



# Archdiocese of Birmingham

## INSPECTION REPORT

### TRINITY CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Guy's Cliffe Avenue, Leamington Spa, CV32 6NB

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Inspection dates	15 <sup>th</sup> -16 <sup>th</sup> October 2014
Reporting Inspector	Paul Nutt
Assisting Inspector	Mary Keelan

Inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

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Type of School	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	11-18 years
Number on roll	839
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governors	Mrs Juliet Dove
School address	Guy's Cliffe Avenue Leamington Spa CV32 6NB
Telephone number	01926 428416
E-mail address	trinityschooloffice@welearn365.com
Date of previous inspection	November 2009
DFE School number	937/4752
Unique Reference Number	125756
<b>Headteacher</b>	<b>Mr Chris Gabbett</b>
Previous inspection:	3
This inspection:	2

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DIOCESAN EDUCATION SERVICE



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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Diocesan Inspectors. The focus of the inspection was on the effectiveness and use of the school's self evaluation of Catholic life and religious education (RE). To validate the school's self-evaluation of teaching and learning, the inspectors observed 5 whole and 2 part RE lessons, each with a member of the leadership team. In addition the inspectors attended part of a Year 6 Confirmation Preparation Day offered in the school for primary partners, and the end-of-day Mass, completed a work scrutiny, and held discussions with the School Council to evaluate the impact of teaching and extra-curricular opportunities on their learning over time. They held meetings with the principal and his deputy, the chair of governors and RE link governor, the 2 parish priests and school's lay chaplain. They joined 2 registration groups and 2 year assemblies. They looked at a range of evidence related to the school's self evaluation such as RAISEonline, the post-Ofsted development plan, whole-school, faculty and departmental planning, and teachers' planning.

## Information about the school

Trinity Catholic School is an average-sized Catholic secondary school within the parish of St Mary, Warwick, though with significant numbers of children coming by bus from 12 primary schools beyond Leamington Spa. The proportion of baptised Catholic pupils is currently 44.82%. The pupils are mainly of White British heritage with 10% from ethnic minority households. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is 8.46% and those having special needs 19.43%. Attainment on entry is close to the national average.

## Main Finding

In its self-evaluation Trinity judges itself to be a good Catholic school in all aspects of its work. This judgement is accurate in most areas, though the inspection team found that some aspects of provision, within lessons and collective worship, require improvement at this time. The school has not fully implemented the recommendations of the previous Section 48 inspection, with too few opportunities for, and regular monitoring and evaluation of, collective worship. However, since the appointment of the current principal in 2012, a new leadership structure has been introduced and a faculty system implemented. A strong senior leadership team is now in place, all sharing a clear understanding of the detailed plans and timescales for sustained and quickening improvement. Management will need to maintain support and professional development for the recently-appointed lead teacher of RE. Governors know the school well and provide support and good oversight, though greater rigour and challenge would better support the school's progress. The priests and lay chaplain provide significant support for Catholic life and wider pastoral involvement, trying to overcome the logistical difficulties for whole-school collective worship. Pupils speak with real enthusiasm about the school. There is an extensive evidence base for the quality and value of Catholic life. The internal judgements of teaching over time are secure, though assessment for learning and marking procedures require greater consistency and focus to ensure accurate challenge for all pupils. The principal has begun a programme of outreach work with local primary schools and the wider community which is beginning to bear fruit.

## School Self Evaluation

The school's self-evaluation that it is good in all its work cannot be fully validated, as there are some areas where the judgement is too generous. However, the inspectors can confirm the overall judgement, having been able to identify significant strengths and improvements. Most important amongst these are the leadership of the principal and the

revised leadership structure he has introduced since his own appointment in 2012. The faculty system is already impacting on the quality of teaching and learning, and outcomes for pupils. The leadership team is composed of strong senior staff, working within a faculty system. Each member is empowered with clear areas of responsibility, sharing an understanding of, and commitment to, a collective vision for the future. The Faculty Principal for Humanities is supporting the recently-appointed lead teacher for RE to undertake wider responsibilities and effective departmental leadership. The work of school chaplains, both clerical and lay, lends positive support in developing and enriching Catholic life and involving increasing numbers of pupils. This work is given valuable support by the recently-appointed director of liturgy and music, who planned and delivered a primary school preparation day and Mass, delivered by Father Stefan. The school's liturgy group contributed greatly to the quality of the day's events, music, scripture and liturgy. Governors work well to promote the range and quality of opportunities offered by the school, especially in the area of Catholic life, but they could offer greater challenge to leadership with a better informed analysis and understanding of data, enabling them better to articulate the quality of teaching and learning and certain processes, for example induction and ongoing professional development for classroom staff.

