



Archdiocese of Birmingham

INSPECTION REPORT

OUR LADY AND ST CHAD CATHOLIC SPORTS COLLEGE WOLVERHAMPTON

Inspection dates 29th-30th April 2009
Reporting Inspector Mr Keith Ash

Inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

Type of School	Catholic Secondary
Age range of pupils	11 - 18 years
Number on roll	831
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governors	Mr I Middleton
School address	Old Fallings Lane Wolverhampton West Midlands WV10 8BL
Telephone number	01902 558250
Fax number	01902 558251
E-mail address	info@olsc.org.uk
Parish	Our Lady of Perpetual Succour
Date of previous inspection	May 2006

Headteacher Miss M C Keelan

Description of the school

Our Lady and St Chad's is a smaller than average 11-18 comprehensive school in the north of the city of Wolverhampton. There are 831 pupils on roll of whom 34% are Catholics, with 117 students in the Sixth Form. Most of the pupils come from the area around the school, which is an area of considerable social deprivation. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is well above the national average. The proportion of pupils with special needs is average but the proportion with statements is above average. The school community is very diverse, 35% are from ethnic minorities and for 15% of the pupils, English is not their first language, there is a significant number of newly arrived pupils from eastern Europe and Africa. Attainment on entry is slightly below the national average.

Overall effectiveness of the school

Our Lady and St Chad's is a very good Catholic school with some outstanding features. The inspirational leadership of the headteacher and of the senior leadership team, of which the head of religious education (RE) is a member, have led to the development of a very strong Catholic ethos. This is evident throughout the school, particularly in the high standards of behaviour and the respect shown to one another by all members of the school community. Staff, governors and pupils all share a sense of the school's mission within the Church and the local community. Pupils learn well within this secure environment. They are friendly and welcome visitors to the school in a very open manner. The school's specialist status enhances its Catholic ethos well. The RE department makes a very strong contribution to the school. The quality of teaching is generally good. Most of the issues from the last inspection have been addressed and appropriate, effective action taken. Self evaluation is careful and accurate in identifying key priorities and realistic plans to address these have been made. Based on the strength of leadership at all levels, the school's capacity to improve is outstanding.

What the school should do to improve further

- Extend work on monitoring spiritual and moral development across the curriculum to plan rather than simply monitor, provision
- Provide opportunities for pupils to plan, organise and contribute to assemblies
- Take steps to ensure greater consistency in assessment in RE
- Evaluate and review the strategies for raising achievement

The Catholic Life of the School

Leadership and Management

The Catholic life of the school and its leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher, through her inspirational leadership, together with the senior leadership team, who share her vision, have successfully built a community characterised by respect and inclusivity and the gospel values of justice, forgiveness, truth and charity, which are evident in the daily life of the school. The governing body fulfils its role very well in relation to the school's Catholic foundation. They are a very active body, enthusiastic and fully involved in the school, attending school events and through the work of their partnership committee, monitoring the Catholic life of the school and RE. They are rigorous in discussion and give good support, offering constructive challenge and acting as good critical friends. Leaders at all level are united in their vision for the school, leadership is characterised by collegiality and is focused on the school's Catholic mission. Staff work well together to provide high quality care and Catholic education in a harmonious community where the motto "be the best you can be" is a reality and inclusion is at its heart. All are aware of their responsibility to promote the spiritual and moral development of the pupils. This is reinforced by

staff training and an audit of practice across the curriculum has taken place. The school effectively monitors and evaluates its Catholic life formally.

Collective Worship

The quality of collective worship is good. Prayer is an integral part of school life, pupils pray at the start of the day in registration and assemblies and in RE lessons. The chapel is well used for daily prayer by Year 7 groups and in RE lessons. Staff pray at the beginning of the day and meetings. There are regular Masses for Year groups on a termly basis, on Holy Days and special occasions through the year. The pupils respond well to the provision; they are reverent and respectful and all participate well. Pupils play an active part in the planning and presentation of Masses and other liturgical events, reading and presenting drama and music. Assemblies tend to be more teacher led, with limited opportunities for pupils to lead. The school should consider ways to increase their role in assemblies. The chaplain provides a valuable presence in the school and is well known by the pupils. Collective worship contribute very well to the spiritual and moral development of the pupils, relating religious themes to their everyday lives, supporting the principal values of the school and promoting inclusion.

Community Cohesion

The school's work to promote community cohesion is outstanding. The school is a diverse community, with some twenty-four languages spoken by pupils. It is characterised by harmony; pupils work, play and live together in an atmosphere of respect and a recognition that all are created in the image of God. There are no significant differences in achievement between different groups; all achieve equally well. The school has had particular success with "hard to reach" pupils and this has been recognised nationally. The curriculum in RE supports this work. Pupils study other Faiths in Key Stage 3; they study Judaism, Islam, Sikhism and Hinduism and in Key Stage 4 they examine social issues such as poverty, justice and racism. The school's commitment to inclusion leads to all being welcomed and involved in collective worship. Good provision is made for newly-arrived pupils; this is particularly so in the case of Polish pupils, where a Polish speaking learning support assistant provides valuable support. The school's vision for cohesion on a global basis is witnessed in its work for Fair Trade and its two Ugandan partner schools. The school is a real presence in the local community, through its extended services and community use; it has a positive impact and the school justifiably sees itself as a learning and activity hub for the community.

