



DIOCESAN CANONICAL INSPECTION REPORT

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

St Clare's Catholic Voluntary Academy

Convent Drive, Coalville, Leicestershire, LE67 3SF

School URN:	138296
Inspection Date:	19 November 2018
Inspectors:	Mr Gregory Hughes and Mr Anthony Harrison

Overall Effectiveness	Previous Inspection:	Good	2
	This Inspection:	Requires Improvement	3
Catholic Life:		Outstanding	1
Religious Education:		Requires Improvement	3
Collective Worship:		Good	2

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

St Clare's Catholic Voluntary Academy is a Catholic school that requires improvement.

- St Clare's is a Catholic school where faith is at the centre of all that is done. The community is a focal point. Under challenging circumstances, the school plays a central role in the life of the parish. The headteacher is passionate about creating an inclusive and welcoming environment.
- The Catholic Life of the school is outstanding. 'Learning through faith' is St Clare's mission statement that is lived out by all stakeholders. Relationships are strong and modelled by adults to enable pupils to become independent in their actions to overcome challenges in their lives and in service to others.
- The teaching and learning of Religious Education requires improvement. Pupils are not producing consistently high quality and quantity of work in line with diocesan guidelines. Over time, there have been noticeable gaps in the written outcomes of pupils in both key stages. Assessed work, although accurate, is not replicated in pupils' books.
- Collective Worship is good. The school has worked hard to implement the high expectations of the diocese. Pupils are increasingly taking ownership of worship and are confident in a variety of ways. Participation from the Foundation Stage to the end of Key Stage 2 is reverential and respectful.

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 Wilfred's Coalville, Leicestershire.
- There are currently 184 pupils on roll. 61% are baptised Catholic; 17% belong to other Christian faiths; 3% identify with other world faiths and 20% have no religious affiliation.
- 11% of the school population has SEND (special educational needs and/or a disability) and this is below the national average.
- 15% of the pupils on roll are in receipt of additional pupil premium funding (the pupil premium 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 the national average.
- The school is a coaching school and a centre for excellence for 'Talk for Learning'.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

■ Catholic Life:

- The current chaplaincy provision is effective in supporting and promoting the Catholic Life. This now needs to be become embedded and cascaded to the whole school so that all pupils share the mission.
- As part of the new St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Multi-Academy Trust, the role of the lay chaplain needs to be established and then developed in order to further strengthen the work of the school.

■ Religious Education:

- Ensure that the quantity of work in pupils' books is in line with diocesan expectations.
- Ensure that the quality of work produced by pupils in their assessed pieces of work is replicated in pupils' work books on a day to day level consistently throughout the school.
- Following monitoring activities; leaders and local governors need to hold teachers to account to ensure that gaps correctly identified in pupils' books are acted upon swiftly.

■ Collective Worship:

- Raise the pupil ownership further in both class and whole-school liturgies so that all pupils are participating and evaluating in Collective Worship.
- Develop pupils' monitoring of Collective Worship so that there is increased confidence in preparing and leading worship independently.
- Improve leadership and governance to ensure that action points identified in monitoring are acted upon so that provision matches the ability of all pupils.

CATHOLIC LIFE

THE QUALITY OF THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL	1
--	---

- 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.

1
1
1

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school – outstanding

- St Clare's is a caring and inclusive Catholic school. The school motto, 'Learning through Faith' is at the centre of the school's actions. Pupils play an active role in the day to day life and mission of the school.
- Pupils from St Clare's are proud to be members of the school community; they speak highly of the actions they take throughout the year in promoting Catholic Life. The pupils support local and global charities. Money is raised for Mary's Meals, a charity which provides a meal for children in a place of education, as well as Macmillan Cancer, Children in Need and CAFOD.
- Pupil relationships are extremely strong throughout the school. Pupils spoke about their involvement in choosing and awarding their peers with the 'star of the day' and the 'mission award'. Their pride in celebrating each other's self-worth is clearly evident.
- Behaviour is a strength of the school. Pupils explained that they live out Gospel values and are able to resolve disputes between themselves. They can articulate what restorative justice is and have a clear understanding of seeking and giving forgiveness.
- Pupils are respectful of each other and different faiths. They feel personally supported and regard themselves as important members of the school community. Through the teaching of Christian values, British values are understood and respected.

