

Ratcliffe Catholic College

URN: 120316

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Nottingham

25–26 June 2025

Summary of key findings

Overall effectiveness

The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school

Catholic life and mission (p.3)

How faithfully the school responds to the call to live as a Catholic community at the service of the Church's educational mission

Religious education (p.5)

The quality of curriculum religious education

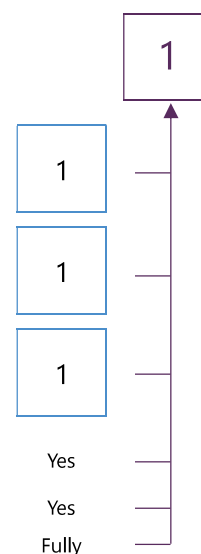
Collective worship (p.7)

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

The school is fully compliant with the general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishops' Conference

The school is fully compliant with any additional requirements of the diocesan bishop

The school has responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection



Compliance statement

- The college is fully compliant with the general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishops' Conference.
- The college is fully compliant with any additional requirements of the diocesan bishop.
- The college has responded fully to the areas for improvement from the last inspection.

What the school does well

- The distinctive Rosminian charism of Ratcliffe College is lived proudly and with authenticity throughout the whole community, impacting on an unwavering commitment to its Catholic ethos. This ensures that the college is a place which welcomes religious diversity, and is characterised by a sense of inclusion, tolerance and respect.
- Pupils are outstanding ambassadors for the college and embrace their personal responsibility to undertake charitable works in the service of others.
- Pupils achieve very high standards in religious education and are exceptionally religiously literate.
- Prayer and liturgy are experienced in a purposeful and meaningful way for the whole community, with chaplaincy provision rightly celebrated as a priority.
- Leaders, including governors, are committed to continually strengthening all aspects of this outstanding Catholic college.

What the school needs to improve

- Demonstrate explicit links to the principles of Catholic social teaching within the wider curriculum.
- Provide frequent opportunities for challenge and creativity in religious education lessons consistently across the college.
- Empower pupil ministry to flourish, with all pupils using their leadership skills to create shared ownership of the prayer and liturgical life of the college.

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

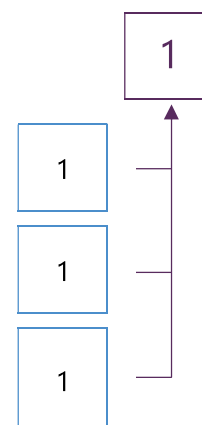
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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 Rosminian charism and values underpin all that is undertaken at Ratcliffe College. The deeply embedded mission of, 'Learning and growing in the light of the gospel', is lived with authenticity and embraced by the college community. Pupils feel valued and cared for and, as a result, are happy and confident. They have a clear understanding that the college community is committed to following the teachings of Christ and gladly embrace their personal responsibility to serve those in need. One senior pupil says, 'As a Ratcliffian, I would never be afraid to share my faith and treat people with dignity. Ratcliffe has taught me life lessons that my faith is not always straightforward, and that is okay', and another explains that, 'I understand that I need to be charitable and ensure I always help others, even if that just means listening to them'. Pupils, particularly in the senior school, are adept at finding and leading innovative ways of responding to the demands of Catholic social teaching. Charities, such as Aid to the Church in Need, Cafod, and The Carpenter's Arms (rebuilding lives after addiction) have benefited from pupils' understanding to pursue the common good. Though Catholic social teaching does not feature explicitly within the wider school curriculum, pupils understand its impact and importance. Pupils show a deep respect for their own personal dignity and that of others.

The college prides itself on its sense of welcome, where pupils from various cultures and belief traditions are celebrated. Pupils speak about the opportunities afforded them to discuss their own faith traditions, especially around major festivals and holy days. During night prayers with pupils who board at the college, those from around the world are invited to share the significance of their name in relation to scripture, where 'God calls us by name'. The environment is exceptionally celebratory, and all displays are carefully considered with pupils' contributions prioritised. The chapel is a central and celebrated aspect of the Catholic life and

mission of the college, providing high-quality opportunities for the spiritual and moral development of pupils and staff. The chaplaincy teams ensure that the chapel is used in a prayerful and respectful manner and has a dynamic and well-planned programme for all pupils. Chaplaincy provision is a real strength of the college, and the leadership teams have been visionary in appointing a lay chaplain and an assistant who encourage and inspire the whole community. The provision for relationships, health and sex education is planned collaboratively to ensure progression through the college.

