



DIOCESAN CANONICAL INSPECTION REPORT

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

St Clare's Primary School, A Catholic Voluntary Academy

Convent Drive, Coalville, Leicestershire, LE67 3SF

School URN:	138296
Inspection Date:	16 May 2022
Inspectors:	Mr G Hughes and Mrs P Tonge

Overall Effectiveness	Previous Inspection:	Requires Improvement	3
	This Inspection:	Good	2
Catholic Life:		Good	2
Religious Education:		Good	2
Collective Worship:		Good	2

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

St Clare's Catholic Voluntary Academy is a good Catholic school.

- St Clare's is a welcoming school in the heart of the community. Its mission statement '*Learning through Faith*' reflects the strong Catholic ethos and Gospel values held dear. Families appreciate the pastoral support given to the needs of all pupils. Staff are seen as 'kind, approachable and helpful'.
- The teaching and learning of Religious Education at St Clare's are good. Most pupils, relative to their age, become increasingly religiously literate and engaged. The leadership team and governors are strong, determined and focused. Lessons are well-prepared; teachers use the '*Come and See*' programme to build upon previous learning, which supports the progress of all pupils.
- St Clare's is a good Catholic school. Catholic Life permeates the school. The headteacher and the subject leader for Religious Education are both driven and passionate Catholic leaders. All staff are welcoming; parents feel supported and valued. Strong relationships are evident between teachers and pupils.
- Collective Worship at St Clare's is good. Acts of Worship are central to the school day. Pupils are led by an effective chaplaincy team. Staff take on diocesan initiatives and are keen to adapt and develop the engagement in and promotion of this area of the school's mission. Parents and stakeholders are invited to celebrate Collective Worship in both the school and the parish.

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- St Clare's is an average sized, one-form entry primary school. It is part of the St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Multi-Academy Trust. The school serves the parish of St Wilfrid, Coalville, in Leicestershire.
- There are currently 198 pupils on roll. 46% are baptised Catholics; 27% belong to other Christian faiths; 8% identify with other world faiths; 19% have no religious affiliation.
- 11% of the school population have SEND (special educational needs and/or a disability) and this is below the national average
- 18% of pupils are in receipt of additional pupil premium funding, which is additional government funding that schools receive to support those known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority. This is slightly above figures for the national average.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

■ Catholic Life:

- Establish a new mission statement, considering the views of all stakeholders, namely: pupils, parents, teachers, staff and governors.
- Continue to re-establish school and parental links with the parish.

■ Religious Education:

- Continue to use the expertise in the St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Multi-Academy Trust to support the journey of progress, through shared expertise and moderation of work, to further improve outcomes.
- Ensure that all pupils understand how to improve their work using driver words and a 'scripture detectives' approach in order to reach the next level of challenge.
- Provide a wider variety of tasks including drama and art to increase enjoyment in Religious Education.
- Continue to encourage opportunities for pupils to access and use a range of resources to promote independent learning and research.

■ Collective Worship:

Ensure that the knowledge and the ability to deliver Collective Worship with confidence and competence by the chaplaincy team is passed onto the rest of the pupils by:

- Providing more opportunities for more pupils to lead, prepare and evaluate liturgies.
- Ensuring greater ownership for pupils leading prayer and worship, without adult support, so that this is embedded by the end of Key Stage 2.

CATHOLIC LIFE

THE QUALITY OF THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL	2
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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 – good

