

DIOCESE OF LEEDS DBI



# SECTION 48 INSPECTION REPORT

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL  
AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

St Joseph's Catholic College  
Cunliffe Road  
Bradford  
BD8 7AP

School URN	107429
Chair of Governors	Mrs M O'Shea
Headteacher	Mr P McDermott
RE Subject Leader	Miss M Hattersley
Dates of Inspection	29 <sup>th</sup> & 30 <sup>th</sup> January 2009
Section 48 Inspectors	Miss E McGuire & Miss A Dews

## INTRODUCTION

The Inspection of St. Joseph's Catholic College was carried out under the requirements of the Education Act 2005, and in accordance with the Leeds Diocesan Framework and Schedule for Section 48 Inspections approved by the Bishop of Leeds.

### Description of the school

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St Joseph's Catholic College is a voluntary aided 11-18 girls' school. Ninety six percent of the pupils are baptized Catholics. The College has an associated post 16 arrangement with St Bede's Catholic Grammar and this has been extended to include Yorkshire Martyrs Catholic College from September 2008.

St Joseph's is a Specialist Science College and has a partnership with the University of Leeds and the Rothschild community of excellence. The College is, from September 2008, part of a hard federation sharing a single governing body with St. Bede's Catholic Grammar School and Yorkshire Martyrs Catholic College.

The College is part of the Bradford Central confederation which comprises 14 other local secondary schools together with Bradford College and Shipley College. The College has a joint vision statement and programme of activities with Feversham College, the local Muslim girls' school, and this partnership has received national recognition.

St Joseph's serves all parts of Bradford, Shipley and Bingley and the surrounding areas and its intake reflects a wide range of socio-and economic backgrounds. The College has seen an increase in admissions from Catholics from Eastern European countries but pupils also come from the Congo, Zimbabwe and the Philippines. The girls show a wide range of attainment on entry but are generally about or just above the national average as measured by KS2 SATS results.

The school summarises its Mission Statement as a commitment to:

- The search for excellence.
- The Uniqueness of the individual.
- Gospel Values.
- The education of the whole person.
- The education of all.
- Education as the service of others rather than the service of self.
- The belief that we are all learners in a learning community and
- That leadership is shared.
- This is a school *'Where Every person Matters'*

NOR = 1002 girls aged 11-18

## OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL

### The overall effectiveness of the provision for the Catholic life of the school, of curriculum RE, and the school's main strengths and areas for development.

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St. Joseph's Catholic College provides an outstanding Catholic education for the students, their families and the communities it serves. All aspects of school life are at least good and many are exemplary. There is an extremely strong sense of mission within the college community in the recognition and value of each person and in the belief that every person matters and is encouraged to take an active part in the life of the school. The distinctive Catholic nature is evident at all levels of management and in the college's systems and structures. Leaders at all levels of the school are highly committed to the Catholic life of the college and the Mission in leading by example. The chaplaincy, prayer life, and spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development of the pupils and staff is and vibrant and integral part of daily life. This is evidenced in the many opportunities to celebrate achievement; by ensuring inclusion; through high quality pastoral care;

and in the diverse roles and experiences offered and supported by outside agencies and a highly dynamic chaplaincy team. The management and leadership of RE is outstanding and the liturgical prayer life of the college is excellent. Standards in RE are high in relation to students' capabilities. The college priority is to continue to raise levels of attainment in RE. The planning for development in order to raise standards in the college is now rigorous and if the present strategies are owned and implemented by all staff there is great opportunity to greatly advance the level of achievement in the college. The college has a very good organisational capacity to improve.

### **The effectiveness of any steps taken to promote improvement since the last inspection**

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Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection:

#### **A. The provision of a room more suited to smaller (numerically) acts of worship.**

1. The Upper Room now provides a very beautiful Chapel for prayer, reflection and acts of worship for small groups; weekly Mass, weekly exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, Form visits for Catechesis using the 9 window prayers, the Rosary, and special days of prayer e.g. Holocaust Day.

#### **B. The leadership and management should ensure that all leaders are equally confident in carrying out the mission through the provision of ongoing Inset and quality assurance.**

1. Inset for all staff has been provided; 'Christ at the Centre' has focused the college on bringing the Mission Statement into reality by reflecting on and translating the Beatitudes into school life. Help has been offered to staff in praying with young people.
2. Six staff are studying for the CCRS.
3. The Centenary of the College has been a springboard for the celebration of the College's rich faith tradition and Catholic roots and has helped to increase the confidence of all staff.
4. Year Team Leaders have been included in quality assurance work.

