



Saint John Fisher and Thomas More Catholic Humanities College

URN: 119785

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Salford

14–15 March 2024

Summary of key findings

Overall effectiveness

The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school

3

Catholic life and mission (p.3)

How faithfully the school responds to the call to live as a Catholic community at the service of the Church's educational mission

3

Religious education (p.5)

The quality of curriculum religious education

2

Collective worship (p.7)

The quality and range of liturgy and prayer provided by the school

3

The school is fully compliant with the curriculum requirements laid down by the Bishops' Conference

Yes

The school is fully compliant with all requirements of the diocesan bishop

Yes

The school has responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection

Partially

What the school does well

- SS John Fisher and Thomas More is a school that creates a warm and caring ethos in which committed staff provide high quality pastoral care to all students, particularly to those who are vulnerable.
- The religious education department are a hardworking, committed and collaborative team of teachers who are determined to ensure high quality provision and outcomes for students.
- Planning for collective worship is effective and whilst this is at an early stage of implementation the intent is fully Catholic.

What the school needs to improve

- The school needs to fully review the mission statement so that it is known, understood and lived out by the whole school community, this needs to be underpinned by scripture and Catholic social teaching.
- To prioritise future resources to ensure that the school chapel is reinstated to provide a sacred space for prayer and liturgy.
- To fully rewrite the Key Stage 3 curriculum so that it is in line with the *Religious Education Directory*.

Catholic life and mission

How faithfully the school responds to the call to live as a Catholic community at the service of the Church's educational mission.

Catholic life and mission key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

The extent to which students contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

3

Provision

The quality of provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school

3

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school

3

3

Students at Fisher More know that they are valued and cared for by the staff in the school. They appreciate all that the staff do to support them and help them to fulfil their potential. However, not all students understand the Catholic mission or can articulate what it is that underpins the care that they receive. Whilst the commitment from the 'Faith Leaders' is strong, this is not widespread across the school, although there are other opportunities for students to lead in a range of groups. That said there is a strong commitment to charity and students in the main treat others with dignity and respect. Each of the houses respond to local needs and raise funds for local charities such as 'curry on the street' and Pendle hospice. However, whilst students are actively engaged in a wide range of charitable activities, they cannot fully explain the Catholic social teaching which underpins their actions. One student did link their work to scripture stating, "we follow the teaching in the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats when we work for charity" Those on the margins are supported with a breakfast club run by the faith leaders and a food pantry.

The mission statement of the school is underdeveloped and is not underpinned by the Word of God or by Catholic social teaching. The motto 'Let all our bright colours shine' is known throughout the school but the link between that and the Catholic mission is not expressed with any clarity. Staff are clearly committed to the 'Fisher More family' and serve the community willingly. Staff create a culture of welcome and they told inspectors that staff and students from all backgrounds are included within the community. Some staff told inspectors that their actions are 'because Christ is at the heart of the school.' Staff provide strong pastoral care for students and there is a clear sense that students are known and loved. There is currently no chapel or sacred space within the school which is a result of ongoing building work. Students and staff

both sorely miss this facility in school and are looking forward to it being re-established. Chaplaincy provision in the school is limited by capacity rather than willingness. The lead for Catholic life is to be commended for the attempts he is making to ensure the faith life of the school is being supported.

Leaders in the school have struggled in recent years to place Catholic life and mission centrally. The impact of the COVID pandemic and ongoing building work has been significant and needs addressing as a matter of urgency. Governors have articulated their commitment to clear action to deal with this issue. Leaders fail to give full regard for the dignity of workers. Policies and structures do not translate to good pastoral care of staff and staff are unable to fulfil their full potential when given too many responsibilities or frequently changing roles. Staff in the school are working with local parishes to continue to develop the relationships between them for the good of the community. The local parish priest has worked closely with the lead for Catholic life to ensure retreat days can happen in the summer term. In the main parents are satisfied with how the school provides a Catholic education for their child. Leaders self-evaluation recognises that actions going forward are imperative in centralising the mission of the school and ensuring it underpins and permeates all aspects of school life.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

How well students achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

2

Provision

The quality of teaching, learning, and assessment in religious education

3

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for religious education

2

2



Students at Fisher More achieve well in religious education and outcomes at GCSE in recent years have been comparable with, or above, other core subjects in the school. In lessons students engage well with their learning. Students spoke enthusiastically about religious education in the school, they told inspectors that they enjoyed their religious education lessons and that they are supported to achieve well. Students’ work overall is presented carefully and students of all abilities are keen to improve their work. Behaviour in lessons is good because lessons are well structured and enjoyable. Students observed were able to work independently and produce good quality work. Students participate fully in lessons and are keen to volunteer answers to questions and to respond when asked. One student, when asked about religious education said, “I’ve learnt a lot from my teacher, he spreads the word, it’s like free Bible lessons!” Students are religiously literate and use subject specific vocabulary with confidence.

