



Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection report for St Patrick's Catholic Voluntary Academy

Unique reference number (URN): 139347

Carried out on behalf of the Right Reverend Ralph Heskett, Bishop of Hallam on:

1-2 December 2022

Overall effectiveness

The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school.....

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1

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2



Summary of key findings

St Patrick's Catholic Voluntary Academy is a good Catholic school.

The area of Catholic life and mission is outstanding. This is because leaders, including governors, are passionate about exercising their educational and faith-filled duties; they place the teachings of Jesus Christ firmly at the heart of every decision and activity. This means that pupils benefit from outstanding pastoral care and provision.

Religious education is good. Teachers work hard to engage pupils well in lessons, providing interesting and varied tasks. Pupils enjoy their learning; they show a willingness to improve and speak confidently about what they know. Pupils now need to have greater involvement in evaluating their own learning; they do not all understand explicitly how to produce work at a deeper level in relation to their age. The leadership of religious education is particularly strong and effective.

Collective worship is good. In conversation, pupils are religiously literate: they can articulate their understanding of the Catholic faith extremely well; they are well informed about the faith traditions of others, including that of their peers; they relish opportunities to lead prayer and worship and demonstrate the capacity to do this more often.

What the school does well

- The community of St Patrick's is welcoming, warm and loving. All members show care and consideration for others: this is demonstrated in the quality of relationships at all levels.
- Pupil behaviour is exemplary, within and outside the classroom.
- Leaders, including governors, and staff go 'above and beyond' the levels one might expect in order to support pupils and families pastorally. Families recognise this and appreciate it greatly.
- The development of 'Godly Play' has a significant and positive impact on the prayer life of the school community.


What the school needs to improve:

- Improve pupil outcomes in religious education across the school by ensuring that pupils
 - can interpret sources and make links more consistently
 - produce pieces of written work which show more depth of understanding
 - build the stamina to write at greater length in their workbooks regularly, according to the expectations for their age.
- Strengthen planning and assessment procedures in religious education so that
 - pupils know how well they are doing in this subject
 - pupils are clear about what they need to do to further develop their skills
 - all teachers mark work in religious education with closer attention to what is expected of pupils in different age groups.
- Widen and increase the range of ways in which pupils lead times of prayer so that pupils can become more involved and increasingly independent, from an earlier age, in the planning and leading of prayer and liturgy.

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:..... | 1 |
| Pupil outcomes The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school | 1 |
| Provision The quality of provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school | 1 |
| Leadership How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school | 1 |



Catholic life and mission is a key strength at St Patrick's. Pupil outcomes, provision and the work of leaders, including governors, are all outstanding in respect of Catholic life and mission.

Pupils greatly value the school's Catholic ethos and values; in their own words, pupils articulate how they live out their faith both in school and also within their lives. They say that the Bible, 'links up to our lives: it's like a manual!' Pupils speak of the warm welcome given to those new to the school, recognising how they can '... help them to know the school better; we make them feel comfortable'. Pupils are a credit to themselves, their school, and their families: this is demonstrated in their outstanding behaviour and attitudes in and around the school. Older pupils show exemplary standards of care for each other in words and actions, particularly when guiding and supporting younger pupils. They talk positively about the good relationships and respect which pervade their school. Pupils have a deep awareness and understanding of their role as stewards within the world, called to look after God's creation: they explain that it is important to, 'save the land and make less pollution' as responsible citizens. Pupils gladly embrace and cherish the Catholic identity of the school; they are proud of the part they play in helping others and seek to grow in virtue by immersing themselves in charitable work, such as raising money for Cafod and recycling school uniform. Pupils speak warmly about the opportunities provided to pray together: 'We do it respectfully. When we 'pray of mind', we pray deeply; we pray for the food crisis'.