The Catholic life and mission of Ratcliffe College is very clearly prioritised and embraced in the development plan and self-evaluation documents. Leaders, including governors, are rightly proud of the college and all it offers, and are able to articulate with great clarity the Church's mission in education. They are equally clear about the strengths and developments needed for the college. Governors are very much involved in the life of the college and are regular visitors. They value their relationship with the diocese and appreciate the services it offers. Likewise, the senior leadership team encourages all staff to engage with diocesan training and support. Leaders and governors recognise and value the unstinting encouragement from the Rosminian priests, whose support for the identity, charism and mission of the college results in an energised and joyful expression of the Catholic faith. A typical comment from parents indicates the strength of leadership at Ratcliffe College: 'The leadership leads with integrity to the gospel values and unashamedly puts God in the centre of the community'.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

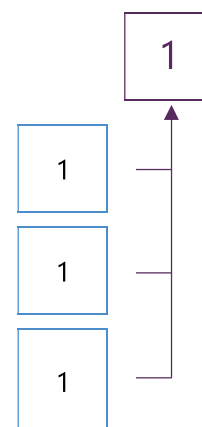
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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 make outstanding progress in religious education and their behaviour for learning is excellent. They speak with confidence about the impact that religious education has had upon them from the preparatory to the senior school, providing a strong moral compass. Pupils are exceptionally religiously literate; they transfer what they have learnt in religious education into real life situations. For example, in a senior school lesson about 'life after death', pupils discuss and debate the topic of assisted dying with sound theological knowledge, often referring to previous learning; in the preparatory school, a lesson on 'stewardship of creation' prompts excellent discussion around how they might feel if someone they cared about was hurt, such as feeling 'damaged' and 'disrespected', knowing that it would not just affect themselves but other people as well. Although lessons do not always reflect increasing challenge and creativity throughout the college, progress in religious education across all key stages has led to outstanding outcomes. Pupils are reflective learners. They have a clear understanding of how well they are doing and appreciate constructive feedback from teachers. Pupils at Ratcliffe College achieve above average attainment compared to other core curriculum subjects and national data at Key Stages 4 and 5.

The teaching of religious education exemplifies consistently high standards across the college. As a result of excellent subject knowledge, teachers engage pupils in lessons that demonstrate the high level of confidence teachers have in teaching this subject. Teaching is adapted to meet the needs of all learners, encourage collaborative discussion and ask probing questions to determine pupils' understanding. This leads to pupils having confidence to express their ideas and understanding, and become independent learners. Teachers have an excellent understanding of the impact religious education has on the moral and spiritual development of pupils; for example, in the Early Years Foundation Stage, there are ample opportunities for

prayerfulness in outdoor learning to celebrate the gift of God's creation and, in the senior school, learning about other faiths supports the pupils' understanding of tolerance and respect. Subject leaders of religious education explain that the 'vision is to be a strong department academically, but also spiritually and morally, bringing these two aspects together, acknowledging that all pupils can achieve in religious education at different levels, so they all feel they have a positive experience'. Pupils are celebrated widely across the college in lessons, in headteacher newsletters and in marking and feedback.

Leaders have high expectations for pupils in all year groups, and this results in the development of pupils who are articulate and motivated to learn. Staff new to the college, including those new to teaching as well as established teaching and support staff, highly value the continuous support of the leadership team in developing their theological knowledge and understanding. They are appreciative of the opportunities to attend diocesan training and collaborate with other schools. Staff speak passionately about the Rosminian values, especially in the belief that every pupil has a talent and that they are encouraged to believe in these. Governors are highly visible in the college and, as well as their exceptional support for the religious education strategy, they also lend their support to activities such as lesson 'learning walks', 'pupils voice' discussion and scrutiny of workbooks. They have all taken the opportunity of training within the diocese around the inspection process as well as undertaking other courses. High expectations of religious education are as a result of a sincere and authentic commitment by the leadership team to Catholic education at Ratcliffe College. Robust strategic leadership, supported very ably by governors, ensures the highest standards and expectations from all stakeholders.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

