

DIOCESE OF MIDDLESBROUGH

Inspection of Religious Education Collective Worship and The Catholic Life of the School



School: St Mary's College, Cranbrook Avenue, Hull. HU6 7TN

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Chair: Mr Michael Day

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Inspector: Mr Steve Mort

A Report from
The Diocese of Middlesbrough Education Service
Section 48 Inspection Team
50a The Avenue
Linthorpe
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Introduction

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

The report of the inspection is produced for the Bishop of Middlesbrough (Code of Canon Law 804 and 806) and for the governors of the school.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

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Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school.

Factual information about the school

St Mary's College is a larger than average Catholic secondary school with Sports College status. It serves all of the parishes of Hull and the southern area of East Yorkshire.

There are 1532 pupils on roll in school and a sixth form of 287 students. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is slightly below average and there are slightly lower than average numbers of pupils with minority ethnic backgrounds or with English as an additional language. However, the number of pupils with English as an additional language has risen significantly in recent years. There are 20 pupils with a statement of Special Educational Needs. There are 67% baptised Catholic pupils and 22% baptised Christians of other denominations. There are 94.3 (full time equivalent) teachers of whom 43% are Catholics.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL

St Mary's College is an outstanding Catholic School

St Mary's College lives out its Mission Statement. There is an outstanding shared understanding of the college's ministry to young people and its service to the Church. A very strong commitment to the principles of the Mission Statement is evident in the verbal expressions and practice of the Governors, Head teacher and Senior Leaders, Chaplaincy Team, Staff and Students of the College. They ensure that the mission of the school informs all policies including those related to the Catholic life of the school, curriculum, extra-curricular activities, discipline and behaviour and collective worship. Practical commitment to the principles underlying the statement is evident in the status and role of the Religious Education Department, the outstanding opportunities for Liturgy and Worship, outstanding Chaplaincy provision and opportunities for students to contribute to the College and wider community. There is outstanding pastoral care for both students' and staff and EAL provision is a particular strength of the College. The College's success in building a caring community, which values all and celebrates successes, is witnessed to by the students who value the support and care provided by staff and are happy to belong to the College community. Student achievement in Religious Education is outstanding and there are secure links with parents, local clergy, schools and members of the local communities who hold the College in high regard.

Improvement since the last inspection

Improvement since the last inspection is outstanding.

Since the previous inspection the College has made significant progress. The report at the time made several recommendations and the College has addressed all of them.

- The College Mission Statement has been reviewed and rewritten in consultation with all stakeholders, and this process is currently being repeated.
- A spiritual development audit has been undertaken and a Policy for Spiritual Development has been written.
- The Sex and Relationship Education Policy has been reviewed and rewritten.
- Teaching and learning in Religious Education has been further developed through a department review process and implementation of the Key stage 3 strategy in line with whole College developments in teaching and learning.
- The Religious Education department has reviewed the assessment and marking policy and pupil tracking system in line with whole college assessment and marking arrangements.
- The Religious Education Department has reviewed and updated the Key Stage 3 assessment tasks to enable the new levels of attainment as stated by the Bishop's Conference in 'Faith and Science, Church and State, Religious Diversity and Dialogue' to be assessed effectively and meaningfully.
- The Religious Education Department has reviewed provision at Key Stage 5, which has resulted in a significant increase in uptake at A Level.

Capacity to improve

The school's capacity to improve is outstanding.

The College completed a thorough self-evaluation and has a very accurate view of its own strengths and of those areas it seeks to develop further. It is clear from the discussions with all members of the College community that the College is very well positioned to effect further improvements and is committed to doing so.

What the school should do to improve further

To improve further the school should:

- develop further and extend opportunities for all students to participate in a retreat and/or day of reflection.
- develop opportunities to strengthen and formalise links with the governors.
- develop further the literacy strategy in Religious Education to ensure it is fully embedded in all lessons at Key stage 3.
- develop further the outstanding chaplaincy provision by increasing the Chaplaincy budget.

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

The effectiveness of leadership and management in developing the Catholic life of the school

The effectiveness of Leadership and Management of the College in developing the Catholic life of the school is outstanding. The Governors, Head teacher, Senior Leaders, Head of Religious Education, Pastoral leaders and Chaplaincy Team all have a strong sense of the educational mission of the Church and the role of the Religious Education Department in contributing to the school's role in this.

