



DIOCESAN CANONICAL INSPECTION REPORT

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

The Priory Catholic Voluntary Academy

Raglan Street, Eastwood, Nottingham, NG16 3GT

School URN:	137909
Inspection Date:	28 February 2020
Inspectors:	Mr Gregory Hughes and Mrs Pamela Tonge

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

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

The Priory Catholic Voluntary Academy is a good Catholic school.

- The Priory is a good Catholic school with key strengths in Catholic Life and Collective Worship. The headteacher and the subject leader for Religious Education are driven and passionate Catholic leaders. All staff are welcoming and parents feel greatly supported and valued. Parents state that they see the school as a family where every child is known and nurtured.
- Catholic Life at the Priory is outstanding. The mission statement, 'The Priory: a place to learn, have fun, grow and develop, in the light and love of Christ', underpins every aspect of daily life. On entering the school, the Catholic ethos is tangible; accurate liturgical displays are attractive, informative and inviting.
- The teaching and learning of Religious Education at the Priory are good. Most pupils, relative to their age, are religiously literate and engaged. Lessons are well-prepared and teachers use the *Come and See* programme to build upon previous learning to support the progress of all pupils.
- Collective Worship at the Priory is outstanding. It plays a central part within the school week. All pupils participate with enthusiasm and staff guide and support pupils in the planning and delivery of Acts of Worship. Parents and stakeholders describe aspects of Collective Worship as 'beautiful' and 'uplifting'.

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- The Priory Catholic Voluntary Academy is a smaller than average sized primary school serving the parish of Our Lady of Good Counsel, Eastwood.
- The school became part of the St Ralph Sherwin Catholic Multi-Academy Trust in September 2018.
- 56% of pupils on roll are baptised Catholics; 16% are from other Christian denominations; 0.4% are from other faiths and 28% of pupils have no religious affiliation.
- 41% of pupils transfer to Catholic provision when moving onto secondary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is 19% (this is above the national average).
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are supported by additional funding (the pupil premium) is 12% (this is below the national average).

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- Catholic Life:
 - Share outstanding practice with other schools within the St Ralph Sherwin Catholic Multi-Academy Trust and continue to adopt the Bishop's and other diocesan initiatives.
- Religious Education:
 - Provide further opportunities for independent learning which allow pupils to express their individual thoughts.
 - Ensure that all pupils understand how to improve their work using the *driver words* to reach the next level of challenge.
 - Following monitoring activities, leaders and governors need to ensure that gaps identified are acted upon in a timely manner.
- Collective Worship:
 - Ensure that pupils further embed their central role in the planning and evaluation of liturgies independently.

CATHOLIC LIFE

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 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 – outstanding

- Pupils play a central part in the Catholic Life of the school. They contribute to the development of the mission statement and ensure that the Catholicity of the school is at the heart of everything that they do.
- All pupils are seen as ambassadors and describe how they ‘believe that we should treat someone as we treat ourselves’. They are welcoming and show respect to one another, ‘treating people in this way, because we are following Jesus’ mission’.
- Pupils take an active role in the school’s Catholic Life and mission by supporting a number of local and global charities. The Eastwood Foodbank regularly receives donated items from the school. The Priory has also supported CAFOD and Mary’s Meals and has demonstrated missionary discipleship by providing active aid to pupils in Malawi.
- The Priory is a prayerful community; a mixture of traditional and contemporary prayer punctuates the day. Pupils and stakeholders are respectful and reverent in their times of reflection. Pupils enjoy participating in liturgical music in an uplifting atmosphere and environment.
- High quality and liturgically accurate displays permeate the whole school environment. This is a real strength of the school. Pupils have fully embraced ‘The God who Speaks’ initiative. This can be seen in the whole-school area which displays pupils’ favourite top ten Bible stories. Each class has a designated area in the central hall devoted to their individual response to Scripture, linked to the Year of the Word.

