

The Diocese of Hallam
Section 48 Inspection Report

The Catholic Life of the School and Religious Education

St Mary's Catholic High School

Newbold Road, Chesterfield, S41 8AG

School URN	138470
Name of Chair of Governors	Mr Martin Molloy
Name of Head teacher	Mrs Maria Dengate
Name of RE Subject Leader	Mrs Cait Thurlow
Date of inspection	14 March 2018
Name of Chaplaincy Coordinator	Miss Siobhan Garth
Overall Effectiveness grade	1
Date of previous inspection	November 2012
Previous inspection grade	1
Section 48 Inspector(s)	Mr Paul Martin / Mrs Deirdre Cleary

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 is at the centre of this school and it is all pervading. It is to the credit of all concerned that the continuing developments of the school's mission have constantly been *the number one priority* at all times.
- The Headteacher along with Governors provide excellent vision, commitment, challenge and support to all at the school, working hard to ensure that the school continues to be a beacon of excellence.
- Leaders and Managers at all levels are highly effective in managing and developing the Catholic Life of the school including the provision and outcomes of Religious Education.
- The school has a very detailed and accurate self-evaluation and has a very accurate view of its own strengths and areas for continued development.
- All previous inspection recommendations have been met in full.
- Students in the sixth form make an outstanding contribution, supporting and leading both within and beyond the school across a wide range of initiatives.
- Pupils, including those in the sixth form, are highly responsible and greatly enthusiastic about contributing to and benefiting from the Catholic Life of the school. This is as a result of an extensive range of opportunities and roles provided by a dedicated staff seeking to further the spiritual, social and academic needs of all pupils.
- GCSE results are outstanding. Both attainment and progress have been significantly above diocesan and national average over the last three years. There are no groups of pupils who have been significantly below average during this period and many are significantly above. A level results have improved year on year and they are broadly in line with other departments in school.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is excellent and the passion and enthusiasm they have impacts positively on the quality of teaching and pupil response in lessons.
- Prayer life is central to the school community and staff provide excellent resources to engage all pupils and members of the school.
- The whole community demonstrates a moral conscience in a wide variety of charitable activities along with a commitment to supporting one another.
- Pupils openly talk about the distinctive nature of the school and their commitment to improving the lives of others. Their excellent relationships with one another and adults in the school community are testament to the very positive effect the school has on their lives.

What the school needs to do to improve further.

- To continue to improve teaching outcomes at Key Stage 5 so that they match the high performance seen at Key Stage 4, for example, by further adapting resources and teaching activities to match the individual needs of pupils.
- To further improve pupil outcomes in both Catholic Life and Collective Worship across the school by
 - a) Embedding the roles of Chaplaincy/ Mission and Ethos.

- b) Developing more robust monitoring systems.
- c) Providing further opportunities for more students to be involved in leading prayer.

Information about this inspection

The inspection of St Mary's RC High School was carried out under the requirements of the Education Act 2005, and in accordance with the Hallam 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 inspector reviewed in detail the following aspects:

- Quality of teaching and learning, planning and assessment for learning in the Religious Education Department.
- Analysis of Religious Education outcomes for pupils and the tracking of their progress across the key stages.
- Leadership and Management roles with respect to Mission / Ethos and Chaplaincy and their impact on the quality of provision and level of outcomes.
- The effectiveness of the school's monitoring and evaluation procedures of Catholic Life / Collective Worship in the school.

The inspection was carried out by 2 inspectors over 1 day:

- A sample of 11 Religious Education lessons covering all 3 key stages, 1 Chaplaincy Y12 tutorial and 4 Acts of Collective Worship were observed.
- Meetings were held with the Headteacher, Assistant Headteacher (Inclusion / SEN / Pastoral), Director of Teaching and Learning, Director of Mission and Ethos (and Head of Religious Education), Director of Sixth Form, Head of Key Stage 3, Chaplain, Chair/ Vice Chair of Governors and a Foundation Governor, and representative groups of pupils and parents.
- A wide range of Religious Education/Catholic Life of the School documentation was scrutinized, including the School Development Plan, Religious Education Development Plan, OFSTED report, previous S48 report and Monitoring Visit report, attainment data, Catholic Life / Collective Worship policies, meeting minutes from evaluations of Religious Education and Catholic Life of the school and Chaplaincy Reports. Schemes of work, pupil progress tracking records and a representative sample of their work were also scrutinized.

Information about this school

- St Mary's Catholic High School is a large secondary voluntary academy located in the Diocese of Hallam and primarily serving the Catholic community in North Derbyshire. Some students travel from areas further afield such as Sheffield and North Nottinghamshire.

