



## **DIOCESE OF BRENTWOOD**



### **Inspection Report**

**Name of School: Holy Family Catholic School and Sixth Form**

**Unique Reference Number: 103106**

**Inspection Date: 12 May, 2014**

**Reporting Inspectors: Dr. Michael Sutherland-Harper and  
Ms. Anne Marie Brister**

**This Inspection was carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005.**

**Type of School: Secondary  
School Category: Voluntary Aided  
Age range of pupils: 11-18  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 1,160  
Appropriate Authority: The governing body  
Date of previous inspection:**

**School Address: 1 Shernhall Street  
Walthamstow  
London  
E17 3EA**

**Tel. No. 020 8520 0482  
Fax No. 020 8520 0482  
Chair of Governors: Mrs. Virginia Fawcett  
Headteacher: Dr. Andrew Stone**

## **Introduction:**

The Inspection was carried out under Section 48 of the Education (Schools) Act 2005 by two inspectors appointed by the Diocesan Bishop at the request of the Governing Body of the School.

The Inspectors acknowledge and are appreciative of the full support, co-operation and courtesy they enjoyed from the Governors, Headteacher, Staff and Students of the School both before and during the Inspection. The Inspectors wish to express their gratitude to all concerned.

## **The focus of the Section 48 Inspection was:**

- Classroom Religious Education
- The Catholic nature of the School through:
  1. Worship
  2. Links with the Catholic and wider community
- Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development

## **The Section 48 Report**

**Holy Family Catholic School  
1 Shernhall Street  
London E17 3EA**

**Head Teacher: Dr. Andrew Stone**

**Date of Inspection: 12 May, 2014**

## **Description of the School:**

Holy Family Catholic School and Sixth Form is an 11-18 Catholic school and is situated on two sites on Shernhall Street in Walthamstow with Years 9,10 and 11 on the Wiseman site and Years 7 and 8 and the sixth form on the Walthamstow House site. The school serves Catholic families from the parishes of Our Lady and Saint George and Our Lady of the Rosary and St. Patrick in Walthamstow and from St. Joseph's in Leyton and Christ the King parish in Chingford. The school is situated in the London borough of Waltham Forest and in the diocese of Brentwood.

### **Record of Evidence Base:**

Two Diocesan Inspectors were in the school for the equivalent of two inspection days.

- The study of pre-inspection documentation including the Self-Evaluation Form/ Denominational Provision (SEF/DP).
- The observation of eight lessons.
- Participation in a Mass and an assembly.
- Scrutiny of pupils' written work.
- Meetings with the Headteacher, the Head of Religious Education (R.E.), one of the parish priests, the Chair of Governors and a group of students from across the school.
- Observations of R.E. displays in the classrooms and around the school.

### **What the School does well:**

Holy Family Catholic School and Sixth Form is a good Catholic School.

The school fulfils its mission statement well as a community embracing the clear Christian values of respect, service and justice. It has a strong sense of family, valuing the many cultures which make up the school, and this sense of family comes from the shared and successful emphasis across the school on educating young people towards excellence in all dimensions of their lives. The headteacher is ambitious for his school and its students and staff share his drive to place the school at the heart of its local community.

Outcomes in Religious Education have improved enough recently, especially in Key Stage 3, for them to be judged good overall, although further improvement is needed for some groups. For example, work remains to be done on the progress and attainment of boys and of disabled students and those who have special educational needs to maintain their standards at a consistently good level. Attainment at GCSE is rising and expected to increase again this year. Results at A level have been good over time but are stronger at A2 than at AS level. The department has recently added to its supply of books and resources. The aim is to ensure that students become more involved in their learning, and develop their enjoyment of the subject in order to increase their levels of achievement.

The quality of students' learning and progress in Religious Education requires improvement. Expectations of what students should achieve in lessons and the contribution they should make are not consistent or always high enough to facilitate a more rapid rate of improvement. Students do not contribute sufficiently in a number of lessons to take their own learning forward rapidly enough. Attitudes to learning vary between lessons. The school has developed its approaches to delivery of the subject, including through on-line resources and use of the school website, but it has not yet fully explored how students feel delivery and interaction in the subject could be developed.