Pastoral care for all is a high priority. There is a concrete commitment to the most vulnerable,

shown in multiple ways within the school's outstanding Catholic life and mission. The commitment to ensuring that 'no child goes hungry at this school' is lived out daily, through the free school meal provision as well as by welcoming over 100 pupils to the pre-school breakfast club; those arriving at the start of the school day also have access to toast or bagels on entry. Opportunities are maximised to celebrate the languages and home cultures of the school population, creating a rich and vibrant community where every individual is overtly loved and cherished. The school environment is reflective of a worshipping community which is committed to faith development: displays and ambient music create a prayerful and calm atmosphere; the faith traditions of others are celebrated and shared through colourful artefacts, pictures and records of visits.

Leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school to an outstanding degree. This is evident in the unswerving commitment to supporting families and working unceasingly with outside agencies to ensure that all-round support is as effective as possible: for example, a Fairshare link ensures that families in need receive weekly food parcels; when illness strikes in families, bespoke packages of support are put into place swiftly and subtly; in times of bereavement, families are actively supported and a child's history of loss is remembered. Parents recognise this: 'The headteacher holds our families in her heart'. Leaders and governors are dedicated to the school's mission, 'where children share faith and culture with pride' with a focus on 'uniting society'.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade:.....

2

Pupil outcomes

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education.....

2

Provision

The quality of teaching, learning, and assessment in religious education.....

2

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor, and evaluate the provision for religious education.....

1

Religious education is good and pupil outcomes in religious education are good. Pupils enjoy their lessons: they are interested and engaged, showing good concentration. Pupils particularly enjoy the range of activities they undertake: they like to be creative in lessons, completing cooperative tasks such as pieces of shared writing, making charts and posters, dressing up and dramatizing stories and scripture. Verbal responses are good or better, and these reflect religious literacy which is built upon year by year. The quality of written work is variable, though this is stronger in Key Stage Two. The use of workbooks is still relatively new across the school and needs to be further embedded in order for the quality of pupils' understanding to show clearly in their writing; pupils need to know how well they are doing and what they need to do next in order to make progress and work at a deeper level.

The provision for religious education is good. Positive relationships are established and fostered so that lessons run smoothly with no lost learning time. Teachers have good subject knowledge: in the best lessons, this is used to great effect by making links between scripture, hymns, prayer and the impact religious education has on each one of us in daily life. Pupils' successes are often celebrated and this leads to good levels of pupil motivation. Effective resources, in terms of time, personnel and equipment, ensure that pupils learn well. There is evidence of a consistent approach to teaching religious education within the school, such as enabling time for pupils to regularly 'pair and share' with a partner or confer in a group about their learning, enabling pupils to rehearse and clarify their understanding. This contributes to developing in pupils an ability to orally express themselves at a higher level than the resulting written work suggests. Teachers now need to galvanise the skills pupils possess in verbally articulating their knowledge and

understanding and direct this into written work; teachers need to provide increased support so that pupils can more fully explore their depth of knowledge in their writing in order to reflect and promote a deeper understanding in religious education. Some teachers follow the marking policy, though this is not always consistent or as accurate as it could be: this means that opportunities are missed to fully challenge pupils to regularly produce high-quality pieces of work. Teachers' marking does not consistently identify what pupils have achieved in terms of progress towards any targets in relation to the age of pupils. In the planning of lessons and tasks, teachers demonstrate a recognition of the importance of religious education and use good quality resources to sustain pupils' interest in lessons.

Leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for religious education to an outstanding level. They ensure that religious education in this school has full parity with other core subjects within the curriculum, including the careful timetabling of lessons. Leaders and governors are highly committed to training and support for staff, showing drive and passion for continual improvement in this subject. It is particularly impressive to hear how those in the earlier stages of their teaching career have been closely supported as they take up their positions in school: mentoring, coaching and team-teaching opportunities ensure that relevant guidance and professional training is continually provided and is of high quality. The vision held by leaders and governors is inspiring in its commitment for improvement and dedication to staff development in religious education.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade:.....