- The school serves the parishes of Our Lady Queen of Peace Chesterfield, Immaculate Conception Spinkhill, St Michael's Hathersage, Christ the King Alfreton, St Joseph's Shirebrook, St Joseph's Matlock, All Saints Hassop, Our Lady of Sorrows Bamford.
- The proportion of students who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below the national average. The number of students from minority ethnic backgrounds or who have English as an additional language is low compared to national averages.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs, supported at school action, is below average. The percentage supported at school action plus or who have statements is low.

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

- Pupils across all key stages speak with enthusiasm and confidence about this Catholic community and appreciate the benefits of belonging to St Mary’s Catholic High School. They play their part in contributing and supporting the schools distinctive mission. There is an increasing involvement of pupils in taking responsibility and positions of leadership with respect to the Catholic Life of the school, for example, through the school council. Further development of pupil leadership roles will enable them to take a full and active part in monitoring and evaluation in this area.
- The energetic Year 12 chaplaincy team are well supported by the chaplaincy coordinator. Sixth form students are excellent role models and demonstrate outstanding leadership qualities. Further opportunities will enable these students to develop the leadership abilities of pupils in the lower school.
- There is a common respect between all groups, including pupils and adults, within the school leading to a very positive and relaxed atmosphere. One sixth former commented that “there is a real sense of community, everyone helping each other”.
- Pupils can express their beliefs and views with confidence. They are very alert to the needs of others and seek to support and bring justice for those both within and beyond the school.
- They are very proud of their school and show this through their exemplary behaviour, witnessed throughout the day both in classrooms and around the school. Relationships between teaching and support staff and pupils are characterised by mutual respect, courtesy and support. Pupils speak passionately about their sense of belonging, expressed in terms of a strong community, ‘supporting each other’, and being ‘like a family’.
- The school offers many opportunities for pupils of all ages and abilities to put “faith into action” and the pupils respond with outstanding commitment and compassion to those in need. The whole community demonstrates a moral conscience in a wide variety of charitable activities along with a commitment to supporting one another.
- Parents appreciate everything that happens at this school and witness the holistic approach to education and life with great appreciation.

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

- This is a Catholic school first and foremost in every aspect of its work. This is clearly and unequivocally the school's priority. The school's mission along with a strong commitment to the common good is constantly promoted every day across all areas of the school.
- The Catholic Life of the school, including the provision for Collective Worship, permeates everything that happens within the school on a day to day basis. High standards and expectations, along with a caring and supportive approach, are all in evidence throughout the school.
- Pupils across all key stages are provided with an extensive range of opportunities by a dedicated staff seeking to further the spiritual, social and academic needs of all pupils.
- Staff, equally, are fully committed and enthusiastic about the school's distinctive nature and Catholic mission. There is a strong sense of community at all levels where relationships ensure a calm atmosphere throughout the school.
- Pastoral care is a high priority in the school and all staff work very effectively in caring for and supporting all pupils. Discussions with all stakeholders give evidence of the positive relationships that exist throughout the school, where respect and forgiveness are clearly demonstrated. Leaders are fully committed to supporting all pupils and a small group of pupils follow a reduced curriculum in order to concentrate on life skills. The school is also looking at ways in which these pupils can access further vocational courses at Key Stage 4.
- Leaders have introduced vocational courses into the sixth form along with SEN apprenticeships to give some pupils more appropriate career pathways.
- Parents talk very positively about the school's Catholic mission. They are very grateful for the many opportunities provided by the school to support their children's spiritual development and believe the school is a very caring community. They know what is going on at school and how their children are progressing through regular communication.
- The school environment is well cared for and easily identifiable as a Catholic school. This is clearly and visibly reflected in the displays and various icons situated around the school. The school chapel, along with Religious Education teaching rooms and chaplaincy office are situated together and centrally located.
- The chaplaincy provision is becoming increasingly effective in supporting and promoting the Catholic Life of the school. Policies and structures are in place and provide a very solid basis for further development.
- Personal, health and social education (PSHE) along with relationships and sex education (RSE) programmes of study are planned and taught thoughtfully, conforming to Catholic teaching and diocesan guidelines.

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

- The Catholic Life is at the centre of this school and it is all pervading. It is to the credit of all concerned that the continuing developments of the school's mission have constantly been *the number one priority* at all times.

