

INSPECTION REPORT Brownedge St Mary's Catholic High School

Inspection date 17th November 2014
 Reporting Inspector Sister Judith Russi
 Mr Kevin Hogan

Inspection carried out in accordance with Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

Type of School Catholic High School
 URN 119748
 Age range of pupils 11-16 years
 Number on roll 708
 Appropriate authority The Governing Body
 Chair of Governors Mr David Livesey
 Head teacher Mr Martin Reynolds
 Date of previous inspection June 2011

The Inspection judgements are:	Grade	Explanation of the Grades
Overall effectiveness of the school	2	1 = Outstanding 2 = Good 3 = Requires Improvement
The quality of Catholic Leadership	1	
The quality of the Word of God community	2	
The quality of the Welcome community	1	
The quality of Welfare	1	
The quality of Worship	2	
The quality of Witness	1	
<i>The following pages provide reasons to support these judgements</i>		

CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT OF THE SCHOOL

Brownedge St Mary's is a smaller than average Catholic High School under the Trusteeship of Ampleforth Abbey. Since the last inspection the school has experienced falling rolls which is now being addressed and the intake is increasing. There is a below average percentage of girls. 55% of students are baptised Catholic drawn from 15 partner primary schools. 49% of teaching staff are Catholic with a further 26% who are Anglican. 51% of support staff are Catholic. The proportion of students supported at school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is broadly in line with the national average. Most students are White British. The school is above the government's current floor standards. The school has the Coaching Quality Mark and is a placement school for candidates following the National Professional Qualification for Headship.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL IS GOOD

The Governing body and staff of Brownedge St Mary's have made significant progress in meeting the many challenges facing the school since the last inspection. Governors are proactive and rigorous in their governance and hold the Head teacher and his team to account. They are clear about the challenges facing them in building up confidence and raising the profile of Brownedge St Mary's. Significant progress has been made in building up a good Catholic learning community with many outstanding features. The school is now well placed to consolidate its improvements in order to move from good to outstanding across the board. The Mission Statement '*Let your light shine*' is a focus for the whole school as they strive to be the best they can be. The leadership team's passion for learning, personal development and the well-being of all members of the school community ensures that all pupils receive an integrated Gospel based formation and education.

KEY STRENGTHS OF THE SCHOOL INCLUDE:

- The vision and commitment of the Governors, Head Teacher and senior leadership in creating the climate for a Gospel based education is rapidly improving the school.
- The warmth of welcome, inclusion, witness and outreach of the school to those in the greatest need is inspirational.
- The quality of the care and welfare of all within the school is outstanding.

THE QUALITY OF LEADERSHIP IS OUTSTANDING

The Governing body are highly committed to taking the school forward and recognises the importance and necessity for all governors to continue their rigorous monitoring and ongoing evaluation of the progress of the school as they strive for excellence. Continuing professional development, formation and mentoring/support at all levels has improved and developed since the previous inspection. Governors are now well placed to further develop closer links with middle leaders in order to have a more in depth knowledge of teaching and learning. The school has identified that pupil voice and leadership continues to improve through numerous opportunities for students to take on areas of responsibility and will be further developed by an appropriate pupil involvement at Governor and senior leadership levels through attendance at meetings by student groups such as Caritas Ambassadors. The school has recently reviewed the mission statement "*Let your light shine*" which is well known and understood and clearly a driving force for all. The religious and cultural diversity of the school is celebrated in such a way that it provides a Catholic education with a global focus. The inspirational initiatives such as the visit to Ghana by staff and students, introduced and developed by the leadership team have significantly impacted on the school community who recognise their place in the world as future stewards who can influence, change and contribute to the common good for all people. Parent views were expressed in written form confirming that "*the support and encouragement that their children have received has been*

overwhelming". Students spoke of the close working relationship between home and school and the way in which they felt that everyone was equally valued. Clearly students felt proud of their progress as a learning community and were able to outline the growth and significant progress that has been made. The leadership of the school are clearly aware of their next steps for improvement as they strive to be outstanding in all areas.

