

The Diocese of Hallam
Section 48 Inspection Report

**The Catholic Life of the School, Religious Education and
Collective Worship**

Notre Dame Catholic High School

Fulwood Road, Sheffield S10 3BT

School URN	107159
Overall Effectiveness grade	Outstanding
Date of inspection	1st May 2019
Name of Chair of Governors	Mr M Colclough
Name of Head teacher	Mr S Davies
Name of RE Subject Leader	Mr J Neal
Date of previous inspection	November 2013
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding
Section 48 Inspector(s)	Meg Baines and Margaret Hattersley

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 the school is in providing Catholic Education.

1

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

CATHOLIC LIFE

1

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

1

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

1

OUTSTANDING (1)	To be judged OUTSTANDING for overall effectiveness: The three Section judgements must all be OUTSTANDING
GOOD (2)	To be judged GOOD for overall effectiveness: The three Section judgements must all be at least GOOD
REQUIRES IMPROVEMENT (3)	To be judged REQUIRES IMPROVEMENT for overall effectiveness: One or more sections will be judged to REQUIRE IMPROVEMENT with no sections judged inadequate.
INADEQUATE (4)	To be judged INADEQUATE for overall effectiveness: At least one Section will be judged inadequate.

Summary of key findings:

This is an outstanding Catholic Secondary School

- The Catholic Life of Notre Dame emanates from their school mission statement: “Sharing the love and goodness of God with everyone.” It can be found in all areas of this charismatic school community.
- Leadership is outstanding and the Headteacher, along with senior leaders and governors, provides a vision which is founded on the Seven Hallmarks of the Sisters of Notre Dame and is as relevant today as it was 100 years ago when the school was established. Leaders work well together ensuring that the school continues to have a future which keeps it at the forefront of education development, demonstrating excellence within and beyond the Catholic communities in the city of Sheffield.
- Leaders and Managers at all levels are highly skilful and effectively manage and guide the Catholic Life of the school through their modelling of their own faith and ensuring that provision for Catholic Life remains a priority. Religious Education is seen as a core subject.
- The school’s Diocesan Self-evaluation Form (DSEF) is largely accurate, reflecting a very good understanding of its own strengths and areas for continued development.
- Recommendations from the previous inspection have been addressed. The transition to new leadership within the RE department has been very successful with the school and department fully supporting the new leader.
- Student staff relationships are key to the success of the school. Students are happy and are extremely proud to be associated with the school. Students in the sixth form make an outstanding contribution, acting as mentors, supporting and leading both within and beyond the school across a wide range of initiatives including voluntary work in the summer term.
- Students show care towards each other and demonstrate high levels of responsibility. They are eager to contribute to and therefore benefit from the Catholic Life of the school, taking part in an extensive range of opportunities provided by the school, for example pilgrimages to Lourdes and Rome as well as fundraising.
- GCSE results are outstanding. Both attainment and progress have been significantly above diocesan and national average over the last three years. A Level results last year were below expectations, but in previous years they were broadly in line with other departments in school.
- Teachers’ subject knowledge is excellent. They demonstrate passion and enthusiasm for their subject. As a result outcomes at Key Stages 3 and 4 are excellent. Recent interventions demonstrate an impact on outcomes at Key Stage 5 and expectations are high for this summer.
- Prayer is fundamental to the life of the school. Bells ring and remind students of their opportunity to pray. The whole school community embraces the opportunity to pray and key staff provide excellent resources to engage and support all pupils and members of the school community in their prayer life.
- Students say they feel safe and discuss the distinctive Catholic nature of their school confidently. They place a focus on their commitment to improving the lives of others. An outstanding assembly on CAFOD was conducted by three 6th form students who were keen to motivate others to respond to their appeal.

- The excellent relationships between staff, staff and students and between the students themselves are testament to the highly positive effect the school is having on the growth and personal development of the school community.

What the school needs to do to improve further.

- Review the current curriculum time for Key Stage 3, with a view to extending provision to 10% to be in line with the Bishops' Conference recommendations.
- Improve outcomes for students at A Level by:
 - Continuing to develop teaching and learning resources
 - Consolidating staffing in the Religious Education (RE) department
- Continue to work towards greater progress for students in Groups in RE by;
 - Further developing strategies for those with Special Educational Needs (SEN), boys and disadvantaged students.
 - Looking for ways to increase the number of qualified staff in the department and possibly enrolling them on the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies (CCRS) programme.