The Head teacher and Senior Leaders communicate a strong sense of spiritual purpose, with a focus on promoting high standards and the fullest personal development of students'. Governors and senior leaders ensure that the Mission statement of the College informs all policies. Opportunities for spiritual and moral development are evaluated across the Catholic life of the school, the curriculum, extra-curricular activities, the discipline and behaviour strategies and the contribution made by collective worship.

There is an strong Head of Religious Education Department. He is ably assisted by a Second in Department. His leadership, experience and commitment to Religious Education are an asset to the department and to the school.

The school Chaplaincy Team is making a significant contribution to maintaining and developing the outstanding Catholic ethos of the school, and to encouraging an active faith amongst the students' and staff.

There are excellent links with the local Clergy who provide strong support for the Catholic life of the College.

The Pastoral Team is a real strength in the school, whose hard work permeates all aspects of student activity. The pastoral systems, policies and procedures support the five areas of the 'every child matters' agenda.

There is a link governor for Religious Education.

Collective Worship

The provision and quality of Collective worship is outstanding.

Prayer, liturgy and worship are at the heart of the College community. The policy for Collective Worship has recently been reviewed and developed. The College records, monitors and reviews Collective Worship and this has been identified in the SED as an area for further development. The College is fulfilling its statutory duties of providing a daily act of Collective Worship which is a collaborative task which is shared by the Chaplaincy Team, Religious Education Department, Head teacher, Senior Leadership Group, Pastoral Leaders, Form Tutors and students. The College has recently addressed the short time for morning assemblies by re-organising the school day. The year group assemblies observed during the inspection were outstanding occasions using themes, which were relevant and reflective. Students participated fully in the assemblies and their behaviour was excellent. ICT was used effectively and appropriately to enhance the pupil's experience of collective worship.

Daily prayer is promoted in the school with each day starting with a prayer conducted in a form or year/half year group assembly. Daily prayers and assembly themes follow the liturgical year. During Advent and Lent students participate in a special liturgy to mark the season. The themes for assembly follow the liturgical year and resources are provided by the Chaplaincy Team, Pastoral Teams and RE Department. The range of prayer and liturgical experiences to which learners are exposed contributes significantly to the spiritual development of students. Students regularly prepare and lead acts of worship with confidence and enthusiasm.

There are regular opportunities for students to participate in Eucharistic celebrations including a weekly voluntary Mass, year group Masses, and the whole college open air Mass. Further extra curricular opportunities for spiritual development include seasonal prayer e.g. the rosary in May and prayers for the dead in November. Students participate in retreats and days of reflection, the SVP camp, a year 8 CAFOD Day, Fair Trade groups and the Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes. Staff prepare and lead prayers and reflections at morning briefings and have participated in a staff retreat to reflect on the meaning and purpose of Catholic Education.

The College enjoys excellent links with members of the local clergy. Clergy support

Religious Education lessons by working with individual students, small groups, and whole classes and in some cases half/whole year groups. The Religious Education department has established close links with the local deanery and attend some of their meetings.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Achievement and standards in Religious Education

Achievements and standards in Religious Education are outstanding.

Students' attainment in Key stage 3 based on lesson observation and scrutiny of pupil's work is above the national average and compares well with those in other curriculum areas. At Key stage 4 results are above the national average and Religious Education is one of the highest achieving subjects in the College.

The sample of students' work that was seen during the inspection showed a good level of achievement within and across the broad areas of attainment in Religious Education. The levels of attainment were good. Pupils understand appropriate religious terminology and are able to use it with confidence in written and oral work.

Quality of provision for Religious Education

The quality of teaching and learning in Religious Education is outstanding.

Teaching is well informed, confident, engaging and precise. The work is well matched to the full range of learners' needs, so that most are suitably challenged. Teaching methods are effectively related to the lesson objectives and the needs of the learners. Assessment of learners work is regular and consistent and contributes to their progress.

The students' attitudes to Religious Education were never less than good and in most lessons were outstanding. The behaviour of pupils was outstanding. The students enjoy Religious Education and are attentive to the input of information, explanation or instruction from their teachers. There are excellent relationships between students' and staff that help students' to respond positively to their work and to make good progress. The students' show interest in their work, are able to sustain concentration and think and learn for themselves. They acquire new knowledge and skills, consolidate prior learning and apply it to new contexts.