### **The capacity to make further improvements**

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St Joseph's has a strong capacity to improve further. The college has a clear vision for the next phase of development and leaders have the determination, insight, strategies and capacity required to take the school forward during this period of transition. The college's strong spiritual and moral leadership will ensure the college remains committed to its Catholic foundations and the development of each student as a unique individual. The college is building on its strengths and focusing on enhancing aspects of teaching and learning by sharing good practice in order to further raise levels of attainment. The college leaders are working with leaders in partner schools in the federation, mindful of the complexities and sensitivities required, in order to plan for the future of Catholic education in Bradford.

### **What steps need to be taken in order to further improve the provision of Catholic education?**

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1. The college needs ensure that it raises standards further so that all students make at least good progress.
2. The quality of teaching and learning in R.E. is evidence of outstanding practice which exists in certain areas of the college. This best practice should be shared with departments to enhance the performance, achievement, and progress of all students in school.
3. To sensitively and successfully manage the period of transition for all staff and students involved in the Federation.
4. To seek support for the governors in their role in monitoring the college's mission within the Federation.

## THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

### LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

#### How effective are Leadership and Management in developing the Catholic life of the school?

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The leaders of St Joseph's have a very clear vision of the nature and role of a Catholic School and are highly effective in developing the Catholic life of the college and gaining the support of all staff in its implementation. The Mission Statement has recently been the focus for review and renewal under the guidance of the Headteacher and in the light of "Christ at the Centre". Leaders and staff have a shared understanding of the Catholic ethos and values and this is made real in all aspects of college life. There is an extremely strong sense of mission within the college community in the recognition and value of each person and in the belief that every person matters. The spiritual and moral development of students is excellent.

Governors and parents have shown their commitment and support for St. Joseph's during the period of consultation on the future of Catholic schools in Bradford. The governors have demonstrated their responsibilities to lead, develop and support the school's Catholic foundation. The result is that the future of St Joseph's is secure and it is now at a new and exciting phase of development becoming part of a federation of three Catholic schools with a single governing body.

St. Joseph's is a welcoming, inclusive community where students are known and valued and feel secure. The college has admitted an increasing number of students from Eastern Europe and works hard to integrate them into the community and support their learning. Pastoral care is a great strength of the college and designated teachers and support staff work in partnership with parents/carers and a range of external agencies, including Catholic Care, in support of students. As a consequence, students are happy, confident and know where they can go if they need assistance. The Behaviour Policy, and the staff structure that supports it, has resulted in good standards of behaviour and no permanent exclusions. Students enjoy lessons and relate well to teachers. Parents reported that they are highly satisfied with all aspects of their children's education at St. Joseph's and appreciate the role the college plays in helping their children to develop their faith.

Rigorous systems of monitoring achievement and progress have been implemented to ensure that the development of each student is tracked and intervention made as and when appropriate. The college has in place strategies to enhance the quality of teaching and learning and further raise attainment. Mentoring of staff by leaders of outstanding departments such as Religious Education is supporting the process of school improvement. The consistent implementation of the strategies by all staff is essential and should lead to very successful outcomes.

The college's Lay Chaplain plays a key role in the life of the school, linking with staff, students, parents and carers, the diocese, parishes, religious orders and other faiths. She is always available to staff and students and her work as Chaplain and in leading the Chaplaincy teams is intrinsically linked to that of the leadership team and other leaders in developing the Catholic life of the college. The Chaplaincy teams are involved in monitoring and evaluating aspects of the Catholic life of the college. The contribution of this provision to the Catholic life of the school is outstanding.

A very wide range of extra-curricular activities is provided to help students to use their free time effectively and to support any vulnerable pupils. Students' involvement in school life is actively promoted through the school council and students' views are sought, listened to and acted upon. Students are given many opportunities to show responsibility and take on leadership roles and they enjoy this. The student response to overall college provision is very positive. As one student stated, "You get a lot of help here from staff. There are a lot of activities that involve staff." Students spoke of the very good relationships between staff and students and of cross-curricular

support. As one student explained, "Staff working together helps us to learn." The college takes every opportunity to reward and celebrate the success of its students in college and in the broader community.

The college is mindful of its responsibilities to promote social cohesion and does so effectively. The college is actively involved in outreach activities such as the work with Feversham College and the Bradford Sixth Form Consortium. The effectiveness of leadership and management of St. Joseph's College ensures that every person has the opportunity to experience an authentic and fulfilling Catholic education and enjoys it.

## **COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

### **How good is the quality of Collective Worship?**

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The provision of Collective Worship is outstanding. Prayer and worship are intrinsic to the daily life of the school. The day begins with Morning Prayer and at midday the Angelus bell is rung. There are many opportunities for prayer and worship throughout the week for staff and students at lunchtimes and after school and these include prayer groups and Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and opportunities for private prayer in the Chapel and newly created Upper Room. Each week is marked by a theme for prayer and prayer books, resources and artifacts are available to support staff and students leading prayer in acts of worship and assemblies.