THE QUALITY OF WORD IS GOOD

The development of the school mission statement "*Let your light shine*" has provided an important focal point for the whole community to better understand and witness to the mission of the school. All staff and pupils new to the school are inducted into the meaning and message of the mission statement. The leadership of the school have ensured that RE receives 10% of taught curriculum time at both key stages. RE continues to develop into the leading area for learning. All students sat a full GCSE course. 70% achieved a grade C, 51% achieved grades A*-B and 24% achieved grades A*-A reflecting a clear trajectory of improvement in GCSE RE results over time. The RE curriculum and schemes of work are based on the Religious Education Curriculum Directory. The introduction of detailed planning and use of a wide range of teaching and learning strategies in order to raise standards is impacting on pupils learning. The ongoing improvement of the Higher order questioning was in use in some lessons and when used appropriately did produce more profound responses. Assessment for learning, use of success criteria and diagnostic marking in RE linked to personalised and school targets are in place and pupils feel confident that they have a better understanding of their next steps for learning. Behaviour for learning and relationships between pupils and teachers are outstanding. The department is now ready to raise expectations particularly at Key Stage 3, to a higher level through encouraging more independent learning, critical thinking skills and reflective writing. Teaching assistants were purposefully engaged in supporting students learning. Pupils learn about a range of other faiths through the RE scheme and through interaction with outside speakers from other faiths. Considerable training and support has gone into delivering spiritual, moral, social and cultural education across all key stages and was in evidence across the curriculum. The leadership team recognise the need to develop teacher confidence in delivering SMSC across the school. The Religious Education budget is set according to the needs of the curriculum and the Catholic life of the school.

THE QUALITY OF WELCOME IS OUTSTANDING

Brownedge St Mary's RC High School is outstanding in its welcome and care for one another and visitors. The school has initiated a clearly understood culture and ethos of inclusion and welcome. Students spoke confidently about the way in which "*Everyone is welcome here because we all make up one family*". Staff and students ensure that no one feels excluded, especially those new to the country and or school. There is a tangible sense of pride in the school at all levels. Year 10 students spoke with pride about the way the school has changed and as far as they were concerned "*This is the place to be*". Parents are actively involved in the life of the school in many ways. Families and carers felt well informed and very appreciative of the welcome that was being extended to them. As one mother said "*As a parent I know I made the best choice!*" Others spoke of the particular welcome extended to those who were not Catholic and the way in which inclusion and diversity is celebrated. The pupils' sense of ownership and responsibility for what happens in their school was outstanding. The recently formed House system enables the older students to play a key role supporting the younger children and those newly arrived in the area. Members of staff at all levels were found to be proactive in ensuring a respectful and warm welcome. Frequent activities take place where Brownedge St Mary's welcomes the local community into the school as well as supporting a wide range of activities in the local community.

THE QUALITY OF WELFARE IS OUTSTANDING

Students and staff were confident in being able to recognise that the care and welfare of all in the school is based on the belief that everyone is made in the image and likeness of God. The system of restorative justice and forgiveness was acknowledged as being instrumental in helping the school to reach its present level of success. The levels of exclusion both short term and permanent are very low. The extensive pastoral care system is greatly appreciated by students and families. Students feel safe, valued and supported. The provision for SRE is mainly through RE, science and the Learning for Life programme. Students felt confident that action against inappropriate behaviour was swift and effective. They spoke readily of how they were confident in regulating not only their own behaviour but also the behaviour of others. However, they were particularly appreciative of the school policy of restorative justice and forgiveness. The many leadership opportunities open to students such as the buddy system, prefects, House Council, Caritas Ambassadors and liturgy leaders, all serve to develop pupil responsibility and service to the common good. Care for staff across the school was found to be of a very high standard. Staff spoke of the ways in which the Head Teacher and the senior leadership team took a personal and immediate interest when needed. The school actively reaches out to those in need at home and abroad, through a wide variety of charity work.

