



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

URN: 146119

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

Date: 22-23 March 2023

<b>Overall effectiveness</b> The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school.....	<b>2</b>
<b>Catholic life and mission (p.3)</b> How faithfully the school responds to the call to live as a Catholic community at the service of the Church's educational mission.....	2
<b>Religious education (p.5)</b> The quality of curriculum religious education.....	2
<b>Collective worship (p.7)</b> The quality and range of liturgy and prayer provided by the school.....	2
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

- The mission statement at St Elizabeth's Catholic Voluntary Academy, 'Be like Jesus, be your best, be safe, be caring,' alongside the seven Franciscan values of joy, forgiveness, faith, respect, service, peace and stewardship, are at the heart of the school community. Pupils and staff demonstrate a good understanding of this mission, which is visibly lived out every day. Pupil behaviour is exemplary.
- School leaders are ambitious for the vision of the school. They share and live out their faith; they identify strengths and areas of development for the school; they implement systematic plans to drive improvement.

- The school has a well-developed sense of community where all are cared for and supported. Parents say, 'We feel our children are loved and nurtured at St Elizabeth's. Staff are great role models and it is clear that children are encouraged to be respectful and caring to each other.'
- Pupils demonstrate impressive religious literacy and verbally communicate a wealth of knowledge about religious education. They express a deep understanding of how this impacts on their daily lives.
- Pupils show enthusiasm and enjoyment when planning and leading worship. They plan thoughtful prayer and liturgical prayer and are keen to share these occasions with the wider school community.

#### What the school needs to improve:

- Create systems for further evaluation and analysis of Catholic life and mission which
  - bring together key themes for future development
  - enable pupils to be involved in and contribute to evaluation
- Ensure that the religious literacy demonstrated by pupils orally is reflected in written work by
  - maximising time and pace within religious education lessons
  - identifying the precise content of the knowledge being taught in lessons
  - ensuring the effective deployment of additional adults
- Provide more opportunities for staff to access training, or use the training that they have completed, in a way that better supports pupils to plan and lead prayer and liturgical prayer

## 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

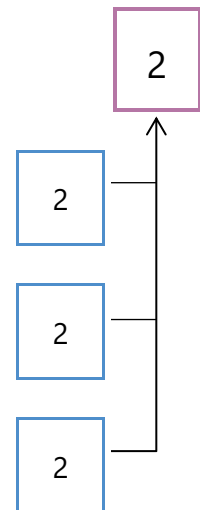
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school .....

### 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 .....



The school's mission statement is a strength of the school because pupils know and understand how to 'Be like Jesus. Be your best. Be safe. Be caring.' Pupils give examples of how this is lived out in their everyday lives, and help others to do so: 'Our mission statement gives us a purpose at school and if we have done something wrong, it helps us to reflect.' The seven Franciscan values of joy, forgiveness, faith, respect, service, peace and stewardship are embedded throughout the school and link to both scripture and the school's own heritage. Pupil behaviour is exemplary. Pupils consistently show respect and care for each other and show politeness to visitors and staff members. Pupils help and care for each other, taking great pride in their own special leadership roles and responsibilities.

Pupils benefit from the work of the lay chaplain and speak enthusiastically about class retreats, prayer and liturgy. The chaplaincy team act as role models and show joy in helping younger pupils. Pupils are keen to raise money for charities such as Cafod: they held a non-uniform day for the earthquake appeal in Turkey and Syria. Although pupils do not suggest their own charities and fundraising ideas or lead these independently, the Faith in Action group have formed a 'donation station' and donate goods to a local foodbank under the guidance of the lay chaplain. Staff show continuous commitment to the school community: they act as good role models as they live out the school's mission. This includes the development of the Franciscan prayer garden and attending school events outside the school day. Parents appreciate ongoing support: 'The work the staff and lay chaplain do is invaluable, not just educating my child in Catholic teaching but also giving her enjoyment of her own spiritual development.'

The sense of community across the school is strong. Staff know pupils well and these relationships are nurtured carefully. The physical environment reflects the Catholic life of the school. Prayer areas are visible around the school and demonstrate the liturgical year by the use of appropriate colours and artefacts.

Displays show different areas of Catholic life and mission, including the Franciscan history of the school and related values. Provision for relationships, sex and health education meets the diocesan requirements. Long term planning outlines the curriculum to ensure that all pupils receive the appropriate provision according to their age.

School leaders work well together in driving the vision for the school. They have helped to design a clear mission statement for the school which puts Christ at the centre and ensures that the curriculum is faith-filled. Leaders engage well with the diocese, for example providing class retreats for each of the bishop's themes: encounter, discipleship and missionary discipleship. School leaders are working with the parish to continue to strengthen links, including through sacramental preparation and parish ambassadors. Leaders have a firm understanding of Catholic social teaching and are embedding this throughout the curriculum.

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

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

### Pupil outcomes

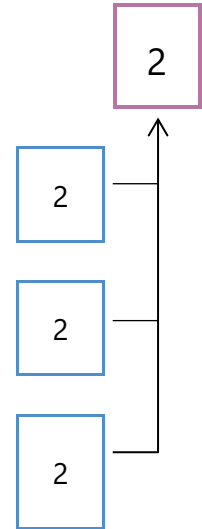
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education.....

### 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.....



Pupils enjoy religious education lessons and are fully engaged in their learning. Parents support this view, saying, 'My children enjoy sharing what they have learned in religious education. They have a good understanding of the Catholic faith.' In the strongest lessons, pupils make good progress over time. Systems are in place to ensure pupils know more and remember more by regularly revisiting prior learning: 'revisits' are established at the start of lessons, modelled and introduced by the subject leader.

