



## DIOCESAN CANONICAL INSPECTION REPORT

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

### Blessed Robert Sutton Catholic Voluntary Academy

Bluestone Lane, Burton-on-Trent, Staffordshire, DE15 9SD

<b>School URN:</b>	146235
<b>Inspection Date:</b>	23 November 2021
<b>Inspectors:</b>	Mr Chris Maher, Mrs Sarah Lockyer and Mrs Hannah Coe

<b>Overall Effectiveness</b>	Previous Inspection:	Requires Improvement	3
	<b>This Inspection:</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Catholic Life:</b>		Good	2
<b>Religious Education:</b>		Good	2
<b>Collective Worship:</b>		Good	2

### SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

#### **Blessed Robert Sutton Catholic Voluntary Academy is a good Catholic school.**

- The overall effectiveness of Blessed Robert Sutton school is good and has improved since the last inspection. Under the inspirational leadership of the headteacher and her senior team, the school has now re-established its strong Catholic identity and ethos. As a result of dynamic and driven leadership, Catholic Life is promoted at all levels within the school. The governing body has recently become more effective in monitoring the school's work and must now continue to set high expectations and ensure that these are realised.
- The Catholic Life of the school is good. The values of the school reflect its mission statement and pupils know and understand how the mission of the school benefits and impacts upon them. Improvements in the behaviour of pupils through the 'Sutton Way' are having a positive impact on ethos and culture. There are good opportunities for pupils to encounter Jesus and make contributions to the wider school community. All pupils benefit from the emphasis on personal development with the pupil leadership and enrichment opportunities. Further development of Catholic leaders would help to sustain and further advance improvements.
- The quality of Religious Education is good. Behaviour in lessons is excellent: there are warm and positive relationships between teachers and pupils. Pupils enjoy their lessons. The consistent approach of using low stakes retrieval quizzes and knowledge organisers is having an impact on improving pupils' theological literacy and understanding. The quality of most pupils' work is good; however, this could be improved with more emphasis on extended writing. Under the purposeful leadership of the subject leader for Religious Education, the department has a very effective approach to retrieval practice which is having a visibly positive impact on pupils' ability to retain key concepts.
- Collective Worship within the school is good. There is a good programme of pupil-led Acts of Worship delivered for all year groups. This provides pupils with the opportunity to pray together and reflect on their faith. During form time, all pupils are not yet always confident in leading prayer. There now needs to be a consistency in provision and greater opportunity for prayer throughout every year group, along with a monitoring plan: currently, stronger provision can be seen in Key Stage 3.

## FULL REPORT

### INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- Blessed Robert Sutton Catholic Voluntary Academy is a smaller than average secondary school, with 528 pupils on roll, aged from 11 to 16. It is part of the St Ralph Sherwin Catholic Multi-Academy Trust.
- The school serves the parishes of St Joseph the Worker, Winhill; St Peter and St Paul, Swadlincote; St Charles Borromeo, Measham; Our Lady of Lourdes, Ashby de la Zouch; St Mary and St Modwen's, Burton (Archdiocese of Birmingham).
- 43% of pupils attending the school are baptized Catholics. 21% are from another Christian background, 2% are from another faith background and 34% have no religious affiliation.
- A lower-than-average proportion of the school population is eligible for pupil premium (19%).
- 10% of pupils are at the 'school support' stage of the special educational needs and / or disabilities register. 8 have an educational, health and care plan to support additional needs, which is below the national average.
- Blessed Robert Sutton Catholic Voluntary Academy has a total of 24 feeder primary schools.
- The headteacher was appointed to the substantive position from Pentecost term 2021.

### WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

#### ■ Catholic Life:

- Introduce a more systematic approach to reviewing the Catholic Life of the school, so that
  - a more thorough system is in place so as to identify not only what is working well but also where improvements are required, clarifying how and by whom these areas can be addressed and checked more precisely over time
  - carefully planned reviews can lead to clearly planned strategic improvements, so as to build on the strong foundations that currently exist in the school
- Seek to develop stronger links with the local parish communities, so that there is greater involvement on the part of the school in parish celebrations and activities
- Develop Catholic leaders within the school to add greater capacity to and further distribute the leadership of Catholic Life

#### ■ Religious Education:

- Challenge students to produce extended written responses in their tasks, particularly at Key Stage 4
- Improve the monitoring arrangements for Religious Education by
  - refining plans to check the work of all pupils in order to ensure that the progress of learners is consistently good across all groups
  - involve governors further in the process

#### ■ Collective Worship:

- Involve a greater number of pupils in
  - planning and leading Collective Worship throughout all year groups, particularly in Key Stage 4
  - the evaluation of Collective Worship so that those beyond the pupil chaplaincy team take part
- Involve governors in the monitoring and evaluation of Collective Worship

## CATHOLIC LIFE

## THE QUALITY OF THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

2

- 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.