2

Pupil outcomes

How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

1

Provision

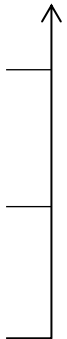
The quality of collective worship provided by the school

2

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for collective worship

2



The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from collective worship is outstanding. Pupils engage deeply in times of prayer and liturgy; they are eager and active in their response; they are attentive to those in a leadership role; they frequently sing with enthusiasm and volume. Pupils demonstrate an excellent understanding of scripture, silence and reflection in the prayer life of the school and the tradition of the Church. The prayer warriors are serious in the undertaking of their leadership responsibilities, relishing the opportunity to talk about and carry out their duties. Consequently, they lead Godly Play with finesse and skill, holding the attention of those present: while exploring the idea of Jesus being like a good shepherd, or explaining elements of the liturgical year, they command the room using figures and a natural speaking style to deliver a meaningful, child-friendly experience of prayer. The wider pupil body, from across the school, is well placed to build upon these embedded skills and experiences to lead prayer and liturgical prayer more frequently and in a greater variety of ways.

The provision for collective worship is good. Prayer and liturgy are central to school life; the pattern of prayer follows that of the Church and is appropriate to the season, such as Advent or Lent. Pupils enjoy praying in the variety of ways offered, many of which are adult-led or stimulated by adults, although there is scope for adults to be more creative when leading these occasions. Staff ensure that traditional prayer is well established; they also support pupils to write their own prayers and encourage pupils to pray in their own languages, modelling good practice and celebrating the rich culture within the school family. Time is provided for pupils to plan

prayerful reflections at the end of each topic in religious education lessons and within the designated times for 'Godly Play'. The development of provision for collective worship does not yet extend to giving pupils the opportunities, from an earlier age, to plan and lead prayer independently in a variety of situations and more frequently.

The extent to which leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate collective worship is good. The views of parents, pupils, staff and the wider community are sought and these are considered when planning for improvement. Resourcing is prioritised so that artefacts and materials can enhance times of prayer and worship. Professional development opportunities are available for staff and, for new teachers, this is particularly welcome. Governors are frequent visitors, engaging enthusiastically in worship opportunities with the school community, commenting that 'the joy of the pupils lifts you'. Governors include reflections and prayer in their own meetings, confirming their own desire 'to be open to our faith'. Links with the parish are strong: parents are keen for these to be even further extended. Parish clergy are impressed with the prayer life of the school and the support the parish receives in terms of sacramental preparation for pupils. School leaders understand a variety of ways of praying and they help staff to develop expertise in planning prayerful experiences for pupils and the wider school community: there is scope for the further promotion of pupil leadership of prayer to support the drive towards collective worship becoming outstanding.

Information about the school

St Patrick's Catholic Voluntary Academy

Barnsley Road, Sheffield, S5 0QF

0114 245 6183

Name of Headteacher: Mrs Sharon McKeown

Chair of governing body: Mrs Gill Brown

Website address: www.st-patricks.sheffield.sch.uk

Diocese: Hallam

Parish in which the school is situated: St Patrick's and St Catherine's

Local authority area: Sheffield

Type of school: Primary

Type of school organization: 10 classes; ages range from 3-11

Foundation trustees: Diocese of Hallam

Gender: Mixed

Significant groups:

- 41% of the pupils are baptized Catholics; 43% belong to other Christian traditions; 11% of pupils are Muslim; 5% belong to other religious groups.
- 50.6% of pupils have English as an additional language. 33 different languages are spoken within the homes of pupils.
- There is a wide ethnic mix within the school community. 83% of pupils have a BAME background and 17% of pupils have a white, British background.

Proportion of pupils eligible for school Free School Meals: 30.4%

Proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities: 10.5%

Proportion of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan: 1.3%

Date of last denominational inspection: 14 June 2016

Date of last statutory inspection: 16 April 2019

Current statutory status: Good

The Inspection team:

Fionuala Boucher, Lead Inspector

Ellen Archer, Team Inspector