



# Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection report for St Bede's Catholic Voluntary Academy

URN: 138018

Carried out on behalf of the **Right Rev. Patrick McKinney, Bishop of Nottingham** on:

Date: 8-9 November 2023

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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	Fully

## Summary of key findings

### What the school does well

- Staff, governors and students use a common language to articulate the school's mission. They understand fully how Catholic virtues are applied, resulting in a consistent thread across school life.
- The commitment to pastoral care has created a school family where support and love thrive.
- The behaviour of all students is exemplary in and around the school.
- The wide range of creative opportunities provided in religious education enhances students' enjoyment of the subject.
- Student leaders are inspired to initiate prayer and worship, sharing these occasions with the wider school community.

What the school needs to improve:

- Embed the newly developed school reward system, 'Be Like Bede', across the whole school.
- Develop teaching techniques in relation to how tasks are adapted to support the needs of all pupils in religious education.
- Extend the systematic evaluation of collective worship to include all students.

## 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

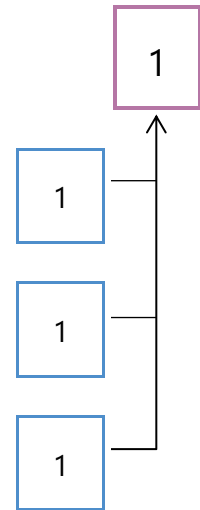
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school .....

### 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 .....



Students at St Bede's are fully aware of what it means to be part of a distinctively Catholic community. They all know how to live out the school's mission statement, 'love, respect and serve one another as disciples of Jesus Christ'. Some students can talk about the recently introduced virtues-based rewards system, 'Be like Bede'; this group, but not all students, can express a good understanding of how this impacts their lives, demonstrating their moral development. A strength of the school is its commitment to helping the poor and vulnerable, particularly within the local community. Students participate in numerous fundraising activities, which enable them to respond in a practical and enjoyable way to the demands of Catholic Social Teaching, such as raising money for Cafod, the Jimmy Mizen charity and Macmillan cancer support. Students show genuine respect for people of other faiths and cultures, which is embedded in the school's ethos. The students are happy, confident and feel secure. They are also extremely well behaved and show a deep respect for their own personal dignity and that of others.

The mission statement is celebrated throughout the school and this is implicit in the way that the school operates. The strong commitment of staff to the school's Catholic mission is reflected well. They say, 'This mission is lived by all in our school community; we are one family'. The pastoral care of students is outstanding, with an explicit commitment to meeting students' needs. The provision of care from the safeguarding team typifies the way staff live out the school's mission. The school environment strongly reflects its Catholic character through appropriate signage and iconography, including quotations from sacred scripture: the religious education corridor, in particular, contains beautiful works of art and displays linked with the Catholic nature of the school. The provision for relationships, sex, and health education (RSHE) meets all statutory requirements and is firmly rooted in Church teaching. It is delivered through the Ten:Ten resources, which the school further supplements to respond to issues raised by students through surveys.

Leaders, including governors, have an excellent understanding of the mission of the Catholic Church and the place of Catholic education within it. The headteacher has an inspiring vision for the school's mission and expresses this with confidence and clarity: he exemplifies his high aspirations for St Bede's which energises the whole school community. The school is actively engaged with the diocese and other schools within the Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi-Academy Trust, proactively delivering diocesan priorities and the bishop's vision. The school is served well by the local priest and the school actively engages with the parish. The newly-formed parish ambassadors deliver a parish newsletter sharing events from St Bede's; they engage with parishioners, inviting them into school for Mass. Parent questionnaires show that the work that the school does is greatly appreciated and has a profound impact on all in the school community. School leaders are highly committed to the tenets of Catholic Social Teaching and resources are directed to support the most vulnerable, both within the school and externally. Catholic character education is mapped across the curriculum and many departments have created subject specific displays as 'visuals' for students. Minutes of governors' meetings show that governors have a clear understanding of the school's mission and are confident in holding leaders to account. They have an honest and accurate evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. All students and staff new to the community are supported by effective induction, which is on-going and bespoke to their individual needs. Continuing professional development is carefully considered against the needs of the school and the Catholic community: there is a clear, evidence-based approach to this. Leaders' and governors' ongoing evaluation of the school's Catholic life and mission is detailed, accurate and effective.

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

**Religious education key judgement grade:**.....

### Pupil outcomes

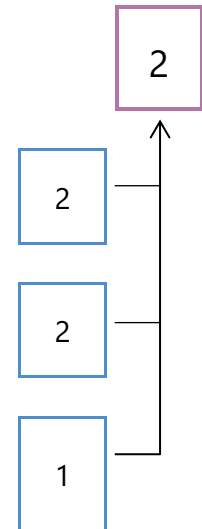
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education.....

### 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.....



Students are developing a secure understanding in religious education, so that they know more and remember more. Students speak passionately about religious education. They express their enjoyment for the subject and are keen to compliment their teachers on how supported they feel. Progress is evident in students' work and enables students to build on prior learning. Key vocabulary is revisited regularly, embedding knowledge and supporting students in becoming religiously literate. Students' work is well-presented, further demonstrating the value they give to this subject: they are rightly proud of the work they produce and this work is of at least the same quality as work seen in other core subjects. Students are developing a secure knowledge and understanding of their faith. Students discuss their learning and are confident in sharing what they have learnt. In the best lessons, opportunities for retrieval are clearly embedded and lessons allow students to recall previous learning: this support them in building upon what they already know. Recent results in religious education examinations are comparable to those of other core curriculum areas: however, this was nevertheless a decline in religious education attainment when compared to the previous three-year trend in this subject area.