2

2

2

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

- There is a strong sense of community at Blessed Robert Sutton and pupils are very proud of their school. Pupils show a deep appreciation for the Catholic Life and mission of the school.
- Most pupils value the school's lay chaplaincy provision and the opportunities that the school provides for retreats. The school is planning to send students on pilgrimage to Lourdes and to The Briars youth centre this academic year, extending its provision.
- Pupils have a strong sense of belonging to the school. Pupils show a respect for themselves and for others because of the 'Sutton Way' approach to behaviour and culture. The behaviour of pupils is good almost all the time.
- Pupils are keen to be involved in school life: they value the opportunities they have in the school, particularly with the pupil leadership programme and enrichment opportunities. Over a hundred pupils participate in the leadership programme and many more attend the forty plus enrichment activities which take place at lunchtime and after school. However, a wider range of pupils could be involved in the evaluation of Catholic Life.
- Pupils have a good understanding of vocation. They value the opportunities provided by the school through charity work, support for a local care home during the pandemic and raising money for many local and international charities.
- The school should seek to develop stronger links with the local parish communities, so that there is greater involvement of the school in parish celebrations and activities.

### **The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school – good**

- School leaders have successfully married the mission statement of the school with the ‘Sutton Way’ which provides key values for all pupils and staff to follow the mission statement, ‘Academic Excellence, Spiritual Development and Social Awareness through Christ’. School leaders have successfully involved the whole community in shaping their ethos and values through a considered approach to consultation and ensuring the values of love, kindness, hope, respect and resilience underpin the mission of the school, lived out through the ‘Sutton Way’.
- Staff within the school promote very high standards of behaviour and pupils respond positively to this. The staff are exemplary role models of mutual respect and forgiveness for pupils.
- Staff and pupils comment on the very positive relationships within the school, which are founded on a genuine respect for each other. Staff particularly comment on the support from parents and pupils during the pandemic and the strong focus on well-being by all school leaders: because of this, the staffing is very stable in the school.
- The physical environment clearly reflects the Catholic identity of the school. There are many different visual representations of the Catholic character of the school. The signage on the ‘Sutton Way’, the school Chapel at the heart of the school and the departmental ‘saints’ all ensure that the school is visibly Catholic.
- Pupils benefit from the high-quality pastoral care in the school; the support staff work extremely hard to support all pupils. Every pupil in the school is mentored and the new pupil support area, when completed, should provide a place of inclusion and support for the most vulnerable pupils.
- Relationship and Sex Education programmes are planned using the Ten:Ten resources and staff have received training for using this material, which reflects Catholic teachings and principles.

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

- The headteacher is passionate about the Catholic Life of the school. She has been the driving force behind all the recent improvements and, in particular, the developments in how the mission statement is fully understood by pupils in the ‘Sutton Way.’ Identifying and developing additional Catholic leaders in the school would add capacity to leadership.
- The staff induction programme is effective and well supported by the lay chaplain. As a result of the continued professional development on offer, staff are aware of what is expected of them and feel confident in participating fully in the Catholic Life of the school.
- The provision of Catholic Life is given priority by governors: they are ambitious for the school. Although it has been challenging during the pandemic, governors have remained determined to see improvements in the Catholic Life of the school. They have challenged school leaders to address the actions from the previous inspection. The provision for Catholic Life is seen as the key priority for the school, as reflected in the school improvement plan.
- Leaders, including governors, should now look to introduce a more systematic approach to reviewing the Catholic Life of the school, so that it is more in depth and not a superficial look at what is happening on a day to day basis. Carefully planned reviews, which lead to clear, planned strategic improvements, should help to build on the existing foundation in this area.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION	2
------------------------------------	---

- 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.

