

# DIOCESE OF LEEDS



## DIOCESAN BOARD FOR INSPECTIONS

### **CANON LAW 806 FINAL INSPECTION REPORT INCORPORATING SECTION 48**

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL  
AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION  
ST THOMAS a BECKET CATHOLIC COLLEGE  
Barnsley Road, Wakefield  
West Yorkshire

School URN	3844800
Date of Inspection and OE grade	5-6 Oct. 2017 Grade 2
E-mail address	<a href="mailto:cbaxendale@beckets.bcat.co.uk">cbaxendale@beckets.bcat.co.uk</a>
Chair of Governors	Mrs Anne Marie Glover
Headteacher (acting)	Cathy Baxendale
RE Subject Leader (acting)	Linda Wright
Date and grade of last S48 inspection	20-21 Sept. 2012 Grade 2
Section 48 Inspector/s	Meg Baines Mary Mollicone

# INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection Grades: 1 is Outstanding, 2 is Good, 3 requires improvement in order to be good, 4 is Inadequate

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

2

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

- *Outcomes for pupils,*
- *The provision for Catholic Education*
- *Leaders and Managers*

**OUTCOMES FOR PUPILS**

2

**THE PROVISION FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION**

2

**LEADERS AND MANAGERS**

3

## Summary of key findings:

### **This is a good school**

- St Thomas a Becket is a good, caring and inclusive college with Gospel values at its heart.
- The strength of relationships between staff and students is evident. This offers students a safe environment, conducive to learning.
- Very effective strategies for tracking and monitoring student progress are now in place and being used to identify students who need intervention.
- The college is currently negotiating change at management level and within the Religious Education (RE) department. Initial outcomes suggest a positive future for the college and students thanks to the commitment and drive of incumbent leaders.
- Standards of progress in RE are good and the quality of teaching is good. Teaching areas are bright and well-resourced and are conducive to learning.
- The overall effectiveness of the school is good.
- The Catholic ethos is evident in the interactions between students, staff and visitors and in the iconography and outward signs of the Catholic faith. Weekly Mass is open to all. Staff demonstrate a firm commitment to the Catholic ethos of the school.
- Governors are totally committed to the school and support the headteacher and staff in their day to day dealings with students. They have identified areas for focus and linked governors to these areas. School self-evaluation (via Diocesan Self Evaluation Form) is not yet in place. This and an action plan are on the agenda for the new school year. Once they are in place the capacity for sustained improvement will improve.
- Strong links are well established with local parishes. The school continues to build on and take great advantage from the historical links with the parishes.

### **What the school needs to do to improve further.**

- Complete the Diocesan Self Evaluation Form (DSEF) by:
  - working with the head of the RE department and those responsible for Catholic Life and Catholic Ethos
  - enlisting the expertise on the Governing Body and ensuring that procedures are in place for monitoring Catholic Life and Collective Worship at Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and governor level.
- Review and clarify the roles and responsibilities within the RE department.
- Strengthen Collective Worship within school by:
  - creating a Chaplaincy team, led by a Chaplaincy Co-ordinator who will report directly to the headteacher.
  - developing an action plan for Collective Worship which involves students in the planning, preparation and delivery of Collective Worship and liturgies.
- Improve further teaching and learning within the RE department by:
  - sharing good practice within the department and across the college
  - seeking to develop links with other diocesan schools for CPD and moderation purposes.

### **Information about this inspection**

The Inspection of St Thomas a Becket Catholic College was carried out under the requirements of the Education Act 2005, and in accordance with the Leeds Diocesan Framework and the Schedule for Section 48 Inspections approved by the Diocesan Administrator of Leeds. 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 2012).

The inspector reviewed in detail the following aspects:

- Consistency in teaching and learning, planning and assessment for learning in the RE Department.
- Tracking of students' progress across the key stages.
- The roles within the RE Department and SLT and the impact they have had since the last Section 48 inspection and Canonical reviews.
- The monitoring and evaluation of Catholic Life in the college.
- The provision for Collective Worship in the college.
- The provision for students' social, moral, cultural development.
- As no DSEF was available evidence was gleaned from other college data including the Census and the 2017 Academy evaluation document produced by the trust.

