

Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection report for **Our Lady Queen Of Peace Engineering College**

URN: 119782

Carried out on behalf of the Most Rev. Malcolm McMahon, Archbishop of Liverpool on:

Date: 11-12 October 2023

Overall effectiveness

The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school.....

3

Catholic life and mission (p.3)

How faithfully the school responds to the call to live as a Catholic community at the service of the Church's educational mission.....

2

Religious education (p.5)

The quality of curriculum religious education.....

2

Collective worship (p.7)

The quality and range of liturgy and prayer provided by the school.....

3

The school is fully compliant with the curriculum requirements laid down by the Bishops' Conference

✓

The school is fully compliant with all requirements of the diocesan bishop

✓

The school has responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection

Fully

Summary of key findings

What the school does well

- Pastoral care is a defining strength of the school. Teachers show a collective desire to support the young people for whom they have responsibility.
- The Headteacher has systematically identified the areas for improvement across the school. She has confidently mapped out a journey for improvement which places Catholic life at the centre.
- Teaching in religious education is a shining light, and gives glory to the founding purpose and mission of the school.
- Despite the fact that the school is located in a community with many social challenges, the pupils instinctively rally to the needs of others in local, national, and international contexts.

What the school needs to improve:

- The school environment does not accurately reflect the school's mission. Resources should be directed to improvements in physical provision for prayer & liturgy, as well as in corridor and assembly spaces to reflect scriptural texts underpinning the school mission.
- The department marking policy is not yet consistently applied. Written feedback does not always inform students how to improve. The subject team should review this, implement improvements and then evaluate again so that pupils make even faster progress.
- Pupils' experience and confidence in prayer and liturgy is limited. Leaders, at all levels, should engage with external professional support to ensure that pupils' experience is meaningful, helps their formation, and contributes to the Catholic mission.

Catholic life and mission

How faithfully the school responds to the call to live as a Catholic community at the service of the Church's educational mission.

Catholic life and mission key judgement grade:.....

2

Pupil outcomes

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

2

Provision

The quality of provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school

2

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school

2

Most students can talk confidently about the school mission statement '*In Christ We Grow*' and what it means to them. One student aptly described this: "*Our mission statement has helped me be positive in my actions for myself, and also in the way I am to others.*" Students are sincere when they say they are well-cared for, even though some cannot express this in terms of their uniqueness. The most able students articulate this as "Imago Dei" and appreciate all that the school does in upholding their dignity. The school works hard, and successfully, to change students' negative self-image where it exists. This inspires many. One very able student spontaneously linked the concept of personal dignity to the writings of St Catherine and the belief that God loves everyone immeasurably. Because the school places a high value on students' moral development, Catholic social teaching is well-understood. The Cafod *Live Simply* project is at the centre of this. In addition, students and staff show their charity in Saint Vincent de Paul foodbanks, the Whitechapel Homeless Charity, and fundraising for Macmillan and Ukraine. Students' behaviour is polite and focused on learning. School leaders are consolidating this and students understand their part in improvements. Students highly value the chaplain's work and note his unstinting care, good humour and diligence, freely given to all.

The school promotes the mission statement on the website, through policy and frequently in assemblies and form time. Survey responses endorse the actions of leaders to put Catholic life at the forefront of school improvement. This is borne out by frequent testimonies to the headteacher's hard work, dedication, and high expectations. Because staff value the school's sense of community, they are generous with support to students. This is one reason why the school has repeatedly been awarded the flagship *Inclusion Quality Mark*. Pastoral care is exceptionally strong, and recent improvements to special educational needs and disabilities provision enhances the nurture

experienced by many students. The school environment does not always reflect the fact that Catholic life is at the centre. Minor improvements to the chapel have been made but this should become a focus for redevelopment. Recent unplanned adjustments to chaplaincy mean that further development is required. The chaplain is valued for his support work among students and stands to benefit from external support aimed at the improvement of prayer and liturgy. Provision for relationships and sex education, as well as the wider personal development curriculum, is a strength. Leaders show integrity in ensuring an authentically broad offer to all students. One example is the rapid development of materials provided by the *Anti-Bullying Alliance* already quality assured using Archdiocesan support.

