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CANON LAW 806 FINAL INSPECTION REPORT INCORPORATING SECTION 48

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

ST JOHN FISHER CATHOLIC VOLUNTARY ACADEMY
OXFORD ROAD, DEWSBURY
WEST YORKSHIRE
WF134LL

School URN	107783
Date of S48 inspection and OE grade	23 rd and 24 th May 2018 Grade 3
E-mail address	headteacher@stjohnfisher.org.uk
Chair of Academy Council	Mrs S Collins
Headteacher	Mr J Taylor
RE Subject Leader	Miss M Mollicone
Date and grade of last S48 Inspection	22 nd -23 rd November 2012 Grade 1
Section 48 Inspector/s	Mr S Mort Mrs C Collard

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 is the school in providing Catholic Education.

3

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

CATHOLIC LIFE

3

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

2

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

3

Summary of key findings:

This Catholic School Requires Improvement

- There is a clear sense of community at all levels of the school, which is evident in the quality of relationships that exist between staff and pupils. The provision for Pastoral Care is an evident strength of the school. Pupils from all year groups talk positively about the constant care and support provided for them by pastoral leaders.
- Parents value the quality of pastoral care provided by the school and are able to cite many examples of how the school has supported their children during difficult times. This is confirmed further by parental responses to annual school surveys. Pastoral leaders demonstrate a strong commitment to restorative practices and the Catholic values of forgiveness and reconciliation.
- Most pupils are alert to the needs of others and demonstrate a commitment to seeking justice for others within and beyond the school community. For example, pupils in all year groups regularly participate in fundraising for designated year group charities including CAFOD, Samaritans Purse and Forever angels.
- The school environment reflects its mission and identity through obvious signs of the school's Catholic character. The school chapel is situated in a central location and is open to all members of the school community. It also provides a base for the Lay Chaplain and Catholic Care worker. Weekly staff briefings, which are held in the chapel, provide regular opportunities for staff to pray together.
- Standards of attainment and progress in Religious Education (RE) at key stage (KS) 4 require improvement but the overall quality of teaching across the department is good. Attainment and progress in the Sixth Form are good.
- Governors and school leaders must ensure that the Catholic Life and mission of the school is a whole school priority. Whilst governors make some efforts to maintain the Catholic Life of the school, these efforts are not concerted or reflected in the school's self-evaluation of the Catholic Life and mission of the school.

- Stronger strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation of the Catholic Life and mission of the school needs to take place on a more systematic and regular basis.
- Governors and school leaders currently do not monitor and evaluate Collective Worship adequately. Greater involvement of governors will help drive the changes required and will ensure a greater consistency of practice.
- The Lay Chaplain possesses an honest and accurate understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement relating to the Catholic Life of the school, Collective Worship and Chaplaincy provision. The new chaplaincy opportunities she is providing are positive developments for the school. These are still in their infancy and mainly confined to lower school students, therefore, it is too early to measure their impact.

What the school needs to do to improve further.

- Clarify the roles and responsibilities of governors and school leaders to ensure that the provision for the Catholic Life of the school has the highest priority.
- Ensure regular monitoring and evaluation of the Catholic Life of the school by governors and school leaders through the implementation of a systematic and regular cycle of self-evaluation.
- Continue to raise standards in RE by further improving teaching and learning so that pupils in all key stages make at least expected progress, and a greater proportion make better than expected progress.
- Provide greater opportunities for all pupils to contribute to and benefit from chaplaincy activities at a school, parish and diocesan level.

Information about this inspection

The Inspection of St John Fisher Catholic Voluntary Academy, Dewsbury was conducted 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. 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 2017).

The inspectors reviewed in detail the following aspects:

- The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.
- The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school.
- How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school.
- How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning RE.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in RE.
- How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for RE.
- How well pupils respond to and participate in the schools' Collective Worship (CW).
- The quality of provision for CW.
- How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for CW.

