

**THE DIOCESE OF SHREWSBURY**



**Harrytown Catholic High School**  
**Harrytown Lane, Romiley, Stockport, SK6 3BU**

**URN: 106143**  
**DCSF No: 356 4601**

**28<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup> September 2011**

**Report on the**  
**Inspection of Denominational Education**

**Lead Inspector: Mr John McCann**  
**Link Inspector: Mrs Pat Barker**

The inspection of the denominational education of  
Harrytown Catholic High School, Romiley  
was carried out at the request of the Governors of the School  
in fulfilment of their obligation under the requirements,  
and according to the directives of, the School Inspections Act 2005.  
The school was inspected within the framework  
approved by the Bishop of Shrewsbury  
for the conduct of inspection of the denominational education of  
Catholic Secondary Schools within the Diocese.

Key for inspection grades

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

## DESCRIPTION OF THE SCHOOL

Harrytown Catholic High School is an 11-16, voluntary aided, coeducational comprehensive school. The school is under the trusteeship of the Diocese of Shrewsbury and in the Stockport MBC (Local Authority). The school has specialist status for science and has gained the Leading Parent Partnership Award (LPPA). Although serving a wide catchment area to support Catholic education students are drawn, in the main, from 7 parishes and the attached primary schools. There are 772 students on roll. 64% of the students are baptized Catholics with 18% from other Christian denominations and 3% from other World Faith traditions. The percentage of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average as is the proportion of those with a statement to support their special educational needs. The proportion of students known to be entitled to free school meals is below the national average. There are 52 members of teaching staff (including ten part-time) of whom 42 (81%) are Catholic.

## OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

GRADE 1

Harrytown is an outstanding Catholic school with its Catholic ethos at the heart of all that it does. The school is committed to the challenge inspired by John 10:10 "I have come that you may have life and have it to the full". Since the last inspection the school has maintained its capacity for continued improvement. This is reflected in all aspects of the Leadership and Management of the Catholic Life and Ethos, and in Collective Worship. Achievement and standards in Religious Education are outstanding, teaching and learning are good with many outstanding features. Students believe Religious Education to be one of, if not the best subject in the school. This is further evidenced by an analysis of the large number of parent and student questionnaire returns which were made (685 students and 286 parent returns)

## IMPROVEMENT SINCE THE LAST INSPECTION

GRADE 1

The recommendations made at the last inspection have all been addressed and the measures taken have positively impacted on the Religious Education Department and the whole school. The management and leadership structure of the R E Department has the full confidence and support of the governing body and the Headteacher who is also line manager for the subject. The two subject leaders have a shared vision and complement each other in a successful partnership which has seen standards of attainment rise. The role of the chaplain in the school impacts on every area of school life and the part the chaplain plays in the life of the school is valued and appreciated by all members of the school community as one member of staff responded "she is worth her weight in gold". Students believe the School Council is effective and has a voice which is heard in the school and impacts upon decisions which the school has made. The school in recognition of its mission to work in partnership with parents has achieved the LPPA.

## CAPACITY FOR SUSTAINED IMPROVEMENT

GRADE 1

There is the capacity for sustained development which is evident from the detailed and thorough departmental and school Self-Evaluation. Quality statements are supported by plans for development and identified improvements. The departmental document is linked to whole school initiatives, which targets improvement within realistic timescales.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT

- Continue to develop the work which has recently begun whereby each department identifies and explores its special/particular contribution to the spiritual and moral development of the students.
- Redevelop the provision of a place for quiet reflection – presently provided by the oratory.
- Identify and resource the most appropriate accredited course for Y11 students who have completed a full GCSE by the end of Y10.
- Within the Religious Education department ensure consistent application of departmental policies across the department.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF THE CATHOLIC LIFE AND ETHOS GRADE 1

Leadership and management of the Catholic Life and Ethos of the school are excellent. During the inspection there was clear evidence that the staff, governors and students lived out the aims of the school in its daily life. The Headteacher has a very clear understanding of the mission of the school as a Catholic community in the area in which it serves. All students spoke of school as a 'welcoming community' in which they felt respected and cared about. This view was mirrored by all who were interviewed and the welcome was experienced by the inspection team. New staff felt valued, respected and supported not only in their subject specialism but in the development of the prayer and spiritual life of the school. The behaviour of students in whole year assemblies was exemplary; in the playground orderly and considerate. During lessons the school was calm and settled with a purposeful and focused atmosphere. Students were friendly, outgoing and helpful. Expectations of pupil behavior are made clear through the acronym RESPECT: responsible, everyone matters, show kindness, polite, environment, courteous, tidy litter.

