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DIOCESAN BOARD FOR INSPECTIONS

CANON LAW 806 FINAL INSPECTION REPORT INCORPORATING SECTION 48

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

Date of S48 inspection and
OE grade

5-6th June 2018
Grade 2

E-mail address

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Chair of Governors

Mrs Jane O'Gara

Headteacher

Mrs Jo Langstaff

RE Subject Leader

Mrs Roisin Bishop

Date and grade of last S48
Inspection

20-21st March 2013
Grade 2

Section 48 Inspector/s

Mrs Meg Baines
Mr Steve Mort

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.

2

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

CATHOLIC LIFE

2

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

3

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

2

Summary of key findings:

This is a Good Catholic school

- St John Fisher Catholic High School is a good and caring school with strong leadership, highly effective pastoral systems and gospel values central to its being.
- Governors are committed to the school and its success. The governing body has recently welcomed a number of new governors and is in the early stages of developing key personnel for specific roles.
- The governors and acting headteacher have a clearly defined vision for an aspirational place of learning with Christian values at its heart.
- A number of pupils are involved in a variety of ministries. There is a student chaplaincy team and a Young Vincentian group. The school supports a number of charities at home and globally.
- There are outward signs of the Catholic nature of the school in classrooms and corridors. Many of the religious icons and symbols of the faith around the school were made by the students.
- Parents are very supportive of the school and its ethos.
- The school offers students a safe environment, conducive to learning.
- The strength of relationships between the acting head teacher and her senior leadership team and staff is clear, thus enabling the current process of transition arising from changes to leadership in school and amongst governors to run smoothly.
- Standards of progress in Religious Education are below expectations as compared with other subjects in the school.
- Curriculum time allocated to Religious Education is less than in other subjects and falls below the time recommended by the Bishops' Conference.

- The teaching of Religious Education requires improvement. Too often, the pace of learning is too slow and teaching often lacks the creativity that would ensure the variety of learning styles students need.
- The acting headteacher has ensured that Religious Education classrooms are now centralised within the main school building. This makes for better monitoring of teaching and for sharing good practice.
- Leaders monitor attainment and progress well.
- The sixth form is highly successful. Students enjoy General Religious Education and at A' Level make good progress.
- Leaders of Religious Education are coping well with a number of changes to staffing and leadership within the department. Their priority is to ensure continuity of provision for students. Inspectors are concerned that coming changes will be more difficult to manage.
- Collective Worship is good. Pupils and staff lead prayer and liturgies throughout the school year. Prayer is viewed by most as a priority and a key part of daily life. School leaders work closely to provide good quality Collective Worship. Students speak with knowledge and confidence about the Church's liturgical calendar and the place it has in their lives.
- The school makes good use of the chapel, particularly in weekly voluntary Mass and acts of Collective Worship.
- Strong links with local parishes are well established. The school continues to build upon and take advantage of the historical links it has with the local parishes and clergy.
- The overall effectiveness of the school is good.

What the school needs to do to improve further.

- Raise the levels of progress for pupils in Religious Education at the end of Key Stage 4 by:
 - Addressing attitudes to learning in some lessons.
 - Improving behaviour for learning in some lessons.
 - Developing active and creative teaching methods.
 - Ensuring all teaching is at least good.
 - Targeting the 'gender gap' in performance of boys.
- Ensure the newly reconstructed governing body plays a lead role in developing the school's Diocesan Self Evaluation Form (DSEF) and the Section 48 Action Plan.
- Formalise, and make more robust, governors' monitoring of Catholic Life and Collective Worship.
- Review the roles and responsibilities within chaplaincy in order to raise its profile, appointing a person who has a role on, or strong links with, the Senior Leadership Team (SLT)
- Ensure the school is working towards providing Religious Education with 10% of curriculum time at Key Stage 3 and 4 and 5% in Key Stage 5 in line with the requirements of the Bishops' Conference.

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 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:

- Chaplaincy provision across the school and the role pupils take in planning and leading Collective Worship.
- Systems for regular monitoring of Catholic Life.
- Teaching and its impact on learning across the Religious Education department.
- Procedures around written feedback on pupils' work. Detailed work scrutiny.
- Tracking of progress across all key stages.
- Leadership roles within the Religious Education department and chaplaincy.

The inspection was carried out by two inspectors over two days through:

- Interviews with leaders and key staff as well as students across the key stages, formally and informally.
- Interviews with senior and middle leaders, chaplaincy team, clergy, parents and governors.
- Observation of Collective Worship in assembly and classrooms.
- Scrutiny of documents and school data.
- Previous Section 48 and diocesan documents.
- Scrutiny of students' work and related policies.
- Lesson observations (17) and learning walks.