Information about this inspection

The inspection of Notre Dame Catholic High School was carried out under the requirements of the Education Act 2005, and in accordance with the Diocesan Framework and Schedule for Section 48 Inspections approved by the Bishop of Hallam. 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 students benefit from and contribute to the Catholic Life of the school.
- The quality of learning and the impact teaching is having on learning in RE. The quality of planning and assessment in RE.
- Analysis of the outcomes for students and the effectiveness of the tracking of progress.
- The impact that leadership and management are having on school ethos, chaplaincy, mission and the quality of provision for Catholic Life at school and beyond.
- The effectiveness of the school's monitoring procedures around Collective Worship and Catholic Life.

The inspection was carried out by two inspectors over one day:

- A sample of 12 RE lessons covering all 3 key stages and 3 Acts of Collective Worship were observed.

- Meetings were held with: the Headteacher; Head of 6th Form and Assistant Head linked to the 6th Form; Senior Management Team [which included Deputy Headteacher with responsibility for Teaching and Learning / Special Educational Needs / Pastoral; the Ethos Lead; Head of RE and his mentor; senior leaders with responsibility for data; the Lay Chaplain and RE teachers; Chair of Governors, Ethos Link Governor and representative groups of students from all key stages and parents.
- A range of RE and Catholic Life of the school documentation was scrutinised, including the Hallmarks of Notre Dame, the School Development Plan, the DSEF and Religious Education Development Plan, previous OFSTED report, previous Section 48 report from 2013 and the diocesan monitoring visit report from 2018. We also reviewed attainment data, Pastoral, Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) programmes of study, Catholic Life/Collective Worship/ Behaviour/ Spiritual Moral Social and Cultural policies, meeting minutes and evaluations of RE lessons plus other observation and monitoring records. Schemes of work, student progress tracking records and a representative sample of student work were also scrutinised.

Information about this school

- Notre Dame Catholic High School is a larger than average school in the city of Sheffield. It has a very good reputation locally as for a number of years academic results have been extremely high.
- At Notre Dame the whole community is committed to the ethos of the Sisters of Notre Dame, following assiduously the seven Hallmarks of the world-wide Notre Dame community. These Hallmarks form the basis of the school's educational philosophy.
- The school is actively involved in the Sheffield Catholic Schools' Partnership and is an accredited provider of school centred initial teacher training (SCITT).
- Students are drawn from across the city of Sheffield.
- 81% of students are baptised Catholic. Following an agreement between the Catholic Bishop of Hallam and Anglican Bishop of Sheffield 14% of student places are reserved for students of other Christian traditions. A more recent expansion has provided for a further 5% of places to students from other faiths.
- The 6th Form is growing and approaching maximum capacity and draws students from across the city. This has produced a highly diverse 6th form community which reflects well the ethnic and cultural mix to be found in the city of Sheffield.
- The number of students who are eligible for pupil premium is below the national average as are those with special educational needs and students from minority ethnic backgrounds or with English as an additional language. These numbers are higher in the 6th form.

Full Report – Inspection Judgements

CATHOLIC LIFE

The quality of the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding

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	1
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision of the Catholic Life of the school	1

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.

- Students and staff have embraced the school’s mission statement, “Sharing the love and goodness of God with everyone”. The school’s check list for whether they are succeeding in this aim is constituted by The Hallmarks of St Julie, the foundress of the Notre Dame community. It is very evident in their lessons and in the way the students treat each other that this is the case. Students take a lead role in the 1804 Society meetings, previously known as prefects, playing a significant part in developing, monitoring and leading the Catholic Life at Notre Dame.
- Behaviour is outstanding. Students behave extremely well outside the classroom showing respect for themselves and others and behaviour for learning in the classroom is exemplary.
- There is a strong welcoming atmosphere. Students are proud of their school and the rôle it plays in the local community. Students are alert to the needs of others and they try to do what they can to address them by taking part in a wide range of charitable events within school and beyond.
- Students are provided with opportunities for personal and social development and have age appropriate relationship and sex education (RSE) sessions delivered by key staff throughout the school year. They embrace the opportunities provided by the school and are confident in their own stage of spiritual and emotional development.
- Where faiths are different students are inclusive and accepting. All members of the school community are recognised and valued. A beautiful prayer room is used by the Lay Chaplain and her team. It houses the Blessed Sacrament. Staff and students spoke of a sense of personal worth and demonstrated respect for each other. Students work closely with the Lay Chaplain whose work plays a key role in the community providing opportunities for others to benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.
- Students spoke affectionately about their school, demonstrating a genuine pride in belonging to the Notre Dame community.

