

DIOCESE OF LEEDS DBI



SECTION 48 INSPECTION REPORT

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL
AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Cardinal Heenan Catholic High School, Leeds

School URN

108095

Name of Chair of Governors

Mrs A Cox

Name of Headteacher

Miss E Cox

Name of RECo / HoD

Mrs C O'Neill

Date of Inspection

May 2010

Section 48 Inspector

Mr S.Mort and Miss M.Mollicone

INTRODUCTION

The Inspection of Cardinal Heenan Catholic High School 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

Cardinal Heenan Catholic High School is just below the national average for the number of students attending. It is situated in Meanwood, a suburb of Leeds, but draws students from a wide area. The school, while being denominational, attracts students from different faith groups and a wide range of cultural heritages. The school has a greater than average proportion of students from a variety of minority ethnic groups but the proportion whose first language is believed not to be English is below average. Around three quarters of students are described as being from the White British ethnic group. The proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average, as is the proportion of students with a statement of special educational needs.

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.

Cardinal Heenan Catholic High is a school that lives out its Mission Statement. There is an excellent shared understanding of the school's ministry to young people and its service to the Church. A very strong commitment to the principles of the Mission Statement is evident in the verbal expressions and practice of the Governors, Head teacher, Senior Leaders and Religious Education Team. They ensure that the mission of the school informs all policies including those related to the Catholic life of the school, curriculum and extra-curricular activities, behaviour and Collective Worship.

A practical commitment to the principles underlying the Mission Statement is evident in the status and role of the Religious Education Department, the good opportunities for Liturgy and Worship, and developing Chaplaincy provision. Pupils are well aware of the belief and values system, which underpins the Catholic life of the school. These beliefs and values are present in the content of the curriculum and in the quality of relationships between the members of the school community. Excellent behaviour, politeness, respect for the school environment and for each person in the community are very much in evidence around the school.

There is outstanding pastoral care for both pupils and staff. The promotion of community cohesion is a particular outstanding strength of the school. The school is successful in supporting all learners, including the most vulnerable. Its success in building a caring community, which values all and celebrates success, is witnessed to by the pupils who value the support and care provided by staff, and are proud to belong to the school community. Pupil achievement in Religious Education is outstanding and there are secure links with parents and members of the local communities who hold the school in high regard. The school has positive strategies for informing parents about the progress of their children and about the life and work of the school. Parents feel that they are kept well informed about their children's progress in Religious Education.

Governors provide outstanding support and appropriate challenge. They are aware of the strengths of the school's Catholic character and the areas which require further development. The Chair of Governors and RE link governor bring personal commitment, enthusiasm and substantial knowledge to their roles.

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

Since the previous Section 48 inspection in 2007, the school has made satisfactory progress in addressing the recommendations made in the report at the time.

The capacity to make further improvements

The school's capacity to improve is outstanding. The school completed a very thorough and honest self-evaluation and has a very accurate view of its own strengths and of those areas it seeks to develop further. It is clear from the discussions with all members of the school community that the school is very well positioned to effect further improvements and is committed to doing so.

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

Arising from its own effective monitoring systems the school has accurately identified steps it wishes to take to improve the provision of Catholic education.

In order to develop further as a Catholic school and to enhance existing provision the school should:

- i) Appoint a Lay Chaplain, as planned, to develop further the excellent chaplaincy initiatives instigated by school staff;
- ii) Review roles and responsibilities in the Religious Education Department, ensuring that these reflect the objectives set out in the School Development Plan;
- iii) Review internal standardisation procedures for assessing pupils' work at Key Stage 3, in order to develop a shared understanding by teachers of attainment levels in Religious Education.

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

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

The quality of leadership and management of the school is outstanding. The Governors, Head teacher, Senior Leaders, Curriculum Leader for Religious Education and Pastoral Leaders have a strong sense of the educational mission of the Church and the role of the Religious Education department in contributing to the school's role in this. The Head

teacher and Senior Leaders communicate a strong sense of spiritual purpose, with a focus on promoting high standards and the fullest personal development of pupils.

There is an outstanding Curriculum Leader for Religious Education. Her leadership, experience and commitment to Religious Education are an asset to the department and the school. She is ably assisted by a Second in Department who, through her leadership of Chaplaincy provision, is making a significant contribution to maintaining and developing the Catholic ethos of the school and to encouraging an active faith amongst the pupils and staff.

The Pastoral Team is a real strength in the school. It is led by a committed Assistant Headteacher, Year Leaders and Pastoral Managers whose hard work permeates all aspects of pupil activity. The pastoral systems, policies and procedures support the five areas of the 'Every Child Matters' agenda. The school's Positive Discipline Policy is based on the gospel values of Christian love, moral behaviour, fairness, justice and mutual respect.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

How good is the quality of Collective Worship?

