

St Peter and St Paul Catholic Voluntary Academy

URN: 139623

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Nottingham

26–27 June 2024

Summary of key findings

Overall effectiveness

The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school

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

Religious education (p.5)

The quality of curriculum religious education

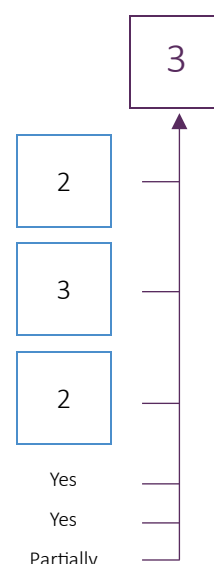
Collective worship (p.7)

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

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



What the school does well

- The Catholicity of the school is central and is inspired by the passion of the headteacher.
- The centrality of Catholic Social Teaching is evident in the caring community of the school, and in conversations with teachers and students. All staff are committed to the mission of the school. They express this most strongly in their care for all students and their families, and for each other.
- School leaders are committed to the value of religious education and ensure that it has parity with other core subjects.
- The school uses the neighbouring parish church exceptionally well and the headteacher and parish priest enjoy a very effective working relationship.
- Provision of prayer spaces and resources, such as the Living Word website, ensure that prayer is accessible to all and at the heart of the community.

What the school needs to improve

- Increase the skills of middle leaders to share leadership in Catholic Life and Mission so that the school confidently offers a culture of welcome embracing all students, including those from other faith traditions and none.
- Consistently use questioning in religious education lessons to check understanding and adapt explanations, responding appropriately to individual needs.
- Implement formal processes for evaluation of prayer and liturgy to ensure that all students experience the same quality of delivery.

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

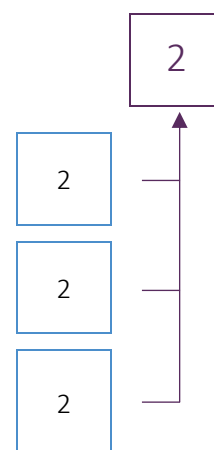
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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



All students at St Peter and St Paul's recognise the school's Catholic identity, and readily share the mission statement. They relate 'living life to the full' to their own lives, understanding that it refers to human flourishing and making the most of opportunities that are offered. This is a strong message for young people. Many students refer to principles of Catholic Social Teaching, including human dignity, option for the poor, care for creation and subsidiarity. As a result, many students, particularly in Advent and Lent, reach out to others (for example, through the foodbank and Cafod Big Lent Walk). Some take an organising role through membership of the chaplaincy team. A student commented that helping the foodbank improves people's dignity and reminds everyone that, 'it is okay to ask for help'. While most students feel respected and cared for, some do not appreciate the strength of the Catholic identity of the school. This reflects the stage of the school's journey to embed Catholic life and mission. Sixth form students particularly comment on the sense of community that comes from being in a small school. The inspection took place during the school's Diversity week. Students strongly value opportunities to share diverse cultures. The choir, comprising around 80 students, is a joyful example of inclusivity. However, some students of other faiths do not feel that the general culture of welcome considers how their own faith needs may be met.

Staff greatly value ongoing professional development which explains the importance of Catholic life and mission. They embrace the mission as the catalyst for service and recognise that it has strengthened the school community. It provides the reason for actions which are already being undertaken. This significant and positive stage in the school's journey has been driven by the headteacher. Staff provide the highest levels of pastoral care and go the extra mile to care for students. The school abundantly expresses its Catholic character in classrooms, corridors and the school grounds. This is achieved collaboratively. The student artwork which enhances the new chapel, is an outstanding expression of this. Despite the current lack of a lay chaplain, substantial provision is made for the spiritual and moral development of students and staff,

including weekly reflection for students on how to apply Catholic Social Teaching to their own circumstances. This is provided through the Living Word website.

The headteacher's determination to raise the profile of Catholic life and mission is recognised by the Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi-Academy Trust, governors, staff, parents, parish priest and students. The impact of this can be seen in the central position of Catholic Social Teaching: in form time structures, in pastoral care and outreach, and in professional development devoted to creating curriculum maps. The proximity of the church to the school enables parish links to be strong. There is a very effective working relationship between the headteacher and parish priest. Students visit the church daily for prayer. They also support parish life by taking part in the parish fair and providing refreshments after joint Masses. Governors have a clear vision and understanding of strengths, opportunities and obstacles for the school and have extremely effective processes in place to both support and challenge the leadership team. Leaders know the next steps needed to embed recent improvements. There are issues of capacity which are outside the school's control. However, thanks to the actions taken so far, many teachers express a willingness to share responsibility for the future. Leaders' commitment to the wellbeing of staff is strongly evidenced in the staff survey.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

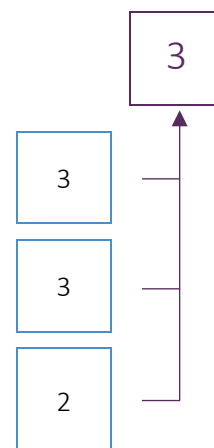
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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



Many students enjoy religious education lessons, which is evident in the warm relationships they have with their teachers. Most students are aware of key concepts in the areas they have studied and can use subject specific vocabulary very well. Some Key Stage 4 students speak confidently about what they have learned and how they can make further progress. This is not the case for students in lower years. Particularly in Key Stage 3, students demonstrate a limited understanding of how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. Scrutiny of work shows that target sheets in books are not always completed. Where students are given the time to work independently, they are willing to do so and where they understand the task, they respond well. Provision of such opportunities is inconsistent. Written work in books is of inconsistent quality. Some of it is unfinished, or feedback is inadequately responded to. Misunderstandings are not always corrected. As a result, students, including the disadvantaged and those with special educational needs, do not always achieve average attainment compared with national and core subject data.