Currently, and historically, school leaders show fortitude in placing the school's Catholic life and mission at the centre. Recent adjustments to governance have not limited the headteacher's resolve that this is a core obligation. The school proactively engages with the Archdiocese using services for school improvement such as specialist leaders of education, and advisors for religious education. Links with parishes are less well-developed, but the frequent involvement of one priest chaplain provides inspiration for all. The school works unstintingly to create partnerships with parents focused on the needs of individual children and also affirming the Catholic foundation of the school. The well-being of staff is considered without losing sight of high expectations illustrating leaders' emotional intelligence. More could be done with curriculum statements to express the fact that life in a Catholic educating community is governed by the teachings of Christ, and nourished each day by the Holy Spirit. Systems for quality assurance and self-evaluation are secure providing an accurate insight into what is working well and what needs to improve. Professional development for staff (including early career teachers), in aspects of Catholic life, is present, but there are opportunities to enhance this to ensure there is a greater impact on students' experiences.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade:.....

2

Pupil outcomes

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education.....

2

Provision

The quality of teaching, learning, and assessment in religious education.....

2

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor, and evaluate the provision for religious education.....

1

Most students are developing secure knowledge and understanding in religious education and, as a result, make good progress in knowing more, remembering more, and doing more. Adaptive teaching caters for students of all abilities and needs without diminishing high standards or expectations. Religious literacy is at the core of each lesson, and students display a high level of confidence in understanding and applying religious terminology. These high standards transcend ability levels, with all students skilfully taught additional and complex terminologies. Students were observed referencing scripture scholars and accurately made use of these to ask good questions to further their learning. One example came from a Year 10 student who, when examining different beliefs about creation asked, *"What would agnostics think of this?"* Some students display the ability to work independently, and opportunities to develop these skills are embedded within lessons and modelled by staff. The standard of work produced in lessons is good, and students take pride in their work. There is a willingness from students to engage in lessons, and most students approach their lessons with interest and enthusiasm. As a result, classroom behaviour is good. Attainment in religious education outperforms other core curriculum subjects, especially at high grades. Nevertheless, results remain below national averages.

Religious education teachers are confident in their subject knowledge. They have high expectations and communicate this effectively to students. Lessons that were observed had a high level of challenge, and teachers consistently work to raise aspirations. Teachers ensure that students are given the opportunity to push beyond target expectations. Resources for literacy are expertly used in their teaching. Teachers are skilled at using questioning to gauge learner understanding and adapt questioning and explanations using relevant examples to help develop this. The very positive learning environment is a planned outcome and achievement is celebrated. This adds much to the already good relationships with the students. Feedback in books is good overall, and most students

are conscious of what they need to do to improve. However, the departmental feedback decoder is not used well. The quality and quantity of references to this varies across the department. The use of red pen self-correction is generally of a high standard, with students providing evidence of progression. A variety of good quality resources are used in lessons and adapted well to meet the needs of individuals. Adaptation for students with English as an additional language is a particular strength. The religious education team are committed to the continued improvement of teaching and learning, and subscribe to the subject leader's vision.

Leaders and governors ensure that the school curriculum for religious education is a faithful expression of the legacy *Religious Education Directory*. There is a robust curriculum in place for Year 8 and Year 9, and there have been effective steps taken to start to provide an authentic delivery of the new *Religious Education Directory* in Year 7. The provision for religious education is comparable to other core curriculum subjects, and whole school policies are applied systematically across all subjects. The subject leader has an ambitious vision for the department based around the goal of raising aspirations for all students. He is a passionate advocate for the subject and provides inspiration for departmental staff as well as the wider school community. His commitment to high standards ensures that students achieve positive levels of attainment. Leaders ensure that religious education is thoughtfully planned to ensure the curriculum is well sequenced. The subject leader's vision clearly reflects the school mission, giving all students the opportunity to grow in knowledge and confidence. Opportunities for cultural capital and enrichment are embedded within curriculum planning to promote students' learning and engagement. These include classroom contributions from the local clergy, visits to local places of worship, and an annual visit to Auschwitz. Leaders' self-evaluation of religious education is informed through monitoring, analysis, and self-challenge, to create strategic approaches to improvement.