2
2
2

**How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education – good**

- Overall, attainment and progress in Religious Education are in line with the diocesan average over the last three years.
- Pupils enjoy their Religious Education lessons and recognise the subject as important. They are particularly positive about the resources provided by the department and how they are supported in their preparation for examinations.
- Observations of lessons demonstrate how most pupils are actively engaged in lessons, participating well and showing commitment to improving their learning. They approach their lessons with interest and respond well to tasks. Behaviour in lessons is excellent: there is a warm and positive relationship between teachers and pupils.
- Pupils are theologically literate and can use their skills to reflect on and express a range of ethical, philosophical and religious ideas. This understanding is underpinned by a consistent approach to low stakes retrieval practice and use of knowledge organisers across the department.
- The quality of most pupils' current work is good: however, for some pupils, particularly in Key Stage 4, pupils could be challenged to complete more extended writing tasks.
- The department has worked hard and creatively to offer enrichment opportunities, which has had a positive impact on pupils' enjoyment and engagement in the Catholic Life of the school. This has included a virtual pilgrimage to Lourdes and virtual interviews with faith leaders.

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

- The school has ensured Religious Education is fully delivered by subject specialists who are confident in their subject expertise and have a good understanding of how pupils learn. Staff within the Religious Education department are fully committed to further enhancing their own subject knowledge and harvest a love of learning that is passed on to their pupils.
- There is evidence of collaborative planning between members of the Religious Education department which leads to consistent resources being prepared for classes. The curriculum is well-planned and sequenced appropriately. Under the purposeful leadership of the subject leader for Religious Education, the department has a very effective approach to retrieval practice which is having a visible and positive impact on pupils' ability to retain key concepts.
- There is a consistency of expectation across the department and teachers clearly communicate high expectations about Religious Education. This is supported by pupils' positive perceptions about the subject. Pupils also feel that there is a good level of challenge in the subject.
- Pupils' work is regularly reviewed and the department offers feedback using a 'whole class feedback' approach. Additionally, teachers offer feedback verbally in class and pupils can self-evaluate in their 'progress logs'. Teachers use these progress logs to inform the retrieval task for further lessons, enabling future planning to reflect the needs of pupils.
- Questioning in lessons is strong and leads to some good responses from pupils. The use of 'cold calling' ensures all pupils are engaged during teacher questioning. There remains scope for further improvement of questioning to check learning, as all pupils should be encouraged to offer a response rather than opting out.
- In a small number of lessons, the pace of the lesson needs to be increased, but, in most lessons, teachers manage time effectively to keep pupils 'on task'. There is an expectation that pupils will work to the full extent of their ability in Religious Education.

### **The extent to which leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education – good**

- Leaders and governors share a common understanding for the importance of Religious Education. The department has recently relocated to the 'heart of the school' and is seen by all as the 'heart of the curriculum'.
- Leaders and governors have ensured that the Religious Education curriculum time meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales and that Religious Education has full parity with other core subjects. Leaders and Governors fully support the priority of Religious Education as a core subject, but would benefit from a deeper understanding of the performance of the department for monitoring and evaluation purposes.
- The monitoring and self-evaluation of Religious Education has been a priority for school leaders since the last inspection; this now needs to continue in order to ensure that the progress of all learners is consistently good across all groups.
- The subject leader for Religious Education has a strong vision for the department and the curriculum chosen is well matched to the needs of the pupils. The subject leader is well informed of current best practice, as well as being an active participant and contributor to trust and diocesan network groups.
- Moderation activity with other schools in the trust has taken place to ensure consistent precision in marking; this is evidenced in accurate marking and work scrutiny.

## 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

- Pupils in Year 7 are engaged and respectful during Collective Worship, which is confidently led by a variety of pupils. There are clear links between the themes, such as that of 'kingdom' and how this can be linked to pupil behaviour and spiritual growth. Pupils receive a mission message to take forward into the day, furthering the impact of Collective Worship. Pupils are at ease with expressing their faith and show great reverence throughout worship.
- The 'spiritual and well-being' pupil group is regularly involved in preparing liturgy and Acts of Worship, facilitated by the lay chaplain or a year group leader. Pupil leadership of Collective Worship should now be extended to the wider pupil community, so that they all can plan and lead liturgy. The 'spiritual and well-being' pupils can explain the importance of the lay chaplain and how he has worked with them regularly to promote opportunities for form time prayer. They value his support and experience.
- Pupils value the prayer life of the school and are able to describe their daily prayers and their afternoon worship time. They understand the links to the liturgical year and how it contributes to their sense that the school is 'like a family'.
- Pupils in Key Stage 3 are far more engaged and demonstrate more confident leadership of prayer during form time than in those in Key Stage 4. There now needs to be a consistent approach to prayer and worship across the school to ensure that all pupils receive the same provision: for example, Year 11 pupils have not yet participated in Mass this academic year.

