



DIOCESE OF  
**SHREWSBURY**

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**St Paul's Catholic High School,  
Wythenshawe**

**URN: 139456**

**DfE No: 3524766**

**4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> July 2016**

**Report on the  
Inspection of Denominational Education**

**Lead Inspector: Mr John Mc Cann**

**Link Inspector: Mrs Anne-Marie Appleton**

**The inspection of the denominational education of  
St. Paul's Catholic High School, Wythenshawe  
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 Requires Improvement**

**Grade 4 Inadequate**

## **Description of the school**

St Paul's Catholic High School is a slightly smaller than average-sized 11-16 co-educational secondary school. The school is under the trusteeship of the Diocese of Shrewsbury and part of the Wythenshawe Catholic Academy trust, within Manchester Local Education Authority. St. Paul's mainly draws pupils from the 3 parishes that it serves and the Catholic partner primary schools within them. There are 837 pupils on roll; 61% of the pupils are baptized Catholics with 17% from other Christian denominations and 3% from other world faith traditions. There are 59 members of teaching staff, including the Head, 48% of whom are Catholic. The pupils come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium, which in this school provides additional funding for children in the care of the local authority and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, is high. The number of pupils supported on school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also double the national average.

The inspection team observed teaching in each key stage, 9 lessons in total, and all specialist teachers of Religious Education were observed as were a number of non-specialists who were timetabled on the days on inspection. Two teaching assistants and the chaplain were observed working with pupils. Pupils' work was sampled in each lesson as well as a scrutiny of pupils' work provided by the RE department. Inspectors observed the work of the chaplain with two groups of pupils, visited 7 classes during form time and attended two whole year Acts of Collective Worship. Inspectors spoke to pupils in their classes as well as conducting structured interviews with representative groups from each key stage. Inspectors took into account the results of 30 completed parents' questionnaires, 54 staff questionnaires and 473 pupil questionnaires which related to the Religious Education Department and the Catholic Life of the school. Discussions were held with: the headteacher, a member of the Governing Body, two assistant headteachers, the head of Religious Education, the school chaplain, a newly qualified teacher and the Educational Welfare Officer. Learning walks were undertaken as well as a visit to the Romero Centre. Throughout the inspection the team had access to school and departmental documentation and development plans.

### **Overall Effectiveness:**

#### **How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education**

**Grade 2**

This is a good school which has many strengths and effectively lives out its mission statement. The school has effectively met all but one of the recommendations for development raised in the last Section 48 inspection and has acknowledged this in its documentation, discussions and actions taken by the present Executive Head and Governing Body to address this for September 2016.

## **The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the School** **Grade 2**

This area is a strength of the school. Pupils are proud that they attend here and they are appreciative of all that is being done on their behalf by all staff. They appreciate the opportunities in Y7, Y8 and Y9 to attend day and residential retreats and see them as a chance to learn more about themselves and others and grow as people. Many opportunities exist, within the school day and in planned extra-curricular activities for all pupils to engage in prayer, reflection and enquiry. Some of the pupils are active within their parishes. The pupils show interest in the religious life of others and treat those of different beliefs with respect.

Throughout the school, there are aspirational quotations and reflections as well as acknowledgements of pupil achievements in a range of fields. Within the school's Mission Statement – "Journeying together with Jesus Christ, we learn to love and love to learn" five key values are identified which exemplify how the Mission is to be achieved. These values are promoted throughout the school in classrooms and public spaces and are known to the pupils and staff and form the core of many of the prayer opportunities provided. An awareness of the common good and commitment to the wider community and service for others runs throughout the school.

The vast majority of pupils are polite and considerate of others within the class and outside in the grounds. Incidents of bullying are few and the pupils state they are dealt with efficiently, effectively and fairly. From pupil interviews it is overwhelmingly believed that this is a safe and secure place in which to learn where everyone is valued and success celebrated and all are made welcome.

## **How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education** **Grade 2**

Pupils achieve well in each key stage, benefitting from appropriate and well-structured curricula. The percentage of pupils achieving grades A\*-C since the last inspection has improved considerably and over the last three years are 2013 52%, 2014 56%, 2015 60%, In each year the percentage of pupils achieving A\*-A has also shown a year on year increase and in each year has been significantly higher than English and mathematics. In 2015, 21% of the entry achieved the highest grades with a predicted 29% in this year's examination. At GCSE, A\*-C performance lies between that achieved in English and mathematics, with the following being the percentage of pupils achieving of A\* - C over the past two years: RE – 60%, 56% English 70%, 68%: mathematics 53%, 50%. Although girls currently outperform boys at GCSE, effective steps have been taken to close the gap through targeted intervention, this is also the case for PPI pupils. All pupils are provided with personalised revision packs and revision sessions. All pupils are encouraged to work hard and aspire to achieve the best that they can.