Student's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is clearly rooted in the beliefs of the Catholic Church. They have a secure understanding of the life and teachings of Jesus and are able to apply his teachings to their own lives and

experiences. Some students are able to articulate how the Religious Education curriculum, the wider curriculum, the PSHCE programme of study and the Catholic life of the College have contributed to their own faith development.

The College makes outstanding provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. Every department in the College is aware of the responsibilities, which it has to contributing to these areas. The Religious Education Department provides an exciting range of extra curricular opportunities to support the taught curriculum. A recent example is an A level study trip to New York to attend an international conference on religion. Students participate in residential retreats, days of reflection, year group Charity events and campaigns e.g. Make Poverty History.

The quality of provision for Religious Education is outstanding. In Key stage 3 teaching and learning is outstanding. Lessons are well planned, learning outcomes are clearly identified and the content of the lesson is clearly linked to achieving them. The three-part lesson format is well entrenched, with a variety of starter activities to introduce the key learning objectives, good development and challenging plenary activities. The curriculum at Key stage 3 allows learners of all abilities to make good progress in relation to their ability.

In Key stage 4 teaching and learning is outstanding. Students' are encouraged to apply prior knowledge to new contexts. Students' work well collaboratively in paired work or small groups. They apply themselves to individual tasks and show excellent levels of concentration. The current GCSE syllabus enables students of all abilities to make progress, including the option of a short course or entry level examination for those students who find the full course too challenging. The department uses appropriate and effective intervention strategies for those students who are underperforming, especially at Key Stage 4. Students who progress above expected levels are rewarded with letters and postcards which are sent home to inform parents of this progress. The department uses Assessment for learning stickers to enable students, parents and teachers to monitor progress and identify how progress can be improved.

In AS and A level lessons, the quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. A wide variety of teaching methods are employed to meet the preferred learning style of

students. The students work well collaboratively in paired work and small groups. They show confidence to present their own work to the rest of the class, to listen with respect and to challenge each other's views. Year 12 and 13 data indicates that, the cohorts are making progress at least in line with and often above expectation. The Religious Education department are currently piloting the post 16 ARCS course with Edexcel and the CES.

Quality of provision for Religious Education

The quality of the curriculum in Religious Education is outstanding.

The Religious Education schemes of work meet the requirements of the Catholic Curriculum Directory and focus on teaching and learning. Learning objectives are explicit in these schemes and are linked to assessment tasks. The Religious Education department has adopted rigorous monitoring and assessment procedures, which are in line with QCA Attainment levels. These are shared with students and are effective in informing their progress. Monitoring and evaluation occurs through regular internal lesson observations and an annual internal review of teaching and learning. Recent developments include the introduction of Edexcel GCSE, which has increased the Roman Catholic content, movement to sets in year 9 to facilitate early introduction of GCSE, and the introduction of Religious Ethics modules at A Level.

The Religious Education teachers have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the differing capabilities of all pupils. Relevant pupil data is used effectively and teachers work closely with the SENCO, Teaching Assistants and Learning Mentors to meet the needs of all learners. The Religious Education Department uses innovative procedures for monitoring the progress of pupils. Learning is monitored through student tracking and common assessment tasks against attainment levels. The Religious Education teachers, Chaplain and Pastoral Leaders are making excellent use of the ICT resources, which are being effectively incorporated in to lessons, assemblies and Collective Worship.

There are secure links in place between the school, parents, parish priests and the local community. Parents have a high regard for the school and its provision of Religious Education. They appreciate the opportunities available to their children for prayer and liturgy. In addition to the statutory information provided by the school, information is provided via pupil journals, the College prospectus, the school website, the Head teacher's newsletters and displays around College.

The time allocation of 10% to Religious Education fulfils the requirements of the Bishop's Conference. The Religious Education curriculum is carefully planned, monitored and evaluated to meet the requirements of the Catholic Curriculum Directory. The curriculum has been carefully adapted to match the needs, aspirations

and potential of all students. At each key stage the topics, learning objectives and intended learning outcomes build upon the student's prior attainment and experiences. Curriculum Religious Education makes a significant contribution to the spiritual and moral development of the pupils. All lessons begin with the sign of the cross and there are appropriate and stimulating visual reminders of the Catholic life of the school in the classrooms and around the College. The curriculum covers a range of ethical issues which are linked to liturgies which are lead by the Chaplaincy Team in RE lessons during Advent and Lent. The students are gaining a good knowledge and developing an understanding of and respect for the teachings, beliefs, values and way of life of other faiths. The school has in place a comprehensive Education in Personal Relationships Policy. Sex Education is taught within a Catholic framework mainly through the PSHCE programme.

