

DIOCESE OF LEEDS



DIOCESAN BOARD FOR INSPECTIONS

SECTION 48 FINAL REPORT

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL
AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

ST JOHN FISHER CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL
Hookstone Drive, Harrogate, North Yorkshire, HG2 8PT

School URN	121717
School DfE Number	815/4609
E-mail address	Office@sjfchs.org.uk
Chair of Governors	Mrs Sheila Ambler
Headteacher	Mr Paul Jackson
RE Subject Leader	Miss Roisin McNulty
Date of Inspection	20th / 21st March 2013
Section 48 Inspector/s	P.Martin / M.Mollicone

INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection Grades: 1 is Outstanding, 2 is Good, 3 requires improvement in order to be good, 4 is Inadequate

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS: how effective the school is in providing Catholic Education.

2

The above judgement on overall effectiveness is based on all the available evidence following the evaluation of:

- *Outcomes for pupils,*
- *The provision for Catholic Education*
- *Leaders and Managers*

OUTCOMES FOR PUPILS

2

THE PROVISION FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION

2

LEADERS AND MANAGERS

2

Summary of key findings: This is a good school

- The overall effectiveness of the provision for Catholic Education is good with some outstanding features.
- The headteacher, governors and senior leaders are extremely dedicated to the Church's mission in education and there is clear evidence that they are working tirelessly in 'seeking to create a true community of faith and place of learning' (School Mission Statement).
- The wide range of pupils' personal, social and special educational needs is exceptionally well met and support is delivered with compassion and dignity. This is a real strength of the school and a daily witness to this community living the gospel values.
- Many pupils take advantage of the wide range of extended curriculum activities that provide spiritual, moral and social opportunities for personal development.
- Acts of worship within assemblies take place in an atmosphere of reverence and spirituality.
- GCSE A* - C results have improved from 63% to 76% of the full cohort in the last two years and evidence suggests that this upward trend will continue.
- The sixth form is outstanding. Students are keen to learn and make excellent progress.
- The school has the capacity to become outstanding in all sections in the very near future.

What the school needs to do to improve further.

- To further develop Chaplaincy provision across the school giving more opportunities for pupils a) to lead and take responsibility for acts of worship and b) to become chaplaincy leaders.
- To develop a more detailed and robust system for regular monitoring and evaluation of the full Catholic Life provision in order to ensure areas for improvement are clearly identified and acted upon.
- To put in place systems that make teaching across the department consistently good or better.
- To implement procedures that enhance the consistency of quality written feedback on pupils' work.

Information about this inspection

The Inspection of St John Fisher 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 Diocesan Administrator of Leeds. The inspection reviews and evaluates how effective the school is in providing Catholic education. This process begins with the school's own self-evaluation and the inspection schedule follows the criteria set by the National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers (NBRIA 2012).

The inspectors reviewed in detail the following aspects:

- Observation of thirteen lessons covering all key stages. One observation was undertaken jointly with the RE Senior Leadership Team line manager.
- Examination of pupils' written work, teacher assessment and written feedback.
- Meetings with the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team (SLT), the RE subject leader (SL), Personal Social Health Education (PSHE) co-ordinator, Special Educational Needs co-ordinator (SENCO), chaplain, lay chaplain, chair of governors, pupils and parents.
- Examination of school and department documentation including school improvement plans, policies, planning and assessment files, meeting minutes.
- Inspectors also shared in the celebration of Mass, Form prayer and year assemblies.

Information about this school

- St John Fisher Catholic High School serves all the parishes in the Deanery of Harrogate and in the Deanery of Selby - St. Joseph the Worker, Sherburn-in-Elmet (served by Barkston Ash Catholic Primary School) and St Joseph, Tadcaster.
- Students who attend the school live in Harrogate, Knaresborough, Pateley Bridge, Ripon, Wetherby, Clifford, Sherburn-in-Elmet, north Leeds, and in villages and rural areas in between.
- 95% of the pupils are baptised Catholic.
- There are 85.24 fte teachers - 71 full-time and 26 part-time. Of these, 50 fte are Catholic teachers. There are 5.3 fte teachers in the RE department. 13 teachers hold the CCRS or its equivalent.
- Pupil attainment on entry is significantly above national average and intake is skewed positively in terms of ability. Of the 1399 pupils, 11(0.8%) pupils have a statement of

SEN. A further 122(8.7%) are identified as having special education needs with 89 at School Action and 33 at School Action Plus. 33 pupils (2.4%) are eligible for free school meals. All figures are below the relevant national average.