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

- The leadership and management of the school through the drive of the headteacher and supported wholeheartedly by the local governing body, is deeply committed to the Church's mission in education. Together with the teaching staff, they are highly ambitious for the Catholic Life of the school.
- 'Statements to live by' are clearly displayed in all classes supporting pupils' social, emotional and moral awareness.
- Parents and pupils alike value living and working within the school community. Parents praised the work of the school and appreciate the love, care and support they receive in times of need. Regardless of their beliefs, families of various backgrounds participate in school celebrations.
- The *Come and See* programme of study for Religious Education is used throughout the school. This is supplemented by 'R-Time' resources for PHSE (personal, health and social education). The RSE (Relationships and Sex Education) programme has been discussed in partnership with parents. *Journey in Love* is effectively taught throughout both key stages together with diocesan material.
- The school's behaviour policy is adhered to closely. The written policy reflects the core Catholic values of forgiveness and reconciliation. Pupils feel safe, and as one pupil said: 'Jesus is in our hearts', is a clear indication of the school living out its mission to follow their faith. Initiatives such as 'star of the day' focus on the celebration of each individual pupil.
- The mission statement: 'Learning develops independent thinking children, through exciting challenges, expecting success with faith at the centre of all we do', reflects the welcoming environment which greets visitors and all stakeholders at St Clare's. Pupils speak with confidence and pride about their school.

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

- The school mission statement is clearly linked to the educational mission of the Church. The headteacher is passionate about the promotion of good relationships with all stakeholders. Monitoring is ongoing and cyclical. Leaders and staff seek to support the wider community.
- The welcoming learning environment clearly promotes the school's Catholic character. Pupils are proud of their school and are eager to be part of future developments.
- At the start of each academic year, leaders have implemented staff liturgy and training. They have ensured that the continued professional development has been aligned to diocesan events and the Bishop's directives for the year such as: 'The heart which sees' and 'Encounter' with in-house training being linked to the liturgical year.
- In the absence of the regular parish priest due to ill health, leaders and local governors have responded proactively to ensure that the celebrations within the liturgical year have been fulfilled. They have taken the responsibility to maintain and promote the Catholic Life of the wider community by making the school a focal point reaching out to the parish.

continued

- The school has significant examples of deploying successful strategies for engaging with parents and carers to the benefit of pupils. One parent told inspectors that the school had gone beyond expectations when supporting during a very difficult time. Several parents said that the love and care shown by the school was always a great help.

- Local governors are actively involved in the school. The newly appointed governors have set up regular discussions with the headteacher and subject leader about Religious Education. The local governing body has the capacity to accurately monitor and challenge the necessary changes identified in the school development plan.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION	3
------------------------------------	----------

- 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.

3
3
3

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

- Pupils show a keen interest in Religious Education. They are ready to work and show good listening skills. Lessons rely heavily on ‘talk for learning’. From the Foundation Stage, pupils are encouraged to talk to their partner. Discussions are used extensively in Key Stages 1 and 2. However, in some classes, this gives little time to engage in other forms of activity and learning and results in some pupils not making the progress that they are capable of.
- The quality of pupil work in terms of output and coverage requires improvement. The quantity of extended pieces of work in Religious Education needs to be in line with diocesan expectations and pupils need the opportunity to be able to write at greater length, capturing their rich conversation and discussion.
- Behaviour for learning is good. Pupils are respectful of each other and listen intently to each other’s thoughts and opinions. They are increasingly articulate as they progress through the school. Pupils are given time to reflect and, in some classes, are exposed to a rich religious vocabulary.
- Pupils enter St Clare’s from a low starting point. Over time, pupil assessment data has been variable and there is evidence of inadequate progress. Taking into account their low baseline starting point, standards of attainment in Religious Education are not in line with diocesan averages at Key Stage 1. Key Stage 2 outcomes are in line with diocesan averages. Pupils produce a higher level of achievement in assessed pieces of work than they do in their books over time. The level of challenge set for pupils on a day to day basis needs to match their ability levels seen in their assessed pieces of work. This needs to be consistent throughout each topic and must challenge pupils to continue to strive for further improvement.
- Pupils enjoy learning about other faiths and are respectful of other beliefs. Learning environments are engaging and diocesan initiatives such as the use of driver words, key lesson words and the use of the big questions are evident and support pupils.
- Pupils in some classes are unsure of their current level of attainment and how to achieve their next step targets. There needs to be a greater school consistency with all teachers explaining to pupils how to improve their current level of achievement and what their next steps in learning are.