There are six good sized Religious Education teaching rooms, including a dedicated new ICT room situated around the Chapel. The chapel provides a quiet place for reflection for all members of the school community. It is used regularly for a variety of private, individual and collective prayer. The chapel is well maintained and has helpful resources to aid prayer.

The Religious Education Department is well supported financially and the Governors, Head teacher and Senior Leaders ensure that resources are deployed efficiently and effectively to achieve high standards.

Leadership and Management of Religious Education

Leadership and management in Religious Education are outstanding.

The strong Head of Department is making a significant contribution to the development of the subject and the wider life of the College. He has a clear vision of the direction and purpose of Catholic Education, the teaching of Religious Education and the role of the department in the on going development of the College. Religious Education is staffed as one of five 'core subjects' in the new staffing structure, committing additional resources to leadership and management of Religious Education. The Head of Department leads a fully committed and enthusiastic team of eight specialist teachers who are all practising Catholics. There is a shared commitment between all of those teaching Religious Education to the subject's aims

and values. The personal witness of the Religious Education teachers to their own belief and their willingness to share their faith with students is having a significant impact upon the College community. The Head of Department is fully involved in Performance Management and the department review enabling him to monitor the standards of teaching and learning.

All staff are receiving appropriate professional development and responsibilities for key areas of work within the department are shared e.g. Gifted and Talented, Special Educational Needs, English as an Additional Language. The department enjoys strong links with the University of Hull and has shared good practice with schools' within and beyond the Diocese. The Head of Department and a senior leader have addressed national conferences on Religious Education and are currently exploring opportunities to develop the study of Theology at the University of Hull and to incorporate this in to the Diocesan Pastoral Plan.

Inspection Judgements Form

Area	Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 is good, grade 3 is satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate.	Judgement
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Overall effectiveness

A1	Effectiveness and efficiency of the provision of Catholic education	1
A1.1	Distinctive nature of the Catholic life of the school	1
A1.2	Overall effectiveness	1
A1.3	Effectiveness of the home / school / parish partnership	2
A1.4	Improvement since the last inspection	1
A1.5	Capacity to improve further	1

The Catholic Life of the School

B1	Effectiveness of leadership and management in developing the Catholic life of the school	1
B1.1	Governing body	2
B1.2	Leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction	1
B1.3	Quality of the leadership of the Headteacher and senior staff in developing the Catholic life	1
B1.4	Contribution to spiritual and moral development	1
B1.5	Effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation	2

B2	Quality of collective worship	1
B2.1	Frequency and quality of provision	1
B2.2	Learners' response	1
B2.3	Contribution to spiritual and moral development	1

Religious Education

C1	Achievement and standards in Religious Education	1
C1.1	Learners' success in achieving targets, trends over time and variations between groups of learners.	1
C1.2	Standards of work	1
C1.3	Progress	1
C1.4	Enjoyment	1
C1.5	Behaviour and strategies in use	1
C1.6	Contribution to spiritual and moral development	1
C1.7	Learners' contribution to the school community	2

C2	Quality of provision for Religious Education – teaching and learning	1
C2.1	Match to learners' needs and curriculum requirements	1
C2.2	Suitability and rigour of assessment in planning, monitoring and informing learners' progress	1
C2.3	Additional learning needs	1
C2.4	Involvement of parents and carers	2

C3	Quality of provision for Religious Education - curriculum	1
C3.1	Match to aspirations and potential	1
C3.2	Match to external requirements and response to local circumstances	1
C3.3	Contribution to spiritual and moral development	1

C4	Quality of provision for Religious Education – leadership and management	1
C4.1	Effectiveness of leadership and support of staff	1
C4.2	Effectiveness of monitoring of performance – quality assurance and self-assessment	2
C4.3	Equality of opportunity	1
C4.4	Adequacy and suitability of staff	1
C4.5	Adequacy and suitability of resources and accommodation	2
C4.6	Deployment of resources	1
C4.7	Effectiveness of Governors' responsibilities	2