

Harrytown Catholic High School

URN: 106143

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Shrewsbury

11–12 December 2024

Summary of key findings

Overall effectiveness

The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school

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

1

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

1

The school is fully compliant with the general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishops' Conference

Yes

The school is fully compliant with any additional requirements of the diocesan bishop

Yes

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

Fully

2

Compliance statement

- The school is fully compliant in relation to the general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishops' Conference.
- The school is fully compliant in relation to any additional requirements of the diocesan bishop.
- All areas for improvement outlined in the previous diocesan inspection have been addressed.

What the school does well

- It is the hope of the school that all who visit are left in no doubt about the desire and mission to bring the love of Christ into every aspect of school life.
- The religious education department is effectively led by a passionate leader, who is rooted in his desire to enable all students to succeed and flourish.
- The beautiful chapel lies at the heart of Harrytown, and the reverence shown within the walls is palpable. It stands central to the Catholic life and worship of the school.

What the school needs to improve

- Ensure that checking for understanding routines are integral to lessons in order for students to be more active learners.
- Develop regular opportunities for external speakers and learning experiences outside the classroom.
- Develop student leadership of prayer and liturgy including opportunities to create and lead prayer more regularly.

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

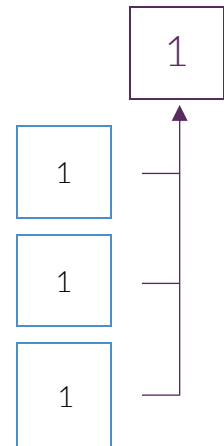
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

Provision

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

Leadership

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



Harrytown Catholic High School is an inclusive and welcoming community. It is the hope of leaders that all who visit are left in no doubt about the desire and mission to bring the love of Christ into every aspect of school life. Students are happy at the school. They recognise that they are loved and valued. The virtues, the legacy of the Sisters of Evron who founded the school in 1913, remain a strong thread throughout Harrytown. These are known and understood by all members of the community. Students are encouraged to embrace these virtues in their daily life. Most recently, there are reward opportunities to gain virtues badges which are cherished. Catholic social teaching is a key focus in school and the recent addition of 'Building the Kingdom' days has enhanced this understanding across the curriculum. Opportunities to express faith in action in support for others through Advent and Lent through charities such as Cafod and The Wellspring are deeply embedded into the school life. There are other opportunities for students to embrace mission opportunities. Key student groups include Youth SVP (St Vincent de Paul), Mini DASH (Diocesan Association of Secondary Heads), the Peace Council and the Eco Council. Parents express their confidence in the mission of the school and in the fact that the young people are known and cherished.

The school is proud of the beautiful chapel which is central to the life of Harrytown. The Evron virtues of service, charity, simplicity, unity and humility are embedded in the stained glass of the chapel and visually echoed across the whole school. There is a clear thread across all aspects of policies and procedures that the centrality of faith is integral to the day-to-day workings of Harrytown. The life and mission of the school are deeply rooted, and staff are committed to living this out in their work. Colleagues new to the school speak passionately about being part of this family and describe a welcoming and united staff body. They recognise the many spiritual opportunities for staff which include an overnight retreat provided by the school. Appropriate

professional development is provided on a regular basis and is highly valued. Harrytown is seen as an exceptionally supportive community which values all members without exception. Staff are appreciated for the care and nurture that they provide to the students.

From all conversations, it is clear that the focus of Harrytown is centred on the young person and their flourishing within the context of this Catholic school. Governors are highly experienced and strategically focussed. They are passionate about the school and its mission and work relentlessly to ensure its flourishing. They regularly support events in school, for example, the weekly Mass each Friday. They are hugely ambitious for the Catholic life and mission of the school, and these are central to the school improvement plan. The annual staff retreat is attended by 40 staff and is provided by the school. There is strategic evaluation of the school mission, and it runs through all aspects of school life. The newly appointed headteacher is appreciated for her work and the weekly letter to parents, with its Gospel focus, is welcomed. She is taking time to review the mission statement with all stakeholders. The school enjoys strong relationships with partner primary schools, and the local parish priest who is also a governor at Harrytown, celebrates a voluntary Mass in the Chapel on a weekly basis which is open to the whole school community.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

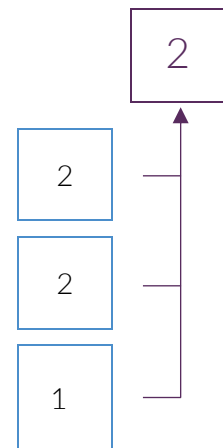
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

Provision

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

Leadership

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



Colleagues recognise that the outcomes at GCSE are on an improving trajectory with continued work to secure higher outcomes overall. Most students enjoy their learning in religious education. They are respectful and engaged in lessons and overall, make good progress in knowing more and doing more at both key stages. In the best lessons seen, the learners are curious and are encouraged in this inquisitive learning by their teachers whose planning enables student confidence. For these students progress is appropriate. However, checking for understanding is not always consistent across lessons which means that not all students' understanding is challenged and therefore students are not always actively engaged in their own learning. Where best employed, skilful questioning observed in the classroom enables good progress. Overall students' books are a strength and there is much evidence of good extended writing across the ability range. The majority of books show a pride in the work completed. The new Key Stage 3 curriculum has brought about a greater depth of learning experience.