The provision and quality of Collective Worship is good. Prayer, liturgy and worship are at the heart of the school community. There is every indication that these will improve further with the appointment of a Lay Chaplain to encourage and enable more pupils to take a more active and confident role in the preparation and celebration of liturgy and worship. A chaplaincy team meets regularly to monitor, evaluate and review the programme of liturgies and worship throughout the year and there is a Collective Worship policy which outlines the roles of the team.

The school is fulfilling its statutory duties of providing a daily act of Collective Worship. Daily prayer is promoted in the school: each day starts with a prayer conducted in a form or year group assembly. Daily prayers and assembly themes follow the liturgical year. Year group assemblies use themes which are relevant and reflective. Resources to support daily Collective Worship are provided via the interactive whiteboard and in booklet form. These resources include a thought or reflection for the day which is used effectively by form tutors as a focus for prayers with their tutor group.

Collective Worship is delivered in a lively, interesting and prayerful mode and is interactive where appropriate. Time is given to share the peace of God: time for reflection (silence) gives pupils quiet space for contemplation as well as an opportunity to consolidate their understanding. Pupils participate fully in collective worship and their behaviour is excellent.

There are regular opportunities for students to participate in Eucharistic celebrations including a weekly voluntary Mass, Year 7 Mass of welcome, Year 11 Leaver's Mass of celebration and a whole school end of year liturgy of thanksgiving and celebration. Pupils from all year groups participate in well established days of recollection, residential retreats and the Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes. Further opportunities for developing pupil's spiritual development include seasonal prayer e.g. Devotions to Mary during May and October, a Remembrance Day Service in November and a Service of Carols and

Readings during Advent. All students are invited to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation during the seasons of Advent and Lent.

There are a wide range of pupil groups involved with the liturgical and spiritual life of the school, emphasizing the positive impact of the programmes. These include the Madrigal group and the junior choir, the school orchestra and the school drama groups.

The Chapel is resourced with artefacts, posters and colours to reflect the Liturgical Year. Resources are displayed appropriately and the pupils show respect for them. The Chapel is open at all times for pupils to use. Guided meditation in the chapel is an integral part of the RE Curriculum and all RE lessons begin with a prayer.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

ACHIEVEMENT AND STANDARDS IN RE

How well do learners achieve in RE?

Pupils perform very well in Religious Education, particularly at Key Stage 4, where results are consistently the highest in the school. The positive attitude and behavior of students is commendable and derives from the stimulating lessons and learning environment. Mixed ability differentiated teaching is used effectively to cater for the learning needs of all the pupils, including those with Special Educational Needs, the Gifted and Talented and EAL. All Key Stage 4 pupils follow the G.C.S.E. course. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make excellent progress. The gender gap between the achievement of boys and girls is narrowing as a result of effective intervention strategies in the Department; these include a wide variety of teaching styles and a new non-coursework G.C.S.E. examination.

The standard of attainment at Key Stage 3 is very good; a high percentage of pupils achieve Level 5 or above at the end of Key Stage 3. Most pupils, including those with learning difficulties, make at least good progress. Lesson observations and 'Learning Walks' by the curriculum leader and senior leaders have confirmed that lessons are at least good, often very good and in some areas outstanding.

The department has developed and successfully implemented an innovative Target Setting and Tracking Record System to identify whether pupils have progressed sufficiently and it allows intervention at an early stage. This excellent practice has been shared with other departments. The Religious Education department makes effective use of learning targets to help pupils progress to the next level. The priority is to standardise marking and assessment in order to develop a shared understanding by teachers of attainment levels across Key Stage 3.

THE QUALITY OF PROVISION IN RE

How effective are Teaching and learning in RE?

The department comprises of a dedicated team of RE specialists, all of whom are theology graduates. They all engage in their work with a sense of purpose. This cohesive group of

professionals is totally committed to the academic, spiritual and moral development of the pupils. Their aim is to develop the intellectual and spiritual nature of the pupils they teach. The department has produced a book of meditations which are used within RE lessons; it is obvious from speaking to the pupils and reading their written evaluations that they value the opportunity to gain an insight into their personal existence and are encouraged to develop a sense of wonder awe and reverence. Planning and assessment across the department is consistent and thorough, with all staff making effective use of differentiated learning objectives that are clearly measured by mini-plenaries throughout the lesson. Pupils know their targets and are given oral and written advice on how to improve and to progress to the next level. All staff make good use of ICT to enhance provision in the classroom.

Assessment for Learning is firmly embedded in lessons across the department, where Peer Assessment and G.C.S.E. mark schemes are effectively used by pupils to further their understanding and evaluation skills. Achievement is monitored and used to inform planning. Performance data is analysed and used in an innovative way to draw up seating plans that help pupils to make further progress.