- The headteacher provides excellent vision, commitment, challenge and support to all at the school, working hard to ensure that the school continues to be a beacon of excellence.
- The Governors have, equally, worked tirelessly over the last year with great commitment and skill in shaping the way forward. Appointments have been made under tight financial constraint which clearly demonstrates an immense commitment to the mission and ethos of this outstanding Catholic school.
- Leaders and Managers at all levels are highly effective in managing and developing the Catholic Life of the school. The implementation of the new Wellbeing team, along with a new family resource worker, ensures that the school reaches out to all pupils with support and compassion.
- The school has a very detailed and accurate self-evaluation record and has a very clear view of its own strengths and areas for continued development. The school improvement plan has the school's mission at its centre and all areas are effectively monitored and evaluated throughout the year. All previous inspection recommendations have been met in full.
- CPD focussing on the Catholic Life of the school is planned for when new staff are employed in addition to ongoing support for all staff throughout the year. Further developments are planned for to enable all staff to fully engage with the mission and ethos of the school.
- The school follows diocesan policies and responds positively to their initiatives thereby promoting the Bishop's vision. Key personnel attend a range of diocesan meetings.
- The school is fully committed to providing outstanding pastoral care for all pupils, especially for those in most need. This is evidenced by recent appointments to the pastoral/wellbeing team including a family wellbeing resource worker and a vulnerable and emotional needs coordinator. Provision, along with these appointments, is developing for those who cannot access the full curriculum in order to meet their needs more fully.

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 are outstanding. Both attainment and progress have been significantly above diocesan and national average over the last three years. The

majority of pupils across each key stage and including those with special educational needs, make good progress. There are no groups of pupils who have been significantly below average during this period and many are significantly above. There was a dip in 2017 in the percentage of pupils who achieved a grade C and above but this figure was still above national figures.

- Outcomes in 2017, revealed a gap between the achievement of boys and girls with the girls outperforming the boys. This was a reversal of the trend seen in 2015 and 2016. Similarly, non-pupil premium pupils achieved better results than pupil premium pupils, though not significantly. The department are addressing these issues through a variety of well targeted strategies, including: analysis of barriers to learning, low stakes testing, introducing a competitive element to lessons and providing greater support for revision.
- A level results have improved year on year. They are broadly in line with other departments in school. High quality planning and resourcing, alongside rigorous intervention with pupils have led to an improvement in results. The level of challenge is high in lessons and pupils respond confidently and are prepared to work independently. The department have been working together to make content more accessible and suitable for all pupils, which has proved beneficial. A continued focus on this and further development of classroom practice will lead to further improved outcomes.
- In all lessons seen and during meetings, pupils clearly articulated their enjoyment of and enthusiasm for their Religious Education lessons. They value the support they are given by teachers, the variety of teaching strategies employed in lessons, and the opportunities for discussion. They also explained that they were encouraged to reflect on the studied content and recognised that this was a valuable part of their personal and spiritual development. Almost all pupils worked collaboratively and co-operatively together, remaining on task and demonstrating exemplary behaviour and concentration.
- Effective, collaborative lesson planning across the department provides a framework that ensures almost all pupils are religiously literate and can think theologically. Scriptural analysis, Church teaching and Theology are seamlessly embedded in to lessons. This is a strength in the department.

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

- The standard of teaching across the department is very high, all lessons seen were at least good with many outstanding. Teachers use a wide range of strategies resulting in highly motivated pupils who enjoy this subject. Little, if any time is wasted.
- Across the department subject knowledge is excellent and the passion and enthusiasm teachers have impacts positively on the quality of teaching and pupil response in lessons.
- Formative assessment is regular and pupils are well trained in peer and self-assessment and can effectively and confidently analyse the work of others and their own.
- Pupils are given clear advice on how to improve their work, by teachers, based on well broken down assessment criteria. Pupils were able to explain how they used their feedback to improve future work but there was less evidence of this in exercise books. The Head of Department has rightly identified pupil response to marking as an area for development. There is some good practice in relation to this within the department but it needs to be more consistently embedded.

- The standard of higher order questioning and discussion is impressive across all key stages. Pupils are able to respond to challenging questions and engage in mature discussions. Resources used were high quality, engaging, relevant and related to real life.
- Praise is used to good effect and celebration of progress, attainment and good behaviour are central to the school’s philosophy.
- Parents commented that their children “are given ownership of their own learning and are given extra challenges”. Another parent said that her child was interested in Religious Education and wanted to do well in a subject which was seen as important as everything else.