Collective worship

The quality and range of liturgy and prayer provided by the school.

Collective worship key judgement grade:.....

3

Pupil outcomes

How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

3

Provision

The quality of collective worship provided by the school

3

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for collective worship

3

Prayer and liturgy is underdeveloped. Whilst students are respectful of prayer experiences, they show a hesitancy in participating and can often be passive. Smaller numbers of students willingly undertake elements of ministry such as reading scripture and are active within the chaplaincy provision. However, the majority of prayer and liturgy is highly scaffolded by adults. The daily pattern of prayer reflects the rhythm of the liturgical year. Nevertheless, students did not have a clear understanding of why this is provided. Student confidence to plan and lead prayer and liturgy is limited. The potential for students and staff to collaborate, so that prayer and liturgy is more varied and meaningful, has not yet been realised. When asked, students find difficulty in making connections between prayer and liturgy, the curriculum, and the wider life of the school. Many students find difficulty in linking the *Word of God* to their own experiences and the way they live their lives. They display some awareness of the ways in which these experiences can lead to action, but struggle to articulate the impact upon them personally.

Leaders and staff are focused on the integration of prayer and liturgy into the life of the school. Leaders spend time considering ways to reflect the rhythm of the prayer life of the church. Collectively, and individually, the school community appreciates the spiritual support provided, particularly during bereavement. This was emphasised in the feedback from one teacher who spoke for all by saying, *"Whilst some of our students might not be religious, during the sad moments our community has faced, the compassion, love and empathy shown was moving."* Daily prayer and liturgy is beginning to offer participants a growing range of ways of praying that are part of the Catholic tradition. Scripture is chosen to help students reflect and actively participate. Systems for this are underdeveloped and, in time, could ensure an effective coverage of the Gospels. Senior leaders, and increasingly, middle leaders, are enthusiastic role models when delivering and participating in prayer and liturgy. Some staff have taken up ministries, studies for the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies and one adult was recently received into the Church. Music and other art forms are present but would benefit from being developed further. Classroom spaces are a living witness

to the Catholicity of the school. The chapel is treated reverently, respected by students, and conducive to prayer. Families are warmly invited to participate in the prayer life of the school, and the school continues to seek effective links with neighbouring parishes.

The school's policy on prayer and liturgy is regularly reviewed and fit for purpose, but its impact on the work of staff, at all levels, could be improved. Staff with responsibilities for the development of prayer and liturgy, including the chaplain, have not yet shown the depth of understanding of the potential of students, and how they can better contribute. A greater focus on differentiation of materials would help this process and help realise the latent creativity and vibrancy which is seen in other areas of students' educational formation. Leaders have planned the school calendar to provide opportunities to celebrate the Eucharist as a school community. A weekly morning Mass is well-attended by staff and sometimes by other community members. Seasonal whole school Masses are well received and demonstrate a genuine commitment to the Catholic tradition. Leaders, including the chaplain, are not yet consistent in providing precise development or training opportunities for staff.

Information about the school

Full name of school	Our Lady Queen of Peace Catholic Engineering College
School unique reference number (URN)	119782
Full postal address of the school	Glenburn Road, Skelmersdale, Lancashire, WN8 6JW
School phone number	01695725635
Name of head teacher or principal	Mary Henshaw
Chair of governing board	Vice Chair: Mr Seamus Brady
School Website	www.olqp.org.uk
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Not Applicable
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Voluntary aided
Age-range of pupils	11-16
Trustees	Archdiocese of Liverpool
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	18 November 2015
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

The inspection team

Philip Mooney	Lead inspector
Sarah Daley	Team inspector
Julia Ashton	Team inspector
Name of inspector	Lead/team

Key to grade judgements

Grade	England	Wales
1	Outstanding	Excellent
2	Good	Good
3	Requires improvement	Adequate and requires improvement
4	Inadequate	Unsatisfactory and in need of urgent improvement