- St Clare's whole-school environment clearly demonstrates the Catholic ethos and mission. Pupils follow the mission statement, 'Learning through faith,' and develop socially, spiritually and morally. Pupils from all faiths live and work in harmony. The school is in the process of renewing the mission statement with the views of the pupils being taken into account.
- The welcoming reception area contains displays of Pope Francis, Bishop Patrick, the Synod and the school's patron, St Clare. A designated area for spontaneous prayer sits alongside a prayer tree that was designed and is maintained by the chaplaincy team. These, along with the liturgical year's wheel and the Bishop's themes of *Encounter*, *Discipleship* and *Missionary Discipleship*, all serve as a constant reminder for the pupils of the mission of the school and their place within it.
- Good behaviour is promoted throughout the school and pupils have an understanding of high expectations. As a result, pupils are polite and well-mannered. Pupils say that they have lots of friends. They say, 'the school helps us to be better people; we learn about the Word and follow in the footsteps of Jesus'. Pupils feel safe and well-supported by teachers who have clear rules and ensure good pastoral care.
- The Catholic ethos of the school is evident through the support of vulnerable groups and those less fortunate. The school is supportive of disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils and can offer a family liaison officer, together with access to the Catholic hardship fund. A wide range of local and worldwide charities are supported, including the local foodbank, parish charity appeals, the local care home, LOROS hospice care and Macmillan. The school has fundraised and collected items for a Ukrainian appeal and completed a sponsored walk for CAFOD.
- The pupils participate in the Catholic Life of the school. They benefit from parish links and make regular visits to the Church, attending termly Masses led by the parish priest. They work closely with the Nottingham Diocesan Catholic Youth Service and attend The Briars residential centre each year. The chaplaincy team are a driving force in the school. They lead whole school Collective Worship, support their peers in prayer and regularly update the trust's chaplaincy blog with their thoughts and reflections.

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

- St Clare's school prioritises the provision of Catholic Life. It is very much part of the local community, working alongside the parish of St Wilfrid and the St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Multi-Academy Trust. Parents feel valued and included in the life of the school.
- On entry to the school, the learning environment is welcoming. Staff have invested in good quality artefacts and resources which enhance scripture, contemporary and traditional prayer and promote the school's Catholic character.
- Prayer underpins the school day. The school family clearly values the importance of prayer and reflection, which is evidenced by the formation of a spontaneous prayer area at the entrance of the school; a new prayer garden is now being developed. Meditation and Lectio Divina are regularly timetabled.
- The school has good pastoral care and has embraced the new 'Relationships and Sex Education' expectations. This is taught alongside the 'Ten:Ten' scheme, 'Life to the Full,' and the 'Come and See' programme, which reflect Catholic teachings and principles.
- St Clare's staff are committed to the improvement in the quality of curriculum provision. They have accessed and participated in a wide range of continuing professional development. They are good role-models of mutual respect and forgiveness for pupils.
- The mission statement '*Learning through Faith*' greets all visitors and stakeholders on entry to the school. The school has used social media effectively to promote and celebrate the many aspects of its Catholic Life.

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

- The headteacher, Religious Education leader and governors work together as a close team. They strive to promote a strong Catholic ethos promoting Catholic Life, attending diocesan training and seeking support from the trust's lay chaplains. External advice has been sought from the school improvement headteacher, director of performance and standards and the diocesan adviser for Religious Education and Catholic Life. This advice has driven improvements and identified areas for development.
- Social media platforms have enabled parents and staff to continue regular contact and support the Catholic Life of the school. The school has used a private *YouTube* channel to share virtual liturgies. School celebrations and important religious events are captured in the school's *twitter feed* and '*True Spirit*' blog. Parents have a clear understanding of what is happening in school and feel part of the celebrations.
- Governors take their responsibilities seriously. Regular contact with the school through the pandemic has ensured that Catholic Life has continued to develop in line with the Bishop's directives. The governors are proud to be part of the community: they make a good contribution to the school's mission.
- Regular monitoring is in place with 'book looks', pupil progress meetings and learning walks informing progress. Monitoring and evaluation schedules are timetabled and pupil voice is sought to continually assess and improve outcomes.
- Stakeholders take part in surveys reviewing the school's current mission statement. Parents and pupils have answered a series of questions about their individual understanding of the school's mission, which has led to a refreshed vision which is ready to be launched and implemented.