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

- The quality of teaching is varied. In the early years, adults model activities and expectations well. Key thoughts and questions are targeted appropriately. Theological discussion and teacher subject knowledge is clearly evident in some classes. This expertise needs to be shared and modelled to support the improvement of teaching throughout both key stages.
- Teachers' specialist knowledge and expertise varies throughout the school. Systems to check pupils' understanding and to provide them with demanding expectations regarding the improvement of their work need to be more consistent.
- The *Come and See* programme is being used throughout the school but learning tasks need to allow time for the prescribed diocesan expectations to be met and for the full programme of study to be followed.
- Teachers allow a significant amount of time for in depth dialogue between pupils in class discussions but opportunities for pupils to record their responses and to engage in a range of other activities need to be developed.
- Marking and constructive feedback need to be developed to ensure that pupils know how to improve their work. Time also needs to be afforded so that pupils can respond to teacher questioning.
- Assessment of pupils' work in Religious Education is accurate and is captured on a regular basis. The school now needs to ensure that the levels achieved by pupils in assessments are then matched in their day to day work. Pupils need to be challenged with work that matches their ability throughout all lessons so that their progress can be maximised.

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

- The headteacher, together with the subject leader for Religious Education and senior leadership team have accurately identified the areas for development in their monitoring activities. Evaluation in the school's self-evaluation document needs to match the internal findings. For example, gaps identified in coverage need to be addressed and there needs to be a process used to hold teachers to account rigorously when expectations are not being followed.
- The senior leadership team has provided support for staff. Systems are in place to check and monitor both coverage of the Religious Education scheme of work and pupils' output. Expectations are shared and feedback is given. However, these now need to be followed up to ensure that advice is taken on board and that it occurs. With imminent staff changes pending, the leadership team is well placed to create a consistent approach to planning, delivery and expected outcomes in all classes throughout the school.
- Leaders should ensure that there is less reliance on worksheets and a greater emphasis on extended writing opportunities to provide sufficient evidence for assessment. There is scope for independent learning to be promoted with higher ability pupils who have a clear knowledge of areas taught being allowed to begin their work at an earlier part of the lesson.
- The Religious Education subject leader has engaged fully in diocesan training. She is committed to school improvement and has cascaded diocesan initiatives back at school level. Leaders and local governors ensure that the episcopal requirement to provide 10% of curriculum time to Religious Education is followed.

continued

- Leaders have supported staff to embed the *Come and See* scheme of work and this has been developed in an adequate way focusing on the needs and interests of the pupils. The curriculum provides opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP	2
-----------------------------------	---

- 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.