THE QUALITY OF WORSHIP IS GOOD

The Governors and Head teacher have invested considerably in the development of prayer and worship throughout the school. A beautiful chapel has been refurbished and a full time lay chaplain appointed. This appointment is already having a significant impact on the Catholic life of the school and beginning to encourage a greater degree of student led prayer and liturgies. A wide range of innovative and creative prayer and worship activities are developing such as "Breakfast with God", lunchtime prayer groups, staff prayer times, reflection days for year groups and creative para liturgies. The school is well supported by Father George Corrie OSB, who is a representative of the Benedictine Trustees and governor at the school. The daily acts of worship take place for all pupils and assemblies and other para liturgies are creative and contemporary. The proposed development of a prayer garden will further enhance opportunities for quiet reflection for both students and staff. The ongoing development of the chaplaincy provision should enable chaplaincy prefects to develop further as pupil chaplains. This, with the further development of a planned and flexible programme of prayer and worship, coupled with further training for all staff, will help to move worship from good to outstanding.

THE QUALITY OF WITNESS IS OUTSTANDING

Staff and pupils are clearly very confident in witnessing to a Christ centred priority which is both prophetic and challenging. Encouraging and enabling staff and students to be confident in their witness to Catholic beliefs and values is a high priority across the school. Governors are aware of the need to support the Head teacher and his team in deepening the knowledge and understanding of Christian teachings for all staff so that they are able to engage with student's faith development at a higher level. The outstanding relationships across the school, behaviour respect and care for one another are a living testimony to the centrality of the Gospel within the school. Pupils were found to be confident and willing to speak about their faith and why it was important to them. The school community clearly witnesses to Christ's love, justice, forgiveness and compassion. The Governing body and staff have made significant progress since the last inspection in building up a strong Catholic learning community. The presence of a large number of staff and students from other religious backgrounds or none is treated with sensitivity and respect. As one student pointed out, *"I don't have any religion, but I know God is inside each one of us, that's why I belong here."* The importance of learning within a faith community was identified by parents and staff alike who spoke of the need to work and teach in an atmosphere which *"had roots"*, values and beliefs which contextualised their life together.

November 17th 2014

Dear Pupils

Thank you so much for the wonderful welcome you gave us when we came to visit you. Much of what is happening in your school is good and in many areas it is outstanding. This is because you are really striving to live up to your challenging mission statement "*Let your light shine*"

Your work is of a good standard and we could clearly see that you take your learning very seriously and are proud of your achievements. To help you develop even further your teachers are going to help you to develop your critical thinking skills, higher order learning and to become strong independent learners.

We could see that you can make connections between what you are learning in RE with other areas of the curriculum and your daily lives. Your governors and Mr Reynolds would like you to have more responsibility in leading in the Catholic life of the school through your chaplaincy and the newly appointed Caritas Ambassadors.

We were very impressed by many aspects of your school, by the beautiful chapel and on the corridors and especially the way you care for the school buildings. However, we were most impressed by your outstanding behaviour and respect for each other. Well done!

God bless you all.

Yours sincerely

Sr Judith Russi

(Section 48 Inspector)

Summary Report to Parents

On the 17th November 2014 the school was inspected in accordance with Section 48 of the Education Act 2005. The full report has been made available to the school and can also be accessed via both the school website and the Education section on the website of the Diocese of Salford.

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AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT:

- In order to further develop and sustain the leadership as an outstanding leadership team, continue the review and understanding of roles and responsibilities for all governors so that they are able to engage at a deeper strategic level as they strive to consolidate and continue the rapid progress of the past year.
- Continue the development of the RE programme, through a more accurate understanding of levels and success criteria and with greater challenge for all pupils.
- Continue to develop a model of Chaplaincy provision which recognises the diversity of the school and fosters pupil leadership in school and where possible, parish and the local community.
- To explore ways in which the Benedictine spirituality and charism can be embraced as a resource for the faith development of the school community.