The inspection was carried out by two inspectors over two days. The inspectors;

- Observed parts of 8 RE lessons to evaluate the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Conducted a joint lesson observation with a Deputy Head teacher.
- Completed a work scrutiny exercise and held discussions with pupils to evaluate their understanding of the Catholic Life of the school, CW and the impact of RE teaching on their learning over time.
- Met with governors, Head teacher, two Deputy Head teachers, Head of RE, Lay Chaplain, Pastoral Leaders, Special Education Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator (SENDCO), Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Co-ordinator (PSHCE) and parents.
- Observed a year 10 assembly, a sample of form group CW and a staff briefing including CW.
- Undertook a tour of the school to inspect the presentation of the Catholic Life of the school and pupils' behaviour.
- Reviewed a range of documents including the school's self-evaluation, data about pupils' attainment and progress, development plans, teachers' planning and records of aspects of Catholic Life and Chaplaincy provision.

Information about this school

- St John Fisher Catholic Voluntary Academy is a mixed Catholic 11-19 comprehensive school located in the town of Dewsbury in the Diocese of Leeds and within the Local Authority of Kirklees.
- The school serves the following Catholic feeder primary schools: Holy Spirit (Heckmondwike), St Joseph's (Batley Carr), St Mary's (Batley), St Paulinus (Dewsbury) and St. Patrick's (Birstall). The intake also includes pupils from a number of local community primary schools.
- The school is part of the Blessed Peter Snow Trust which was formed on the 1st October 2014, along with the primary schools of St Malachy's (Halifax) and Sacred Heart (Sowerby Bridge).
- There are 1156 pupils on roll with 171 in the Sixth Form. The proportion of pupils with English as an additional language is below the national average. The proportion of pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding is above the national average. The proportion of pupils on the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities register and those with an Education Health Care plan is below the national average.
- The school has maintained a high percentage of baptised Catholic pupils. 69% of pupils aged 11-16 are Catholic. The percentage of Catholics in the sixth form is comparable with the figure for the rest of the school (62%).
- Following an Ofsted inspection in November 2017 the Academy Council was dissolved and replaced with a Trust Intervention Board. A new Chair of the Academy Council, Head teacher and Lay Chaplain have recently been appointed.
- There are 65 full time teachers and 15 part-time.

Full report - inspection judgements

CATHOLIC LIFE

The Catholic Life of the school Requires Improvement

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.	3
The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school	2
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision of the Catholic Life of the school	3

- The school has a mission statement which clearly expresses the educational mission of the Church; ‘Following the example of our Patron, St John Fisher, priest and scholar, we aim to love one another throughout our life at school, to learn and develop our full potential in the image of Christ’. The school also has a ‘vision statement’ which was produced in consultation with all stakeholders.
- The Catholic Life of the school is not yet good because, whilst most pupils accept the responsibilities of living within a Catholic school community, only a minority of pupils actively participate in the Catholic Life and mission of the school. Greater opportunities for all pupils need to be carefully planned by governors and school leaders and systematic evaluation of such activities needs to be undertaken to ensure greater pupil participation.
- Governors and school leaders must ensure that greater opportunities are provided, beyond the RE and PSHCE curriculum, for pupils to actively participate in activities which contribute to their spiritual and moral development.
- Most pupils do not participate in the school’s evaluation of its Catholic Life. Therefore, pupils have an insufficient involvement in shaping the school’s mission and ethos. Opportunities for pupils to review the Catholic Life of the school are infrequent and inconsistent across year groups.
- Members of the school council were unable to provide examples of how their contributions have made a difference to the Catholic Life of the school.
- Parents believe that the new Lay Chaplain has raised the profile of the Catholic Life of the school and is providing greater opportunities for pupils to “engage with their faith” and to “seek answers to the questions of faith which are relevant to them”.
- Whilst acknowledging the importance of pupil’s participation in local events e.g. Batley torchlight procession, live crib and re-enactment of the crucifixion, parents have welcomed the recent opportunities for pupils to engage in wider diocesan events such as ‘Revelation’.
- Governors have not addressed the area for development from the previous inspection relating to the development of staff and pupil chaplaincy teams. The Lay Chaplain has recently introduced a ‘Faith in Action’ group. This is a positive initiative, but currently only 12 lower school pupils are contributing to the group. The establishment of Chaplaincy teams across all year groups would help to give more direction and structure to the Chaplaincy provision.
- Most pupils are alert to the needs of others and demonstrate a commitment to seeking justice for others within and beyond the school community. For example, pupils in all

year groups regularly participate in fundraising for designated year group charities including CAFOD, Samaritans Purse and Forever angels.