There are improvements in the outcomes for pupils at the end of KS3 with an increase in the number gaining Level 5. The introduction of The People of God scheme of work allows pupils to experience the rigour that will be required for KS4. With the introduction of the new Religious Studies GCSE there is an opportunity for the department to become even more accurate at assessing progress at the end of KS3 and outcomes for pupils at GCSE.

The structure, resourcing and delivery of the curriculum, supported by an effectively applied assessment policy have enabled improvement. There are opportunities for further success in the 'GCSE- driven' key stage 3, especially if pupils are able to develop skills within the philosophical explorations, not only to achieve at the higher end but also to enable all pupils to become fully engaged in the subject. The majority of pupils of all ages speak positively about religious education and see its relevance to their own lives and the wider world; they also take pride in their work which is very well organised and presented and they benefit from excellent classroom environments.

### **How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship Grade 2**

In whole year groups pupils respond with respect, reverence and improving levels of participation and ownership. They listen well and relate much of their prayer and reflection to the needs of local and wider communities and service to others. Pupils benefit greatly from the availability of the recently reinstated well- appointed and resourced chapel and the work of a very active and highly effective chaplain. During the inspection, outstanding whole year Acts of Collective Worship were observed, which indicated positive levels of engagement and attitude and full acceptance of worship as a key element of the life of the school. Staff appreciate and regularly draw upon the comprehensive materials provided on a weekly basis by the chaplain to support prayer and reflection in form time. Staff value the support provided by the chaplain and, as necessary, members of the RE team and Assistant Head with responsibility for the Catholic Life of the School. All staff have access to a published calendar at the beginning of the year of weekly themes to support collective worship and assist tutors in forward planning. The approach to, and the provision of, form based acts of collective worship is consistent throughout the school. The delivery and staff interaction with the morning prayer material could be developed further if the staff had earlier access to the resource. Events and liturgical seasons are appropriately marked, often through Year or whole school celebration of the Eucharist. There is an experienced Assistant Head with a specific responsibility for monitoring, leading development and having a strategic planning/ overview of the Catholic Life of the school.

### **How well leaders, governors and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school and plan and implement improvements to outcomes for pupils Grade 2**

Leaders, governors and managers demonstrate a strong commitment to the Church's mission in education, with spiritual and moral development a priority. The school sets out its vision identifying five key values in which it seeks to make an impact and which is at the heart of all it does. There is evidence that it is striving to make a positive and effective impact in each of the areas.

The school has recently appointed a dedicated lay chaplain who is highly regarded by the whole school community for the opportunities that are provided with the support of others to develop the pupils' spiritual and prayer life. Opportunities throughout the day exist for staff and/or pupils to visit the chapel for private prayer and reflection or a planned liturgical event. The chapel has an open door policy and hopes to be seen by all as 'a place of stillness and reflection where all in need of silence or support feel welcome' Although numbers attending on a voluntary basis are small this is an area of school life that is developing.

A number of monitoring systems are in place to check on provision and outcomes. Some effective systems that have previously been used have lapsed in terms of formal monitoring of late. The school may wish to consider reintroducing them. Leaders and managers are aware of the strengths and areas for further development, especially in relation to consistent provision and developing pupil participation in the planning and delivery of Acts of Collective Worship especially in form time.

There is a strong, effective and well-resourced pastoral support system in place to support pupils with different needs. It is clear from pupils' interviews that there is a high regard for the Catholic Life of the school and the encouragement for everyone to be involved in it.

**How well leaders, governors and managers resource, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan and implement improvements to outcomes for pupils** **Grade 2**

Leaders, managers and governors are committed to developing the quality of Religious Education to the highest level. Levels of departmental funding are commensurate and appropriate with other core subjects. An effective range of systematic monitoring and training activities are in place which have succeeded in very significant improvements over time. Issues are identified and strategies implemented to ensure rapid improvement; for example, in order to improve outcomes at GCSE the whole curriculum in Key Stages 3 and 4 has been developed with the GCSE assessment process at their core; this has resulted in pupils' familiarisation with the methods of successfully answering the different types of questions without stifling creativity and allowing for extending writing opportunities.