- There are two looked after children (LAC) and 22 children designated as service children. Eleven sixth form students were awarded bursaries in 2012 / 2013 with one for a LAC student and ten discretionary bursaries based on free school meal (FSM) criteria.
- There is a wide range of different ethnic groups with White British at 1218 or 87% being the largest group, Indian 12 (0.9%), Other Asian 19 (1.4%), Any Other Mixed Background 11 (0.8%), White Irish 21 (1.5%) and Any Other White Background 58 (4.1%).
- There are 74 (5.7%) pupils for whom their first language is other than English made up mainly of Polish and Tagalog (Filipino) speakers. These figures represent part of an upward trend reflecting the increased numbers of pupils from Eastern Europe and Asia.
- The school is an Arts, Sport and Humanities Specialist College.
- Most recent results: 93% of Year 11 cohort of 204 students achieved 5+ A*- C grade GCSEs (86% 5+ A*-C incl. EM.) 48% achieved A*-C passes in all English Baccalaureate subjects. 98% students achieved 5 A*-G grade GCSE. 40% pass rate A*/A.
- Post 16 provision is organised jointly within an Associated Sixth Form with St Aiden's Church of England High School. In 2012 87% students progressed into the Associated Sixth form. There was a 63% pass rate at A* - B.

Full report - inspection judgements

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils are Good

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school.	1
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.	2
How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship.	2

- Pupils are confident in expressing and justifying their own views appropriate to their age group with a keen awareness and respect for other people's beliefs and cultural backgrounds. Pupils are quick to show praise and celebrate success as was seen at a year 9 assembly involving a presentation made by representatives from The Order of the Knights of St Columba to the winning pupils in a religious art competition. Pupils are firmly aware that their behaviour has consequences but they are alert to the needs of those who need support and reconciliation. Year 11 pupils clearly appreciated the benefits of a stress management course, undertaken during the inspection period, which included opportunities for prayer and meditation. Many pupils take advantage of the wide range of school activities providing spiritual, moral and social opportunities for personal development. Regular retreats and liturgies support the spiritual development of each individual and many pupils in Year 9, for example, have been keen to attend follow up sessions at lunchtime in the Chaplaincy resource area. An increasing strength of the school is the responsibility that some of pupils are taking, under the direction of the lay chaplain, for shaping and leading activities with their peers. A

detailed and coordinated approach would help develop more pupils as key players and leaders and provide further benefits to all pupils.

- Pupils with special educational needs, along with those with a range of social and behavioural needs, are well supported. The 'Third Floor' resource area is a credit to the school and all who work within it. The needs of all pupils are exceptionally well met and support is delivered with compassion and dignity. This is a real strength of the school and a daily witness to this community living the gospel values.
- Sixth form students are involved in a range of initiatives to support pupils in the main school, for example as peer readers and peer listeners. Pupils across all age groups take on responsibilities to lead and support local, national and international charities including the recent World Toilet Day (Dec 2012). The school was awarded a Global International Award in 2011.
- Standards in RE achieved by pupils in all key stages are above average. At Key Stage 3 achievement is consistently high with 56% of pupils achieving Level 6 or above and 95% achieving Level 5 or above at the end of Year 8.
- The GCSE 2012 results in RE at grades A* – C were 16% below those of GCSE English and this has been the trend over the last three years. A number of pupils (15) in Year 11 did not take the examination due to the logistics of alternative educational provision off site for part of the week. However, GCSE A* - C results in RE have improved from 63% to 76% based on the full cohort between 2011 and 2012. Leaders and managers are confident that this upward trend will continue with the current Year 11. Closer tracking of pupil progress has driven this improvement with effective intervention procedures that include extra teaching time and an 'Easter School' for identified pupils. In light of the results in the Short Course on St. Marks Gospel taken at the end of Year 10, 35 underachieving pupils were placed on specific timetabled RE intervention. 18 of these achieved or exceeded their target grades and 14 of the remainder, whilst not achieving their target, did improve their grade. One pupil remarked, "We are well set up for the exams."
- At A/S pupils performed very well across the Association with 98% A*-E and 59% A*-B, ALPS 3 in RE. At A2 98% of pupils achieved A*-E and 68% A*-B, ALPS 6. The RE department has identified C/D pupils as the focus for intervention.
- Evidence from observations and talking to pupils suggests that many enjoy their learning.
- There is evidence of pupil involvement in acts of worship with whole year groups. Assemblies and Liturgies in these situations take place within an atmosphere of reverence, spirituality with impeccable pupil behaviour. Pupils join in community prayers and singing, and generally show great respect for acts of worship.
- During the inspection, however, there was a broad spectrum of quality of provision for, and participation in, form-based acts of worship. In one classroom pupils were involved in reading part of Pope Francis' sermon, watching a clip from the 'Free the Children' international charity as well as having the opportunity for quiet reflection thereby making excellent use of the registration period of 20 minutes. Where the quality of provision was judged 'room for improvement', pupils were not all engaged and there was no evidence of pupils leading worship.