The Eucharist is central to the life of the school. Voluntary Mass is held weekly and well supported as it is prepared by the RE department and all students are involved in the preparation of these Masses. Masses are held on feast days and at key times within the college for different years. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is celebrated in college at Advent and Easter. The college recognizes that although the number of baptized Catholics is very high, for many young people, school is their only experience of Church and the college welcomes and supports them on their faith journey.

The college runs a well-structured programme of retreats and students clearly value and enjoy these experiences. The day retreats for Years 7 and 8 lead to residential in upper school. One student in Lower school said, "At retreats we learn about one another." The Lourdes pilgrimage, open to years 10 and 12, is valued by staff and students and there are more volunteers than places. The Lourdes group is involved in assemblies and acts of worship in the college.

Staff have the opportunity to pray together, to develop their understanding and faith through inset and through retreats. Last year staff went on a pilgrimage to Rome and Assisi. The impact of the support for staff's spiritual development can be seen in the fact that 6 staff are currently studying for the CCRS. New staff and those on ITT appreciate the excellent induction programme run by the College and the welcome and support of staff.

Chaplaincy is integrated into and supported by the college structures and therefore makes a powerful contribution to the community. The Chaplain has a well resourced base close to the Upper Room and she is available for staff and students throughout the week. Staff and students contribute enthusiastically to the different Chaplaincy groups. One Year 7 girl said, "I've only just started (chaplaincy) but I feel already the God's next to me."

A Year 13 student stated, "This a really supportive place to be if I'm worried, it's somewhere I can go. It's a really important part of my life. There is a family feeling of Years 7 to 13 together looking after each other." The Chaplaincy teams are not only involved in worship but they are also involved in the monitoring and evaluation of worship against the college's Collective Worship Policy.

Charity events are built in to the calendar and students are exceedingly generous. Opportunities are created for those students who might have little money to give to contribute in other ways. The college's involvement with CAFOD is ongoing throughout the year and links into educational programmes. Effective links have been made with the Muslim Schools at Feversham and students

speak of the understanding of other faiths they have developed through these links and through the visits to places of worship through the 6<sup>th</sup> Form RE programme.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

### **ACHIEVEMENT AND STANDARDS IN RE**

#### **How well do pupils achieve in RE?**

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The knowledge skills, understanding and achievement of students is outstanding considering their baseline at the beginning of Key Stage 3. There is a range of courses and strategies to meet all students' needs. The progress of the students is well monitored in a highly effective review system within an incisive quality assurance system. The excellent attitude and behaviour of students is commendable and derives from the stimulating and high achieving learning environment. The standards pupils achieve in RE are very high given their capabilities and starting-points. Results at A2 level and the standard of A2 achievement are very good in comparison to college results and national results. The standard of AS achievement is very good. The majority of students in Year 12 and 13 achieve an externally accredited award for General RE. At KS4 a high percentage of students achieve a grade C or above and a very good percentage achieve or exceed their GCSE FFT target grade. Entry level results are excellent. The standard of RE results achieved is excellent in comparison to the college results and the national average. An NOCN course has been developed and validated for Years 12-13 General RE.

The standard of achievement at Key Stage 3 is good in comparison to the college results and prior attainment on the baseline assessment. A very good number of students achieve a level 5 or above at the end of Key Stage 3. Almost all students, including those with learning difficulties, make at least good progress as reflected in value-added measures. Students are gaining knowledge, skills and understanding at a very good rate across all key stages. Performance is good or better in all key stages in RE, and there are no unsatisfactory areas.

RE is assessed at the end of each module and the department ensures that appropriate targets are set for pupils, supported by independent learning, in order to raise achievement. Students enjoy their work and are actively involved in target setting and this information is available to parents in the school planner. Lesson observations by the RE subject leader, and a shared observation with an inspector, have confirmed that there are at least good, often very good and in some areas outstanding standards of teaching and exemplary behaviour throughout RE. The programmes provide a significant opportunity for pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development. Students are challenged to think spiritually, ethically and theologically, and to become aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life. The priority is to further raise student attainment in RE by extending the use of interactive learning with AfL and continuing to monitor teaching and learning. The college shares the good practice of the team in a mentoring strategy for other subject areas and to improve achievement across the college.

### **THE QUALITY OF PROVISION IN RE**

#### **How effective are Teaching and learning in RE?**

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Teaching and learning are highly effective as demonstrated by the very good progress made by students as a result of excellent planning. Students are challenged to think spiritually, ethically and theologically, and to become aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life. Opportunity for prayer, reflection or meditation makes an excellent contribution to the spiritual and moral development of the learners by teachers who are knowledgeable, specialist teachers and committed, practicing Catholics. Planning and assessment are thorough and pupils know their targets and how to improve. Effective arrangements are in place to inform parents and carers of students' progress. The majority of teaching is at least good, often very good and in some areas outstanding. Students enjoy RE and are engaged in their learning. There is excellent evidence of assessment for learning in the planning and practice of the team. The monitoring of learning is

evident in the strategies used to review progress. A wide variety of teaching and learning methods and differentiated, high quality resources are used in lessons.