**Information about this school**

- St Thomas a Becket is a smaller than average 11-16 Catholic college whose numbers recently saw a decline. The college became part of The Bishop Konstant Catholic Multi Academy Trust in November 2012, shortly after the last Section 48 inspection. It serves a large catchment area drawing in the current year from 42 feeder primaries with a wide range of socio economic backgrounds. There are 703 students currently on roll, a number which is now steadily growing. Figures are slightly weighted towards males (52.41%). 25% of students receive free school meals, a figure above the national average and pupil premium numbers are in excess of 30%. There are 138 students who are on the special needs register (19%) and a similar proportion (19.49%) of students have English as an additional language. Attendance across the school is good and stable in all age groups averaging 95%. There have been no permanent exclusions this term.
- An upward trend in outcomes for students has been noted. Current Progress 8 residual of +0.33 for 2016 and 2017 is above the national expectation of 0.0. Overall outcomes for students at Key Stage Four (KS4) are also above average. Over the last three years those entering with starting points above the national expectation made good progress by the end of KS4 achieving a very good progress 8 score of +0.41. Rates of progress for disadvantaged students are mixed; while some made expected progress in English and Mathematics there is still a variation in performance across different groups. In 2017 pupil premium students achieved a Progress 8 score of - 0.08, this is a significant improvement on the previous year. Overall progress is on an upward trend.
- Catholic students make up 56% of the student body and of the 46 members of teaching staff 38% are Catholic. Of the 67 non-teaching staff 20% are Catholic.
- The college recently appointed an acting headteacher who took up her post in September. Her previous role was deputy headteacher in the college. There is also an acting head of the RE department.

**Full report - inspection judgements**

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils are good**

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.	<b>2</b>
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.	<b>2</b>
How well pupils respond to and participate in the school’s Collective Worship.	<b>3</b>

- The college’s mission statement: “To develop the potential of every individual by providing the best education through experience of our Catholic community within which all our members can grow in faith” is supported by the good relationships evident between students and staff. The college offers opportunities for students to live out their faith.
- A strength of the college is its pastoral system which affords students the opportunity to develop as leaders. Prefects spoke of their pride in helping with liturgies, Masses, especially St. Thomas a Becket’s Day Mass.

- A large number of students attend the Lourdes pilgrimage each year. They return enriched and go into parishes to talk about their experiences. The parishes then support the school through fundraising for Lourdes.
- Two staff members were recently appointed to take responsibility for Chaplaincy and Catholic Life and Ethos. An audit of ethos and spiritual, moral, social and cultural education (SMSC) is underway and plans are now in place for events connected to the Catholic Life of the school. Also new to the school is a very supportive priest who celebrated Mass at the start of the year and who comes in for weekly Mass for staff. The college benefits from a beautiful chapel which can be opened out into the main hall for whole college Masses.
- Students say they feel safe in school and speak highly of their headteacher and teachers.
- Attendance is good with many past students keen to retain links with the college and returning for visits.
- Students respect each other and staff. This is demonstrated in the very good behaviour observed outside the classroom and positive attitudes to learning inside the classroom. The recently modified behaviour policy is proving highly effective. It is understood by all the school community and demonstrates clearly the Christian values of tolerance, understanding and forgiveness. There is a strong emphasis on mediation throughout which is appreciated and endorsed by both parents and students. Pupils, parents and carers praised the dedication and care given by all the staff, which they feel helps to create a caring, family atmosphere where all are valued and all can achieve their potential.
- A local authority autism unit is based at the college. The college works closely with the staff there and benefits from the facility. The college's behaviour policy and protocols are used to very good effect here.
- There are good links with the main four Catholic feeder primaries. An induction day in the summer term offers an opportunity for students, including prefects to talk to the Year 6 pupils about what it means to be part of St Thomas a Becket Catholic College.
- Parents are highly supportive of the Catholic ethos within the college, citing examples of how the college had supported their children during difficult times. Parents also stated that channels of communication between them and the college were now better than ever.
- Charitable giving is part of the culture at St Thomas a Becket. The aim of the newly appointed Catholic Life co-ordinator is to allocate a different charity for each year group. Evidence of charitable giving to charities such as CAFOD, Christmas Child, Calais Jungle and the local food bank was found.
- Students like their college and are happy and proud to be associated with it. They are familiar with its heritage and know well the school motto: *Esse Quam Videri* (which they interpret as 'Just be yourself'). The prefect group spontaneously chanted the school prayer.
- Outcomes for students in RE at Key Stage Four are good. Not all students take GCSE at the end of Year 11. Those who are not able to access the GCSE follow the ASDAN course which provides them with a qualification. Analysis of data suggests that there has been an upturn in results in RE, remaining steady over the last three years. This is an area that the head of department is keen to develop further. Better results latterly have been driven by more consistent teaching, effective tracking and monitoring of student progress and highly effective intervention strategies. The SLT and data team are effective in their monitoring procedures. Meetings between the headteacher and curriculum leads ensures rigour. Using assessment for learning as a tool for identifying students in need of support is a strength.
- The standards pupils achieve in Religious Education are mostly above average and peaked at 82% A\* - C in 2016.