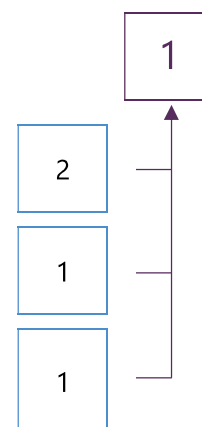
How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

Provision

The quality of collective worship provided by the school

Leadership

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



Pupils value the many and varied experiences of prayer and liturgy at Ratcliffe College. They participate by planning and attending various types of prayer and liturgy during each week including, in the senior school, the headmaster's assembly, whole school celebrations of the word on Fridays, tutor celebrations of the word and boarders' night prayer; in the preparatory school, pupils have the opportunity to plan and deliver prayer, and celebrations of the word. Though they do not lead consistently with increasingly independence, pupils demonstrate the leadership skills and capacity to do so. During discussions with pupils, it is clearly evident that their experiences of prayer and liturgy have a profound effect on them. One sixth former explained that 'chaplains encourage you to be strong in your faith and so I have become a Eucharistic minister and been confirmed, and I wouldn't have done that before coming here'. Pupils are knowledgeable about the Church's liturgical year and how it influences the prayer life of the college. They are keen to share feedback, meaning and understanding of the gospel values with their peers. Although pupils benefit from and can talk about themes of Catholic social teaching, which are identified across the academic year, they are less confident about how these principles thread through and have an impact within different curriculum subjects.

Prayer and liturgy are guided expertly by the lay chaplain, for example through the 'Faith in Action' awards and by having a focus on developing the leadership skills of senior pupils. Staff support the prayer and liturgical life of the school: for example, music teachers encourage the singing of the college prayer in the preparatory school. The whole college takes advantage of praying the Stations of the Cross in the grounds. The pupil Caritas team are provided with support in the senior school to enable pupils to develop and lead prayer throughout the liturgical year. This also includes working with pupils in the preparatory school, planning prayer for them and modelling excellent examples of faith. Staff plan celebrations of the word in line with the

liturgical year and ensure that celebrations of the Eucharist are at the heart of its provision: the recent Corpus Christi procession, was, for staff and pupils across the college, a truly memorable experience. Pupils are keen to talk about their roles in the celebration of Mass as Eucharistic ministers, altar servers and readers. The prayer life of the college is enhanced by the presence of the Rosminian priests who are available for counsel, reflection and regular celebrations of Mass. This enables pupils and staff to receive the Sacraments, including Reconciliation. Ratcliffe College has a strong catechetical programme where pupils are prepared for the Sacraments of First Holy Communion and Confirmation.

Leaders, including governors, clearly prioritise the evaluation of the quality of prayer and liturgy and are reflective in their self-evaluation. Prayer and liturgy throughout the college, whilst remaining committed to the pattern of the liturgical year, clearly reflects the distinctive Rosminian charism of Ratcliffe College. All holy days of obligation and other significant days, for example the Benefactors' Mass, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, and the Feast of Blessed Antonio Rosmini, are prioritised in the calendar, and links are made and emphasised between these feast days and the theology of Blessed Antonio Rosmini. Ongoing professional development opportunities for staff ensure consistency in the outstanding provision of prayer and liturgy. Leaders are exceptionally proud of the college and show a clear commitment to creating a vibrant, worshipping community which provides meaningful prayer and liturgy of a high quality.

Information about the school

Full name of school	Ratcliffe Catholic College
School unique reference number (URN)	120316
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8556001
Full postal address of the school	Ratcliffe Catholic College, Fosse Way, Ratcliffe on the Wreake, Leicestershire, LE7 4SG
School phone number	01509 817000
Headteacher	Jonathan Reddin
Chair of trustees	Fr Tom Thomas, IC
School Website	www.ratcliffecollege.com
Trusteeship	Rosminians
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	N/A
Phase	All Through
Type of school	Catholic Independent School
Admissions policy	Choose an item.
Age-range of pupils	3-18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	7 March 2022 (Preparatory); 25 June 2018 (Senior)
Previous denominational inspection grade	Preparatory School – 2; Senior School - 2

The inspection team

Monica McCarthy	Lead
Lucy Gunton	Team
Bernadette Grimley	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