- PSHCE is well led and planned by the Head of PSHCE and Head of RE. The curriculum is taught by RE specialists and is further enriched by inputs from guest speakers and dedicated 'drop down' days. The curriculum reflects a commitment to Catholic social teaching and is underpinned by gospel values.
- The RSE programme meets diocesan requirements and reflects Catholic teachings and principles. Most pupils have a good understanding of loving relationships and sexual development within the context of a Christian understanding of the purpose of sexual love. The Head of PSHCE will need to consider how to maintain and further develop the current provision whilst managing the proposed new RSE curriculum and overseeing the incorporation of PSHCE into the KS4 curriculum.
- There is a clear sense of community at all levels of the school, which is evident in the quality of relationships that exist between staff and pupils. Pastoral care is a strong feature of the school. Pupils from all year groups talk positively about the constant care and support provided for them by pastoral leaders.
- Parents value the quality of pastoral care provided by the school and are able to cite many examples of how the school has supported their children during difficult times. This is confirmed further by parental responses to annual school surveys. Pastoral leaders demonstrate a strong commitment to restorative practices and the Catholic values of forgiveness and reconciliation.
- The school provides good opportunities for pupils to undertake leadership roles including the school council, prefects, anti-bullying ambassadors and a buddy system. School leaders should now provide regular opportunities for pupils to take a lead on monitoring, evaluating and shaping the Catholic Life and mission of the school.
- There is a strong commitment from governors and school leaders to the most vulnerable pupils. The school employs a full time Catholic Care social worker who provides therapeutic counselling support for both staff and pupils. Her role includes 'outreach work' to support wider family members. The SEND Co-ordinator works closely with the pastoral team and Heads of Faculty in providing support for pupils with a wide range of needs.
- Pupils are very complimentary about the new behaviour policy which is applied "fairly and consistently by all staff and is proving effective in reducing low level disruption to learning". This is reflected in the school's reduced number of fixed term exclusions. Most pupils feel the school is "a safe place to be" and that they are well supported by the pupil anti-bullying ambassadors who have completed an accredited course in restorative practices.
- The school environment reflects its mission and identity through obvious signs of the school's Catholic character. The school chapel is situated in a central location and is open to all members of the school community. It also provides a base for the Lay Chaplain and Catholic Care worker. Weekly staff briefings, which are held in the chapel, provide regular opportunities for staff to pray together.
- The Head of RE and Lay Chaplain lead on the induction of staff into the Catholic Life of the school. The staff ethos day, CW training and mindfulness sessions (recently introduced by the Headteacher and Lay Chaplain) have been well received by staff and there is a strong desire for similar opportunities to be provided in the future. Governors should ensure that such opportunities are a regular feature of the school's on-going continuing professional development programme.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Religious Education is Good

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education	3
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education	2
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education	2