The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding

- Everyone at Notre Dame High School is proud of its heritage and tradition. A clear and effective mission statement which expresses the educational mission of the Church continues to inspire. It is seen by students and staff as the heart of everything that is done in the school. The seven Hallmarks from the statement are writ large around school. They are, “Show that God is good; honour each person’s dignity; work for justice and peace; we are involved in community service; welcome and respect diversity; we are a community; we educate for life”.
- Staff are committed to the implementation of the mission statement across the curriculum. They actively support it through prayer, retreats and through their continuous professional development and induction programmes. There is a strong sense of community. This can be seen in the strong relationships between staff and the senior leadership team as well as among students and other adults in school. Staff well-being is a genuine focus for senior leaders as seen in the well-being policy and in the relationship between adults and students. Students clearly respect and like their teachers.
- High standards of behaviour are promoted by the school. Students’ behaviour is very good outside the classroom and behaviour for learning in the classroom is outstanding.
- A strong and tangible commitment to Catholic social teaching is evident in the school. Students spoke about ‘fairness and helping each other’ and the desire to do the right thing, demonstrating a respect for human dignity.
- The school has shown a commitment to supporting the community through its charitable giving, supporting agencies such as local food banks and the local centre for vulnerable adults (Bishop’s Walk), thereby serving the local community in very practical ways along with CAFOD and other regional and global charities (eg Operation Christmas Child, Sheffield Children’s Hospital, Water Project).
- Parents spoke very positively about the support and care their children receive and the school’s Catholic mission. They are grateful for the opportunities provided by the school to support their spiritual development.
- There are evocative statues, signs and symbols around the school demonstrating its Catholic character.
- Chaplaincy provision is highly effective in offering support for promoting the Catholic Life of the school. The lay chaplain liaises effectively with local clergy and leads retreats.
- Effective structures are in place to support the most vulnerable students in school.
- The pastoral structure is strong. Students know who to go to if they need help or support. The rewards system is used to great effect with merits and positive points being awarded for contribution to the Catholic Life of the school or Collective Worship as well as good work.
- Programmes for personal social and health education (PSHE) and relationships and sex education (RSE), devised by the school in line with diocesan guidelines are taught throughout the school year by key staff. Years 12 and 13 study core RE and follow a planned programme.

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision of the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.

- Leaders at Notre Dame High school are deeply committed to the Church’s mission and bear personal witness to this through the way they treat others and in the lead they take in prayer, assemblies and liturgies. Leaders and governors see Catholic Life as a core leadership responsibility. A member of the Senior Management Team (SMT) said, “the Catholic ethos is at the heart of everything we do”. It is clearly a high priority for senior leaders.
- Leaders and governors regularly monitor the Catholic Life of the school and analyse data from parental and student voice surveys to look for ways to introduce improvements.
- The school has accurate self-evaluation systems and is clear about its own strengths. Frequent learning walks and discussions with students and staff are carried out by governors, leaders and managers. Information about the Catholic Life of the school is fed back to key personnel and records are maintained and shared at the appropriate level to aid evaluation and planning for the future.
- Leaders are rôle models for Catholic Life in school and further afield. The SMT stated that they were part of a “harmonious diocese, which shares expertise and resources”, a clear example of their leadership faith in action. Leaders are also involved in heading up diocesan initiatives and as part of their teaching school they offer training for staff on what it means to work in a Catholic school and on Catholic Ethos in the curriculum.
- There is evidence to show that continuous professional development (CPD) is happening and is having an impact on the Catholic Life of the school. New staff are fully inducted to working in a Catholic school. Mentoring is a high priority within school and is effective.
- Governors play a key rôle in the evaluation of Catholic Life and planning for improvement. A number are experienced educationalists and all are passionate about the school’s mission and are supportive in the on-going development of and strengthening of the Catholic Life of the school, themselves acting as strong rôle models in this regard.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The quality of Religious Education is outstanding

