



DIOCESE OF
SHREWSBURY

DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION REPORT:

**THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL
AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

School: Ellesmere Port Catholic High School
Address: Capenhurst Lane
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Ellesmere Port
CH65 7AQ

Tel No: 0151 355 2373

URN: 111451

Headteacher: Mrs C Vile

Chair of Governors: Mr J Coucill

Date of Inspection: 24 & 25 January 2022

Inspectors: Mrs J Beaver
Mr J Doust

ELLESMERE PORT CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

“I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full.” John 10:10

Ellesmere Port Catholic High School aims to provide a Roman Catholic education in an environment within which all members of the community are encouraged to develop their spiritual, moral, academic and physical potential, based on the teachings of Jesus.

Through our actions we will try to be a witness to Jesus Christ.

“If the Lord does not build the house then its labourers toil in vain.” Ps. 127

SCHOOL: Ellesmere Port Catholic High School

DATE OF LAST INSPECTION: 6TH & 7TH October 2015

JUDGEMENT FROM PREVIOUS INSPECTION: Good

AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT FROM PREVIOUS INSPECTION

1. To ensure the provision for Religious Education in KS3 and General Religious Education throughout KS5 meets the requirements as described in the Bishops' Statement on Religious Education (2000).
2. Apply the whole school marking policy consistently across the Department to provide clear guidance for improvement and to give opportunities for pupils to respond to these targets.
3. To ensure that the Catholic Life Development Plan fully captures and more clearly reflects developmental progression within the Religious Education department and Catholic Life of the school.
4. Further develop pupil ownership and delivery of Collective Worship and Tutor Group Prayer time.

Progress made with areas for development from the previous inspection:

1. This was addressed in September 2016 and all provision meets the requirements of the Bishops' Statement on RE (Religious Education).
2. Whole School marking policy is applied appropriately in RE.
3. Catholic life and Collective Worship are mapped within the whole school planning process and appropriate QA (Quality Assurance) processes are in place.
4. Pupil ownership and delivery of prayer continues to be a focus for the school.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS: how effective is the school in providing Catholic Education.

2

This is a good Catholic school

The above judgement on overall effectiveness is based on all the available evidence following the evaluation of:

CATHOLIC LIFE

2

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

2

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

2

Summary of key findings:

Ellesmere Port Catholic High school is a good school, one which is firmly rooted in its mission statement "I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full" John 10:10.

This mission is central to all aspects of leadership and the Governors, Head teacher and leadership team are committed to the expression of this in very practical ways. It underpins all developments and policies.

There is a deep sense of family in the school and there is a pride in the fact that each young person is known and accepted.

Behaviour observed in lessons, in form and assembly time was good and pupils were attentive.

Chaplaincy provision is exceptionally strong and cherished by all members of the community.

Most pupils learn well and make good progress in Religious Education lessons.

Links with the parish partner primary schools and the wider community are positive and growing.

What the school needs to do to improve further

- Develop the leadership opportunities for pupils to lead and evaluate the prayer and worship life of the school
- Continue to embed focussed whole school teaching and learning strategies to impact positive progress in Religious Education
- Ensure consistency of homework opportunities
- Ensure consistency of stretch and challenge opportunities in each Religious Education classroom

Information about the Inspection

The Inspection of Ellesmere Port Roman Catholic High School was carried out under the requirements of the Education Act 2005, and in accordance with the Shrewsbury Diocesan Framework and Schedule for Denominational Inspections approved by the Bishop of Shrewsbury. The inspection reviews and evaluates how effective the school is in providing Catholic education. This process begins with the school's own self-evaluation and the inspection schedule follows the criteria set by the National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers (NBRIA 2017).

The inspector reviewed in detail the following aspects:

- The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school
- The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school
- How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education
- How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship
- The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school
- How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education, Collective Worship and the Catholic Life of the school

The inspection was carried out by two inspectors over two days during which the inspection team:

- Held two preparatory phone calls with the headteacher before the inspection.
- Met with the headteacher and leadership team members, the chair of governors and members of the governing body, the clergy, a range of teaching and associated staff including middle leaders, the chaplains, the special educational needs coordinator and Early Career Teacher colleagues.

- Met with pupils from all key stages including the Eco Group and Diversity Group.
- Observed all five Religious Education teachers across all year groups and abilities.
- Attended two year group assemblies and a range of form tutor periods.
- Scrutinised a selection of Religious Education books and saw some assessment data to ascertain progress.
- Scrutinised a wide range of documentation made available before, and on request, during the inspection, including the Diocesan Self Evaluation Form (DSEF), departmental and whole school development plans, quality assurance records for the Religious Education department, the Catholic Life and Collective Worship framework
- Received responses to staff, pupil and parent questionnaires, which were collated and analysed.
- Observed pupil conduct in and around the school buildings.

Information about this school

Ellesmere Port Roman Catholic High School has 926 pupils on roll, 90 in the sixth form. 48% of pupils are baptised Catholics, 23% are from other Christian denominations, 1% are from other faiths and 28% are not identifying with any faith.

Most pupils are of white British heritage. 30.1 % of all pupils are from disadvantaged backgrounds and 20.5 % are registered as having special educational needs.

There are 61 teaching staff of whom 36% are Catholic. There are five full time teachers of Religious Education.