Parents are informed of the numerous and varied curricular and extra curricular events in the quality Newsletter 'REquest' written by the Curriculum leader. Pupils' enjoyment of RE is evident through their enthusiastic participation in lessons, the positive relationships between staff and pupils and between pupils and their fellow class mates. Pupils and parents appreciate the work and commitment of staff in supporting pupils in their knowledge and understanding of Religious Studies and in their faith development. Areas for development include further enhancement of written feedback in exercise books, linked to learning objectives to identify what is needed to progress to the next level.

How well does the RE curriculum meet the needs and interests of learners?

The departmental schemes of work meet the requirements of the 'Curriculum Directory for RE'; 10% curriculum time is allocated for teaching RE in Key Stage Four and 8.5% curriculum time is allocated in Key Stage Three. However, the department is successfully delivering all the required elements through careful use of PSHE lessons to complement the RE teaching. The relationship aspect of Sex Education, for example, is taught by the RE specialists to ensure that it is delivered sensitively within the Catholic ethos of the school. The extensive schemes of work allow pupils to study and understand the teachings, beliefs, values and way of life of other world faiths. Pupils are respectful of other faiths particularly in relation to diversity in the community through school initiatives such as the Stephen Lawrence Award. Pupils spoke of this initiative as having changed attitudes within school and they were confident that racism in particular, along with other forms of discrimination, had declined as a result of this initiative. They praised the way staff responded quickly to incidents and this helped to promote a sense of equality and fairness across the school. Staff and pupils are working city-wide with other Catholic schools to develop this work which contributes to the quality of life in all schools, the city and in the wider community. The school is hosting the Stephen Lawrence Faith Cluster Launch in June this year.

There are many and varied opportunities for reflection, contemplation and prayer built into RE lessons. Every lesson begins with a relevant prayer or reflection, which is well received by the pupils. There are many extra curricular events, organized by the RE Department that allow students to deepen their faith; these include the Annual Diocesan

Pilgrimage to Lourdes, residential retreats at Myddleton Grange and Ampleforth and days of Recollection. The RE Department makes a significant contribution to developing qualities of empathy, care and concern for others, by giving pupils the opportunity to work with groups in the wider community, such as senior citizens. Pupils enjoy raising money for charities and have raised significant amounts. Areas for development include greater chaplaincy provision to further develop pupils' involvement in planning and delivering liturgies.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF RE

How effective are Leadership and Management in raising achievement and supporting all learners in RE?

The comprehensive schemes of work and extensive programme of extra curricular activities are testament to the direction and leadership of the Curriculum Leader for Religious Education. She has a clear vision for staff and pupils which has ensured very good examination results and given pupils many opportunities to develop spiritually, morally, culturally and socially. This is communicated to parents via the 'Request' news letter. She leads a hard working, cohesive team who share her vision, determination and commitment to Catholic education in all its forms. Morale in the department is strong, creating a culture of achievement and growth. The Assistant Curriculum Leader for Religious Education actively leads the Chaplaincy team, with a sense of enthusiasm and care. The active inclusion of all pupils is based on the belief that every child matters. This promotes diversity and allows pupils to flourish.

The school's professional development programme for its staff is good. The Curriculum Leader for Religious Education has taken a lead in this provision demonstrating effective tracking and monitoring techniques to staff in other departments. The school is engaged in ITT with trainees from Leeds Trinity and All Saints University and students successfully complete their training practice.

Under the well directed, creative leadership of the Curriculum Leader, staff are willing to incorporate new methods and initiatives into their teaching, such as increased and varied use of ICT, in order to raise standards and further to engage pupils in their learning. Staff also feel confident and able to suggest and develop new initiatives that they can share with colleagues. As a result the Department has the capacity to make further improvements. RE resources are well utilized and there is effective sharing of good practice and resources across the department, including good use of the 'Learning Platform'.

The role of the governors is clearly identified and links with the Governor responsible for RE in the school is good. The school would benefit from the appointment of a Lay Chaplain. This could lead to a restructuring of roles and responsibilities within the RE department to further enhance provision.

INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

ASPECT	GRADE	DESCRIPTOR
OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS	1	<i>Outstanding</i>
THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL		
How effective are Leadership and Management in developing the Catholic life of the school?	1	<i>Outstanding</i>
How good is the quality of Collective Worship?	2	<i>Good</i>
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION		
How well do learners achieve in RE?	1	<i>Outstanding</i>
How effective are Teaching and learning in RE?	1	<i>Outstanding</i>
How well does the RE curriculum meet the needs and interests of learners?	1	<i>Outstanding</i>
How effective are Leadership and Management in raising achievement and supporting all learners in RE?	1	<i>Outstanding</i>