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 plus St Joseph the Worker, Sherburn-in-Elmet and St Joseph, Tadcaster.
- Students come from a wide catchment area including Harrogate, Knaresborough, Pateley Bridge, Ripon, Wetherby, Clifford, Sherburn-in-Elmet, North Leeds and other rural villages.
- There are 1,474 students on roll, which includes a sixth form of 355. There are 11 students with an Education Healthcare Plan (EHP)
- 92% of students are baptised Catholics. There are 67 students who are of other Christian denominations and 4 who are of other faiths. 55 students identify as having no religious affiliation. Pupil attainment on entry is above the national average.

- There are 59 full time Catholic teachers and 32 who are part time, of whom (both full and part time) 12 hold CCRS (Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies)
- In the RE department there are 6 full time teachers and 3 who teach part time. One member of staff is on maternity leave and a full time supply teacher is in place.
- Post 16 provision is organised jointly with St Aidan's Church of England High School, a short distance away. This 'Associated Sixth Form' is popular with students. In 2017 86% of students from Year 11 of the main school progressed to the sixth form. In total 35 students took A level RE this summer. There are 30 currently studying it in Year 12. In 2017 ALPS 5 results showed an increase as part of a three year trend. Data for the current Year 12 places them above FFT20. An average of 29% of the cohort go on to study Philosophy and Theology related degrees. The well planned general RE programme in Key Stage 5 is designed to deepen religious understanding and explores moral and social teaching.
- In 2017 outcomes for students in Key Stage 4 showed a Progress 8 score of +0.52 for all groups. A slight upturn at A level showed in the progress score of +0.11. The Religious Education department's results at GCSE were not strong with results over a three year trend only recently beginning to improve.
- There is an excellent curriculum for Religious Education in Key Stage 3 which has been written by staff. It meets the Bishops' Conference requirements in its content. Students in this key stage are making good progress.
- The school was a founding member of the Yorkshire Teaching Schools' Alliance; in this capacity it provides experienced staff to work across the Alliance to share their good practice.
- The school does not currently have a dedicated lay chaplain but uses teams within the school to co-ordinate Collective Worship and Catholic Life events. A member of the senior leadership team has responsibility for reporting on these areas to the acting head teacher and the governors.

Full report - inspection judgements

CATHOLIC LIFE

The Catholic Life of the school is good

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.	1
The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school	2
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school	2

- The greater majority of students actively participate in the Catholic Life of the school. They play a part in its evaluation cycle through pupil questionnaires and feedback and leaders value the part students play in acting out their faith.
- There is a well-defined cycle of evaluation of Catholic Life.

- Students are supportive of each other and are proud of their school and its values. They embrace the leadership roles offered to them and are alert to the needs of others seeking an intellectual as well as a spiritual understanding of social issues that affect the young.
- Students at St John Fisher understand the school's values and take an active part in projects in which they live out their faith. They take part in charitable fund raising throughout the year for charities close to school and afar. The weekend following this inspection a number of staff and students are taking part in the "Knaresborough Bed Race", for local charities. In 2017-18 the total raised for charity stands at £12,346.97 demonstrating a high level of engagement by the students. They have been actively involved with projects such as the Franciscan Friars Homeless project in Bradford, CAFOD, 'jogging for Jordan' and Children in Need.
- The chaplaincy teams and Youth Leader who visit school are well known to everyone. All students are given the opportunity to go on retreat. A comprehensive programme of retreats is well thought out and beneficial to the school community.
- All students spoke highly of the pastoral provision in school. A range of support is offered from informal chats to the safe haven of 'The Attic', a centre within school where mentors provide enormous support to students from across the school on a range of needs. As a result, students are mostly happy, confident and secure in their personal and emotional stage of development. The school holds as important each student's mental health and well-being. This topic is discussed through General Religious Education in the sixth form and in other key stages in the Personal, Social, Health Education (PSHE) lessons where the MYRIAD (my resilience in adolescence) system is effectively employed. Pastoral teams are a real strength of the school, they care for and guide students with genuine care and affection.
- Year 12 students are ambassadors for the school. They promote and support the school community in a variety of ways; Peer Listeners, Prefects, School Council. This service to the community is a cornerstone of the Catholic Life of the school.
- While the school's motto (Educating for Life) does not explicitly reflect the educational mission of the church, a number of statements posted around school demonstrate that Christ is at the heart of thinking and being. Their CHRIST statements are displayed in all corridors.
- There is a clear and tangible sense of community at St John Fisher. There are outward signs of the school's Catholic character across the school.
- Staff work hard to promote high standards of behaviour and act as good role models for the students. Good relationships exist between staff and students.
- Behaviour around school is good. In most classrooms focused and respectful interactions were observed. In some Religious Education lessons poor behaviour for learning was preventing some students from achieving their best. Low level disruption and in some cases disrespect for staff was noted.
- Permanent exclusions are well under national averages.
- The school has set up key workers/champions for all SEND pupils who work with them on a daily basis and liaise with home and external agencies.
- Almost all students have a great respect for the Catholic tradition of the school and value its connections with the parishes. There are designated teacher or other adult links with the parishes who ensure that these connections are strong and maintained.
- The provision for chaplaincy is fragmented. There are a number of groups, who operate within the school and are effective in what they do. They would benefit from