This is a coherent and cohesive department team. They are positive role models for their classes. Subject knowledge across the department is strong and ensures that most students enjoy a rich learning experience in religious education. The department recognises that outcomes at GCSE need to improve. They are confident in their monitoring and tracking of improvement in student outcomes and strong quality assurance processes ensure rigorous analysis of data. Teachers bring their own faith experiences to enrich and enhance the student experience. This adds a contemporary relevance to learning. Teachers are passionate about their own professional formation and are actively engaged in national and local professional development opportunities including the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies (CCRS) programme and Flame, the annual event for Catholic youth. They attend national religious education conferences together and enjoy other developmental

opportunities. For example, they attended the visit of the relics of Saint Bernadette in their own time using this to bring this lived experience back into the classroom for the benefit of the students. As a result of this commitment, students enjoy a rich variety of learning opportunities. The department has used guest speakers to enhance the classroom experience and hopes to build on this opportunity more broadly. Colleagues work very hard for the benefit of their students of all ability levels. Marking is a significant element of their work. All teachers provide effective feedback which enables students to recognise the next steps in their learning. However, this is not systematically acted upon by students and opportunities for embedding learning are missed. The curriculum is effectively planned, and appropriate provision is embedded. The new *Religious Education Directory* is on track for complete implementation and relevant staff training is in place.

The department is effectively led by a passionate leader, whose leadership is rooted in his desire to enable all students to succeed and flourish. He reminds all that each child is created in God's image and treats all with immense dignity and humanity. He has a clear vision for continued development and improvement of the subject area, always striving for excellence. Leaders and governors ensure that there is parity with other core subjects and the centrality of the religious education curriculum to the whole school is clear. They have strong quality assurance processes in place. Leaders and governors are effective in their monitoring and analysis of religious education and are ambitious for the best outcomes for the students. They work closely with the head of religious education to ensure appropriate challenge and accountability.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

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

2

Provision

The quality of collective worship provided by the school

1

Leadership

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

1

1

There is a rich variety of prayer opportunities at Harrytown. These include silent reflection, creative and community prayer. Students appreciate these opportunities. They recognise and are familiar with these routines as part of the everyday prayer life of Harrytown. Prayer time at the start of each day is taken seriously and reverently by most students. Opportunities include either weekly year group celebration of the word assemblies or form prayer time, called *Orare*, each with a focus on the Sunday Gospel for the given week. Each form takes its turn to plan and deliver assemblies with their form tutor and the lay chaplain. These opportunities enrich student understanding of how prayer can lead to putting faith into action. This was evident during form prayer time with the link to the charity The Wellspring. The recently chosen form saints also inform prayer opportunities. Their feast days are celebrated in school. Liturgical music is being used more frequently to enrich worship and there is inventive use of technology to enrich the prayer life of the school community. Groups of students including the Youth SVP are engaged in promoting prayer and liturgy. However, there is limited opportunity generally for students to plan, lead and contribute to wider prayer and liturgy on a routine basis.

Prayer and liturgy are central to daily life at Harrytown. This daily pattern of prayer supports the liturgical life and calendar of the Church. There are many and rich opportunities in prayer and liturgy which reflect the Catholic tradition, these include Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, weekly Mass, Reconciliation, retreats for both staff and students and prayers appropriate to the liturgical calendar. The beautiful chapel is at the heart of the school. The voluntary morning prayer for staff and students is a wonderful opportunity for an enriching experience of contemplative prayer to start the day. Prayer punctuates the rhythm of school, including a final bell two minutes before the end of the day, which heralds the final prayer for the whole community. This rich diet is ably supported by the lay chaplain, head of religious education and senior leader for Catholic life and mission. Chaplaincy provides prayerful and spiritual opportunities for formation and growth of both students and staff. For example, as part of their

induction to school, Year 7 learn about the chapel space, how and why it is at the heart of the school. This thoughtful planning builds student understanding of the centrality and sacred nature of the chapel.

The lay chaplain although relatively new to school, has brought his immense experience to the benefit of the school community in a short time. He ensures a deep and rich variety of opportunities for worship which enrich the school experience beautifully. This includes the offering of the Sacraments and Masses on holy days. He is described as a joyful witness to Christ, bringing the love of God to all in the community. Senior leaders and governors ensure that the spiritual development of staff is sustained and nurtured through many development opportunities and the opportunity for a staff weekend retreat, which is richly appreciated. Through careful planning, they ensure that staff can be confident in their delivery of prayer and liturgy which has a direct impact on the lives of the young people in their care. Prayer and liturgy are wholly and systematically embedded in the school's cycle of self-evaluation and the voice of staff and students is taken into account in that review process.

Information about the school

Full name of school	Harrytown Catholic High School
School unique reference number (URN)	106143
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	3564601
Full postal address of the school	Harrytown Catholic High School, Harrytown, Romiley, Stockport, SK6 3BU
School phone number	01614305277
Headteacher	Clare Pickles
Chair of governors	John Wilbraham
School Website	http://www.harrytownschool.org
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 pupils	11-16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	21 March 2017
Previous denominational inspection grade	1

The inspection team

Jane Beever	Lead
Katherine Packham	Team
Simon Duggan	Team

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