The school's self-evaluation document was rather too imprecise and offered little focused evidence in line with the framework. It would be helpful if governors oversaw more closely the development and impact of documentation. However, it was possible to confirm judgements of progress and attainment from the evidence available in school. The Faculty Principal of Humanities, incorporating RE, provided processes and outcomes for monitoring and evaluating pupils' progress, formally updated three times a year and reported to parents. Together with records of lesson observations and learning walks by senior staff, these demonstrate a secure basis for ongoing improvement. They contribute to the cycle for effective and relevant improvement planning, reflected in whole school and departmental development planning and identification of targets for performance management, which all links to the termly programme of staff inset.

Outcomes at Key Stage 4 are good overall and account for the increase seen in take-up for AS Level Philosophy and Ethics over the last two years. However, only small numbers of students study Religious Studies post-16, and results, especially A\*-B, have been below expectations for the last 2 years. The department should look at ways of securing better outcomes at the C/D boundary in GCSE, which would be helped by moving from the present total reliance on FFTD, while developing more refined monitoring and evaluation data internally across the school. Baseline outcomes on entry indicate a sound starting point, but outcomes across Key Stage 3, relying as they do on comparisons with foundation subjects rather than English, create the real possibility of underachievement. From its improved internal procedures, the school is aware of the need to address disparities in Key Stage 3, which include closing the gap for SEND and pupil premium children. Despite the student assessment grids, too many pupils are unclear about how to improve and make progress. The consistent use of formative assessment, especially in Key Stage 3, and the setting of more demanding, aspirational targets in each key stage, would help the drive towards raising attainment. There is clear capacity to deliver these improvements, as indicated in the faculty leadership. Teaching is for the most part well planned, with a good range of learning opportunities. Internal judgements during observations can be confirmed. The subject leader for RE, a recent internal appointment, would benefit from further targeted professional development. A curriculum review for Key Stage 4, where the WJEC GCSE is currently offered, would be valuable, as it impacts on the way in which the Catholic life of the school is nurtured.

The Catholic life of the school has improved since the last inspection. Spiritual life is strongly led by the principal and Faculty Principal, who has implemented the Catholic

curriculum and DOVE awards to celebrate the gifts of the Holy Spirit and Marist values. Monitoring and evaluation of PSHE and vocational education are secure, under the leadership of the designated Faculty Principal for Curriculum and Vocations, with a framework in place for further improvement. Catholic life is further enriched by the work of the director of music and liturgy, supporting a range of liturgical events and the school's outreach work, and the lay chaplain, who engages increasing numbers of pupils through a targeted programme of activities. There is effective collaboration with the clerical chaplain, as seen in the work of the chaplaincy group and in the celebration of Mass during the Confirmation Preparation Day for primary schools. The students speak highly of the school, feel safe and enjoy the opportunities offered. Many would commit to wider involvement in extra-curricular activities, and the emerging opportunities, through the chaplaincy team, CAFOD group and Pax Christi for example, which will continue to enrich Catholic life. There is still a need to emphasise and celebrate the uniqueness of the Catholic Faith more explicitly, both during lessons and around the school, where there are too few displays and dedicated areas. Attention is being paid to the environment, for example the production of crucifixes by students in the CDT department, and quotations from scripture in certain key areas of the building. It would be of much wider benefit to celebrate all internal good practice overtly, connecting very effectively with the engagement of staff, the powerful programme of termly inset, and the work in science to ensure that lesson content utilises all opportunities to engage with the Catholic curriculum. There are continuing concerns about the quality of collective worship and the prayer life of the school. There are no spaces within school for whole-school liturgy; a voluntary Mass and opportunity for reconciliation are offered monthly, and the clergy confirm that this is a pleasure and celebration is good. However, the year assemblies and registration sessions observed lacked spirituality, engagement and prayer. Students confirmed that they did not always say prayers, as was seen in Sixth Form assembly, and prayer elsewhere was poor and not participatory. Staff training and modelling good practice would begin to address this, together with embedding prayerful experiences into school life, beginning with RE lessons.

### **Overall effectiveness of the school<sup>1</sup>**

Trinity Catholic School provides a good Catholic education. Provision for students post -16, presented in the school's self-evaluation, indicates that numbers of students opting for AS Religious Studies, and continuing to A2, have increased, with 100% pass rate at both levels. The school also provides the Extended Project Qualification for all students, and has recently introduced the John Paul II Award, which affords opportunities to engage with and develop values of social justice and stewardship within the community. The school identifies, as an area for development, the need for more robust strategies to identify underperformance and appropriate interventions. Attainment at GCSE is 100%, with the number achieving A\*-C grades equalling the diocesan average. Teacher predictions for SEN pupils are accurate; the school is aware of the need to close the gap for FSME students. Progress in Key Stage 3 is good, especially in the light of pupils' levels on entry. Most groups of pupils make at least good progress, are keen to do well, and standards of attainment are above average in all strands of each attainment target. Teaching is mainly good, some outstanding and none inadequate, with the majority enabling pupils to make good progress. Teachers generally have good subject knowledge, inspiring and challenging most pupils and contributing to their good progress. Lessons, stored centrally, use a variety of teaching methods and technology, and contain mini-plenaries to enable pupils to monitor their own progress. Good assessment procedures ensure accurate planning to meet the needs of all pupils. Pupils are keen to learn, concentrate well, enjoy their work and achieve to a good standard. They feel safe and valued. The RE curriculum provides good opportunities for spiritual and moral development and vocational

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<sup>1</sup> As the quality of the school self evaluation has been affirmed, the judgements in this section of the report conform largely to those of the school.

understanding. Extra-curricular opportunities are varied, have a high take-up and are much enjoyed.