The provision for Catholic Education is Good

The quality of teaching and how purposeful learning is in Religious Education.	3
The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum promotes pupils' learning.	2
The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school.	2

- Teaching is good in some respects and there are no significant inadequacies across year groups but there is inconsistency and some aspects require improvement.
- Support provided in the classroom by other adults is effectively deployed.
- In most lessons, pupils are keen to learn, behave and concentrate well and work hard.
- In the lessons where pupils made good progress the planning was differentiated and the work was tailored to the needs of different groups of learners and learning objectives were shared with pupils and progress was checked in mini-plenaries. In an A/S lesson, the teacher gave hint sheets to some pupils and more difficult work to others to stretch them.
- In lessons judged to be good there was a variety of teaching and learning styles, imaginative use of resources, a high level of challenge and good pace. Progress was less evident in the more teacher led lessons where some pupils were not engaged and off task for significant amounts of time. Good and varied resources were used effectively, ranging from photographs and differentiated worksheets to relevant YouTube clips. In a Year 7 lesson on service, pupils were given a starter activity to study a photograph of Pope Francis washing the feet of a woman and they were asked to discuss what they thought was happening and why it was significant .
- Pupils made most progress when they were motivated and empowered to work independently on active pupil centred tasks for most of the lesson. The introduction of a common lesson plan would ensure a more consistent approach to lesson planning and delivery.
- Good oral feedback was a strong feature in the best lessons enabling good progress to be secured. Written feedback from teachers is variable with some good practice where learning targets are set, detailing how improvements could be made. It would be useful for leaders to ensure that the marking policy is used more effectively to support learning.
- The RE curriculum is carefully planned and in line with the Curriculum Directory, with all schemes of work in place, however curriculum time is less than the recommended 10% in Key Stage 3 and 4 at present, but it will increase to 10% in Year Nine next year. In the two year Key Stage 3, the schemes of work are based on 'The Way, the Truth and the Life'. Increasingly effective schemes of work and resources are being developed, for example in Year 7: this is partly as a result of the RE transition work carried out by a member of the RE department. In Key Stage 4, pupils study St Mark's Gospel and Roman Catholic Ethics from the AQA specification.
- The use of personalised programmes to meet the needs of individuals are in place in Key Stage 4 but some pupils are only able to attend one RE lesson a week and as a result most do not sit the GCSE exam.
- All Sixth Form students follow a religious studies programme, choosing to study Philosophy and Ethics at A level from the OCR specification or an A/S from the AQA specification: studying unit 5 - religion, art and the media and unit 9 Buddhism. The remaining students follow a non-exam course (RSG) which incorporates elements of RE, general studies and study skills.