Teachers are competent in their subject knowledge and committed to the value of religious education. Their relationships with students are good and pupil effort is celebrated verbally, and with merits and awards. There is a brisk start to lessons, effectively using mini whiteboards to assess prior learning. However, pace is not consistently maintained, so some students do not develop the required knowledge, understanding and skills. Where there is extended teacher talk, many students become passive and make little progress. Where teachers question well and set timed independent tasks, students are challenged, engage more and learn more. This is not consistent across lessons. Questions and explanations are not always adapted to the needs of learners and teachers do not always check that their explanations have been understood. At times, teachers do not challenge minimal effort from students and are insufficiently aspirational for student outcomes. A variety of resources are used in lessons. At times, there is so much detail included in lesson plans that the main learning objectives are lost. Planning is not always linked to students' current assessment.

Scrutiny of documents indicates that significant time and effort by leaders has been spent on planning and sequencing the curriculum in line with the *Religious Education Directory*, so that resources are available to develop knowledge, skills and understanding for students. Departmental and link meeting minutes show there is planning for pupil progress and to meet the needs of different groups of students. The impact of this planning is not always evident in the classroom. At times, leaders' empathy for the challenges faced by some students can lead to low academic aspirations for them. The head of department takes opportunities to meet with other faculty leads in the diocese and is supported by the Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi-Academy Trust. This ensures that she keeps abreast of requirements and developments in curriculum and pedagogy. Professional development opportunities are available as part of a whole-school focus on behaviour and pedagogy. As a result, behaviour in the classroom is generally appropriate and initiatives to engage students early in the lesson are evident. Resourcing for religious education is comparable with other core subjects. As a result, the value of religious education has been enhanced and students are beginning to recognise this. Leaders, including governors, ensure that students' learning is consolidated through enrichment activities, such as events for Holocaust Memorial Day, attending FLAME, using Cafod resources in Lent and visiting the church and Cathedral to consider the impact of art in religion.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade

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

2

All students are very clear about how and when prayer takes place. Regularity and structure ensure that students understand its centrality to the life of the school. Every form celebrates prayer every morning, in either the classroom, assembly hall or church. There is prayer at the end of the day, and regular celebration of Mass according to the liturgical season. Some students understand this brings the community together and provides a calm space. Prayer is varied, including formal prayers such as the Our Father and Hail Mary, and meditation. The choir is passionate in its praise of God. Members regularly contribute to liturgy, including at school Masses. It is a model of diversity and integration, recently rehearsing gospel music for the school's celebration of Mass on its patrons' day. Excellent form prayer resources are read to the class by students. The quality of delivery is variable, so not all students are fully engaged by it. They are encouraged to respond by preparing their form group celebration of the word. Still in the embedding stage, some students are passive in their participation, while others readily undertake liturgical ministries. Student evaluation of liturgy is not formalised. However, all students show respect during prayer and liturgy. Students of other faiths are respected and included. They do not have to actively participate where this is contrary to their own belief. This inclusivity is appreciated.

Prayer is central. The innovative use of the Living Word website ensures that its delivery is accessible to all teachers. A member of staff commented that the website has, 'transformed the prayer life of the school'. The richness of Catholic tradition and seasonally appropriate scripture are provided systematically, allowing staff to build their skills and supporting the less confident. The format facilitates quiet reflection and discussion of meaning and relevance. Linked with the diocesan 'word of the week' and a principle of Catholic Social Teaching, it ensures that the school is linked with the diocese and that Catholic Social Teaching is at the centre. The new chapel is an outstanding example of harnessing the creative and artistic skills of staff and students. A collaboration between different departments, it places spiritual space in the heart of the school.

The headteacher has a deep understanding of the requirements for prayer and its potential impact. She has led staff training to create confidence in delivery. With the deputy headteacher and a small cohort of other teachers, she has modelled good practice. Recognising time limitations, partially due to the temporary gap in chaplaincy personnel, she commissioned the Living Word website which is an innovative response to a practical situation and demonstrates her tenacity in ensuring provision of meaningful prayer. Designed by the director of chaplaincy and the lead lay chaplains of the Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi-Academy Trust, it provides a means for the headteacher to monitor weekly responses to reflective activities. Thus, prayer is monitored to an extent which is manageable in the current circumstances. However, evaluation of actual classroom practice is ad hoc, so variation of class delivery cannot be monitored. Leaders, including governors, have planned the school calendar and work closely with the parish priest so that school Masses take place at all appropriate times in the year, including holy days of obligation. The parish priest confirms that the Sacrament of Reconciliation is made available in Advent and Lent. The tenacity of leaders and governors in ensuring the centrality and consistency of prayer and liturgy in this school is outstanding.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Peter and St Paul Catholic Voluntary Academy
School unique reference number (URN)	139623
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	9255421
Full postal address of the school	St Peter and St Paul Catholic Voluntary Academy, Western Avenue, Lincoln, LN6 7SX
School phone number	01522 871400
Headteacher	Caroline Hewerdine
Chair of Local Governing Body	Richard Mellows
School Website	http://www.sspp.lincs.sch.uk
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Our Lady Of Lourdes Catholic Multi-Academy Trust
Phase	Secondary
Type of school	Academy
Admissions policy	Non-selective
Age-range of pupils	11-18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	25 April 2016
Previous denominational inspection grade	Good

The inspection team

Catherine Danaher	Lead
Marie Mulcrow	Team
Sarah Lockyer	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