



Archdiocese of Birmingham

INSPECTION REPORT

OUR LADY AND ST CHAD CATHOLIC SPORTS COLLEGE WOLVERHAMPTON

Inspection dates	30 th – 31 st May 2012
Reporting Inspector	Dr John Lally
Assisting Inspector	Mrs Bernadette Morton

Inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

Type of School	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	11-18 years
Number on roll	830
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governors	Mr I F Middleton
School address	Old Fallings Lane Wolverhampton WV10 8BL
Telephone number	01902 558250
E-mail address	info@olscmail.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	April 2009
DFE School number	336/4606
Unique Reference Number	104401

Headteacher	Miss Mary Keelan
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DIOCESAN EDUCATION SERVICE



Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Diocesan Inspectors. The focus of the inspection was on the effectiveness and use of the school's self evaluation of Catholic life and religious education (RE). To validate the school's self-evaluation of teaching and learning, the inspectors observed 8 part RE lessons, some together with members of the senior leadership group or the subject leader. In addition the inspectors completed a work scrutiny and held discussions with pupils and sixth form students to evaluate the impact of teaching on their learning over time and their response to the school's Catholic ethos. They held meetings with a governor, senior staff, the subject leader, the chaplain and the chaplaincy team. They observed class worship and two year assemblies. They looked at a range of evidence related to the school's self evaluation such as RAISEonline, the development plan, a departmental review, and teachers' planning. Alongside the validation of school self evaluation, the inspectors gathered evidence about cross curricular Catholic values, evidence which will be shared with other diocesan schools.

Information about the school

Our Lady and St Chad is a below average size Catholic secondary school located in the North East of Wolverhampton. The school serves an area of significant social deprivation. The proportion of Catholic pupils is currently 30% which is lower than at the last inspection. The proportion of ethnic minority pupils is well above the national average as are the proportions of pupils eligible for free school meals and where English is not their first language. Attainment on entry is below the national average overall. The school enjoys specialist school status as a sports college.

Main Finding

In its self evaluation, Our Lady and St Chad judges itself to be a good Catholic school with some outstanding features. The latter are its Catholic life, the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and vocational development, and the leadership of the Catholic life and religious education. In broad terms the judgements are reliable with only the judgement relating to the response of pupils to worship differing between school and inspectors. The headteacher and senior staff know the school thoroughly and have a range of processes in place for formal monitoring and evaluation: only collective worship needs a more formal process. The leadership of RE is highly effective and the subject leader and senior team know the department's strengths and development needs very well. Planning for improvement is securely rooted in detailed knowledge of the school's Catholicity and religious education.

School Self Evaluation

The evaluation of the Catholic life of the school takes its inspiration and direction from the headteacher who, together with her senior leadership team, gives high priority to and leads self evaluation. Evaluation is integral to all that the school does and all in the community contribute to it. Governors are well informed about all aspects of the school including its Catholic life and RE. Review of the Catholic life of the school has taken place since the last inspection at all levels including form and house tutor monitoring, guidance leaders' meetings, and voice of the learner. Pupils understand that what the school as a Catholic school gives to them is distinctive. They feel that their views are heard and that they make their own contribution to school self evaluation. The recently established chaplaincy team in particular have a significant role: they see themselves as "inspirers of faith" and as having a responsibility to encourage other students to find their faith in God and in themselves. Starting from previous practice in the school, they have planned and led improvements in liturgies which have been very successful. They have accomplished much in a short time within the context of the school's key value: "be the best that you can be."

Currently the focus of evaluation and planning is on the relationship between the school as a sports college in the year of the Olympics, as a Catholic school seeking to promote pupils' spiritual and vocational development. Olympic values are consistently conveyed through sports lessons, assemblies, and displays. They are linked explicitly with Gospel values and the key value is

frequently expressed as be the best that God wants you to be, making a clear link with vocation. The values are effectively taught and impact on lessons other than sports and religious education, though the link between Olympic and Gospel values could yet be closer in both promotion and evaluation. Pupils know the Olympic values thoroughly and are able to assess their own progress in developing them. Their familiarity with Gospel values is evident.

The head of RE, as a member of the senior leadership team, has conducted an audit of spiritual development across subjects in the school. This has revealed that all subjects help pupils to reflect on meaning and identity and encourage spiritual development in some measure, though there is an acknowledgement that it could be more securely consistent across subjects and the headteacher is aware of where the strengths and weaknesses rest. The audit has not as yet been fully analysed and the next step that the school should consider is seeking to identify in each subject what more could be done to foster spiritual, moral and vocational development. The PE and sports department has given an outstanding example of how this can be done.

Religious education is monitored and evaluated as part of the school's routine of subject review and this is conducted using the diocesan framework for inspection. The process involved lesson observations, work scrutiny and student voice interviews. The review found that teaching ranged from outstanding to borderline satisfactory with the majority of lessons being good or better. This is wholly consistent with the findings of the inspection. Feedback to teachers comments on strengths and areas for development both individually and across the department. Monitoring of pupils' work identified a weakness in marking and feedback to pupils so a new method was introduced which has quickly brought about change. As a consequence, pupils now know what their targets are, how well they are performing, and how they can improve their work. In the best classes they are also showing that they can assess their own and their peers' achievement. Peer and self assessment, however, are yet to be developed in the majority of classes. Written work is consistent with the judgements made by the department and shows progress within and between years and key stages. That could be enhanced if the pupils were given more opportunities to organise their own thoughts and structure their own work. In the departmental review pupils' views were sought and, as in inspection, they were very positive about their experience of RE finding it enjoyable and relevant to their lives. Monitoring of the curriculum is an area where the department might establish clear criteria to judge its effectiveness.

