



DIOCESAN CANONICAL INSPECTION REPORT

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

Our Lady of Lincoln Catholic Voluntary Academy

Laughton Way, Lincoln, LN2 2HE

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| School URN: | 139622 |
| Inspection Date: | 19 March 2018 |
| Inspectors: | Mrs Kate Mann and Mr Anthony Harrison |

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

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

Our Lady of Lincoln Catholic Voluntary Academy is a good Catholic school.

- The quality of Catholic life is outstanding because it is central to the life of the school and is rooted throughout the school community. The vast majority of pupils are eager to promote the Catholic identity of the school. This is under-pinned by a relentless desire by leaders to deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding of the divine. The school is a supportive and joyful community.
- Pupils make strong progress in Religious Education across the school from their low starting points. They develop a range of skills and acquire relevant knowledge. This academic progress is rooted in a body of staff who care for their pupils by establishing a safe and stimulating learning environment which parents value. One parent of a family who have just moved into the area said; 'We have heard so much goodness about the school; the teachers are all so loving and so caring here'.
- Collective Worship is a strength of the school, it is central to the life of the school and is embedded in pupils' daily routines. Pupils have a growing ownership of Collective Worship across the school; praying together is part of daily experiences. Relevant staff have an excellent understanding of the Church's liturgical heritage. They are passionate about ensuring that pupils have high quality experiences of Church life.
- Pupils are rightly proud to be members of Our Lady of Lincoln Catholic Academy. The school's Catholicity is led by a subject leader and headteacher who are passionate and wholly committed to promoting and maintaining high standards; together they have a clear vision for the school as they continue to lead members of staff and the school community forwards.

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- Our Lady of Lincoln is a smaller than average sized primary school with 206 pupils on roll.
- The school is situated on the outskirts of the City of Lincoln to the north and serves the parish of Our Lady of Lincoln, as well as the northern area of St Hugh of Lincoln with St Francis, Bardney.
- The school is part of the St Gilbert of Sempringham Catholic Academy Trust.
- 33% of pupils on roll are baptised Catholic, 23% are from other Christian faith backgrounds, 25% are from other faith backgrounds and 19% have no religious affiliation.
- 33% of pupils are in receipt of pupil premium funding and 16% are on the SEND (special educational needs and/or a disability) register, 3 of whom are in receipt of an EHCP (education, health care plan).
- The governing body is in transition with an acting chair in place from the beginning of this academic year, supported by the parish priest and the long standing vice chair of governors.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- Raise standards in Religious Education further by:
 - Providing feedback to ensure the learning process is more effective and opportunities to extend pupils' knowledge, understanding and deeper thought are utilised within lessons.
 - Further engaging pupils with a creative approach to Religious Education where there is minimal use of worksheets as a method of recording –especially in Key Stage 1.
- Develop pupils' response to Collective Worship by:
 - For all pupils to develop such engagement which leads to inspired and deep reflection during worship, so that a palpable enthusiasm exists for all.
- Ensure the effectiveness of school evaluation by:
 - Leaders being more succinct and concise in their school evaluation so that it is well understood and is sufficiently fine-tuned to provide a firm basis for self-evaluation judgements.
 - Governors ensuring that they are aware of the any weaknesses as well as strengths and monitoring the impact of senior leaders' actions on improvement.
- Share the strengths of the school, especially the provision for Catholic Life.

CATHOLIC LIFE

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| 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 managers 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