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education	1
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education	1
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education	1

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education is outstanding

- GCSE results in Religious Education (RE) are outstanding. In summer 2018, 85.4% of students gained grade 4 or above with 78% gaining grade 5 or above. Attainment and progress are well above the national and diocesan average and this has been the trend for the last three years. While most students from a variety of starting points make very good progress, recent results at A Level were below expectations with improvements predicted this summer. This has been a key departmental priority.
- RE remains one of the higher performing subjects in school. Almost all groups of students, including those with special educational needs, are making progress from their varied starting points. The performance of some student groups, namely boys and those with SEN has been identified as making lower progress than other groups. Intervention strategies are currently in place to address this.
- The quality of students' current work both in class and in books is outstanding. Students work with interest and engagement with the subject. They have a good understanding of how well they are doing and what to do to improve. In all lessons seen the students' behaviour for learning was outstanding. They value the support they are given and are appreciative of their hard working teachers.
- During lessons students were actively engaged in their studies, showing a great level of enthusiasm for their subject. This enthusiasm is evidence of their enjoyment and engagement.
- Highly effective and collaborative lesson planning is key to the department's success. The Church's teaching is threaded through KS3 curriculum and students, relative to their age and ability are extremely religiously literate. They are able to articulate their understanding and use their knowledge to think ethically and theologically.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education is outstanding

- Teaching standards are high. Across the department lessons observed were at least good with many outstanding. Teachers plan and assess well and use a wide range of teaching pedagogies to address the varying needs of the students across the age range and to engage their students who are therefore highly motivated and enjoy their lessons.
- Staff have a high level of experience and expertise. They share their best practice across the department and as a consequence students largely make good levels of progress.
- Students are involved in their own evaluations. They know how well they are achieving. Very high levels of student involvement and concentration were observed in almost all lessons. Students are given good advice on how to improve, staff are adept at questioning. During lessons teachers used questioning skilfully to elicit knowledge and encourage high level thinking from the students. Tasks were differentiated and other adults are used to support the needs of some learners.

- Teachers use their time effectively. Feedback on student work is of a very high quality. There was evidence of well-marked work and annotated A level work. Students are encouraged to respond to written and oral feedback ensuring understanding.
- High quality resources are effectively used. Classrooms are bright and display supports learning.
- RE is viewed as a core subject by the whole school and staff and student expectations are therefore high. Expectations are continually communicated to the student body, and they respond well to these.
- Success is celebrated. Praise is used successfully to motivate students. One parent wrote “Our girls feel valued not just through the comments at parents’ evenings and in class, but also through letters of congratulations home on specific achievements.....this goes beyond simply teaching a subject”.

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education is outstanding

- Leadership at Notre Dame is outstanding. Leaders and Governors ensure that the RE curriculum largely meets the requirements of the Bishops’ Conference. RE is regarded as a core subject and is in fact deliberately over-staffed, a measure of the regard the school has for the subject. With the exception of Years 7 and 8, who have 8% curriculum time allocated, all other years enjoy at least 10% and 5% in Key stage 5.
- Leaders and governors ensure that the place of RE on the curriculum has a parity with other subjects in terms of resources, CPD, staffing and accommodation. Leaders ensure that RE rooms are bright and conducive to learning with displays which support learning.
- KS3 Curriculum is effective and provides a springboard for students to move to GCSE in KS4. The EDUQAS GCSE course has been newly adopted and responds to the recommendations made by the Bishops’ Conference, with Judaism as the second world religion. Leaders ensure that the KS3 RE programme is imaginative and effective in meeting the needs of different groups of students. At all points it builds on prior learning.
- The RE department’s annual school evaluation form (SEF) is presented to senior leaders and governors. There is a governor and an SMT link for RE who meet and monitor data regularly. The curriculum lead and assistant lead meet regularly for informal discussions.
- The curriculum lead brings a high level of energy and enthusiasm to his rôle. A strength of the department is their collaborative work in planning and assessment. This has enabled staff to meet the needs of students and the new demands of the new GCSE and A Level specifications.
- Leaders’ and governors’ evaluation of RE is a largely accurate reflection of where it stands. It is rigorous in its monitoring. It is well informed by best practice resulting in well targeted planning. This monitoring and evaluation across all

aspects of the RE department ensure that decisions taken lead to the best possible outcomes for students.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