The chaplain with members of the R.E. Department, Senior Leadership team and subject specialists are a driving force behind many of the activities which impact significantly upon the Catholic Life of the school. Members of the RE department also lead and help deliver the citizenship programme which focuses on rights and duties, responsibilities and freedoms. The chaplain provides the students and staff with high quality resources to support staff prayer and collective worship, these are much appreciated. The work undertaken by the chaplain and Y8 Pupil Progress Manager in making explicit links in form time between aspects of faith and belief to the SEAL programme was excellent. The expectation, on all staff with regard to planning and participation in assemblies and liturgies are made clearly and helpfully, with supporting guidance, in a section of the staff handbook. The recently developed 'Covenant' between home, child and school is a feature in every office and teaching space. The covenant places support and respect for the Catholic beliefs of the school and support for the spiritual development of the child as first elements of the agreement. In each student planner there is a section on 'Caring for People in Need' which highlights the school's charities and the work that it does. In addition there are prayers for different occasions, an explanation of the liturgical year, and a section on the sacrament of reconciliation which underpins the focus on restorative justice. The chaplain is supported by the parish priests in the celebration of the Eucharist and offering days of reconciliation. Students are actively involved in the celebration of the Eucharist at school and many serve as readers and Eucharistic ministers.

A number of retreat programmes are offered in each of the first four years with the full support of the chaplain, form tutors and members of the Religious Education Department.

Year 7 use a local centre and the chaplain and form teachers work with students on the theme of 'Light to the World' and 'Salt of the Earth'. Years 8 and 9 follow a programme run by the Marist Sisters in Chorlton and Year 10 are offered a residential retreat at Brettargh Holt or sometimes, Myddleton Grange. A developmental programme of SRE days is also in place .

The promotion of community cohesion is very good. The school undertakes wide-ranging social interaction and fundraising projects at local, nation and international level. The school has an active and growing number of SVP volunteers who work within the school and the local community. The school is seeking to increase the membership. Many students are well motivated to achieve through the opportunities to extend and enrich classroom activities and through contributions to the community e.g. Well Spring Kitchen, Catholic Children's Fund, Francis House Children's Hospice, Educaid and Cafod. The Religious Education curriculum promotes community cohesion through its focus on knowledge and understanding of other World Faith traditions in Key Stage 3, together with an emphasis on citizenship through Gospel values in all Key Stages. In Collective Worship themes are inclusive of current affairs, issues and moral dilemmas.

The School Council is valued and appreciated by the students who believe it has a voice in the school and is listened to and can make a difference, this is also true of the Pupil Leadership Team which has recently been introduced, at the students' request, to replace the role of Head boy and Head girl. The school has an ABC ,Anti Bullying Council. The school commits to the training off site of the students who volunteer to be members of it. Although parts of the building are in need of refurbishment and a number of areas are 'tired' there is little, if any, evidence of graffiti or willful damage. The work of students is celebrated throughout the building. Of particular note was the wall celebrating student achievement and excellence covering all areas of school life.

#### COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

#### GRADE 1

The provision for and quality of Collective Worship is outstanding. The policy, which is in the staff handbook, contains the philosophy with practical details for implementation. There are weekly themes focused on the Liturgical Calendar. Year group prayer and worship takes place once each week and form groups gather daily. Masses and services take place throughout the year. Consequently learners have opportunities for a practical involvement, which they value. This was exemplified during the inspection through acts of worship in which learners' and staff were fully engaged. On both days, a different Form class was fully involved in preparing and presenting the assembly to the rest of the Year group. The theme in school this week was Light. Inspirational quotes and Scripture passages were used to very good effect. Students were involved in reading, role play and leading prayers. Music was used to further enhance the message and stickers or quotes on paper were given out as students entered or left the Assembly, as a reminder to think about the message given throughout the rest of the day. Students were given support by both the Form Teacher and Chaplain There was the opportunity for personal reflection. The hall provided an excellent space and students entered respectfully with a sense of purpose and engagement. There is a voluntary staff prayer each Friday. The expectation, on all staff with regard to planning and participation in assemblies and liturgies is made clearly and helpfully, with supporting guidance, in a section of the staff handbook.

#### ACHIEVEMENT AND STANDARDS IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

#### GRADE 1

Achievement and standards in Religious Education are excellent. Key Stage 3 results for the past three years have shown a significant increase with 90% or more of the year group in 2010 and 2011 achieving Level 5 or above and a significant increase in those achieving Level 7 or 8 this represents 19% and 15% of the Year respectively. The Department has achieved above the national average in KS4 and been one of the leading departments in the school. In 2010 the GCSE entry achieved 77% A\*-C with 35% of entry gaining A\*-A. In 2011 78% achieved A\*-C with 26% achieving A\*/A. Figures for both of these years remain well above the national average and are a significant increase on performance in 2009. Over the last three years 99% of entry have achieved a GCSE grade. This department regularly achieves the largest numbers of higher grades.

In Key Stage 4 all learners undertake GCSE over two years the majority of students following Edexcel 'Catholic Christianity and Life Course' with a small number following an AQA full course. A recently introduced initiative to introduce the GCSE course into Y9 for two groups of more able students has had very positive results in terms of grades achieved increased confidence and raised aspirations of many students. A suitable course for these students to follow in Y11 has yet to be identified.