- PSHCE is taught cross-curricular in years 7-9 and through enrichment in years 10 and 11. Every year the award winning TEN -TEN Catholic theatre company visit the school to give a performance on the theme of Sex and Relationships to Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 pupils. The Head of PSHCE has devised comprehensive schemes of work and lesson plans that are given to staff delivering the programme. All lessons are taught in line with the teachings of the Catholic Church.
- There are many opportunities for spiritual, cultural, moral, and social development in the RE curriculum allowing pupils to discern their own vocation. There is a wide range of extracurricular opportunities including a CAFOD enrichment day for Year 9, which has led to a CAFOD group where pupils take a lead in organising Family Fast Days. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about selling hot chocolate from the RE classrooms at break to raise money. Year 10 are involved in Fair-trade Fortnight and a Justice Awareness day. There are residential retreats for all year groups and Year 10 pupils go on the Lourdes Pilgrimage. Year 8 pupils, as part of the Multi-faith Worship and Belief Unit visit a Mosque and a Gudwara and members of the Taize community and the Franciscan Sisters spoke to Year 11.
- The school is fortunate in having a chaplain who is available once a week to celebrate mass before school and this provision has recently been extended, beginning with Year 7, to celebrate Mass with each form on a rotation basis at lunchtime.
- Pupils are involved in the preparation of their Form Mass, for example in writing bidding prayers along with serving and reading. Staff review and plan for improvements to acts of worship. However, the quality within Form Period time needs to be monitored and evaluated more effectively to ensure a more consistent and meaningful experience for all pupils.
- There are many examples of the high quality of experience of the Church's Liturgical life provided by the school, for example, in Holy Week and with an Easter Service early in Summer term. The school is again fortunate in having a large Chapel and a school hall that enables increased opportunity for acts of worship.
- Assembly themes follow the Liturgical calendar and are well prepared and delivered by senior leaders as well as a range of staff in liaison with the lay chaplain who is also available to help with further resources. However, there was some evidence of a passive response to acts of worship particularly where pupils were not involved in the planning and preparation. The range of provision for acts of worship within form groups was observed to be variable with some outstanding practice seen in one form group and very little evidence in others.

The Leadership and Management are Good

How well leaders, governors and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Catholic Education and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils.	2
---	----------

- Overall, the leadership and management of the school are judged to be good. The headteacher, governors and senior leaders are extremely dedicated to the Church's mission in education and there is clear evidence that they are working tirelessly in 'seeking to create a true community of faith and place of learning' (School Mission Statement). The strength of the school is the value that it places on every individual within the community. There is a strong Catholic ethos, where every child really does matter and there is evidence of a caring community where spiritual and moral development is made important. The school has implemented changes over time to ensure an outstanding level of pastoral care for all its pupils who receive a wide range of support and develop understanding of the Christian values of sorrow, forgiveness and reconciliation. This is valued by pupils. Excellent opportunities are provided at local, diocesan, national and international level for involving students in events that broaden their appreciation of global justice, community cohesion and fair trade.
- Leaders and managers undertake a range of monitoring activities covering the provision and outcomes of Catholic Education. Evaluation and further development opportunities are linked to and form a key part of the school's development plan. A more detailed and robust system for regular monitoring and evaluation needs to be mapped out to ensure areas for improvement are clearly identified to move the school from good to outstanding overall. At the time of the inspection the school was beginning to formulate plans for departmental reviews.
- Leadership and management in the RE Department are good and there is clear evidence of self-evaluation leading to effective forward planning. The dip in results at GCSE A* - C, in 2011, has been acted upon and results are now on an upward trend. The Head of RE has worked hard with her department, creating schemes of work and raising attainment at Key Stage 4. She is fairly new in post, has been supported by the Head of Geography and is willing to further develop her skills. With the continued support and guidance of senior managers, she has the potential to lead a highly successful department.
- Leaders have ensured that the school offers a varied curriculum that meets the needs of all learners, including vocational options and tailored, personalised learning provision for individual pupils. Parents speak highly of the school community and appreciate the strategies used to keep them in contact with school via on-line reporting, an updated website and regular e-bulletins. After a period of instability within the chaplaincy provision, the new Lay Chaplain is now beginning to have a very positive impact across many areas. For example, on providing pupils with spiritual leadership opportunities, using the recently inspired Year 9 retreat group to support similar work with Year 7 pupils.
- The RE accommodation in pre-fab classrooms which are not in good condition militates against RE being seen as a core subject at the heart of the school and the curriculum.
- The school benefits from a committed Governing Body, who take their responsibilities seriously and have the expertise to meet the school's needs and influence the direction of the Catholic Life of the school: they are knowledgeable about the work of the school. In their structured meeting cycle, which covers all aspects of school life, governors scrutinise documentation and discuss key issues such as pupil progress, the attainment of different groups within the school and the School Development Plan.