The Catholic life of the school is good. The school's buildings and environment are maintained to a good standard, with good quality displays which reflect the school's Catholic nature. The school encourages an inclusive and welcoming approach to all liturgical celebrations. Students are encouraged to live out their faith, ideally beyond the classroom and in the school and wider community. The school's motto, "Equal by Means of God's Image", revisited annually with staff and children, informs wider school and community policy. Pupils take on responsibilities and participate constructively in the Catholic life of the school. They are reflective and enquiring, and understand the importance of key celebrations throughout the liturgical year. Students are given fortnightly periods of reflection, and very good communication exists at all levels within school. The work of the chaplaincy team is developing and seeking to include increasing numbers of pupils, as is the Pax Christi movement. Students lead form prayer and take assemblies. To support a deeper understanding of liturgy, the PSHE session before key liturgical events is used to prepare all students for their engagement with the liturgy. Pupils respond well to, and participate in, collective worship. The school provides a range of liturgies that are inclusive. The student chaplaincy team evaluate these and propose ideas for subject collective worship opportunities. A range of pupils lead the music in liturgies across key stages. Students recently voted on house saints and there is a Mass to celebrate the life of each saint which the pupils prepare and participate in. During October and May student-led Rosary reflections are held. Form prayers are part of the students' daily routine and assemblies are both student and staff led. Staff review and plan improvements to the school's provision of collective worship. Themes are consistent with the Catholic character of the school and responsive to the religious diversity among pupils.

Leadership and management are strong in the school. The principal provides very good leadership and support for all areas of the Catholic life, and the widening of the senior leadership team structure has increased the number of practising Catholics and Christian senior leaders. This has led to improvement in the quality of monitoring and evaluation of Catholicity. The lay chaplain takes responsibility for collective worship and is the main contributor to spiritual life. Weekly meetings are held at management level, to include heads of year, review Catholic life within the pastoral structure and collective worship. Plans have been put in place to support their role as spiritual guides in assemblies and tutoring for individual students. Leaders, governors and managers demonstrate a commitment to the Church's mission in education, with spiritual and moral development a priority; they conduct a range of systematic monitoring activities relating to provision and outcomes.

### **Recommendations**

- Religious education should be reviewed so as to:
  - a. meet in full the requirements of the Bishops' Conference
  - b. consolidate the new SLT/staffing structure and enable more rigorous monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning.
- Improve the processes for monitoring the Catholic life of the school with particular focus on collective worship and opportunities for a variety of prayerful experiences



Diocesan Education Service,  
Don Bosco House,  
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Coleshill,  
B46 3EA

October 2014

Dear Parents and Carers

**Section 48 (Diocesan) Inspection of Trinity Catholic School, October 2014**

I am writing this letter to share with you the findings of the diocesan inspection of your children's school. Diocesan inspection now explores in detail the school's own view of itself as expressed in its self-evaluation. For this reason, much of the report is more technical than used to be the case. You are still entitled to have a copy of the full report should you want one and it will be available on the school website or by request from the school office.

Trinity is a school with many strong features, including a good Catholic ethos giving positive support to the spiritual development of the pupils. Through a caring pastoral system, collaboration from the chaplaincy team, clerical and lay, and very good relationships, they are supported in their spiritual, moral and vocational development and encouraged to question and express themselves with confidence. The school is a positive Catholic community which embraces all as valued individuals and offers an increasing number of opportunities for the pupils to make a positive contribution to its life and work. The principal and those who have responsibilities for Catholic life and religious education demonstrate a clear vision and the capacity for significant further improvements. There are areas which stand in need of improvement: collective worship does not wholly meet diocesan requirements and evaluation of Catholic life needs to be strengthened.

Teaching and learning in RE are good and pupils' achievement at GCSE is at diocesan levels. RE is benefitting from developing collaboration with Music and Liturgy which have also begun to enhance the quality of provision and opportunities for collective worship. Pupils and Sixth Form students enjoy their lessons and speak with enthusiasm of their life in school and the opportunities it provides.

We have recommended that the school should strengthen its assessment procedures to ensure that all pupils are able to achieve their full potential, and look closely for enhanced opportunities for prayerful experiences.

It was a pleasure to spend time in your school and see how much your children enjoy the opportunities it offers. We were made really welcome by everyone, and were very impressed by the collaborative ethos and mutual support that ensure that all the children live happy and enjoyable lives.

Yours sincerely

Paul Nutt  
Diocesan Inspector