having a key person who can represent their work and plans to the SLT at every meeting.

- School policies and procedures reflect the Catholic nature of the school and at all levels provide good support and pastoral care for students across the key stages.
- PSHE and ‘Relationships and Sex Education’ (RSE) programmes are in place. PSHE is taught in Years 7–10. Year 11 have had only one day of PSHE this academic year. RSE is a comprehensive programme which is delivered jointly by the RE staff and the Science department. Both programmes reflect Catholic teaching and principles.
- Leaders and governors demonstrate a public commitment to the Catholic Life of the school and the Church’s mission. They give the provision of Catholic Life a high priority and ensure it is monitored. The recently reconstructed governing body has yet to formalise its roles and would benefit from having a governor who will take a lead in the Catholic Life of the school and in formulating the new school DSEF and action planning relating to Section 48 or section 5 inspections.
- The school engages well with parents, regularly enlisting their involvement and support. Parents and carers speak highly of the school’s mission and are supportive of it.
- Comments from Key Stage 3 students suggest that the Catholic Life of the school is important to them, ‘We are supported by the youth leader and our form tutors to learn about our faith and give us lots of opportunities to raise money for people less fortunate, we enjoy doing it’.
- The school has become more ‘outward facing’ and under the new acting head teacher has responded to diocesan initiatives, promoting the Bishop’s vision and enlisting support from other diocesan schools.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Religious Education requires improvement

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

- Some students make progress in Religious Education (RE). In Key Stage (KS) 3, data showed good rates of progress and work in books supported this. At KS4, pupil progress in Religious Studies GCSE over the last three years is below the Diocesan average. Attainment is roughly in line with the Diocesan average but is below the levels of attainment in this school in comparable subjects such as English.

- The progress made by pupil premium pupils is below the national average and this is a three- year trend. There is a gap between the progress of pupil premium and non-pupil premium pupils. However, there is evidence that these gaps are closing.
- There is a clear gap between the performance of boys and that of girls at St John Fisher. Their performance across the school and in the RE department has been and continues to be a focus for senior leaders and governors.
- In lessons, students were able, when coaxed, to use their knowledge and understanding to address the topics of creation and mission. Students in some lessons participated well and drew on previous knowledge to answer questions and reflect on the tasks set. Others found it hard to concentrate, were slow to get on task and had a very casual approach to their studies.
- Behaviour for learning in lessons is varied. Where it was less than good students distracted each other and showed a lack of respect for their classmates' desire to learn and for the teacher. Where it was good, the teachers were able to make an impact on learning through good questioning and challenge.
- Students showed a limited interest in their RE lessons, with the exception of Year 12 and Year 10 students who were on task and mostly focused. Most students, when spoken to in the lessons, reported that 'RE was OK, but is usually a bit boring'.
- The best teaching demonstrated teachers' subject knowledge, and when it was less than good lacked appropriate pace and a variety of learning techniques.
- The quality of pupils' work is varied. In some instances, the work is thorough and shows clear signs of progress over time. In others, the limited amount of detailed formative feedback limited student progress.
- The housing of the RE department in a discrete area within the main building is welcome. This should enable staff and leaders to address more easily concerns around teaching and learning and will provide the department with more cohesion. Currently the rooms are tired and require some updating. Staff have worked hard to mask deficiencies in the built environment. The school should prioritise the decoration of the RE department to boost its status with the student body.
- Students are involved to some extent in evaluating their success. Most students in KS3 who were spoken to were aware of their progress level but did not seem interested in what to do to make further progress. In KS4 and KS5, students were happy to discuss their progress and most knew what to do to improve. In these instances, it was clear that teachers were communicating their expectations to the students and that they were open to discussion.
- Limited space in classrooms contributes in part to the employment of a limited range of teaching strategies. A small number of lessons were observed where 'active learning' was taking place. All lessons were well planned, but most lacked creativity. In one lesson which fully engaged the students, the teacher employed rap music to delight the learners.
- Leaders within the RE department are good. They ensure that the content of the RE curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference in every key stage. Their efforts to ensure provision for students has not been impaired during the changes which have occurred in recent years. This is to their credit.
- While curriculum time for RE still falls short of the Bishop's requirements it is to be noted that the time allocated this year has increased and plans are in place for the requisite amount of time to be allotted in future.
- The leaders in the department have an accurate view of the data around progress and attainment and they monitor outcomes for students. However, because progress and