High standards in class focus on the capabilities and starting points of all learners. Standards are supported by the continued rise in the quality of teaching and learning, together with quality assessment. A significant contribution is made by the positive attitude of many learners in class. For most students their enjoyment of Religious Education is obvious and they are further motivated by the enthusiasm of the staff.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

## GRADE 2

On the days of inspection six lessons were observed and the quality of teaching and learning in 66% of lessons was judged to be outstanding. Teaching is organized, structured and frequently creative. Full use is made of the three-part lesson. Objectives are set out at the start of lessons and revisited throughout. A small minority of lessons still require development of activities that will address the challenging behaviour of a small number of students and to ensure that pace is maintained throughout. Within the Department there is a wealth of experience and expertise that can be drawn upon to address this issue. The overall quality of learning is exemplified by both interactive and the increasing development of independent activities. There is effective differentiation provided through teacher-led presentation, choices of activities and by outcome. The vast majority of students are confident and engaged in their learning.

Procedures for assessment are well defined. The process is detailed within the staff and departmental handbooks and includes formative and end of task activities, matched to levels of attainment in Key Stage 3 and to accredited courses in Key Stage 4. Excellent examples of peer marking and assessment were observed in the outstanding lessons. Students liked the six whole school academic reviews undertaken each year and particularly appreciated the end of topic assessments marked against GCSE criteria in Religious Education. The students benefit from the fact that both subject leaders mark for the Examination Board and this is shared with all RE staff and enables them to give clear advice and exact guidance in exam technique. Assessments provide evidence that students are challenged to explain, show understanding and to defend their judgements and opinions. The vast majority of work is being marked according to the marking policy. Comments are predominantly diagnostic and developmental. Many students' written work shows high standards of presentation. The content matches the frameworks of study. There is clear knowledge and understanding of key vocabulary and concepts. Effective tracking of progress includes learners' evaluations. Closer monitoring of marking, assessment and the use of agreed departmental pro forma may eliminate some of the anomalies that presently exist. Assessment outcomes are supported by detailed reporting and meetings with parents and carers so ensuring a high level of involvement in the education of their children.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF THE R.E. DEPARTMENT

## GRADE 1

The leadership and management of the Religious Education Department are outstanding. The subject is at the core of Catholic Life of the school. A subject leader meets weekly with the Headteacher who is line manager and there is a clear shared view of the role of Religious Education within the school. The Headteacher values and appreciates the work of the Department in its academic and pastoral impact upon the life of the school. The subject leaders provide high quality management and coordination within the department. The Department has a clear understanding of its strengths and the areas for future development which can be evidenced in the Department's Self Evaluation Form. There are six staff who deliver the curriculum only one is full time RE teacher. Two staff share the leadership of the department; one teacher is the subject leader for Citizenship; one a Pupil Progress Leader; one an assistant headteacher. Five of the team have a specialist subject qualification. Together they are an active, committed team, with a broad overview of whole school systems and policies which accounts for the status and success of the subject within the school. Systems for performance management are well embedded. The process includes programmed peer observations of teaching to enable sharing of good practice and continued professional development.

The curriculum is well managed and coordinated. In Key Stage 3 and 4 the allocation is 10%. The curriculum is well supported by text and ICT resources, in many cases prepared by the department. Equal opportunities are promoted through the continued development of teaching and learning and by learners' access to accredited courses. Consequently the curriculum makes a strong response to diocesan and national requirements. It provides a significant contribution to learners' spiritual and moral development.

Governors monitor Religious Education through the Department's Annual Review and some by their own active participation in school life. A number of the local parish priests are increasingly making a significant and valued contribution to the Catholic Life of the school. In addition many governors are well informed and rooted in the understanding of the faith dimension of the Religious Education Department and its contribution to the overall Catholic Life of the community.

## INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Key to judgements: Grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory and grade 4 inadequate	Judgement
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### OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

How effective is the school in providing Catholic Education	1
The school's capacity for sustained improvement	1

### OUTCOMES FOR PUPILS

How good outcomes are for individuals and pupils	<b>1</b>
How well pupils achieve in Religious Education	1
pupils standards of attainment in religious Education	1
the quality of pupils' learning and their progress in Religious Education	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the School	1
How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship	1

### THE QUALITY OF PROVISION FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

How effective the provision is for Catholic Education	<b>1</b>
The quality of teaching and purposeful learning in Religious Education	2
The effectiveness of assessment in Religious Education	2
The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum meets pupils' needs	1
The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school	1

### LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic Life of the School	1
How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils	1
How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils	1
The extent to which the governing body provides effective challenge and support for the Catholic dimension of the school so areas needing development are addressed decisively and responsibilities met	1
How effectively leaders and managers promote community cohesion	1

## Results of Parental Questionnaire – 286 responses

Question	Strongly Agree %	Agree %	Disagree %	Strongly Disagree %	Don't Know %
My child enjoys school	42	57	1	>1	
I am happy with the values and attitudes that the school teaches	52	47	>1		1
I am made to feel welcome in school	49	48	>1		3
The school seeks the views of parents/carers and takes account of their views and concerns	33	52	2		13
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught in Religious Education	32	58	4		6
The school enables my child/ren to achieve a good standard of work in Religious Education	47	48	>1		4
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress in Religious Education	29	59	3	>1	9