.
- How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship.

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How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship – outstanding

- Pupils demonstrate a genuine enthusiasm for Collective Worship. They regularly prepare and lead worship within school, showing confidence and competence in planning and delivery.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of the Church's liturgical year and are able to articulate their reasons for making choices when preparing resources for times of prayer.
- The chaplaincy team is eager to be fully involved in Collective Worship, particularly in support of younger pupils. For example, they choose to lead prayers in the playground at the end of their lunchbreak. They say, 'There are 12 of us – just like the 12 disciples!'
- Pupils' overwhelming interest in visiting places of worship from other faith traditions is impressive. From discussion and workbooks, there is clear evidence of the impact of this opportunity in the pupils' appreciation of other faiths and their ability to identify similarities and differences with their own spirituality.
- Pupils take their learning from Collective Worship into the playground and into aspects of their lives. For example, relationships are strong and positive throughout the day as pupils draw on the example of Jesus in how treat others. One of the youngest children said, 'That glue has finished, so we are sharing this one'. This ethos is reinforced by the regularly shared 'Statements to live by'.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship – good

- The prayer life of the school is well established. Collective Worship has a purpose, message and clear direction.
- The resources and atmosphere created by committed staff enables Collective Worship to be high profile within the school community. All members speak positively about and highly value times of gathering for prayer and worship, seeing these as key times in the school day, week and year.
- Collective Worship plans now need to incorporate a wider range of experiences in delivery in order to ensure a breadth of prayer and a variety of methods and styles. The school is in a strong position to address this and has identified the resources to enhance provision.
- Relevant staff have a good understanding of the purpose of Collective Worship. They have a strong commitment to improve this aspect and further develop their skills to support pupil-led liturgy.
- The school's cycle of Collective Worship is well thought-out so that different groups and ages of pupils can deliver and participate in worship and prayer. The integration of different year groups creates a positive and distinctive dimension, widening opportunities for shared experiences.

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship – outstanding

- Leaders and local governors are visible role models in Collective Worship and are unrelenting in their drive for continual improvement. Local governor visit reports demonstrate a regular and focused commitment to this area of school life.
- There is a wealth of experience and expertise within the leadership and local governing body teams. Collective Worship has therefore improved since the last inspection due to the careful monitoring and evaluation undertaken by leaders and local governors.
- The clergy has been instrumental in promoting quality Collective Worship within the school. Leaders and local governors recognise the positive influence of their priests on pupils' experiences and engagement in worship. The sacramental programme in the parish is very well supported by school leaders.
- Pupils are encouraged by leaders and local governors to take part in the evaluation process for Collective Worship. They make written comments regarding liturgy and worship experiences, influencing the direction and choices made.
- Leaders and local governors have prioritised staff training for Collective Worship. Staff have accessed high quality sessions with both the Nottingham Catholic Diocesan Youth Service and the Diocesan Education Service in order to promote new approaches to worship and spirituality.

SCHOOL DETAILS

School Name	St Charles' Catholic Voluntary Academy
Unique Reference Number	146105
CMAT	St Thomas Aquinas CMAT

The inspection of this school was carried out on behalf of the Bishop of Nottingham under Canon 806 of Canon Law in accordance with the *Evaluation Schedule (September 2018)* for diocesan canonical inspections in the Diocese of Nottingham. 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 5 Religious Education lessons and 2 Acts of Collective Worship.

Meetings were held with the headteacher, the subject leader for Religious Education, the chair and vice-chair of the local governing body, a parent governor and two parish priests. Discussions were also held with pupils and parents.

The inspectors scrutinised a range of documents including reports of the local governing body, action plans, the school development plan, monitoring forms, assessment information and parental response forms. Inspectors also examined the work in pupils' Religious Education books.

Chair of Governors:	Mr Nigel Pearce
Headteacher:	Mrs Ruth Elmore
Date of Previous School Inspection:	15 January 2014
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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, and there are aspects that require improvement. There will be a monitoring visit within the next 18 months and the school will be re-inspected within 3 years.
Grade 4	Inadequate	There are features in need of urgent and immediate attention. The school is not meeting the basic minimum requirement for adequacy as a Catholic school. The school will receive an annual monitoring visit and will be re-inspected within 3 years.