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

- The mission statement welcomes everyone on entrance to the school. Clear thought has been given to provide a stimulating Catholic environment and this has been achieved extremely successfully.
- Pupils' spiritual and moral development is promoted and seen as a responsibility of all stakeholders. A culture of respect reflects Gospel values. Pupils are reminded of the importance of positive relationships through restorative practice.
- Pastoral care is a strength of the school. Vulnerable pupils are particularly well supported; equality and inclusion are clearly evidenced. Nurture groups enable all pupils to access high quality Catholic education.
- The school sees the importance of investing in the school shepherd who aids spiritual development through guiding and providing themes from which to lead worship for community celebrations.
- The school heavily invests in the provision of a high-quality learning environment and resources. Diocesan initiatives such as 'Encounter', 'Discipleship' and 'Missionary Discipleship' are all on view. Leaders have a clear vision to further enhance the provision with a chapel area to provide a bespoke area for worship.

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

- Leaders and local governors promote the Catholic ethos of the school. It forms the central priority of the school improvement plan. This is lived out by all stakeholders, who are excellent role-models.
- The school celebrates the Church's mission through high-quality, liturgically-accurate displays and well-maintained prayer focus areas. Appropriate religious artefacts enhance understanding and spiritual development.
- Leaders and local governors use learning walks to monitor the provision of Catholic Life in the school on a regular basis. They ensure that displays reflect the Church's calendar and maintain their quality and relevance to the pupils' needs. Prayer focus areas are regularly updated and are useful to demonstrate the school's focus on the Bishop's initiatives.
- Pupil and parent voice is sought in order to evaluate provision. Questionnaires validate the positive outlook. One child stated that the Priory, 'brings me closer to God and makes me feel better inside'.
- Leaders and local governors ensure that staff receive relevant diocesan training which is appropriate to their career path. Staff new to the school have attended the 'New to Catholic schools' training and the Religious Education subject leader attends regular training with the diocesan RE adviser.

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 the Priory from a low starting point. The school has a number of pupils from vulnerable backgrounds; it also has a significantly higher number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities compared to the national average. Taking into account the low baseline starting point, pupils make good progress at Key Stage 1 and standards of attainment over time are above diocesan averages at Key Stage 2.
- From the early years, pupils demonstrate their enthusiasm in practical activities including drama, role-play, painting and singing. Pupils state that they enjoy their Religious Education lessons. Most pupils, relative to their age, are religiously literate and engaged. Teachers at Key Stage 1 provide pupils with clear guidance and use ‘talk for writing’ and sentence starters to scaffold sequential responses.
- As pupils progress through the school, guided practice enables them to develop knowledge, understanding and skills. In both key stages, there is scope for pupils’ written outcomes to be more unique to the individual. The school needs to continue to encourage opportunities for independent learning and research.
- Behaviour for learning is strong throughout the school. Pupils are 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’ enjoyment in activities, enabling full access to the curriculum.
- Pupils write enthusiastically about their favourite Bible stories which are evident in every classroom. They express enjoyment in receiving work that allows them to be ‘challenged and pushed’.

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

- The quality of teaching and learning is good. The *Come and See* programme is used consistently throughout the school. A range of different teaching strategies are deployed using good quality resources. Other adults are used effectively to optimise learning for most pupils.
- Teachers show a good understanding and knowledge of the subject, relative to their year group. Lessons are well-prepared and highly-structured, enabling pupils to complete tasks and reach learning outcomes. However, consideration should be given to allow more time for independent activities, research and extended writing.
- Teachers plan lessons that are linked to pupils' current assessment so that most pupils learn well. They use 'learning challenges' to cater for the abilities of differentiated groups of pupils. However, a sharper alignment to the *driver words* is required so that pupils have a greater clarity in understanding their next steps to move to the next level.
- There is a whole-school approach to feedback and marking; pupils are given the opportunity to respond which improves their understanding of what they need to improve. Assessment informs next day planning.
- Teachers new to the school are well supported and show growing confidence in their subject expertise and are keen to develop good practice. Appropriate professional development is provided through in-house training and diocesan support.
- Teachers ensure that pupils' work is celebrated both in class and in the weekly awards. Pupils enthusiastically collect trophies and certificates to celebrate their role in the mission of the school and for their work in Religious Education and other subject areas.