expectations in other subjects are high this is an area which must be addressed in order to raise the profile of RE on the school curriculum and in the eyes of students.

- Feedback from some parents was that their children had reported the teaching in RE was a little monotonous. 'Lots of making notes and very little opportunity to engage in creative work or make links with other subjects'.
- A number of students reported that they do not get many opportunities to work in groups or 'do drama'. One student reported; 'There are lots of disruptions'.
- All parents spoken to agreed that students learn about other faiths as well as their own and stressed that tolerance and empathy for the views of others was positively promoted by the school.
- The curriculum leader and her line manager, the acting head teacher, have a clear vision for the department. Leadership has made good use of support from the Diocese and taken steps to improve teaching and its impact on learning for some teachers. The curriculum leader shares her own good practice and is working with her staff and the acting head teacher to raise the profile of the department.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Collective Worship is good

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

- Collective Worship (CW) forms part of every day at St John Fisher Catholic High School. There is an act of daily worship in form groups across the years. It is usually led by students and although formulaic is reaching the whole school community. The school's analysis of CW in their DSEF is accurate.
- Students from all year groups feel confident in reading from scripture and leading prayer. Scripture forms the basis of all acts of worship in school, using the 'Gather, Word, Action, Mission' structure.
- Students confirm that they have the opportunity to prepare and lead acts of CW. They were able to speak confidently about the Church's liturgical year and described the events that take place in school throughout the year following the liturgical calendar. A number of year group and classroom liturgies were observed where the students led and took an active role in sharing their faith with confidence and enthusiasm. Students say they value the opportunity to pray and reflect in school. A small number take part in the voluntary Mass, which happens weekly before school.
- While there are few students from other religions among their number, students were able to articulate their respect for people of other faiths.
- The planning for CW is very good. Teams work well together. It has a high priority in whole school planning. While acts of CW are not universally cherished, there are clear signs that students and parents value opportunities for personal and collective prayer.

- Praying together is an important part of school life. Staff and students pray together and separately.
- CW is planned by the chaplaincy team and those who collaborate have an excellent understanding of the Church's liturgical year. The school benefits from having members of the clergy on both the governing body and the chaplaincy teams. An experienced youth worker, with strong links to the local parish and primary school is a well known figure in school and works hard to develop Collective Worship alongside leaders, staff and students.
- Staff are key to the imaginative delivery of CW in school. All form rooms have a holy corner or wall space. All form rooms have a prayer rota. Guidance is given in the form of CW planning sheets but staff are encouraged to develop and expand as they see fit.
- Staff briefings begin with a prayer led by staff on a rotational basis. Staff new to the school said how they valued the opportunity to lead the prayer and be part of the prayer life of the school.
- Stakeholders, for example, parents, governors, clergy, primary head teachers and Diocesan representatives are invited to attend events such as Ethos days, Continuous Professional Development (CPD), Welcome Mass, Advent celebrations and Feast Day Mass held throughout the school year where all gather in Collective Worship and as witness to the ethos and faith of the school.
- Leaders are well versed in the Gather, Word, Action, Mission format, using it to plan for CW in school.
- Leaders have received training on delivering CW in a contemporary context. They are able to offer very good models of practice for other staff and students.
- Leaders have given CW a priority on the School Improvement Plan (SIP) and have made considerable progress with the development of CW in the context of liturgical formation of staff and students and planning of CW in general.
- Staff are encouraged to attend Chaplaincy Team meetings. Support for, and help with, leading CW or for personal formation are offered by the clergy who attend.
- The SLT review CW every half term. Regular feedback in the form of student questionnaires include questions about CW. Results are mixed, but most students feel that they do have appropriate opportunities to gather for CW on a daily basis. There is currently no one person who has oversight of CW. The current system of CW teams is very democratic and encompasses a large number of staff and students. However, the current system does not bring sufficient rigor to the monitoring of CW across the school. Leaders and governors would benefit from creating such a role in order to ensure effective monitoring of, and guidance for, CW at all levels across school.