2
2
2

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

- At St Clare's, pupils act with reverence and are keen to participate in Collective Worship. The chaplaincy team works effectively in regularly planning and leading the whole school in worship. They are proud of their work which results in other pupils, members of staff and parents, being appropriately engaged. The whole school community benefits from the worship opportunities provided by the chaplaincy team.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the religious seasons and feasts of the Church. They are able to adapt their plans accordingly to deliver appropriate themes and messages. During a whole school liturgy, pupils planned readings, music, religious artefacts and reflective prayers around the theme of 'getting ready for Jesus'. Going forth, pupils understood the mission to 'be ready' as they were able to explain this within the context of the Act of Worship.
- Collective Worship is central to the life of St Clare's. The school prays regularly together; also in classes and in small groups. Each day is punctuated by prayer. This is enhanced by each child owning a prayer book – from this, they are able to compose their own prayers as well as learn traditional prayers of the Church.
- Time for quality reflective thinking is a strength of the school. The chaplaincy team leads others each Friday in thoughtful meditation, where pupils and teachers from across the school are represented. As one pupil told inspectors: 'This is time for Jesus to talk to us and for us to talk to him'.
- Throughout the school, pupils are able to lead worship with varying degrees of confidence and enthusiasm. Where they are most familiar with the planning and leading of Collective Worship, ample opportunities are provided and pupils show increasing independence.
- Through further developing pupils' monitoring and evaluation of Collective Worship, the school will be able to embed its good provision across the school and within all year groups so that a more consistent approach is adopted by all classes when planning and leading their own liturgies.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship – good

- Collective Worship is central to the life of the school for all pupils, whatever their own faith and background. Praying and worshipping together is part of the daily experience for pupils and staff at St Clare's, as it also forms the beginning and end of Religious Education lessons which helps pupils to think about how their academic studies impact on their spiritual well-being.
- Collective Worship has a purpose, message and direction at St Clare's as pupils are encouraged early in their education to think about how it affects and guides their lives. Before a lesson about birthdays, pupils meditated on the joy-felt actions and preparations which take place. In reflection, one pupil said, 'My heart feels happy because my friends give me presents; they love me'.
- Collective Worship is given a high priority in terms of planning and resourcing – each class has its own prayer area; collectively they are bright and appealing, well-resourced with appropriate religious artefacts and statues to aid pupils' learning.
- Relevant staff have a good understanding of the Church's liturgical year, seasons and feasts. This is enhanced by the expert theological knowledge of senior leaders who hold higher certification of skills and understanding. This is disseminated to all staff, and in turn to pupils who have good experiences of the Church's liturgical life.
- Opportunities are planned in a manner that facilitates attendance by parents and carers. On the day of the inspection, a small group of parents came to the pupil-led Act of Worship and joined the community in prayer and celebration. One parent said that she enjoyed learning the prayers and the hymns that the pupils were learning and another parent was particularly engaged through the impact and work of the chaplaincy team.

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

- Leaders have an extensive understanding of the Church's liturgical year, seasons and feasts. Together with local governors, they are visible role-models of their parish and school communities, promoting the Faith in their work as Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, children's liturgy leaders and catechists for sacramental preparation.
- Leaders are models of outstanding practice for staff and pupils. They actively take part and lead Acts of Worship during key celebrations and services at school. They help to promote the work of the local parish church, especially when visiting for Mass and curriculum purposes. Together with local governors, they are making stronger links with the parishioners to promote and further enrich these links.
- Leaders promote pupils' planning and their leading of Collective Worship. Records show that they offer staff regular opportunities to receive liturgical formation. They acknowledge that more opportunities for non-classroom based members of staff to attend Acts of Worship needs to develop.
- In monitoring Collective Worship throughout the school, leaders and local governors should now ensure that this is more systematic so that it takes account of all stakeholder views; especially parents and carers who are regular attendees at school celebrations.

continued

- Leaders and local governors regularly review Collective Worship as part of their self-evaluation processes and have accurately identified the need for the chaplaincy team to train and support pupils in other classes to plan and lead their own liturgies. They also want to increase knowledge and understanding of the liturgical seasons across school and within each class. Leaders and local governors now need to ensure that actions points identified through monitoring are acted upon in a more timely fashion in order to have earlier impact.

SCHOOL DETAILS

School Name	St Clare's Catholic Voluntary Academy
Unique Reference Number	138296
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 7 Religious Education lessons and 1 Act of Collective Worship.

Meetings were held with the headteacher, the subject leader for Religious Education, the St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Multi-Academy Trust Director of Standards and two local governors. 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 Alan Brine
Headteacher:	Mrs Louise Freeman
Date of Previous School Inspection:	16 October 2013
Telephone Number:	01530 837747
Email Address:	office@st-clares.leics.sch.uk

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.