



Department for
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

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Mr Philip Thompson
Headteacher
St Mary's Catholic High School,
Royal Avenue,
Leyland,
Lancashire
PR25 1BS

Dear Mr Thompson,

Department for Christian Education Monitoring Visit of St Mary's Catholic High School, Leyland on 24 January 2019.

I am writing on behalf of the Department of Christian Education, Archdiocese of Liverpool to confirm our findings following the monitoring visit to your school.

Thank you for your help and the time you, the governors, departmental leaders, staff and pupils offered on the day.

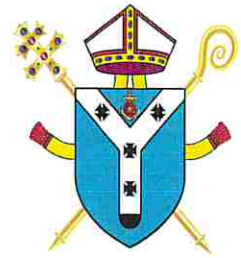
The basis for the visit was the Self Evaluation document and what improvement has been made since the last inspection. The main findings of the visit are enclosed with this letter.

The school's Section 48 inspection will take place during the academic year 2020 to 2021.

Yours sincerely,



Rev Des Seddon
Director of Christian Education



**Department for
Christian Education**

**MONITORING VISIT at St Mary's Catholic High School, Leyland on Thursday 24
January 2019**

THESE ARE AREAS TO CELEBRATE

- The section 48 Self Evaluation Document is shared between governors, senior and Religious Education departmental leadership. Its content provides an accurate and practical guideline for continued development. This guidance has informed the significant rates of progress made since the last inspection in 2016. The School Mission served in raising pupils' awareness of how to live faith daily within the context of home school and parish. Collective Worship has focused on more training for staff and pupils, which in turn has led to even more levels of participation. In Religious Education there is ongoing focus on pupil achievement with standards of teaching and learning continuing to increase. Assessment, marking and feedback is effective in providing diagnostic progress pathways for all pupils. There has been consistent interaction with other schools in the sharing of processes for departmental practice.
- Catholic Life at St Mary's remains at a high standard. This is because of a tradition of sharing the mission together. In 2017 the School Mission challenged the community to ask the question, "Who do peoples say I am?" This resulted in a reflective self and community analysis in how effectively the school lives and celebrates Gospel values in relation to its own Mission Statement call to ensure that each person "is valued and cared for and achieves the best of which he or she is capable". This has impacted upon maintained and increased levels of charitable and practical support for the needs of others. Pupils speak about how the school has over time increased its entire sense of purpose and belonging. *Faith in Action* is promoted by the full-time lay chaplain as a way of life as well as though a small but increasing group who have taken on the challenge of the accredited award. Chaplaincy is highly regarded, because it facilitates mutual support and participation between everyone. The school's formal partnership between other Catholic secondary schools in the region ensures a combined sense of mission and sharing of best training and continued professional development. There has been increased interaction between associated parishes and schools, which has resulted in St Mary's becoming even more "outward

looking.” At the same level, the school has maintained its commitment to diocesan life not least through *Adoremus* and in preparation for *Synod 2020*.

- Relationships and Sex Education is delivered within the framework of Personal, Social, Health, Citizenship and Economic Education (PSHCEE). The level of effective planning is clear. Through a regular series of *Super Learning Days* pupils receive content presented by professionals, working entirely in accordance with Church Teaching. Pupils appreciate these sessions because the content expresses and prioritises the importance of loving relationships and mutual respect.
- Raising the standard of achievement and attainment in Religious Education remains a positive work in progress. This is because departmental leadership has set itself a high benchmark and can be justifiably proud of the fact that progress is evident in the standards of teaching, learning and assessment now in place. Pupils in Key Stage 3 are set aspirational targets, which has resulted in the majority of those in Years 7 and 9 making at least expected rates of progress. In Key Stage 4 results for 2018 GCSE dipped from previous years. However, seven pupils achieved grade 9 which ranks it as the highest achieving department for that grade. Pupils enjoy Religious Education because they feel the tasks support the differentiated stages they are at and they know how to make progress. Pupils say this is because teachers mark their work carefully and include them in the negotiation of outcomes. On the day of inspection pupils' behaviour in class was good or better because they were motivated, which in turn is conducive to achievement.
- Teaching and learning observed during monitoring was a very positive experience. It was clear that standards have continued to rise. This has been the result of the continued fulfilment of departmental expectations. Planning was effective which ensured that teaching was on track to meet the stage and capacity of each pupil. There was first class rapport. Routine monitoring was effective with progress celebrated and positive commentary about continued development. The content was creative, reflective and challenging.
- Much progress is being made with the standard of marking and annotation. Pupils work is carefully marked, and they readily take notice of and complete the targeted areas for development. Marking stops, progress checks and effective book scrutiny ensures staff share raised expectations. Assessments are regular and on track toward development of GCSE techniques and answers. This is enriching the rate of progress in both key stages.

- The curriculum content fulfils the requirement of the Bishops Religious Education Curriculum Directory (2012). *People of God – Called to Serve* informs the Key Stage 3 programme of study. *GCSE Catholic Christianity and Judaism* is the specification undertaken by all pupils in Key Stage 4. There is careful methodology in the use of Scripture linked to Church Teaching, with thorough application to British values. There is abundant coverage of other world faiths and religions. World beliefs and views are considered so making the content entirely inclusive and relevant to contemporary life. Classrooms are well organised and contain motivating displays of teachers and pupils work.
- Leadership of the department is efficient, effective and driven by hard-working commitment. This is evident from the process in place for departmental support, pupil tracking and intervention and in the monitoring of teaching and learning. The department is a team that is confident to strive for the best and to share practice.
- Collective Worship is very well coordinated and planned. Weekly resources are shared amongst staff. They are confident to adapt these to their own needs. Pupils are consistently included in planning and delivery. Pupils themselves regard prayer and worship as occasions when they can become involved through music, drama, reading and discussion, with time for personal space and reflection. They appreciate the availability of the Chapel both for their own use and for group prayer. Pupils spoke about the many examples of prayer both in school and within the wider community. There is effective monitoring of daily provision with periodic training as required. It was interesting to hear pupils comment about the Collective Worship shared on the monitoring day, which in their view typifies the overall quality of provision that is practical, joyful and challenging.
- Governors and leadership are committed to Catholic Life through their own practical involvement and by their systems in place for monitoring. Much progress has been made in securing funding for an additional specialist in Religious Education. They hold the department to account very practically through the monitoring process, whilst celebrating the extent of its hard work and progress.

AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT

- Maintain the significant rate of development in Religious Education through the guidance provided in the Section 48 Self-Evaluation Document.
- Continue to ensure effective rates of progress in Key Stage 3 by focusing on the school's drive toward raising standards in Years 8 and 10.
- Sustain the improved rate of attendance at diocesan training and in schools networking, to ensure continued improvement in GCSE.

Monitoring Visitor

Dcn Paul Mannings
Adviser for Secondary Religious Education
Archdiocese of Liverpool