



Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection report for Cardinal Heenan Catholic High School

URN: 104714

Carried out on behalf of the Title. Archbishop Malcolm Mc Mahon, Archbishop of Liverpool on:

Date: 29-30 November 2023

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The school is fully compliant with the curriculum requirements laid down by the Bishops' Conference	x
The school is fully compliant with all requirements of the diocesan bishop	x
The school has responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection	Partially

Summary of key findings

What the school does well

- Students describe how the strength of Catholic life and mission at Cardinal Heenan enables them to feel safe, supported and loved; they confidently articulate how the school's mission and the teachings of Christ impact on how they serve others, including the most vulnerable.
- The school's mission and Catholic social teaching are lived out through robust pastoral systems which support those in greatest need and those who have multiple disadvantages.
- Students, staff and parents speak very highly of the 'sense of family' that is inherent in this school.
- Prayer and liturgy are central to the life of the school and witnessed through daily practice and emerging pupil engagement with chaplaincy.

This Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection was carried out under canons 804 & 806 of the code of canon law. For maintained schools and academies in England it fulfils the statutory requirements of s.48 of the Education Act 2005. For maintained schools and academies in Wales it fulfils the statutory requirements of s.50 of the Education Act 2005.

- The excellent behaviour of students, in lessons and in unstructured time, demonstrates students' respect for themselves, each other, and their school community.

What the school needs to improve:

- Increase student leadership opportunities including evaluating and contributing to the development of Catholic life and mission, and prayer and liturgy.
- Prioritise the provision of 10% curriculum requirement for religious education in key stage 3.
- Raise the number of students who are entered for GCSE religious studies to give parity with other core subjects and ensure that provision for alternative study pathways meet archdiocesan requirements.

Catholic life and mission

How faithfully the school responds to the call to live as a Catholic community at the service of the Church's educational mission.

Catholic life and mission key judgement grade:.....

1

Pupil outcomes

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

1

Provision

The quality of provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school

1

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school

2



Catholic life and mission is a thread running through every aspect of life at Cardinal Heenan. Students clearly articulate how they embrace their school's mission and describe their living out that mission in their daily lives, both in school and in the wider community. Students repeatedly describe the school community as 'family' and sixth form students talk about giving back to their school. This is also evident in the amount of support the school receives from alumni. Students show a deep respect for themselves and others through their exemplary behaviour and warm relationships with each other and staff. Students explain their understanding of Catholic social teaching and its impact on their own and the wider community. They live this out through regular charity work which is directed by themselves; each year group selects their own charity in addition to those supported by the whole school community. Students value chaplaincy and would welcome more opportunities to engage. They talk confidently about Gospel values and Beatitudes and the impact this has on how they live.

The school's mission statement is clear, understood and lived. It is rooted in the Word of God; one staff member said that 'faith is at the core of all we do' and that is evident through every interaction with and between staff. Staff talk openly about belonging to 'family' and describe the impact this has on them. Students describe how staff 'go above and beyond' for them; this is most evident in the work of the large and highly skilled pastoral team. There are many examples of practical support including support in getting students to school, help and support with providing uniform, and Christmas food hampers for those in need. Students talk warmly about the love and care they

receive. The school environment reflects both the catholicity of the school and the respect students have for their surroundings. This is best shown in the chapel which is a beautiful expression of the Catholic identity and mission of the school. The provision for relationships, sex and health education is well planned, meets statutory and diocesan requirements and is appropriate for the age and ability of the students. There is a connection between this, the wider curriculum, and prayer and liturgy.

Governors' ambition for the Catholic life of the school is shown through their engagement and knowledge. They provide appropriate challenge and support; they know their school. They, with other leaders, ensure that Christ is at the heart of all aspects of school life. This is shown through extremely positive responses to the parent survey; one parent commented that her son had 'been shown nothing but love, care and deep respect' during his time at Cardinal Heenan. Staff are effusive about the support, respect and care they are shown, the strength of community and the inspirational leadership of the headteacher and her senior team. They appreciate the quality professional development opportunities they receive for both Catholic life and mission and prayer and liturgy. New staff feel supported and enabled through the school's effective induction programme. Staff clearly articulate how catholicity runs through the whole curriculum; they gave specific examples of this in a range of subjects and one member commented that 'we are all teachers of RE'. School policies generally reflect the catholicity of the school but could be more consistent in reflecting the mission. Self-evaluation processes are rigorous but students should have greater involvement in the evaluation and development of Catholic life and mission and prayer and liturgy.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade:.....

2

Pupil outcomes

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education.....

2

Provision

The quality of teaching, learning, and assessment in religious education.....

2

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor, and evaluate the provision for religious education.....

2



Students are engaged in their learning and express their enjoyment of religious education lessons at key stages 3, 4 and 5. Lessons are planned and sequenced to enable students to know and remember more; this is shown through well-implemented 'consolidating prior learning' booklets which students describe as showing what progress they have made and what they need to do to secure understanding. Good examples of recall and retrieval are seen in lessons. Students confidently answer questions in class showing prior learning. There is a strong focus on literacy, oracy and vocabulary; in one lesson, students linked prior learning to key terms 'Pax Christi' and 'Icthus'. Mixed ability setting allows 'teaching to the top' and there are a variety of tasks, teaching styles and adaptations to meet the needs of students including time to reflect and unpick the meaning of scripture. Frequent formative assessment points allow for students to self-assess and for staff to plan interventions and improve attainment. Many students' produce high quality work but this needs to be more consistent. School is taking steps to improve attainment in religious education.

Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and work collaboratively with the experienced and effective head of religious education to plan good lessons and share strategies. Teachers have high expectations of their students supported by a well-used whole school rewards system. Students' success and efforts are also celebrated through postcards and telephone calls home. Strong questioning is evident in lessons and provides opportunity to show progress and deepen understanding. Students have opportunity for reflection in lessons and this enables them to make links between what they are learning and modern society. Discussion and debate encourage thoughtful consideration of moral and ethical issues which develop students' moral development. This is appropriate to the age of the students and is evident across all year groups including in sixth

form core religious education. There are clear links between lesson content, prayer and liturgy, and the Catholic life of the school.

The Religious Education Directory is being introduced appropriately, with Year 7 already embarked upon the revised programmes of study. A systematic roll-out is planned for years 8 and 9. The content is well structured with a wide range of centralised resources, which all subject staff use and contribute to. Leaders have succeeded in their innovative approach to the challenge of recruiting teachers for religious education. Non-specialists and new staff are well-supported through engagement with school and archdiocesan development opportunities. Two religious education teachers are studying for the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies. The subject leader is establishing a clear vision for religious education and works well with the chaplain to ensure a cohesive curriculum which meets the needs of all learners. There are plans to enhance students' learning opportunities through enrichment, but these are at an early stage of implementation. Sixth form core religious education is engaging and well attended but leaders should increase the amount of Catholic scriptural content. Evaluation of is evident and effective leading to specific support and actions including timely responses to staffing shortages which have minimised impact on learners. Parity with other core subjects is identified by governors and leaders as an area for development. The required 10% curriculum provision at key stage 3 is a priority. However, there is a comparable level of resourcing and professional development.

Collective worship

The quality and range of liturgy and prayer provided by the school.

Collective worship key judgement grade:.....

2

Pupil outcomes

How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

2

Provision

The quality of collective worship provided by the school

2

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for collective worship

2



Students respond positively to, and participate in, the variety of prayer and liturgy that is provided for them. In both assembly and form prayer, students volunteer responses, contribute to discussion and pray together. This is clearly typical. Year 7 students sang enthusiastically in assembly and the school choir contributed to the year 8 assembly. Students read willingly and well in form time and assembly. Students describe various forms of worship and how they relate to the liturgical year. Some students spoke about their contribution to planning and leading liturgy but this is infrequent. Students articulate how their experience of prayer and liturgy fit with school life and impact on their actions. One student said that he appreciated the 'time to reflect on God' and that His teachings 'help us to live life better'. Students are clear that this influence does not stop at the school gate but continues into the wider community. A year 11 student explained how recent assemblies on generosity, integrity and freedom have encouraged him to 'pay it forward' and to consider how to use his choices to benefit others. The Faith in Action group is well-established and there are plans to increase the opportunities for students to engage and lead chaplaincy provision.

Prayer and liturgy are central to the life of the school; prayer takes place daily in form time and at other key times of the day. Students experience a range of ways of praying supported by relevant scripture. Music, drama and film clips are used regularly to enhance liturgy including singing. Staff are excellent role models in leading prayer. The leadership team, chaplain and subject leader for religious education are highly skilled in leading staff in planning liturgy and prayer; this is evident in the daily resources provided for staff and the quality of support and professional development staff say they receive. The morning service in the chapel for staff and students, led by a member of pastoral staff was a well-planned, thoughtful and genuine expression of the school's faith life. Staff pray together regularly including at the start of meetings. The Wednesday staff briefing started with

a celebration of the school's faith life. Parish clergy support the school by celebrating Mass for year 11 and 13 graduations and the Year 7 Welcome Mass. Parents attend these Masses as well as the Advent service which is also open to parishioners.

The school's prayer and liturgy policy is easily accessible and used effectively by staff. It is currently being reviewed to reflect the new Prayer and Liturgy Directory. There is regular professional development for staff to enable them to deliver effective prayer and worship which is well resourced. Prayer and liturgy training is part of new staff induction and new staff 'shadow' experienced form tutors to see good practice being modelled. Staff of other faiths describe being well supported. Prayer and liturgy is well led by a highly skilled and experienced leadership team including the chaplain and subject leader for religious education. Staff spoke confidently about the importance and centrality of prayer and the positive, calming influence this has on students and themselves. The evaluation and action planning of prayer and liturgy are accurate and effective. The school development plan acknowledges the need for greater student involvement in chaplaincy and in the evaluation and leadership of prayer and liturgy.

Information about the school

Full name of school	Cardinal Heenan Catholic High School
School unique reference number (URN)	104714
Full postal address of the school	Honeysgreen Lane, West Derby, Liverpool, L12 9HZ
School phone number	0151 235 1430
Name of head teacher or principal	Ms Karen Smyth
Chair of governing board	Mr David Glover
School Website	www.cardinal-heenan.org.uk
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Not Applicable
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Voluntary aided
Age-range of pupils	11-18
Trustees	Archdiocese of Liverpool
Gender of pupils	Male (male and female in sixth form)
Date of last denominational inspection	30 November 2016
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

The inspection team

Mr Ivan Gaughan	Lead inspector
Mrs Marie Rishton	Team inspector
Ms Anita Stead	Team inspector
Mrs Sarah Daley	Team inspector

Key to grade judgements

Grade	England	Wales
1	Outstanding	Excellent
2	Good	Good
3	Requires improvement	Adequate and requires improvement
4	Inadequate	Unsatisfactory and in need of urgent improvement