

MONITORING VISIT at Bellerive FCJ Catholic College, Liverpool, on Tuesday 14 January 2020

THE KEY AREAS MONITORED: Catholic Life, Religious Education and Collective Worship

- The section 48 Self Evaluation Document is entirely fit for purpose. The content is concise and accurate in its judgement of rates of progress, and in the identification of areas for continued improvement. Its statements are linked to the school improvement plan, departmental development and to other supporting policies.
- Catholic Life remains the core strength of the school. The current celebration year of the Bicentenary of the Faithful Companions of Jesus (FCJ) has provided renewed impetus for governors, staff, pupils and students to interact with partner schools national and globally. The Mission Statement aims are supported by the expressed virtues of kindness, dignity, hope, gentleness, justice, excellence and companionship. Pupils and students confidently link these to their lives in and beyond school. They are justifiably proud of their school. The pastoral process ensures this is a place where they are cared for and safe. They are encouraged to work hard and reach their maximum potential. Chaplaincy is both well supported and lived in a spirit of daily interaction and sharing that embraces the whole community. There is frequent interaction with local parishes and Archdiocesan events. Networking takes place with other school chaplaincies locally and amongst FCJ schools. *Faith in Action* is both a daily challenge and motivation as well as an accredited option. Pupils and students are included in wide ranging charitable causes and readily support those in need. Governors and school leaders accurately describe their role as servant leaders.
- The content of Relationships and Sex Education is entirely in accordance with Church Teaching. It is delivered within the wider framework of Personal, Health and Social Education. Organisation, monitoring, delivery and review is subject to thorough and ongoing restructuring. Parents are kept well informed about what is delivered and when. The Co-ordinator participates in Archdiocesan continued professional development.
- Achievement and standards in Religious Education remains well focused on individual performance according to age and stage. Differentiation is evident in lesson structure and methods of assessment. This results in end of phase

progress that is in line with teachers' realistic expectations and in many cases within the boundaries of aspirational performance. Since GCSE reform in 2018, results have continued to rise. The school is in the top three highest achieving schools in the Archdiocese. It remains above average for *National All*. Whilst slightly below *National Girls* at 7+ and 4+, national figures reflect a significant number of schools where pupils opt to take Religious Education. For Advanced Level there is good and better performance. Rates of achievement for post 16 General Religious Education are matched to expected individual outcomes. Throughout the three-phase curriculum there is structured formative and end of task assessment. Written work is diagnostically annotated and inclusive of pupil and student feedback. Their workbooks contain marking schemes and flight paths matched to *Assessment Standards*.

- During monitoring there was joint observation of high-quality teaching and learning within one full lesson and during a series of brief visits throughout the department. Planning was thorough. Teachers questioning was searching. There was planned focus on pupils' skills of oration that gave expression to their individual metacognition. They were highly motivated by exciting tasks and sustained deep levels of concentration. Standards of teaching and learning are contributing to rising levels of achievement. Pupils and students who were interviewed highly rated Religious Education because of its sense of purpose, challenge and enjoyment.
- The curriculum content is compliant with the requirements of the Bishops Religious Education Curriculum Directory. *People of God – Called to Serve* is well implemented and supported by the departmental programme of study and resources. GCSE Catholic Christianity and Judaism is undertaken by most pupils. There is a high uptake for Advanced Level Philosophy, Ethics and Religious Studies. Post 16 General Religious Education is provided weekly for all students in Years 12 and 13. This programme of studies is subject to Archdiocesan verification. Curriculum time allocation stands at 8% for Years 7 and 8, with the required 10% for Years 9-11 and 5% for General Religious Education. In each curriculum phase, resources are effectively differentiated to enable progress and achievement. Overall much care and attention are taken ensure classrooms are orderly and stimulating working environments.
- Religious Education line management, departmental leadership and staff work together as a dedicated, professional and productive team. Their shared strengths ensure that administrative and curriculum development is an on-going developmental process of reflection and discernment, which is the result of robust analysis of pupils and students' performance. Departmental staff *go that extra mile*, very often beyond curriculum time, in providing extra study initiatives for their appreciative pupils and students. Departmental leadership regularly participates in Archdiocesan training.
- Collective Worship embodies the school's commitment to Catholic Life. There is an explicit policy and practical guidelines. Effective co-ordination ensures that weekly resources are made available to staff. There is training for new staff and for participating pupils and students. The content is faithful to the Liturgical Year. There is daily provision for prayer during form time. Year groups gather once a

week. Masses and service are celebrated. Pupils, students and staff consistently participate. Provision is monitored for quality. There is a full retreat programme for all year groups. There is meaningful participation from visiting guests. The school is regularly involved in the leadership and planning of Archdiocesan Collective Worship. Pupils and students value Collective Worship as time set aside for prayer and reflection, which helps them to *seize the day* by rising to the challenges set. During interview they spoke of how membership of *Chapel Guardians* and *Chapel Club* enables their appreciation of how their Chapel is central to the focus of school life and the work they undertake for the needs of others. They cited these as examples of prayer that is lived out by action.

- Consequently, Catholic Life, Religious Education and Collective Worship is at the backbone of school life, according to its charism. The governors, headteacher and members of senior leadership are pivotal because they have the faith experience, together with the knowledge and understanding of the *raison d'être* for Catholic Education. There is a collaborative process of effective management that ensures ongoing development.

AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT

- Provide the required 10% curriculum time for those classes in Years 7-8 still receiving 8%.
- Further enrich successful GCSE performance by ongoing development of departmental examination strategies.
- Continue with the drive to further improve students' performance at Advanced Level.
- Undertake a joint school and Archdiocesan audit of the successful programme for Sixth Form General Religious Education.
- Extend the existing arrangement for the monitoring of Collective Worship in form time by providing regular training as appropriate, for year heads and form tutors.
- Ensure the Section 48 Self Evaluation Document remains a qualitative tool for ensuring continued improvement.

Monitoring Visitor

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