Teachers are confident in their subject knowledge. They are committed to the subject's value and communicate this to students clearly. Relationships with students are strong and teachers are authentic witnesses to their faith. The environment enables students to learn in a purposeful way. Teaching assistant support positively contributes to students' learning. Teachers skilfully deploy and include the teaching assistant in the planning of lessons, which results in a team approach and ensures that all students are able to access the learning. Where students make most progress, work is appropriately scaffolded and writing frames, and evaluation templates, ensure that all students succeed. Where questioning is used effectively, this provides appropriate challenge and promotes high-level thinking: however, an overreliance on closed questioning sometimes results in missed opportunities to develop students'

understanding. Students' effort is sincerely celebrated, and the feedback they receive helps them to improve their knowledge and understanding. In some lessons, solid connections are made between students' learning and their spiritual and moral development, though not all lessons consistently provide these.

The recently appointed subject leader has strong leadership skills and readily shares his expertise with colleagues, enabling them to continue to develop best practice. There is clear professional development in place for teachers who are at an early stage in their careers; this ensures that they are well-supported and so gain confidence when teaching religious education. The subject leader shares his expertise in religious education across the trust, leading on the development of the new Year 7 curriculum, and ensuring a collaborative approach to its design and implementation. Religious education is given full parity with other core subjects across the curriculum. Leaders, governors and trust leaders have ensured that religious education is well-resourced in terms of budget, staffing and other resources. The school is working to ensure the curriculum is enriched with a vast range of activities, projects and opportunities to put learning into action, making learning in religious education memorable and relevant for students. Self-evaluation informs the department's strategic direction, as evidenced by the department improvement plan, which is monitored carefully. Governors are generous with their time and work effectively with staff to validate the accuracy of self-evaluation, and offer leaders both support and challenge. This is validated during trust review processes.

## Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade:.....

1

### 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  
.....

1

### Leadership

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

1

Prayer is central to the life of the school, and there are many opportunities for students and staff to experience prayer and reflection. Students are respectful and engage thoughtfully in prayer. Praying together is part of the daily experience for all students and staff, and is embedded into daily routines. Prayer is always in keeping with the Catholic tradition, and scripture is routinely used and referenced. Students are aware of the school's structure for celebrations of the word. Themes are appropriately linked to the liturgical year, strongly supporting the school's Catholic identity. Reflection is used effectively to allow students to make connections between current issues experienced by communities around the world and their impact on daily life. Students engage, participate and show reverence throughout worship opportunities, whether these are within whole year groups or tutor groups. They clearly understand why they pray and they are able to articulate how prayer leads to action, embracing all opportunities offered. Students from all key stages can talk about how prayer and liturgy make a difference to their lives. They truly enjoy the opportunity to write their own prayers and share these with their tutor groups.

Outstanding provision demonstrates that worship and prayer are central to the life of the school. The liturgical coordinator is passionate about ensuring that all students are able to engage in the spiritual life of the school. As a consequence, all students and staff are incredibly respectful of the Catholic ethos of the school. The chapel, which is at the centre of the school, is always open and used regularly, including for voluntary Mass each week. Tutors acknowledge the importance of considering students' different experiences of prayer so that everyone feels able to contribute. Students prepare a focus prayer table in tutor rooms; these are adorned with liturgical cloths to indicate the season, a candle to let the light of the world shine, a tutor group 'scrapbook' and other religious artefacts that are personal to each cohort. Daily celebrations of the word take place at the start of tutor time, following the 'extra-ordo-nary' word of the week.

Governors visit the school to participate in key celebrations: consequently, they are highly ambitious for the school's prayer life to continue to grow. The liturgical coordinator supports staff in leading prayer, keen to demonstrate high standards in how staff can participate and be exemplary role models to all students. Leaders and governors ensure that the school calendar is planned around the liturgical year and time is set aside weekly to celebrate the Eucharist. Holy days of obligation and feast days are all celebrated as a school community. A high priority is placed on the prayer life of the school, demonstrated in the policy which clearly sets out high expectations. Student leadership of prayer is positive: although opportunities for students to contribute and participate are evident, this is limited to some rather than all students. The work of school leaders in inducting new staff into the school's approach and commitment to prayer and liturgy is a strength of the school. The student prayer leadership team is confident to deliver training to students and staff in order to facilitate engagement of whole tutor groups in preparing acts of worship. The prayer leadership team plans and produces a standard of liturgy that is outstanding. As a result, other students participate with a strong sense of purpose and appreciation.



## Information about the school

Full name of school	St Bede's Catholic Voluntary Academy
School unique reference number (URN)	138018
Full postal address of the school	Collum Avenue, Scunthorpe, North Lincolnshire, DN16 2TF
School phone number	01724 245151
Name of head teacher or principal	Ryan Hibbard
Chair of governing board	Jacqueline Kelly
School Website	<a href="http://www.stbedesscunthorpe.org.uk">www.stbedesscunthorpe.org.uk</a>
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi-Academy Trust
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy
Age-range of pupils	11-16
Trustees	Diocesan
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	30 January 2017
Previous denominational inspection grade	1

## The inspection team

Louisa Craig	Lead inspector
Catherine Danaher	Team inspector
Claire Restall	Team inspector
Name of inspector	Lead/team

## Key to grade judgements

Grade	England	Wales
<b>1</b>	Outstanding	Excellent
<b>2</b>	Good	Good
<b>3</b>	Requires improvement	Adequate and requires improvement
<b>4</b>	Inadequate	Unsatisfactory and in need of urgent improvement