Students' contribution to, and benefit from the Catholic life of the school is good. Students who met the inspectors spoke very positively about how they have good opportunities to raise money for charities and local causes, including the Handicapped Childrens' Pilgrimage Trust. The students' strong commitment to helping others and improving the local community mirrors the priorities of the school. Within the school, there is a strong sense of community and respect for each other, whatever may be a person's culture or background. Students showed their desire to deepen their commitment when they said that they would welcome further opportunities to be even more involved in the Catholic life of the school and in promoting its values as school ambassadors.

Opportunities for students to respond to, and participate in, the school's collective worship, including through links with local parishes, are good. Lessons begin with prayers. Students displayed clear spirituality in their respect for fellow worshippers and the sacrament during the Monday Mass held in the Emmaus Chapel. They were reverent and prayerful and it was apparent that the Mass was central to their responses to the world around them. However, a few aspects of collective worship require a rethink. For example, the theme of the assembly on Lent and prayerful response was effectively delivered but its impact was diluted by the addition of school notices and reminders which might have been delivered at a different point or in the classroom setting. Opportunities to add to the presentation visually and with music, using the strengths of the school, were missed. The school meets the needs of students from other faith groups by seeking to promote in everyone a positive relationship with God, which is reflected in the community around them. The recently-appointed school chaplain is developing the prayer life and collective worship in the school.

Teachers, managers and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life of the school and plan and implement improvements well. They have clear plans for promoting high expectations of staff and students and these have been revised in a new plan to take effect from September, 2014. Time, effort and money have been put into the development of the Religious Education department and the Catholic life of the school. The impact of this work is now becoming more apparent. However, monitoring and evaluation of that impact is not always rigorous or frequent enough to ensure rapid improvement at the rate which the school wishes to see. The school's self-evaluation needs to evaluate how well the collective steps in Religious Education are contributing to the overall priorities of the department and of the school. The department still has some work to do to ensure that standards overall are consistently high and maintained over time and that its impact in helping to shape the school ethos increases.

Teaching overall is good but a certain amount requires improvement. Teachers have strong subject knowledge, enjoy good relations with students, use electronic technologies well and are quite often imaginative in their delivery of the subject. They are prepared to spend extra time to help students. On the other hand, assessment procedures are inconsistent and presentation of students' work is variable and reflects their different attitudes to learning. In a few lessons, students do not always know their targets, current levels or how to reach the next steps in their learning and expectations of progress in these lessons are too low.

The curriculum on offer promotes students' learning and understanding well. The department and school have thought about how to make it relevant to students and their future lives but this discussion has not always involved student opinions. The school is increasing the time allocated to the subject to bring time allocation and results up to the level of English. Provision is in keeping with the recommendations of the Church and Bishops' Conference. The department is currently using the latest edition of *The Way, the Truth and the Life*, believing that it best reflects the make-up and needs of the learning community for which it provides.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision is very well developed and is a strength of the school. Its importance is reflected in the wide range of colourful displays supporting each aspect. Students know what is expected of them when they join the school. Students' respect for each other is apparent in lessons. Speakers provide regular insights into the world around the students and the students have a clear sense that they have a responsibility to make that world a better place.

The headteacher is driving the school forward successfully. The school is addressing those areas which require improvement. To help take it forward, the school needs to:

- **Increase the amount of good and outstanding teaching in Religious Education**
- **Evaluate its work more rigorously, especially in Religious Education, with a special emphasis on the impact of its actions**
- **Involve students more widely in the evaluation**
- **Ensure that all assessment in Religious Education provides clear guidelines for what students need to do next against rigorous targets and that these are followed up by students**
- **Insist on high quality student presentation of work**
- **Have consistently high expectations of what students should achieve, the amount they should accomplish in lessons and the contribution they should make to raise the quality of learning.**

The Inspectors endorse the areas identified by the school for improvement in the Section 48 Self-Evaluation Form.