- The quality of the Catholic Life at Our Lady of Lincoln is outstanding. Almost all pupils are at the centre of shaping the school for the future and contribute to the promotion and celebration of the Catholic Life, taking an active role in planning improvements to it. Across the school and in classes, there are teams of pupils with ranging responsibilities related to organisational duties, pastoral roles and teams of pupils who aim to provide spiritual guidance and friendship to others.
- Pupils feel they have a central role in setting the agenda for the future development of the school as an inclusive Catholic community, as they are able to demonstrate that they take part in gathering feedback from other pupils on a wide range of issues relating to its ethos and values.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of the mission of the school and it is evident that this is part of their daily experience. They have a deep awareness of the needs of others and are actively involved in fundraising locally, nationally and at a global level. Pupils told inspectors that they are doing God's work here on earth when deciding to send cards to people in prison, supporting the work of cancer charities and raising funds for CAFOD.
- Pupils regularly and enthusiastically get involved with diocesan and parish/school celebrations and activities due to the strong links developed by the subject leader for Religious Education and headteacher.
- Pupils feel valued and have a deep sense of belonging to the school community and work hard to promote the school's ethos in a very positive way both in and outside the school. The chaplaincy team are role models who take on their duties with diligence and care, they help others with worries in school as well as plan Collective Worship taking on board ideas that they have seen after visiting other schools.
- The Relationship and Sex Education programme (RSE) runs all through school from Foundation Stage to Year 6 and refers explicitly to Catholic social teaching and principles. As a result, pupils are well prepared for their next stage of learning; whether moving class, key stage, or on to secondary education.

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

- The school's mission statement is a good expression of the educational mission of the Church: 'On our road to success, Jesus is beside us'. There is a tangible sense of a school working together under the strong leadership of the headteacher and subject leader for Religious Education.
- Pupils thrive in an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect and see adults as role models for their continuing development. The strong faith base of the school's ethos enables this normally joyful community to also be supportive at difficult times. This was very evident in the way the community came together to support one another as they mourned the loss of a well-loved member of staff.
- Behaviour of almost all pupils is exemplary. Parents from the local community consciously send their children to the school as there is never any bullying. Pupils concur with this, telling inspectors that problems just get sorted by pupils and teachers; nobody ever shouts.
- School policies are rooted in Gospel values, for example, the school's behaviour policy clearly indicates the school's ethos of reconciliation. The grounding of all policies in Gospel values is made explicit by specific reference to the Gospel in the introduction and guiding rationale.
- Pupils thrive as a result of the excellent pastoral care provided. They develop into confident young people with the ability to praise one another, forgive and make amends when things go wrong.
- The headteacher understands developing the Catholic Life of the school as her core responsibility and this is reflected in the systematic self-evaluation which includes key partners. This has led to year on year improvements in provision.

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

- School leaders are deeply committed to the Church's mission. The headteacher and subject leader for Religious Education are well regarded by the whole community and inspire others with their energy, drive and commitment to make Our Lady of Lincoln the best Catholic school it can be.
- The provision for the Catholic Life of the school is given the highest priority in the school development plan. Senior leaders monitor the Catholic Life of the school but the evaluation of this monitoring, although accurate, is not always sufficiently succinct and analytical.
- Effective mentoring systems geared to a wide range of pupil needs and characteristics are in place; staff give their time generously for the benefit of pupils. The subject leader for Religious Education said: 'All the extra hours and time given for the good of the pupils is done in the service of God'.
- Parents' views are sought regularly and are acted upon. The senior leadership team has devised creative ways to ensure that families are able to comment on and evaluate the Catholic Life of the school. This work was reinforced on the day of inspection when a grandparent said: 'Although we are not Catholic, the school helps us to build a relationship with God'.
- Governors are well informed. They are focused on Catholic Life and are actively involved in specific school priorities that develop its ethos and values.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