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 enter St Clare's from a very low starting point. The school has a number of pupils from vulnerable backgrounds. On entry to Reception, pupils receive a high level of support from teachers and teaching assistants. Almost all pupils from their varied starting points make steady progress through Key Stage 1 into Key Stage 2. Standards of attainment are improving towards being in line with diocesan averages at both key stages.
- Pupil's enthusiasm for Religious Education lessons is varied. In the most successful lessons, pupils behave and concentrate well. They show an interest in their work, are actively involved in their learning and are keen to discuss and answer questions. The school needs to continue to encourage opportunities for pupils to access and use a range of resources to promote independent learning and research. Surveys need to capture the views of all pupils, rather than a limited group, in order to gain a clear reflection of whole-school opinion concerning this subject.
- The use of 'driver words', 'the big question' and 'scripture detective' activities help to give structure to learning. Further development of this, and an understanding of how driver words support outcomes, is now needed.
- Pupils receive praise for excellent work and are included in a Masterpiece Gallery, receiving a headteacher award. The quality of presentation and content has improved to a good standard overall. This now needs to be built upon and maintained. Outcomes are now close to diocesan levels.
- Behaviour for learning is evident throughout the school. Pupils are, on the whole, attentive to their teachers and respond enthusiastically. They are respectful of one another in partner and group work and are comfortable in sharing their ideas. Teaching assistants enhance pupils' understanding and engagement in activities, enabling full access to the curriculum. Pupils enjoy opportunities to use drama and art in their lessons.

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

- The quality of teaching and learning is good and senior leaders have worked hard to secure better outcomes. The 'Come and See' programme is used throughout the school with a range of different teaching strategies being deployed. Where teaching is strong, lessons have pace and focused learning objectives, enabling pupils to have a clear understanding of expected learning outcomes.
- Driver words enable pupils to understand next steps for improvement. This practice now needs to be embedded throughout the whole school to ensure consistency. There is a whole-school approach to feedback and marking; pupils are given the opportunity to respond, which improves their understanding of where and how they need to improve.
- Teachers new to the school are well supported and show growing confidence in their subject expertise; they are keen to develop good practice. Subject knowledge for all staff is improving. Appropriate professional development is provided through in-house training and diocesan support.
- Assessment of teaching highlights real strengths in the Reception and upper Key Stage 2. This expertise should be used to model consistent and high-quality teaching throughout the school, to further raise standards and improve outcomes.
- Assessed tasks are completed termly and records of whole class attainment are tracked along with next steps for improvement. It would be helpful if assessed pieces of work in books include the accompanying assessment record, so that pupils can refer to their next steps. Currently, teachers provide feedback but it is not always clear to pupils how to improve.

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

- The headteacher and Religious Education subject leader ensure that the provision of this curriculum subject meets the Bishops' Conference requirements. Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), including use of the 'Ten:Ten' programme, is timetabled effectively.
- Monitoring of the school's data is carried out within the school by the headteacher and subject leader and discussed with all staff at termly pupil progress meetings. Pupil progress meetings are structured and rigorous to ensure the embedding of sharp analysis. External moderation within the St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Multi-Academy Trust and the diocese supports accuracy of levelling.
- The Religious Education governor is pro-active in monitoring provision in the school. She has undertaken training at diocesan level so that she can offer the best support. A cycle of improvement is overseen by the governing body and has ensured that the previous inspection's areas for improvement have all been addressed successfully.
- Leaders seek the thoughts of pupils; parents are keen to give and receive regular responses, both verbally and in questionnaire form. The majority of responses are positive and leaders need to continue to be proactive in dealing with any perceived issues. The school needs to maximise the number of responses from stakeholders to ensure that every voice is captured and a response given where necessary.
- There is drive and determination to continue to progress and maintain the current level of expertise and focus in Religious Education. As staff have changed, leaders have ensured that training has been accessed and support has been in place. The leadership team prioritise Religious Education in pupil progress meetings. Together with the external monitoring from the St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Multi-Academy Trust, St Clare's is in a strong position to ensure that the high expectations of the school are met and that continued progress occurs.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP	2
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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 – good