The department uses data carefully to indicate performance of all groups of pupils from Key Stage 3 through to Advanced Level. There is some analysis of the figures with comparisons to performance in other subjects, but there is insufficient focus on why performance is as it is. This is particularly the case at GCSE level where there is little analysis of what the figures indicate. There is an occasional evaluative comment, for example about the value of the support of teaching assistants and effective planning meetings ensuring that attainment of lower ability pupils has risen. The department knows where there has been improvement, for instance identifying that girls eligible for free school meals have performed well. Otherwise there is a tendency to let the figures speak for themselves rather than providing a thorough analysis of what they mean and what they tell of teaching, learning and necessary action to improve. There is more substance to the analysis of outcomes at AS and A2 levels. This is supported by exam board analysis, but the department's own analysis is effective.

Overall effectiveness of the school¹

Standards in religious education vary over time with no clear trend emerging from the figures other than that pupils achieve at GCSE in line with their attainment on entry and consistent with predictions. Performance in 2011 was below the diocesan average, but comparable to that in schools with similar intakes. In 2010 performance was much higher and close to the diocesan average. Progress in Key Stage 3 and the GCSE course is good, aided by the positive attitudes of the pupils to the subject. There is little underperformance amongst any group of pupils irrespective of ability or ethnicity, though the department considers that it could do more to make work match

¹ As the quality of the school self evaluation has been affirmed, the judgements in this section of the report conform largely to those of the school.

the abilities of pupils with learning needs. At Advanced Level, students perform well as a result of the high quality teaching and on average achieve above predictions. In the last three years all students have achieved pass grades at A2 level and the performance at AS has been good.

Pupils engage with and benefit from the Catholic life of the school very well. They understand and participate in the drive to “be the best they can be”, an aspiration the school has espoused and developed following the visit to the UK of Pope Benedict and also in accord with Olympic values. Arising from these two sources of inspiration, pupils have not only come to understand the Catholic and Olympic values, but also recognise how they put them into practice in their lives, how they can use them to evaluate their own achievement, and how they can inspire them to contribute more to their communities. The voice of the learner in the school is strong and pupils contribute to the evaluation of the Catholic life of the school. One marked outcome of this is the effective chaplaincy team which plans and leads whole school liturgies. There are, across the school, abundant opportunities for the students to be involved in leadership. These started with the sports specialism, but have impacted in other curriculum areas as well as Catholic life. The school has developed a student empowerment through leadership programme which is enabling pupils to learn the value of community and that they are called to serve others through volunteering.

Collective worship makes a powerful contribution to the work of the school, to its character as a harmonious community, and to pupils’ spiritual development. Pupils consider that they are respected and have built their confidence as a result of being trusted to plan and organise liturgies. While they also participate in house based prayers, opportunities for leading and participating in assemblies are limited.

Leadership of the Catholic life of the school is excellent. The headteacher has an impressive commitment and capacity to enable others to develop as leaders in the context of the Catholic school. As a result of her capacity to recognise and promote talent there is a strong senior leadership team which is promoting the Catholic life of the school very well, encouraging the development of Catholic values, currently through the medium of the Olympic values, and pupils’ involvement in the community. Governors are well informed and highly supportive of the Catholicity of the school. Monitoring and evaluation by senior leadership is strong and governors know the quality of the Catholic ethos of the school.

The head of religious education is a member of the senior leadership team and she leads the subject in excellent fashion. She knows the strengths and weaknesses of the department and plans appropriately for its improvement. She is an outstanding teacher and, in this, leads very clearly by example. Teaching in the subject is good overall, with some that is satisfactory and some that is consistently outstanding. Assessment strategies have been recently changed and are now proving to be highly effective in informing the pupils of their targets and progress as well as how to improve.

Recommendations

- The RE department should use its detailed analysis of performance data to identify the reasons why performance is as it is, taking into account:
 - why boys’ achievement is rising while that of girls is stable;
 - whether there are significant differences between classes;
 - how attainment in RE can be raised at GCSE level.



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June 2012

Dear Parents and Carers

**Section 48 (Diocesan) Inspection of Our Lady and St Chad Catholic Sports College,
Wolverhampton, May 30th – 31st 2012**

I am writing this letter to share with you the findings of the diocesan inspection of your children's school. Diocesan inspection now explores in detail the school's own view of itself as expressed in its self-evaluation. For this reason, much of the report is more technical than used to be the case. You are still entitled to have a copy of the full report should you want one and it will be available on the school website or by request from the school office.

The school is a good Catholic school with many outstanding features. It is extremely well led by the headteacher, governors and senior leadership team. They know the strengths and areas for development thoroughly and plan effectively for their improvement. They provide many opportunities for your children to develop as leaders and to develop values which will serve them well throughout their lives. In this, there is a particularly strong link between what the school teaches as a Catholic school and what the pupils learn through sport in the school. Olympic values are taught closely with the values of the Catholic school.

The religious education department has excellent leadership and good teaching, with some teaching that is consistently outstanding. Pupils achieve as well as they should and they make good progress in their learning while in the school. Our Lady and St Chad has a particularly strong record in enabling pupils of all abilities and ethnic backgrounds to achieve well and this is true in RE. Pupils enjoy the subject and recognise its importance.

We have recommended that the school should maintain the promotion of the link between Catholic teaching and the values of the Olympic movement; also that the RE department should build on their analysis of information from public examinations to see how they can raise pupils' achievement further.

The school would not be the good school that it is without the co-operation of the pupils. Their behaviour is excellent and they have a strong sense of loyalty to the school. They contribute a great deal to the school, its Catholic life, worship and religious education, and its involvement in the community. We thank them for the valuable part they played in the inspection and the welcome which they gave to us. As parents and carers you can be very proud of them.

Yours sincerely

John Lally
Diocesan Inspector

Bernadette Morton
Diocesan Inspector