

9th December 2024

Celebrating a Successful CSI Inspection

Dear Parents, Carers, and the St Thomas More Community,

It is with great joy and pride that I share the results of our recent Catholic Schools Inspectorate (CSI) inspection. We are thrilled to have been graded as **Good (2) in all nine areas**. This marks a significant achievement, especially when compared to the school's previous inspection in 2019, where the school was rated as *Requires Improvement*. This remarkable progress reflects the unwavering dedication and hard work of our staff, the enthusiasm and character of our pupils, and the steadfast support of our families and the executive board.

The inspectors' report highlights many of the strengths that make St Thomas More such a special place to learn and grow. At the heart of the report is **recognition of the transformative power of our mission statement**, "*Aspire not to have more, but to be more.*" The inspectors noted that "**all stakeholders live out the school's mission on a daily basis**," using it as a tool to inspire improvement and personal growth. This ethos underpins all aspects of our school and drives us to be the very best we can be.

Catholic Life and Mission

The inspection team **praised our commitment to Catholic life and mission**, which is central to everything we do. Our mission statement inspires all aspects of school life, fostering a community where **every individual feels valued and supported**. The inspectors highlighted that the "**strong chaplaincy provision**" creates meaningful opportunities for spiritual and moral development, providing all members of our school with a chance to grow in faith.

Our **pupils' engagement with Catholic social teaching was particularly noted**, with inspectors recognising their **dedication to charitable works** such as organising a Christmas party for senior citizens and collections for the High Peak food bank. These activities are a reflection of our **commitment to serving the community and living out our faith in practical and meaningful ways**.

The inspectors also celebrated the "**extremely strong family feel**" of our school, describing it as "**a safe, loving place**" where **pupils are known individually and feel cared for and supported**. This nurturing environment is the foundation of our success, ensuring that our Catholic mission is lived out every day.

Religious Education

Our **religious education** programme was **praised for its impact**, with **pupils demonstrating enthusiasm for the subject and recognising its importance in shaping their values of respect, tolerance, and equality**. The inspectors **commended the culture of participation and progress fostered through initiatives like the 'Teaching and Learning 7,'** as well as the commitment of our teachers, who deliver engaging lessons with confidence and expertise.

Collective Worship

In **collective worship**, the inspectors celebrated the **vibrant and faith-filled atmosphere created during communal prayer and song**. They highlighted the contributions of our chaplaincy team and student council, who lead worship and social change with creativity and confidence, as well as the opportunities provided for pupils to engage with prayer and reflection in meaningful ways. The chapel was described as "**the heart of the school**," offering a special space for spiritual activities that pupils thoroughly enjoy.



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**St Ralph
Sherwin**
Catholic Multi Academy Trust

Character Curriculum and Behaviour

The report commends the **meticulously planned character curriculum, which ensures a holistic approach to education, focusing on the personal, moral, and spiritual development of every child**. Our pupils are encouraged to be **authentic, sacred, passionate, inspirational, resilient, and empathetic**, and these values are **evident in their exemplary behaviour**. Inspectors highlighted that **our pupils are respectful and well-aligned with the school's values**, with one pupil describing the school as "a safe, loving place" where "it feels like home." This reflects the strong relationships between staff and pupils, as well as the welcoming, family-like atmosphere that permeates our community.

Pastoral Care

The **pastoral care** at St Thomas More was also **recognised as a significant strength**. The inspectors noted that **pupils "feel they are cared for and loved,"** and that the school's **strong chaplaincy provision provides opportunities for both staff and pupils to experience spiritual growth**. This care is a cornerstone of our success, ensuring that every child feels valued, supported, and able to thrive.

Leadership

The report also highlighted the **strength of leadership** at St Thomas More, recognising the **commitment of our leaders to the school's mission and vision**. Inspectors noted that **leadership at all levels is ambitious, with senior leaders and the executive board working tirelessly to ensure that the school continues to improve and thrive**. The partnership with the St Ralph Sherwin Catholic Multi-Academy Trust was also praised for its role in driving positive change, with leaders successfully embedding Catholic values into all areas of school life.

Inspectors commended the clarity of the vision provided by our leaders, which has resulted in significant progress across many areas of the school. The collaboration between leaders, staff, and pupils has been a key factor in **creating an inclusive and inspiring learning environment** where everyone feels empowered to succeed.

Moving Forward

While we are delighted with the results of this inspection, we are committed to building on these successes and continuing to grow as a community. The inspectors encouraged us to deepen our pupils' understanding of how their actions reflect our Catholic mission and to refine our systems for assessing progress in religious education. These steps will ensure that we remain focused on continuous improvement and providing the very best for every pupil.

A Thank You to Our Community

This report is a reflection of the incredible collaboration between our staff, pupils, families, and executive board. I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to each of you for your contributions to our school's success. Together, we will continue to live out our mission and aspire, as it says, not to have more, but to be more.

With gratitude and pride,



Mr D Redfern
Headteacher



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