- In 2017, 68% of those entered for GCSE achieved A\*- C, with 31% achieving A\*/A. However the gender gap over the last three years has fluctuated and increased between 2016 and 2017 by around 10%.
- There is a growing gap in the attainment of pupil premium pupils and this has widened over the last three years. The KS4 GCSE pupil premium pupils were two thirds of a grade behind the non-pupil premium pupils in 2017.
- The RE Department is focusing on the progress of boys and pupil premium pupils in particular this year, and whole school data shows the pupil premium gap narrowing to half a grade; in-house data indicates that the gap is almost eliminated in the lower years.
- In Key Stage Three, the current Year 8 data shows that pupils are making good progress in RE, and are on a par with English. Year 9 made slightly less rapid progress last year but through intervention their progress has accelerated this year and should be in line with English at the November collection point.
- Students speak positively about their RE lessons. Most work effectively in class and a level of enthusiasm for the subject was noted in some lessons. Recent changes in the staffing profile has led to some uncertainty amongst staff and students. The current regimen appears to be having a stabilising effect.
- Students are aware of their progress in their studies and most know what to do to improve. The new GCSE syllabus has been effectively planned for. Focus has been on the new style questions.
- An outline plan along with themes for Collective Worship is in place.
- During the acts of Collective Worship observed the students acted with respect and were very well behaved. There was a limited response to the prayers and singing. The students who read the prayers did so in a reverential and polished manner. In the classroom the assembly was rushed and had limited prayerful moments, however strong Catholic themes were explored with an emphasis on 'mission and action'.
- Students spoke of their understanding and tolerance of their friends with no faith or faiths other than Catholic. "We are all friends, it doesn't matter to us. We just bond".
- Evidence was seen of planning for the Church's liturgical year. Students, especially the older ones, demonstrated a very good understanding of the Church's seasons and were able to describe the Church's year. They talked with enthusiasm about what happened in college during Lent, Easter and towards Christmas. Occasions of reflection and prayer were recollected by the students in a very positive way.

## The provision for Catholic Education is good

The quality of teaching and how purposeful learning is in Religious Education.	2
The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum promotes pupils' learning.	2
The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school.	3

- Religious Education is part of the core curriculum; it is given 10% curriculum time and is in line with the Bishops' Conference requirements. Key Stage Three pupils follow the Diocesan approved curriculum and most Key Stage Four pupils are taught GCSE; a small number study an applied course instead of GCSE; this is a heritage position and will no longer be the case after the 2017/18 academic year.
- The teaching in RE is mainly good, some aspects are outstanding. All of the RE teachers were observed teaching. In the majority of lessons teachers demonstrated good subject knowledge and a clear understanding of how students learn.