Maintaining a consistent staff team in the religious education department has been challenging over recent years, and whilst the current staff are fully committed, there is not yet a consistent enough delivery of provision across the department to be confident that this is secure. However, there are clear plans that are currently being executed to continue to improve the skills of these novice staff. The impact of this is evident. Teachers in the department are acutely aware of the role they play in the moral and spiritual development of the students in their classes and support them appropriately. Assessment of students understanding is developing and remains a focus for the department; this is important so that staff can plan appropriately and ensure that knowledge is being incrementally gained and used to good effect to allow for rapid progress. There is evidence of developing consistency of pedagogy in lessons. Good quality resources are created to enhance learning. The curriculum is appropriately adapted to meet the needs of all

students and students with SEND can access the curriculum. Parents expressed their concerns about the lack of permanent staff in the religious education department.

Leaders in the school have ensured that religious education has parity with other core subjects. The subject leader of religious education is to be commended for her determination, resilience and commitment to the school. She has a clear vision for the department and is committed to doing the right things at the right times to continue to improve the provision for students. She has been ably supported by the senior assistant headteacher in the school so that she can continue to develop both curriculum and pedagogy. The self-evaluation of the department is accurate. She has engaged in professional development opportunities and is collaborating with the diocesan advisor and other schools to ensure the staff have the support that they need to fully implement the *Religious Education Directory*. It is clear that the strategic leadership of religious education at the highest level in the school needs further strengthening.

Collective worship

The quality and range of liturgy and prayer provided by the school

Collective worship key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

How well students participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

3

Provision

The quality of collective worship provided by the school

3

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for collective worship

3

3

Faith leaders are enthusiastic and plan, prepare and present liturgies and have had the confidence to lead events and celebrations such as Remembrance Day and Ash Wednesday services in recent months. Some of the faith leaders do actively take on other ministries such as reading and altar serving and these students are able to reflect on the quality of prayer. There are a regular opportunities for all students to pray but they do not always participate fully. Students are, in the main, very respectful but they do not always have the opportunity to reflect on their faith. There is limited evidence of students being able to lead prayer and liturgy in their form groups. Students and staff are eager for this area of school to develop and they were able to articulate why this is an important part of their school community. There is inconsistency of outcomes across year groups as not all students get the same opportunities as others for prayer and liturgy. Mass is celebrated half-termly and there is clearly an appetite from staff and students for this to be a more regular feature of school life.

There is a lead for collective worship in the school and all staff are provided with resources and support to lead prayer. Staff recognise and appreciate the work of this member of staff, and in the main use the resources provided but not always with any depth of understanding. Whilst the prayer resources provided to form tutors benefit staff who may be less confident preparing or leading prayer, staff and students are not routinely or widely involved in the preparation or delivery of form prayer or assemblies. The prayer life of the school does not always have scripture at its heart. There is a collective worship policy and there are clear plans in place that follow the liturgical year and to provide sacramental opportunities for students and staff. There is a level of frustration that these opportunities do not always come to fruition because of other issues and priorities. It is clear that the lack of a chapel has led to some of these frustrations. The school has a long tradition of effective and meaningful collective worship provision and once the

current issues have been resolved this will easily be re-ignited because of the clear commitment of the staff and students. In many of the larger scale liturgical events, music and drama are used to good effect. The school has participated in the diocesan singing programme and students involved valued the opportunity that they had to sing at Salford Cathedral.

Whilst leaders and governors recognise the importance of high quality prayer and liturgy, they have not always prioritised it in the improvement planning of the school. As the building work is completed governors are committed to ensuring the chapel is re-established as a sacred space within the school, which is much needed. Leaders and governors have provided continuing professional development opportunities for staff to have a full understanding of their role in leading prayer and liturgy but in recent years this has not always been re-enforced regularly enough leaving staff less confident than they might be in this area. Effective monitoring of prayer and liturgy can only be done if the leaders of this crucial role are given the capacity to do this work.

Information about the school

Full name of school	Saint John Fisher and Thomas More Catholic Humanities College
School unique reference number (URN)	119785
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8884624
Full postal address of the school	Saint John Fisher and Thomas More Catholic Humanities College, Gibfield Road, Colne, BB8 8JT
School phone number	01282865299
Headteacher	Clare Hayes
Chair of Governors	Paul Gauntlett
School Website	http://www.fishermore.lancs.sch.uk
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	N/A
Phase	Secondary
Type of school	Voluntary Aided School
Admissions policy	Non-selective
Age-range of students	11-16
Gender of students	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	26th January 2016
Previous denominational inspection grade	Good

The inspection team

Andrea O'Callaghan - Lead Inspector

Claire Wallace - Team Inspector

Carol Gregson - Team Inspector

Key to grade judgements

Grade	England	Wales
1	Outstanding	Excellent
2	Good	Good
3	Requires improvement	Adequate and requires improvement
4	Inadequate	Unsatisfactory and in need of urgent improvement