Pupils show particular strength when vocalising their religious literacy, clearly articulating their in-depth religious knowledge, making links to how this helps them in their everyday lives. Pupils use a range of religious vocabulary confidently to explain their ideas and understanding, drawing on their knowledge from lessons. The extent of pupils' knowledge is not consistently reflected in written work.

Religious education books are well cared for and pupils show pride in their work. Most pupils produce good work which is neatly presented: however, on occasion, pupil outcomes are limited by the task or a reliance on worksheets. Pupils enjoy lessons, listen carefully and engage with thoughtful questions. For example, a pupil linked the scripture from Luke 22:42, 'Father if you are willing to take this cup away from me...' to Jesus asking for his pain and suffering to be removed. Another child explained how this links to the chalice and the Precious Blood of Jesus.

Pupils show a good understanding of how the feedback policy and assessment systems help them to understand how well they are doing. Though tasks are not consistently purposeful and developmental for learning, pupils thoughtfully respond to 'head, heart and cloud' symbols to further demonstrate their understanding.

Data shows that attainment and outcomes for the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 are high; this is at least in line with and sometimes above diocesan averages. Leaders are aware that outcomes in other year groups are not similarly consistent. Moderation tools are used effectively.

Pedagogical approaches to teaching are systematic and teachers follow a set structure for religious education lessons. Because of this approach, the majority of teachers show good subject knowledge. In some lessons, additional adults within the classroom are not always used effectively to support learning. Planning is secure and linked to assessment; teacher evaluation of current knowledge is assessed through 'revisits' at the start of lessons. Teachers plan questions which link to subject content within the lesson and are matched to pupil ability and prior knowledge. Teachers use a variety of resources to support pupils' learning including sentence starter cards, vocabulary cards and story frameworks.

The religious education subject leader has a strong vision and expert knowledge; he has secured visible impact since the last inspection. Leaders, including governors, have established a cycle of monitoring. This regular monitoring of religious education ensures that the school meets the Religious Education Curriculum Directory requirements. The school embraces the wide range of training on offer. Staff benefit from professional development opportunities through the trust and diocese. Leaders, supported by the trust, correctly identify areas of strength and development and take timely actions which lead to impact and improvements.

## 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

.....

2

### 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



Pupils respond well to prayer and liturgy opportunities, demonstrating this in their enthusiasm for singing hymns and religious songs. Pupils eagerly join in with prayers and responses, showing good knowledge of the liturgical year and linking acts of worship accordingly. They demonstrate their understanding and pick relevant scripture and hymns to support chosen liturgical themes. The well-developed chaplaincy team take pride in their role and cherish opportunities to lead prayer and liturgical prayer across the school.

Collaborative planning is successful and celebrated. Pupils enjoy working with each other and with adults: they understand how they can all contribute in different ways by choosing scripture and music and by writing prayers. Pupils are provided with many opportunities to reflect on religious themes within prayer and liturgical prayer: these include sharing their own thoughts, recording ideas, taking home prayers written by pupils and reflecting on the impact worship has on their lives. Some pupils are involved in the evaluation of times of worship, but this is an under-developed area.

The daily life of school is marked by regular prayer times for all pupils and forms part of the agreed timetable. Significant events such as harvest, Remembrance Day, and the death of Queen Elizabeth II, are marked by gatherings of the school community in order to remember and celebrate. The school's lay chaplain and senior leaders provide a wealth of opportunities for pupils including recent class retreat days linked to the seven Franciscan values. Though pupils benefit significantly from this ongoing input and support, all staff do not confidently help pupils further with planning liturgical prayer.

Parents are welcomed into school for class liturgical prayer and Masses. Many value this involvement: 'I think the class liturgies are a really lovely act to be part of and they leave me walking out, reflecting on the mission.' Prayer spaces within classrooms and around the school are well presented and display a

range of religious artefacts relevant to the liturgical year. These spaces are given a high value by staff and pupils and are central to the classroom and school environment.

Leaders, with the support of the lay chaplain, have implemented systems for child-led worship across the school. The introduction of the 'Let Us Pray 2gether' resource has increased pupils' understanding of planning prayer and liturgical prayer and this has created a greater level of independence. There is a clear progression document for developing skills in relation to planning worship and the level of adult facilitation is appropriate to the age of pupils. Because of this, pupils in older year groups show more independence when planning and leading prayer and liturgical prayer.

Staff are able to develop their own faith through prayer sessions with the religious education leader, lay chaplain and the diocese through personal reflection; staff have fewer opportunities to hone their skills in supporting pupils with planning and leading worship. Systems for the monitoring of prayer and liturgy are in an early stage of development, since comments are not evaluative enough to identify areas to drive improvement.

The clear planning cycle for worship builds on weekly themes. These include the celebration of Mass and other liturgical events, such as celebrations of the Stations of the Cross, Reconciliation and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.



## Information about the school

Full name of school	St Elizabeth's Catholic Voluntary Academy
School unique reference number (URN)	146119
Full postal address of the school	Matlock Road, Belper, Derbyshire, DE56 2JD
School phone number	01773 822278
Name of head teacher or principal	Amanda Clemens
Chair of governing board	Deacon Richard Walsh
School Website	<a href="http://www.stelizabethsbelper.srscmat.co.uk">www.stelizabethsbelper.srscmat.co.uk</a>
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	St Ralph Sherwin Catholic Multi-Academy Trust
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy
Age-range of pupils	4-11
Trustees	The Franciscan Sisters – Minoress
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	27 September 2019
Previous denominational inspection grade	Requires Improvement

## The inspection team

Ruth Elmore	Lead inspector
Andrew Monaghan	Team inspector
Name of inspector	Lead/team
Name of inspector	Lead/team

## Key to grade judgements

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