- Standards of attainment are below the national and diocesan average for KS4 and this is a three-year trend. There is a gender gap and a gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils. However, there is evidence that these gaps are closing.
- Internal data suggests that pupils at KS3 are making expected progress with a minority achieving exceptional progress over time. The RE department should now work to ensure that the assessment at KS3 is robust and reliable as identified in the school action plan. The new focus on GCSE assessment style questions should provide valid data and more accurate target setting.
- The Head of RE has introduced a pupil tracker that is enabling RE teachers to monitor progress and attainment more accurately across the department. This system is still in its infancy and will need monitoring to ensure that it gives accurate information to allow for appropriate intervention at key times of the year.
- The planned whole school move from a two to three year GCSE course may contribute further to raising standards and ensure that the RE department have an appropriate amount of intervention and revision time.
- Sixth Form students praise the quality of teaching in Religious Studies and General RE. They appreciate that the introduction of the new A level has been challenging for their RE teachers and that there has been uncertainty regarding the assessment of the new specification.
- The numbers of students currently studying A Level Religious Studies are low. The RE department should now take steps to ensure that there is greater recruitment and retention of students at KS5. The raising of standards at KS4 should contribute to this process.
- In most lessons, pupils were interested and keen to learn. Pupil's behaviour during RE lessons is generally good. Many students indicate that RE is their favourite subject and they are confident that, with the support of their teacher, they will achieve their target grades. Not all pupils know their target grades, but they are able to refer to their planner that records this information.
- The RE department consists of seven specialist teachers, most of whom are experienced and confident practitioners with strong subject knowledge. The school's self-evaluation that RE teaching is mainly good is accurate.
- The RE curriculum provision is good and it provides a range of opportunities that contribute to the spiritual and moral development of pupils. RE has 10% curriculum time ensuring it meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference.
- There are new KS4 schemes of work, written in light of GCSE changes. Despite a challenging start to the new GCSE, the Head of RE has been proactive in working with

a diocesan network of schools to create and share resources. This allows the use of expertise from within and beyond the school.

- The department have access to common shared resources for each topic. These resources are in effective use across the department. Common assessment tasks are in consistent use across the department.
- Marking is regular and comments focus on what students need to do in order to move their learning on. However, in some exercise books students do not fully respond to staff feedback, including the PROUD Ink stamps used to ensure that students take pride in their work. Marking and feedback needs embedding, because there is some inconsistency of approach.
- There is currently a mismatch between teaching and outcomes. Effective monitoring, marking and feedback are now in place and are beginning to have an impact on pupil work.
- The school is totally committed to entering all students for the GCSE examination. General RE provision at KS5 is good. All students follow an accredited course and the department enjoys a 100% pass rate.
- The subject leader is well aware of the current national changes in RE and has been active in their implementation. She regularly attends diocesan subject meetings and undertakes training provided by the examination boards in the new specifications. She demonstrates a strong commitment to all aspects of her work.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Collective Worship Requires Improvement

How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship	3
The quality of provision for Collective Worship	2
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship	3

- Most pupils take part in the regular prayer life of the school though not always readily or with enthusiasm. Pupils participate in opportunities to sing, to pray quietly and to join in community prayer - although not all engage in such opportunities.
- Pupils regularly prepare or lead acts of worship but their efforts are not concerted, monitored or evaluated. The school expects all pupils to plan and lead daily CW in their form groups. However, this is not consistent across the school. Some pupils indicated that their form do not pray every day and, although there is an expectation that all form groups plan and lead assemblies, some pupils said there is an over reliance on the same pupils and adults to do so. A Year 10 assembly, observed during the inspection, was prepared and led by 7 pupils.
- Most staff accept responsibility for ensuring pupils prepare and lead prayer but daily CW in form groups varies from minimal provision to the full use of time available for meaningful prayer and reflection. There is some evidence of innovation but most staff's understanding of the variety of approaches to CW is not yet fully developed. Pupils have only a basic approach to prayer and whilst prayer may include scripture, the

selection and use of this is often limited. Pupils therefore require further support in developing their skills in planning and leading CW.

- The school has a 'theme for the week' linked to the liturgical year. However, this message is not the focus for all form group CW. This could mean that key liturgical seasons and feasts pass without note or celebration for a significant minority of pupils. More rigorous monitoring and evaluation processes would identify this issue and highlight where the best practice exists. Identification of the current training needs of staff and pupils will contribute to a greater consistency of approach across the school.
- The Lay Chaplain has recently introduced pupil surveys relating to CW; however, pupils were unsure whether the school has actioned their feedback.
- Governors do not monitor and evaluate CW adequately. Although some governors attend school Masses and Liturgies, they are only superficially involved in the self-evaluation of these acts of CW, providing informal feedback to school leaders rather than strategic support and challenge.
- School leaders should ensure that sufficiently robust and systematic monitoring and evaluation of CW take place at regular intervals, that any actions required are carefully planned and impact measured, so that resources are allocated where they are most effective resulting in a greater degree of consistency of practice across the school.