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| 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 managers 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 securely good and some elements were judged to be outstanding. Pupils across school benefit from worship opportunities which are rich, varied and well planned. They demonstrate a good understanding of the liturgical year for their age group.
- Pupils are confident and capable of leading thoughtful whole school liturgies such as the Lenten Remembering led by Year 6 pupils who had been creative and resourceful in their planning and delivery, using relevant scripture readings and a range of resources; including appropriate prayer focus, music and use of digital resources to good effect.
- The impact of pupil-led liturgy and worship is good, with pupils throughout school largely acting with reverence and showing that they are keen to participate. They are able to reflect in silence and join in readily and confidently with community prayers. All pupils in school enjoy praising God through singing traditional and contemporary hymns, pupils voiced this as a key strength of the school.
- Pupils of all ages benefit from a variety of approaches to prayer involving scripture, religious artefacts, traditional prayer and liturgical music. In a Year 1 liturgy, inspectors were impressed by the opportunity for calm and reflection in the presence of God. The chaplaincy team expressed that they would welcome more of these types of prayer opportunities and would welcome the chance for meditation and quieter times for peace and reflection.
- The chaplaincy team spoke enthusiastically about their experiences of visiting a local mosque. Pupils throughout the school demonstrated that they acted with understanding and appreciation of other world faiths. To further embed this all children would benefit from opportunities to visit places of worship from other religions and look to ways in celebrating similarities and differences in approaches to Collective Worship.
- To further develop pupils' responses to Collective Worship, they would benefit from an out-going mission (at the end of the Act of Worship) which is clearer and matched to their age, so that the impact of the Collective Worship is apparent and measurable.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship – good

- Collective Worship is centred on the pupils and is planned on clear themes and messages. Senior leaders work hard to welcome parents and carers – inviting them to attend liturgies, Masses and celebrations. All parents and carers spoken to by inspectors said that they value the welcome which they receive.
- Throughout the school, displays on chosen liturgical and biblical themes are engaging and promote the Catholic character of the school. Each class has a prayer corner to encourage the pupils' interest, reflection and spiritual growth. Prayer focuses are well resourced with pupils able to use artefacts appropriately to enhance their liturgical experiences.
- Throughout the inspection, pupils were able to speak positively about the opportunities to undertake worship and its impact on their lives. A room is designated for prayer and reflection which is utilised well by both children and adults across the school community. Pupils take great pride in managing this space and promoting its importance for their own personal spiritual journey.
- The school day is punctuated with prayer, at the start and end of the day and before meal times. Governor and staff meetings open with a prayer. Staff from all faith backgrounds value the support they receive from the priests in the parish in developing their understanding of the prayer traditions of the Church.
- Senior leaders work hard to train members of staff in the purpose of Collective Worship, and this work is beginning to show impact. Greater emphasis now needs to be put on ensuring all pupils are able to participate in ways that help them to express their thoughts and feelings more freely through discussion, hymns and prayers.

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

- The headteacher, senior leadership team and subject leader for Religious Education are inspirational in delivering high quality Collective Worship. All members of staff have benefitted from the expertise of diocesan personnel as well as training from the diocese and work across the Multi-Academy Trust.
- Members of staff are open to advice to continually improve their practice which impacts positively on pupils' learning. The results of training from the school's leadership are now enabling new ideas to become embedded to improve and enhance provision for Collective Worship.
- Leaders of the school, including members of the governing body, correctly identified the need to improve Collective Worship through the training of staff and pupils and this has been carried out on an ongoing needs led basis; they have an accurate picture of what to do next to make further developments and this now needs to form part of the school's self-evaluation document.

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- The high priority is given to monitoring and evaluating Collective Worship by pupils, this is evidenced by a wealth of photographic materials, questionnaires and coordination reports. However, these evidence sources would more effectively support the school's self-evaluation if a more selective approach was adopted.
- The headteacher, governors, the subject leader for Religious Education and the supporting priest are highly visible leaders of Collective Worship in the school.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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| THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION | 2 |
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| • How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education. | 2 |
| • The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education. | 2 |
| • How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education. | 1 |