The parishes served by the school are:

St Bernard, St Saviour, St Mary of the Angels and Our Lady Star of the Sea.

In June 2021 following a section 5 inspection, Ofsted removed special measures and judged the school to be Requires Improvement overall, with strong features that were judged Good.

During the periods of lockdown, the school continued to ensure a full curriculum offer for pupils and found ways to surmount the many challenges this involved, with energy and ingenuity. Throughout, the prayer life of the school and wellbeing of all remained a priority.

Full report – inspection judgments

CATHOLIC LIFE

The Catholic Life of the school is good

2

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school	2
The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school	2
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision of the Catholic Life of the school	2

- It is clear that the Mission statement “I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full” (John 10:10) permeates all aspects of the school community and daily life and that this is known and understood by the pupils.
- Governors are proud of the Catholic ethos of the school, committed to it and keen to ensure that every child in the school accesses the best education possible. The inclusive nature of the school is important to them.
- The leadership and example of the headteacher and that of her team as witnesses to the Catholic ethos is recognised across the school community.
- There is a rich provision for the Catholic life of the school and a clear sense of community throughout Ellesmere Port Catholic High School. Policies and documents underpin the mission and identity of the school.
- The Catholic Ethos Support Group has been in place since 2016 and comprises the headteacher, the head of Religious Education, the chair of governors, clergy, and chaplains. This group ensures that the mission statement is celebrated and lived out in all aspects of the school community.
- The pastoral support structure echoes the mission of the school and is a key enabler of pupil development. It provides a “wrap around the child” approach. Every child is known and, as far as possible, their needs understood, their dignity and worth valued. This is an inclusive community.
- Most pupils respond well to the opportunities the school provides for personal development and it is clear from the pupil voice that there is a wide appreciation of the Catholic life and mission of the school.
- In discussion with sixth form pupils, they made it clear that they were very appreciative of both the support given, and the opportunities offered. They feel hopeful and optimistic for their future.
- There are many opportunities for sixth form pupils to be involved in the whole school community including the Helping Hands peer mentoring programme. One pupil described it as an opportunity to help the mentees “become the person they are called to be”.

- The sixth form General Religious Education Programme has been rewritten to present a more cogent scheme of learning from which all pupils benefit. This has been warmly received and will need to be continually developed and reviewed.
- Pupils across the school appreciate and value the many chaplaincy opportunities including the programme of chaplaincy lessons and retreats.
- As one member of clergy noted “there is a real joy in school that is born from faith”.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Religious Education is good

2

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education	2
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education	2
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education	2

- In lessons observed and from conversations with pupils, it is clear that Religious Education is enjoyed. Most pupils spoke positively about their lessons and experience of Religious Education, and behaviour observed was managed effectively.
- Pupil progress continues to be a key focus and staff are confident in the accuracy of the data they use.
- During the inspection, all Religious Education staff were observed across all key stages and with different ability groups. Religious Education lessons are taught by subject specialists who demonstrate good subject knowledge.
- Staff engage the pupils in their learning and classrooms are a positive learning environment in which most pupils can benefit and make progress.
- Whole school teaching and learning strategies were clearly evident and being implemented in Religious Education lessons. The use of both closed and open questions in the lessons observed helped most pupils develop their understanding of the topics taught.
- The presentation of work, as seen on the work scrutiny, is well presented. There is a clear assessment plan and pupils respond well to the targets given.
- The head of department is a hard-working member of staff who is committed to raising academic outcomes and enhancing the pupils' experience of Religious Education. She encourages her team to work collaboratively and together they show a genuine care for the pupils and their learning.
- Whilst opportunities for stretch and challenge were observed in lessons these need to be further and more regularly embedded across all RE classrooms.
- From the evidence presented and in discussions, it is clear what the strengths of the department are and where the areas for development lie. Most recently they have been working alongside a diocesan specialist leader in Religious Education to inform practice and further development.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Collective Worship is good

2

How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship	2
The quality of provision for Collective Worship	2
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship	2

- The assemblies observed were on Holocaust Memorial Day and were thoughtfully and sensitively delivered by senior pupils and member of the leadership team. The scripture used in the assembly was made relevant to the lives of the pupils and they were left with a clear mission to follow through.
- Form tutor periods observed were well structured, focussed opportunities for reflection. The chaplains ensure that relevant materials are available to support collective worship across school.
- Governors are involved in half termly Collective worship walks and Catholic ethos is a permanent agenda item for their meetings.
- The school prayer and hymn are used and known by all members of the community on a regular basis.
- Most recently, the Sixth Form led an initiative and training on key saints who have been identified to be used throughout the prayer life of school.
- The school welcomes the opportunity for weekly Mass and for all pupils to participate on a regular basis. One visitor noted the reverence shown by pupils in the Masses attended.
- Clergy are appreciative of the commitment of the school to liturgical life.
- There is a strong induction programme for staff which includes support in respect of the Catholic prayer and liturgy and routines in the school.
- The work of the chaplains is a real strength of this community and cherished by all members of the community. The Chapel is a place of calm and welcome. The chaplains are readily available to the whole community.
- Recent training for all staff focussed on worship and the Catholic life of the school which was warmly received and appreciated.
- The development of regular opportunities for pupils to lead and evaluate the prayer and worship life of the school has been hampered by Covid restrictions and lockdown and is a priority area for development.