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

- All leaders, as well as Governors, ensure that the Religious Education curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops’ Conference in every aspect and across each key stage, including 10% curriculum time throughout the school. They ensure that Religious Education enjoys a high profile in the school.
- The KS3 curriculum is rich and broad in its own right, but also provides an excellent base for KS4, as does the assessment strategy. It meets the demands of the curriculum directory and the diocesan requirement to study Islam as part of KS3.
- The GCSE course chosen reflects the recommendations made by the Bishops’ Conference as does the choice of Judaism as the second world religion.
- Religious Education is fully comparable to other core curriculum subjects including professional development, resourcing, staffing and accommodation.
- A strength in the department is collaborative planning which is reviewed and evaluated after teaching and increasingly takes in to account the varying needs of students. This has enabled the team to meet the demands of the new specifications at GCSE and A level and consequently they are well set to maintain outcomes.
- The Head of Department is ambitious for all pupils to reach their potential and leads the department very well in pursuit of this goal, through effective planning, monitoring and evaluation. The Head of Religious Education has recently been promoted to the Senior Leadership Group as the Director of Mission and Ethos.
- Leaders and governors monitor and evaluate all aspects of the Religious Education department and ensure that decisions are taken which will lead to the best possible outcomes for pupils in Religious Education.

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

- Pupils demonstrate a mature interest in, and respect for, Collective Worship and actively participate in the wide range of provision. They have a very good understanding and knowledge of prayer and liturgy and regularly prepare and lead worship in class, year group assemblies and larger gatherings.
- They show respect and reverence when praying with others and are engaged by the worship sessions organised by their peers. Pupils regularly take responsibility for organising and leading worship. Sixth form Chaplaincy representatives are excellent role models for the rest of the school within this area. Further opportunities need to be planned to enable more pupils across the school to plan and prepare a range of liturgies.
- Pupils speak positively about the voluntary acts of worship and express their enjoyment of the more formal occasions of year group / whole school liturgies. Pupils interviewed spoke of how they make up their own prayers and thoughts during form time and for other liturgies throughout the year. Those of other faiths are also positive about the experience that comes from being part of Collective Worship at St Mary's.
- Collective Worship is very effectively enhanced by a rich musical talent amongst the pupils. Several were heard playing for the Year 9 assembly where almost all pupils sang, joining in with obvious enthusiasm.
- Pupils demonstrated a very good understanding of the Church's seasons and were able to describe the Church's year. They talked with enthusiasm about what happened in school during Lent. Occasions of reflection and prayer were talked about in a very positive way.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship is outstanding

- Collective Worship is central to the life of the school with praying and thoughtful reflection being part of the daily experience for all pupils and staff. All groups have regular opportunities to pray, both together and on an individual basis.
- Relevant staff are passionate about ensuring that pupils have high quality experiences of the Church's liturgical life. They act as excellent role models for all other staff. In the same way, Sixth Form chaplaincy students are excellent role models for all other students.
- All forms of Collective Worship are framed around the liturgical calendar, season and festivals of the Church. A range of prayers are included in student diaries and these are used regularly along with pupil prepared resources.
- Resources are made available for all groups with excellent support from the chaplain coordinator and Director and Mission / Ethos. Staff with no experience of Catholic faith and those new to the school, have induction sessions at the start of their time at St Mary's and so are fully briefed with respect to expectations around Collective Worship in addition to Catholic Life.
- Key personnel are skilled at helping pupils to experience quality Collective Worship. They are able to help pupils effectively in the planning and delivery of Collective Worship.

Further support for those who are less skilled will lead to more pupils having daily access to a more meaningful experience.

- The strong Music department along with keen and enthusiastic pupils contributes very effectively towards an outstanding Collective Worship experience.
- Pupils are effectively led in developing skills with respect to planning and leading Collective Worship. Further development could be extended by assisting pupils in effectively evaluating worship on a more regular basis especially with the daily Collective Worship.

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

- Leaders and managers are visible and present at all Acts of Worship. They are passionate and energetic about their role and lead by excellent example. Equally, they have an excellent understanding of the Church's liturgical year, seasons and feasts.
- Mission and ethos is a high priority for the school and the headteacher has a clear vision which has been shared with all staff at the beginning of the academic year. Further opportunities need to be planned to ensure all staff receive liturgical formation and become more skilled in supporting pupils in the planning and delivery of Collective Worship. The chaplaincy team is aware that it has a key role in this area.
- Leaders regularly review Collective Worship as part of their self-evaluation process. Further development of these systems, especially around daily Collective Worship, will enable leaders to be able to measure the quality of Collective Worship over time and ensure that provision is of equal high quality in every form time. Evaluation and planning will enable training more accurately targeted and enable governors to be fully aware of the quality of Collective Worship being provided by the school.
- School leaders are passionate, as far as is possible, that all pupils are provided with a retreat experience and these are well received by the pupils. Leaders use the opportunity to contribute to the quality of Collective Worship whilst in a setting away from school. A Sixth Form Chaplaincy Team retreat enabled them to get to know one another and develop as a group in order to support the lower school more effectively.