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

- Pupils enjoy Religious Education lessons, they show a commitment and a deep engagement in the lessons; displaying a desire to share their knowledge, understanding and deepen their thinking.
- Behaviour throughout the school and during lessons is a strength thus enabling high production of work and progress being made for the majority of learners. Pupils show a high level of respect to members of staff and to each other which is nurtured by the wider community including the parish priest.
- Assessment information presented for Religious Education shows that pupils arrive at Our Lady of Lincoln below age-related expectations for Religious Education and make good progress so that by the end of Key Stage 2, pupil attainment is in line with or exceeds diocesan averages. However, a higher level of challenge is needed for higher attaining learners.
- The presentation of pupils’ work, especially in Key Stage 2 is a strength. In Key Stage 2 there is ample opportunity for pupils to write at length, displaying knowledge and applying a range of age appropriate skills. In Key Stage 1, however, the reduction of worksheets would allow further opportunities for writing and a more creative approach to the presentation of ideas.
- Pupils are able to talk about their work and share considered viewpoints on their learning. Continue to develop teachers’ skills in providing incisive feedback, in accordance with the school’s marking and assessment policy, so that pupils are aware of their next steps and how they can improve their learning.

The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education – good

- The teaching observed was at least good and some elements were judged to be outstanding. Pupil progress in lessons was particularly strong where inspectors saw high level questioning, good pace, high levels of engagement, good use of teaching support and rapid progress for all groups of learners. This exemplary practice now needs to be disseminated across the school.
- Teachers demonstrate a secure level of knowledge and understanding for Religious Education and the Come and See programme has been clearly embedded into practice. The subject leader, who is highly effective in her role, is supporting staff well with their acquisition of subject knowledge and teaching of the Religious Education curriculum.
- Across the school, there is an ethos of celebration of achievement and effort. This is clearly seen within books where teachers regularly comment upon pupils' successes in learning and what objectives they have secured.
- There are clear systems in place for the planning and delivery of Religious Education. Within Key Stage 2, booklets were produced for pupils which were detailed and informative. However, at times this led to a rigidity of teaching and did not enable opportunities to adapt teaching and learning to the needs of individuals and groups of learners.
- Teachers' assessment is accurate; teachers are able to plan effectively for the next stage of pupils' learning. The use of *driver words* in lessons was evident throughout, therefore ensuring that expectations were appropriate for the groups of children being taught.

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

- It is strongly evident that Religious Education is a core subject throughout the school. The school fulfils the episcopal requirement to devote 10% of curriculum time to Religious Education.
- The subject leader for Religious Education and senior leadership team have robust systems in place for monitoring and evaluating the subject area. They can clearly define and assess the strengths of the teaching team and act to address any weaknesses, supporting teachers as required.
- A programme for professional development to further develop the good teaching has been put into place. Leaders now need to ensure that good practice is embedded and to consider the careful deployment of staff to maximize their impact on pupil outcomes.
- Religious Education is always addressed in the school improvement plan and resources allocated reflect the important role it plays in the curriculum. Pupils have access to quality resources, including text, artefacts and religious sources.
- Leaders have worked hard to develop and forge relationships with the wider community. Recent visits to the local mosque and continued visits to the parish church have enriched the children's spiritual understanding and promoted their learning and engagement of the subject area. Pupils benefit greatly from the active involvement of the supporting priest.
- Governors ensure that Religious Education is afforded the highest priority and are able to identify a number of key strengths. However, in order to ensure the school makes further improvements it is important that governors are astutely aware of the weaknesses and how they monitor the impact of senior leaders' actions on improvement.

SCHOOL DETAILS

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| School Name | Our Lady of Lincoln Catholic Voluntary Academy |
| Unique Reference Number | 139622 |
| Local Authority | Lincoln |

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 2 Acts of Collective Worship.

Meetings were held with the headteacher, the subject leader for Religious Education, two governors and the parish priest. 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.

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| Chair of Governors: | Fr Simon Gillespie |
| Headteacher: | Mrs Ann Desforges |
| Date of Previous School Inspection: | 14 March 2013 |
| Telephone Number: | 01522 527 500 |
| Email Address: | ann.desforges@ourladylincoln.lincs.sch.uk |

WHAT INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS MEAN

Within the report, the following grades are used:

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| 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:

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| 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 12 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. |

In addition to the information above, if any one aspect of the evaluation schedule is found to 'require improvement', the school will receive a monitoring visit within one year of the publication of the report.