The quality of Collective Worship is outstanding

How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship	1
The quality of provision for Collective Worship	1
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship	1

How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship is outstanding

- An enthusiasm for Collective Worship exists at Notre Dame which engages staff, students and visitors to the school. Prayer begins and punctuates the school day enhanced by thoughtfully prepared acts of Collective Worship which follow a theme or in some instances respond to current events. Students either join in reverently or sit quietly respectful during such occasions.
- Students are experienced in planning and leading Collective Worship on both small and large scale. One outstanding session observed was a sixth form presentation assembly based on CAFOD. It was planned, written and delivered by the students themselves, with the support of the lay chaplain and Head of Year, and was very engaging.
- In the whole school act of Collective Worship observed, the students were respectful and some were visibly uplifted by the topic, readings and prayers.
- Worship is experienced through lessons, year Masses, retreats and liturgical programmes. Students work with the highly regarded lay chaplain to prepare Collective Worship and plan the hymns, readings, drama and prayers for each.
- The school has the support of local clergy who take turns to say Mass in the school Salle (the hall). The lay chaplain supports the school in many ways by liaising with staff and students, taking part in ethos and 1804 Society meetings regarding year Masses, liturgies and the use of the prayer room. She works closely with the school on pilgrimages, local charitable events and worship events in concert with other active members of the RE Department and ethos team.
- When questioned closely a number of students were able to demonstrate an excellent understanding of the Church's liturgical year, describing vestments, acts and school events which reflected this.
- Students say they are comfortable with and appear confident in their use of a wide variety of prayer which uses scripture, religious artefacts and music to great effect.

- Students are given the opportunity to experience worship through a variety of forms including musical praise and a sporting prayer group. From student voice surveys it is clear that the vast majority of students value and regularly take part in acts of voluntary worship.
- The experience of studying in a faithful, praying community is having a deep effect on the spiritual and moral development of the students. They have a great understanding of the faiths of others and are inclusive and respectful of each other.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship is outstanding

- High quality Collective Worship and prayerful moments are central to the life of the school for all students regardless of their own faith background.
- Themes chosen for Collective Worship follow the turn of the Church's liturgical year. Key staff are passionate about ensuring that the community has experience of high quality worship. There is a well-documented programme for Collective Worship.
- Praying together is part of the daily routine at Notre Dame. Collective Worship happens both formally and informally. The Prayer Room is open during the day to anyone who wishes to use it. It houses the Blessed Sacrament. There are a number of Eucharistic Ministers on the staff.
- All members of the school community questioned spoke positively about prayer and worship in school. It is given a priority in terms of planning.
- Staff involved have excellent knowledge of the Church's liturgical calendar and its seasons and ensure that at the appropriate times students benefit from well-planned opportunities for worship.
- Staff are skilled at supporting the students in their preparations for such events and thereby help them to deliver good quality acts of Collective Worship.
- The school opens its doors to the community throughout the year, inviting parents, governors and clergy to join in their celebrations. School enjoys the use of St John's Church and other local parishes for services which they sometimes share with St Marie's Primary school next door. Response to these invitations to join worship is outstanding.

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship is outstanding

- All leaders, including the lay chaplain have expert knowledge in delivering and planning highly effective Collective Worship. Leaders and managers have an excellent understanding of how to plan for creative and engaging acts of Collective Worship, through events such as retreats and daily prayer. Leaders at Notre Dame facilitate Collective Worship ensuring that prayer is regarded as relevant and meaningful.
- Leaders have extensive knowledge of the seasons of the Church, its liturgical year and festivals. They attend diocesan training thus deepening their own understanding of Church theology and liturgy.

- High levels of personal understanding and commitment to the Catholic faith enable staff to create prayer opportunities which are contemporary and relevant to the students.
- The headteacher and other school leaders maintain a high profile during acts of Collective Worship, often participating. They are models of outstanding practice.
- The spiritual development of staff is given the highest priority. Leaders offer staff regular opportunities to receive liturgical formation and support for planning Collective Worship.
- Leaders and governors review Collective Worship as part of their self-evaluation procedures. They are passionate about promoting high quality Collective Worship offering both challenge and support ensuring that all statutory and canonical responsibilities are well met.