- In the best lessons learning objectives were clearly differentiated using the SOLO (structured, observed, learning outcomes) learning model and mini-plenaries were used to measure progress throughout the lesson; questioning was skilful and layered, promoting progress for all groups of learners.
- In most lessons, pupils are keen to learn, concentrate well and make good progress.
- Marking in RE follows the school policy using the SPADE (strengths, problems, actions, digging deeper, evaluating) system, helping pupils to understand the skills needed to improve their work and allowing them to develop their answers further.
- KS3 Schemes of work are in the process of being re-written in line with the new Deep Learning Model. Basic KS4 schemes of work were seen and need to be developed.
- At Key Stage Three, pupils follow an innovative programme, devised by staff, based on the Curriculum Directory and 'The Way, the Truth and the Life'.
- At Key Stage Four pupils are being prepared for the Edexcel GCSE which they begin studying in the final term of Year 9.
- A member of the RE Department has this year been given responsibility for Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Ethos. PSHE is taught to Year 7 pupils one lesson a fortnight, and to Years 7 to 10 in form time. As a result of an audit, the co-ordinator has clearly identified the areas that need to be addressed and written detailed schemes of work giving guidance, lesson plans and resources for all staff. Drop-down days are being organised to supplement the PSHE provision. All schemes of work support the Catholic ethos of the school.
- There is liaison between the RE and Science departments ensuring all subjects are taught in line with Catholic teaching.
- The college has planned for whole college assemblies in order for acts of Collective Worship to take place. The quality of the worship is not yet monitored effectively. This would benefit from being built into the planning. The role of students in the planning is not yet embedded.
- Class assemblies take place during form time. There is competition for time at this time of the day and the formal, 'gather, pray, mission, action' aspects of gathering for prayer struggle for priority.
- Year group Masses are planned in collaboration with the priest. Students take the roles of altar servers and readers. The highlight of the school year is St. Thomas a Becket's Mass which takes place in the Summer term and involves the music department and staff and students from across the college.
- The main hall is used for Collective Worship. It has excellent IT facilities which support the provision of Collective Worship for all the school community.
- The college Chapel is a readily available resource in the heart of the college and is currently used for weekly morning Mass for Staff. Students are welcome but this occurs before school when students are not in school so has limited uptake by students.

## The Leadership and Management require improvement in order to be good

<b>How well leaders, governors and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Catholic Education and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils.</b>	<b>3</b>
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- Leaders, governors and managers are committed to the Church's mission in education.
- The governors' knowledge of the school, and their work in recent months have been instrumental in maintaining the high standards the college is currently enjoying.
- Governors are not currently holding the leadership to account for the Catholic Life of the School and not monitoring Collective Worship.
- Recent whole school development planning by the Trust failed to identify issues arising from staff changes in the RE department and subsequent reduction in the role of Lay Chaplaincy which has impinged on the ethos and Catholic Life for the students of the college and the departments' line management. The inherently strong and distinctive Catholic faith of staff and students and governors has helped the college coast through a period when Catholic Life was not at the front and centre of thinking and planning.
- The Catholic Life of the school should be a heading in the School Improvement Plan, and should be monitored throughout the year by the governing body and senior leadership team. The chair of governors has a lead role in this along with ensuring the DSEF is completed.
- The acting headteacher is a strong committed Catholic who plays an active role in both college and parish. In her new role she has already created two areas of responsibility, one for Catholic Life the other for Ethos. These new roles go some way to filling the gaps created by a lack of chaplaincy provision.
- A good, committed senior leadership, working with the acting head of RE, has ensured that the acting head of RE has been supported appropriately in college. She is working hard to create a more cohesive department with an emphasis on improving the quality of relationships. She is keen to develop and improve the quality of teaching and to support colleagues, by monitoring and evaluating teaching and developing the already successful assessment for learning techniques and procedures. No RE improvement plan or action plan from the previous Section 48 inspection or Canonical review was available. These must be a priority for governors and leaders.
- Leaders have ensured there has been more systematic monitoring, tracking and intervention for students in RE. This is proving effective across the college. Schemes of work are developing. These actions have significantly improved the progress of students in RE lessons and should lead to even better outcomes.
- Pastoral leadership has led to consistently good behaviour through the implementation of the new behaviour policy with its emphasis on mediation and reconciliation. This, coupled with support for the more vulnerable, is making the difference. Strong relationships, together with the work of the pastoral team, have ensured the inclusivity of the school's ethos.
- Governors are well placed to ensure the current trend in outcomes for students continues. They are working with the trust to ensure canonical and statutory responsibilities are fulfilled.