The department meets the requirements of the 'Curriculum Directory for RE' and 10% curriculum time. All learners thrive, enjoy their lessons, and make very good progress as a result of the high expectations and stimulating mixed-ability teaching of RE in a secure environment where every person is valued. The subject is staffed by RE specialists and teachers' high levels of knowledge of the Faith and expertise in teaching it, together with careful and consistent planning, highly engaging and productive learning styles with challenging tasks and thorough assessment of learning, ensures that work in RE is very well pitched and suitably challenging for all learners. The methods and use of resources are precisely judged to engage and extend learners, including those with additional and gifted learning needs, and drives up achievement. Parents are involved in the review of the students' progress and target setting. Areas for development have been clearly identified. The team will benefit from the plan to provide more ICT equipment.

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### **How well does the RE curriculum meet the needs and interests of pupils?**

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The RE curriculum is outstanding, all schemes are in place and used effectively, provide for excellent spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development and fulfill the requirements of the Curriculum Directory for Catholic schools and makes provision for EPR with training to teach it. The curriculum enables students to work well together within lessons. One student stated, "I enjoy this type of work because we can share ideas." The subject is staffed by RE specialists and teachers' high levels of knowledge of the Faith and expertise in teaching it, together with careful and consistent planning, highly engaging and productive learning styles with challenging tasks and thorough assessment of learning ensures that work in RE is very well pitched and suitably challenging for all learners. The methods and use of resources are precisely judged to engage and extend learners, including those with additional and gifted learning needs, and drives up achievement. The teachers challenge learners to think spiritually, ethically and theologically, and to become aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life. Opportunity for prayer, reflection or meditation makes an excellent contribution to the spiritual and moral development of the learners.

Students are respectful of all world religions and enjoy interacting with a nearby Muslim Girls school, visit the local places of worship and welcome faith speakers in their lessons. The students are respectful during prayer and worship opportunities and a large number of students attend prayer opportunities outside of the R.E. classroom. They enjoy raising money for charities during Advent and Lent and are involved in the CAFOD group. The high level of interest in the work and successful lessons results in a positive learning environment where the use of sanctions is rarely required. Areas for development have been clearly identified. The students will benefit from the plan to provide more ICT equipment

### **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF RE**

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#### **How effective are Leadership and Management in raising achievement and supporting all pupils in RE?**

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There is an extremely strong sense of the college's Mission and the RE teachers operate as a team totally engaged in this work with a great sense of purpose, have very good relationships and support one another and the students. Their aim is to promote high standards of religious education and to develop the faith of their students. The subject is very effectively managed in a way that ensures the very best use of resources, thorough and incisive quality assurance of its work, and programmes to enhance the skills of the team. The inclusion of all learners is a central goal based on its belief that every person matters which promotes diversity and as a result the learners flourish. All RE staff lead by example as a committed to the school's mission. 'Every member of the team is a good witness'. All RE teachers are involved in the Chaplaincy Team and work collaboratively with the Lay Chaplain and staff morale is high. Excellent INSET is provided for new staff and NQTs. The college is engaged in ITT with trainees from Leeds Trinity and All Saints University and all trainees successfully complete their programmes. RE Examination

results have improved over the last four years and progressed from good to outstanding achievement across all Key Stages. A very good standard of teaching and learning is evident across all Key Stages with good classroom relationships. The R.E. team is secure and confident in what they are teaching. The team's commitment and support for students' development is evident in their attendance at Diocesan Events. There is a great respect for the subject leader who is highly focused with effective standardizing and monitoring systems in place for development of RE. The subject leader is involved in sharing good practice by mentoring other team leaders in order to raise achievement across the college. She has also contributed to the Diocese of Leeds development work for RE. RE is resourced as a core subject and involved in all major aspects of school improvement. The role of the governors is clearly identified and more involvement of the link governor would further enhance development.

## INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

ASPECT	GRADE	DESCRIPTOR
<b>OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS</b>	<b>1</b>	Outstanding
<b>THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL</b>		
How effective are Leadership and Management in developing the Catholic life of the school?	<b>1</b>	Outstanding
How good is the quality of Collective Worship?	<b>1</b>	Outstanding
<b>RELIGIOUS EDUCATION</b>		
How well do pupils achieve in RE?	<b>1</b>	Outstanding
How effective are Teaching and learning in RE?	<b>1</b>	Outstanding
How well does the RE curriculum meet the needs and interests of pupils?	<b>1</b>	Outstanding
How effective are Leadership and Management in raising achievement and supporting all pupils in RE?	<b>1</b>	Outstanding