- Collective Worship is an integral part of school life. The school community works closely with the parish priest in preparation for whole-school and class Masses. Pupils increasingly respond positively to class and whole school liturgies. All classes are timetabled, on a regular basis, to participate in acts of worship throughout the week. The chaplaincy team is embedded; it plays a central part in evaluating and setting targets.
- Most pupils act with reverence and are keen to participate in Collective Worship. They show a good level of enthusiasm and reverence, which is reflected in their communal singing, prayerful silence and participation. However, pupils need to have a greater degree of independence. The chance to lead and prepare liturgies and have greater ownership, without adult support, particularly in Key Stage 2, now needs to be embedded.
- In the words of the lead lay chaplain, the school has been on a tremendous journey since the last inspection. Meditation and Lectio Divina have been successfully introduced and allow the pupils time to pray, reflect and consider the power of scripture. Pupils are beginning to lead these areas of Collective Worship. Their knowledge of key bible passages is beginning to increase, which should support their contribution towards discussion and their writing in their Religious Education lessons.
- The school has made good use of the 'Let us pray 2gether' materials, providing structure to class and whole school liturgies. In Key Stage 2, appropriate artefacts are chosen for the central prayer focus, Scripture responses are appropriate and there is evidence of traditional and spontaneous prayer during times of worship.
- Most pupils have a good understanding of the liturgical year, its seasons and feasts. The experience of living and working in a faithful, praying community has a positive impact on the spiritual and moral development of many pupils, irrespective of ability or faith background.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship – good

- Collective Worship at St Clare's has a purpose, message and direction; Collective Worship folders and prayer areas demonstrate an understanding of the liturgical seasons and the Catholic character of the school.
- Staff show clear understanding and knowledge of the Church's liturgical year. As a result, pupils have a good understanding of the Church's seasons. The school works closely with the trust's lead lay chaplain and together they are committed to promoting and developing high quality worship.
- Leaders promote the planning and leading of Collective Worship; there are good staff role-models throughout the school. The parish priest provides specific support and advice in school, as well as leading liturgical celebrations.
- The addition of the Lectio Divina and meditation have added an extra spiritual dimension to the pupils weekly Collective Worship. Staff and pupils participate with reverence and there is a palpable sense of reflection and prayer.
- Parents are welcome to participate in the various liturgies provided by the school. They appreciate the preparation and opportunity to pray and celebrate alongside the pupils and teachers.

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

- Leaders at St Clare's have worked hard to promote, plan and deliver quality Collective Worship. This is evaluated by parents, staff, governors and pupils to continue to develop pupils' confidence, enthusiasm and independence.
- Leaders place a high priority on the professional development of staff. They have engaged well with diocesan training and have ensured that new staff members are fully inducted. This has resulted in a consistent approach to the planning of Collective Worship and the introduction of Lectio Divina and meditation.
- Staff are able to model well-prepared, high-quality liturgies. Evidence from senior leaders' assessments, together with discussions with pupils, indicate that there is scope for increased opportunities for pupils to plan and evaluate with still greater independence and responsibility.
- There is a range of evidence to support the monitoring and evaluation of Collective Worship through planning and monitoring folders, interviews, feedback from Collective Worship and class planning templates.
- Governors' feedback promotes amendments and improvements. Governors are actively involved in the evaluation of Collective Worship and have a clear timetable of planned monitoring throughout the year.

SCHOOL DETAILS

School Name	St Clare's Catholic Voluntary Academy
Unique Reference Number	138296
CMAT	St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Multi-Academy Trust

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* 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 6 Religious Education lessons and 4 Acts of Collective Worship.

Meetings were held with the headteacher, the subject leader for Religious Education, the trust's lead lay chaplain, the trust's CEO, the directors of performance and standards, the school improvement headteacher and a governor. Discussions were also held with pupils and parents.

The inspectors scrutinised a range of documents including reports of the 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 Kevin McHugh
Headteacher:	Mrs Judy Beer
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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.