Outstanding use of the assessment process results in well targeted planning and strategic action taken. At present there is no link governor attached to RE however one of the Assistant Headteachers is a former experienced Head of RE and line manager for

the Department as well as for the Catholic Life of the School. This is a very effective partnership.

Curriculum provision in each Key Stage does not at present meet the Bishops' Conference requirements. The recently appointed Executive Head and governing body are aware that this is inadequate and have put in place arrangements for September 2016.

### **The quality of teaching and how purposeful learning is in Religious Education**

#### **Grade 2**

Teaching at Key Stage 3 and 4 is never less than good and there are some examples of outstanding practice. All of the teaching in these areas is effective in ensuring that nearly all pupils are consistently interested in their learning, keen to learn in RE, can work in a variety of grouping situations and are making good progress. As a result of good assessment procedures, teachers and learning support personnel work well to meet the needs of all pupils. Support provided by other adults is effectively deployed. Teachers have strong subject knowledge which inspires and challenges most pupils and contributes to their good progress. Good and imaginative use is made of resources and activity, including technology to maximize learning and is a strength of the department. Pupils are consistently provided with constructive and helpful written feedback at GCSE with examples of highly effective marking and feedback in KS3. Achievement and effort are highlighted and personalized advice is regularly given, appreciated and acted upon.

The provision of materials to support learning is excellent as are the learning bases throughout the Department, both in and outside of the classrooms.

The department may wish to consider the use of exemplar material to be displayed within the department so that all students are aware of the quality of work being produced on a regular basis in this subject.

### **The extent to which the Religious Education Curriculum promotes pupils' learning**

#### **Grade 2**

The Religious Education curriculum is enriched through imaginative and well planned strategies to capitalize on the expertise within school. The Religious Education curriculum provides many opportunities for spiritual and moral development. Extra-curricular opportunities are varied, have a high take up and are much enjoyed. The curriculum is characterized by ready reference to local and world-wide social and ethical issues and opportunities for, and reflection on, service to others. The curriculum offered matches fully the requirements of Religious Education Curriculum Directory. The school's plans to date for the introduction of new curriculum developments at GCSE in 2016 are clear and appropriate and as with all schools will require further development.

## **The Quality of Collective Worship provided by the school**

**Grade 2**

Year group and whole college Acts of Collective Worship are given high profile and are well delivered with expertise by staff, chaplain and with the school seeking to increase ownership and participation by pupils. Staff and students are, for the most part, comfortable praying together. There is a range of formal and informal opportunities for daily prayer in form time, assemblies and chapel area. The Assistant Head, RE department and chaplain review and plan improvements to the school's provision and are planning to develop ways of ensuring that pupils are skilled and equipped in leading prayer and owning aspects of collective worship. Staff value the prayer and reflection/discussion materials supplied by the chaplain to support them in form time although this significant resource is not always fully explored. The Church seasons and feasts are celebrated by the whole school community. Themes are consistent with the Catholic character of the school and take note of the religious diversity of pupils and the wider community when appropriate. The chaplain and local clergy significantly enrich and support the provision and their contribution is much appreciated by the staff, governors and pupils.

## **Recommendations for further development**

1. Ensure 10% curriculum RE time for all year groups with increased specialist staffing.
2. Revisit the Mission Statement with all staff so that it is known and its impact understood.
3. Further develop support for staff in leading and enhancing daily prayer and reflection in form time.
4. Ensure new courses in KS3 and KS4 are developed in house and through collaboration with the Diocese, and other partners.
5. Within the Religious Education build upon the existing methods of communication with parents to regularly provide further information regarding course content, assessments and homework within each year.

## INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<b>Key to judgements:</b>	<b>Judgement</b>
Grade 1 = outstanding, Grade 2 = good, Grade 3 = requires improvement and Grade 4 = inadequate	

<b>OUTCOMES FOR PUPILS:</b> How good outcomes are for pupils, taking particular account of variations between different groups	<b>2</b>
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school	<b>2</b>
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education	<b>2</b>
How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship	<b>2</b>

<b>LEADERS GOVERNORS AND MANAGERS</b> How effective leaders, governors and managers are in developing the Catholic life of the school	<b>2</b>
How well leaders, governors and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life of the school and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils	<b>2</b>
How well leaders, governors and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils	<b>2</b>

<b>PROVISION</b> How effective the provision is in promoting Catholic Education	<b>2</b>
The quality of teaching and how purposeful learning is in Religious Education	<b>2</b>
The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum promotes pupils' learning	<b>2</b>
The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school	<b>2</b>

<b>OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS</b>	
How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education	<b>2</b>