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**SHREWSBURY**

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**REPORT ON THE  
MONITORING INSPECTION  
OF OUTSTANDING SCHOOLS**

**Harrytown Catholic High School,  
Romiley, Stockport**

**URN: 106143**

**21<sup>st</sup> March 2017**

**Inspector – Mr J McCann**

The areas of focus in this monitoring inspection were :-

**1. OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS** - How well students achieve and enjoy learning in Religious Education

**2. LEADERS AND MANAGERS** – How well leaders, governors and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school and plan and implement improvement of outcomes for pupils.

**3. PROVISION** – The quality of Collective Worship

The school's most recent Self Evaluation judges that its **Overall Effectiveness** is Outstanding and supports these judgements with comprehensive evidence. This judgement is confirmed through Section 48 Inspection and the following comments summarise findings in the aspects of the key areas identified above.

## **1. OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS**

Standards of achievement in Religious Education are good. There is effective analysis and monitoring of academic performance with effective intervention strategies by the Head of Department. Standards pupils achieve at GCSE are mostly above average and are in line with, or above, the standards achieved in other core subjects. GCSE performance in 2016 showed a significant dip in the grades achieved by boys at grades A\*-C at 59% whereas in previous years it had been 80%+. Analysis by the Head of Department has identified issues which could have impacted. The evidence provided indicates a sustained level of improvement this year in KS4 with a target of 86% at A\*-C. for boys. Girls performance at KS4 has been consistently high with 70% - 80% of the cohort achieving A\*-C over the last 5 years. The Department enters all students for examination and virtually 100% consistently achieve an A\*-G grade. The Department regularly has a high number of students achieving A\*-A grades which makes it one of, if not the most successful at this level in the school.

A three-year GCSE course begins in year 9 which allows opportunities for development linkage and reinforcement of topics. Most students in each Key Stage are keen to do well, display an engaged and positive attitude to the subject, and work with interest and engagement in lessons. Most books show sustained adherence to the learning goals, assessment profiles and marking scheme, this is to be commended as excellent practice and is certainly a significant factor in the Department's continual drive to raise standards of attainment and the aspirations of the students created by the head of department.

Students speak very positively about the subject, especially the nature of the issues studied; the atmosphere in class; the willingness of the staff to support them and want the best for them. The students gain a good understanding of the beliefs and traditions of Catholicism while also engaging with the broader spiritual, moral, cultural and social issues of contemporary society: this is all underpinned by the many activities beyond the classroom.

The students understand the vision and values of the school and are very supportive of them. The school's Mission Statement and its meaning are introduced to all students through RE in Year 7 and is a recurrent theme throughout their 5 years at the school. The Mission Statement is prominently displayed throughout the school and in all documentation.

## **2. LEADERS AND MANAGERS**

The Headteacher, Senior Leadership Team and Governing Body are deeply committed to the Church's mission in education and see it as central to their *raison d'être*. The commitment to these values, in which academic and personal growth are so important, is evidenced in the school's policy documents and practices and its effective leadership, management and governance.

There is unequivocal and explicit evidence that the Catholic mission of the school is a priority, along with opportunities for spiritual and moral development and Collective Worship. This is most demonstrably evidenced through the appointment of a highly effective dedicated school chaplain, whose significant impact is acknowledged throughout the school at all levels; the development of a chapel to accommodate whole year groups: the allocation of a significant budget to support chaplaincy. There is effective monitoring of academic performance and appropriate intervention strategies undertaken by the Head of the RE Department. The Department is line managed by the Headteacher and offered support and challenge by a link member of the governing body.

A SMART Strategic School Development Plan is in place which is costed and set in an appropriate time frame. The Catholic life of the school is regularly monitored and reviewed by the Headteacher, SLT, governors and the chaplain as well as the pastoral team. Parental opinion is sought through questionnaires which are analysed and impact upon the processes of evaluation and planning. The most recent indicates a high degree of satisfaction with the school's delivery of its Catholic mission and curriculum RE.

Classroom observations are regular, accurate and well-documented. Prayer and reflection are an integral part of the tutorial and assembly provision and are subject to systematic monitoring by senior managers and the chaplain. Staff, Governors and the priests from the parishes which many of the students come from appreciate and understand the school's mission and purpose and are wholly and actively involved in their implementation. There is general pride in what the school represents and the students are extremely positive in support of this.

## **3. PROVISION**

The School's Strategic Improvement Plan and other policy documents emphasise the centrality of faith and worship in the daily life of the school and form a key part of every school celebration. The school has a dedicated chaplain to promote, deliver and facilitate the development of Collective Worship across each year group and provide support for staff in delivering prayer and reflection during form time at the start of each day. Evidence from senior leaders, governors, staff, students and parish priests indicates that this element of school provision is outstanding and firmly integrated into the life and practice of students and staff. "Worship and prayer are seamlessly connected to faith and action in the school and the wider community"

Collective worship and prayer are an integral part of the daily life of the school, as are opportunities to receive the sacraments of Eucharist and Reconciliation with a sympathetic appreciation of the opportunities given to those of different denominations and faiths. These activities are linked to practical experiences and challenges that enrich the students' spiritual, moral and cultural education, through charitable fund raising e.g. CAFOD and Wellspring: community events such as One Community Day, this year the theme was 'Called to be Agents of Mercy' engaging the whole school: the work of the SVP group: working with other Catholic schools as part of Mini DASH, Stockport Catholic Schools 'Together in Faith'; and the school Peace Council – where students in school work through lunchtime using restorative approaches to support students who may have difficulties with others.

## **OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS**

Outcomes for pupils are good with a number of outstanding features, the provision for Catholic Education, leadership and management in the development of the Catholic life of the school are all confirmed by this inspection as outstanding. The mission of the school is clearly evidenced throughout in terms of practice, aspiration and relationships all in the context of striving for the highest academic achievement.

## **IMPROVEMENT SINCE THE LAST INSPECTION**

- Regular reviews and updates to reflect developments within Sex and Relationships Education and Personal Development and Welfare.
- The Chapel, opened December 2013, is an excellent and highly valued addition to the school's provision by the whole community and provides an opportunity to reinforce the schools Mission.
- The appointment of a full time school chaplain.
- The development of a comprehensive, highly effective and well-resourced programme which supports Collective Worship and prayer in form, year group and whole school contexts..

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

In order to maintain and enhance the progress of the college even further it is recommended that the school:

- review the timing of the Headteacher's performance management cycle to match the academic year time frame;
- explore the possibility of additional seating options in the chapel;
- ensure all RE departmental staff follow the agreed marking policy and monitor the completion of personal targets on student self-review and assessment sheets.