Religious Education

Achievement and Standards in Religious Education

Pupils' achievement, given their starting point, is good. At Key Stage 3, pupil achievement is good and attainment is in line with national averages. At Key Stage 4, standards have improved and results at GCSE are close to the national average, better than average for the school, with most pupils now being entered. At GCE A level, results are good, representing good value-added for the students. Evidence of pupils' work in Key Stage 3 shows limited progress in Years 7 and 8, with few opportunities for discursive writing and a heavy emphasis on question and answer work. This is in part due to the varied previous knowledge and experience of the pupils on entry. Work in Year 9 shows much better progress, work is more varied, with opportunities for extended and critical writing and to demonstrate empathy and imagination. In the Sixth Form, students show good understanding of the work and make good progress. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress and there is good differentiation in work between teaching groups. Pupils are engaged in RE lessons and express their enjoyment of them, citing both its interest and relevance to their lives. They display a clear understanding of the teaching of the Church and are able to apply it to their own lives. The school encourages pupils to contribute to the school community by taking on responsibilities. Sixth form students act as prefects and support younger pupils in lessons. Senior pupils play a leading role in school events and represent the school at community events. In Key Stage 4, pupils act as peer mentors and, through the Sports College, there are many opportunities for pupils of all ages to be sports leaders. Older pupils are able to take on this role in local primary schools. There is

an active and effective school council and pupils' views are welcomed through the Voice of the Learner system, and other pupil groups, such as the Building Schools for the Future group, and their views are acted upon. Pupils' behaviour, both in and out of lessons, is outstanding.

Quality of Provision for Religious Education

Teaching and Learning

The quality of teaching is at least satisfactory, with much that is good. In the lessons observed, half were good or outstanding and none were unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching is enhanced by the very good subject knowledge and enthusiasm of the teachers and excellent lesson planning. The good lessons were characterised by a brisk pace, a variety of activities, skilful questioning, pupils being challenged, thinking skills encouraged, effective use of ICT, intelligent peer assessment and opportunities for extended writing. As a result, pupils were engaged and made good progress. Lessons which were only satisfactory were often too teacher-led, pupils were insufficiently challenged being too heavily reliant on work which required little re-interpretation of material and few opportunities for independent learning. All lessons were well managed and pupils' contributions were encouraged. Excellent relationships between pupils and staff and between pupils meant that pupils were confident to contribute and listened respectfully to each other. Lessons would generally benefit from more opportunities for peer assessment and for clarification of learning outcomes as well as learning objectives for lessons. Marking of pupils' work is not consistent. There are examples of good diagnostic marking with useful formative comments being given. The department needs to ensure that practice in this area becomes more consistent. Pupils know their current and target levels and are aware of what they need to do to improve their work. Half-termly assessments take place and progress is mapped on *progress in RE* sheets. However, inconsistencies were noted on the assessment of the levels of tasks. The department needs to continue work to ensure moderations of standards and accuracy in assessment.

Curriculum

The curriculum has been revised and now meets the requirements of the *Curriculum Directory for Schools*. The curriculum meets the needs of the pupils well, both at Key Stages 3 and 4 it is designed carefully to address issues which are of direct relevance to the pupils. In the Sixth Form the General RE course requires students to complete an extended study on a topic of their own interest. This has been well received by the students. The programme of sex and relationship education is delivered in liaison with the science department and is based in the *All That I Am* scheme. Pupils' moral, social and spiritual development is promoted very well; they display a clear understanding of the Church's teaching and are encouraged to apply it to their own lives and in their actions. This is demonstrated in their excellent behaviour and the high quality of relationships within the school. Pupils are encouraged to show their faith in action by their support for charities, such as CAFOD, Macmillan Nurses, the partner schools in Uganda, the Good Shepherd appeal and Fair Trade. The curriculum is further enriched by retreats, to Alton Castle in Year 7 and to Soli House in Year 10 and the Sixth Form; these are highly valued by the pupils.

Leadership and Management in Religious Education

The RE department is well led. The head of department has a clear vision for the department and its role in promoting the Catholic life of the school and a concern to raise standards and improve teaching. She leads a team of well qualified, enthusiastic teachers, who share her vision and who work well together, sharing good practice and responsibilities. Through the departmental review process appropriate priorities for development are identified and clear plans drafted, these would benefit from a more detailed time-scale to enable more effective monitoring. The department is well resourced, in line with other core departments in the school. It is housed in a suite of rooms in the heart of the school, reflecting its role in the school. There has been considerable investment in ICT facilities. The governors discharge their responsibilities towards RE very well. There is a link governor for the department and several others take a particular interest in it.