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 Religious curriculum meets the Bishops' Conference requirements. Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), including use of the 'Journey in Love' programme are timetabled effectively.
- Leaders and local governors ensure that resourcing, staffing and accommodation have parity with other core curriculum subjects. Planning and purchasing are thoughtfully considered.
- Leaders and local governors follow a timetable of monitoring. As a result of this monitoring, action points have been identified. Currently, this approach is somewhat informal. With a more formal approach, clearly agreed time-lines will ensure that these points are acted upon even more swiftly.
- Leaders and local governors are keen to receive regular responses, both verbally and in questionnaire form from both parents and pupils. The majority of responses are overwhelmingly positive and leaders continue to be proactive in dealing with any perceived issues. The good level of communication enables pupils and parents to feel cared for and valued.
- The senior leadership team has correctly identified further areas for monitoring and support in their own self-evaluation. Together with the external monitoring from the Catholic Multi-Academy Trust, they are in a strong position to ensure that the high expectations of the school are met.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP	1
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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 – outstanding

- Collective Worship is given a high priority within the school. All classes are timetabled on a regular basis to participate in Acts of Worship throughout the week. Pupils show enthusiasm and reverence, which is reflected in their communal singing, prayerful silence and participation.
- All pupils have an opportunity to participate in the preparation and delivery of Collective Worship. Pupil-led worship is increasingly evident as pupils progress through the school; this now needs to become embedded. Greater ownership in planning and evaluation will enhance already good practice.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of the liturgical year and classroom displays, together with available resources, informs the planning of appropriate worship opportunities. Pupils recognise how their participation in Collective Worship, 'brings them closer to God in a special relationship'.
- Pupils are given opportunities to lead Collective Worship in a variety of activities. They work closely with the parish priest in preparation for whole-school and class Masses. Pupils respond well to the school shepherd who provides a model for leading worship.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship – outstanding

- Collective Worship is central to life in the Priory. Prayer and praying together are part of the daily routine for pupils and staff, irrespective of faith background.
- There is a variety of Scripture, contemporary and traditional prayer which is based on the liturgical calendar. The 'God who speaks' has been an initiative embraced by the school and has presented clear opportunities to reflect on Scripture and the Church's mission in education.
- During the inspection, the school clearly evidenced the approach of each class, participating in high-quality planned worship. Resources were used effectively to provide thought-provoking focal points which created a prayerful, reverent environment.
- 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.
- Opportunities for Collective Worship are timetabled in order to welcome parents and the wider community. The response to this invitation is reflected in the high numbers of participants. Friday celebration assemblies, class Masses and whole-school Masses are clear examples of well-attended gatherings.

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

- Leaders have expert knowledge of how to plan and deliver quality Collective Worship. As a whole-school staff, ownership now needs to be passed on to promote pupils' planning and leadership of Collective Worship.
- Whilst the provision is plentiful, there is more scope for pupil-initiated liturgy. Staff are able to model outstanding practice and now need to provide increased opportunities for pupils to plan and evaluate with still greater independence and responsibility.
- Professional development of staff is given a high priority. Attendance by the headteacher and the Religious Education subject leader has been recognised as being effective by the diocesan RE adviser and both are persistent and determined in their pursuit of excellence. Equally, the chair of governors together with the local governing body have high expectations. The school is well placed to cascade and embed this knowledge to all staff.
- Prayer is made relevant and accessible to pupils in a contemporary context. Collective Worship evidenced during the inspection linked pupils' experiences and included a clear mission to 'love, care, appreciate and admire the world'.

SCHOOL DETAILS

School Name	The Priory Catholic Voluntary Academy
Unique Reference Number	137909
CMAT	St Ralph Sherwin 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 (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 8 Acts of Collective Worship.

Meetings were held with the headteacher, the subject leader for Religious Education, the chair of governors, the school shepherd, the Trust CEO, the Trust director of performance and standards and the parish priest. 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 Dominic Roberts
Headteacher:	Mr Anthony Harrison
Date of Previous School Inspection:	10 June 2015
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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.