### **The quality of provision for Collective Worship – good**

- The appointment of a lay chaplain in 2019 has had a positive impact on the status and quality of Collective Worship. The lay chaplain supports the Catholic primary feeder schools and he is well supported by the new lead lay chaplain for the trust.
- Daily prayer and acts of worship are now part of the school week. The ‘Sutton Way’ character values are closely linked to those of the Gospel message and, as a result, most pupils recognise the importance of the school ethos.
- The school adapted its provision during the pandemic to provide online Collective Worship opportunities for all pupils. Pupils are able to give examples of how this was undertaken and its positive impact upon them.
- A retreat programme has been introduced this year, where a year group spends a day in school involving a variety of experiences such as designing affirmation stones and planning for a prayer garden, culminating in a celebration of Mass. This has taken place for Year 7 and is planned for future year groups. This level of engagement needs to be embedded with the other year groups and adapted, depending on the age range concerned, so that all can benefit from equality of strong provision.
- Continual professional development has been delivered by the lay chaplain. As a result, staff are skilled in helping pupils to plan and lead worship of quality: they are key role models for the pupils in their understanding and dissemination of the importance of the liturgical year.
- School leaders need to realise plans to involve a wider audience for school Collective Worship. Every week, form group Masses are celebrated in the chapel. The school has developed a ‘walking-talking Mass’ resource to support all pupils in their understanding of the Eucharistic celebration.

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

- Leaders know how to plan and deliver quality Collective Worship and have modelled this to staff and pupils. They have participated in diocesan training on Collective Worship. Leaders have a good understanding of the Church’s liturgical year and, when they plan and lead worship, it is well received by pupils.
- The lay chaplain and other school leaders use their expertise to encourage and support pupils in planning and leading Acts of Worship and form time prayer. Pupils have benefited from the improvements in behaviour and culture, as they now feel they have chance to pray and explore their faith.
- Leaders promote the importance of pupils planning and leading Collective Worship. They should now involve a larger group of pupils in this work so that pupil-led prayer experiences continue to grow and develop, up-skilling a greater number of pupils from across the school’s year groups.
- Pupil and parent views are sought by school leaders. The school has responded positively to suggestions and requests, in terms of, for example, increasing weekly Masses, daily worship during lockdown and offering meditation techniques.
- Governors are passionate about the importance of Collective Worship in the school. They now need to become more involved in the self-evaluation and review of Collective Worship.
- The school has begun to evaluate the quality of pupil-led worship, but this evaluation is not yet fully established. A more systematic approach is needed in the evaluation of Collective Worship involving pupils and governors.



## SCHOOL DETAILS

<b>School Name</b>	Blessed Robert Sutton Catholic Voluntary Academy
<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	146235
<b>CMAT</b>	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* 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, 1 main Act of Collective Worship and 7 form time Acts of Worship.

Meetings were held with the headteacher, a governor, the subject leader for Religious Education, The Trust's lay chaplain, the school's lay chaplain, the trust's CEO and the director of performance and standards. Discussions were also held with pupils.

The inspectors scrutinised a range of documents including reports of the 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.

<b>Chair of Governors:</b>	Mr John Rimmer
<b>Headteacher:</b>	Miss Laura O'Leary
<b>Date of Previous School Inspection:</b>	06 March 2017
<b>Telephone Number:</b>	01283 749450
<b>Email Address:</b>	office@brs.srscmat.co.uk

## WHAT INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS MEAN

Within the report, the following grades are used:

<b>Grade 1</b>	Outstanding
<b>Grade 2</b>	Good
<b>Grade 3</b>	Requires Improvement
<b>Grade 4</b>	Inadequate

In the context of the whole school, the overall effectiveness grades have the following meaning:

<b>Grade 1</b>	Outstanding	The school is a highly effective Catholic school. Pupils' needs are exceptionally well met.
<b>Grade 2</b>	Good	The school is an effective Catholic school. Pupils' needs are met well.
<b>Grade 3</b>	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.
<b>Grade 4</b>	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.