

Cardinal Heenan Catholic High School

URN: 108095

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Leeds

30th April – 1st May 2025

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

Religious education (p.5)

The quality of curriculum religious education

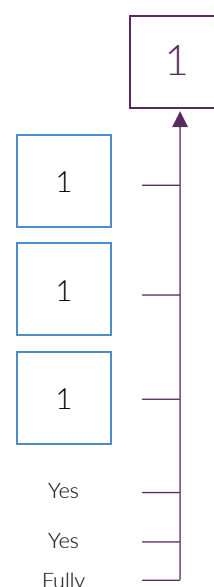
Collective worship (p.7)

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

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

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

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



Compliance statement

- The school is compliant with the general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishop's Conference.
- The school is fully compliant with the additional requirements of the Diocese of Leeds.
- The school has addressed all areas for improvement identified in the last inspection.

What the school does well

- The humility of the head teacher at Cardinal Heenan is inspirational. He strives to offer an authentic Catholic experience that is relevant to all. Consequently, all staff serve as outstanding role models.
- The religious education curriculum is expertly crafted to meet the needs of the individual students, resulting in a curriculum that engages and inspires.
- Academic outcomes for all students, particularly those with special educational needs, are outstanding.
- The behaviour and attitudes of students is outstanding. The pastoral care offered by older students to those younger than themselves is exemplary.
- All staff work well with students to deliver prayer and liturgy that invokes deep reverence and a sense of awe and wonder.

What the school needs to improve

- Create opportunities for students to experience the customs and practices of other faiths.
- Strengthen the relationship between the school and its parishes, so that students and the parish communities grow together in faith.

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

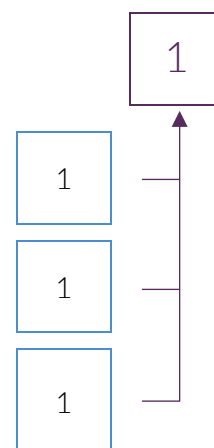
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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



Students at Cardinal Heenan benefit hugely from the commitment shown by all staff in their mission to provide a school experience that has Christ at its centre. They understand that they are unique and made in the image of God; they also comment that staff are helping them to follow Christ's example and value this highly. The school's mission statement is fully understood by all members of the school community. They know how the school's virtues are linked to this and students are aware of the impact of the school mission and its values on their everyday lives both in and out of the classroom. As one student commented, 'we have the opportunity to do what we love, grow closer together and closer to God'. Catholic social teaching principles are woven into all aspects of school life and form the foundations for the curriculum. Students take a lead role on a number of initiatives within school and are keen to support the more vulnerable, with many charities benefiting from their work. These include St Gemma's Hospice, Cafod and The Good Shepherd Fund, to name but a few. The school's collegiate approach to chaplaincy is outstanding and students appreciate the many opportunities offered to them.

Staff are outstanding role models, offering exceptional pastoral support to those in their care and each other. They go above and beyond to ensure that students, their families and the wider community are supported, both materially and spiritually. The school is wholly inclusive towards all faiths and backgrounds. The offer of a range of enriching opportunities that cater for the spiritual needs of the school community has ensured that those of other faiths have the opportunity to practise their faith in accordance with their beliefs. The actions of staff are underpinned by the school's relentless commitment to living the Gospel values in a way that has become the norm for day-to-day school life. Strong chaplaincy is central to all that the school does and the chaplaincy team is committed to developing the talents of everyone. This has a

profound impact on the way that all members of the school community interact with each other. Displays highlight the school's distinctive identity and contribute to student formation. Provision for personal development meets diocesan requirements and is well tailored to meet the needs of its students.

The head teacher is an inspirational Catholic leader and is expertly supported by his leadership team. This is recognised by students, staff and those in the wider community, who see him and all senior leaders as witnesses of their faith. Consequently, all staff play an active part in leading on Catholic life. Governors ensure that Catholic social teaching forms the backbone of the school's work. They have a strong skill set and know their school well. This expertise is effectively used to ensure incisive monitoring and evaluation when assessing the school's provision and helps to refine the Catholic life experience for all. The use of student forums to feedback on initiatives in school also has a real impact on shaping the Catholic life offer. Students appreciate that their views are sought and their comments are acted upon. Staff induction is outstanding and continued training is also very strong; discussions and surveys show all staff appreciate the support they receive from leaders in school. They comment on the approachability of the chaplaincy team and the support offered. A notable example is the new staff Mass, which is planned and prepared by students, who welcome new staff to their school. Consequently, staff feel valued and respected.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

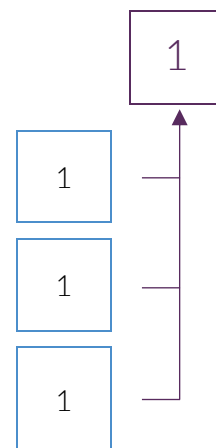
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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



Students from all backgrounds achieve very high levels of attainment in religious education, making outstanding progress, particularly those who have special educational needs. The department's skilled adaptation in lessons ensures that students are able to understand and explain complex concepts with confidence. Students have an excellent religious vocabulary, with tasks in lessons being designed to develop oracy skills, part of a whole school strategy. This results in thought provoking questioning from students which leads to discussion that enhances their learning, allowing them to consolidate new ideas. A relevant curriculum has been expertly designed to reflect the requirements of the Religious Education Directory. It is rich in variety and meets the cultural needs of individual students. This results in all students buying into the curriculum offer. Retrieval is a routine element of every lesson and students are able to make good use of their learning to understand the sequencing of the curriculum. There are high levels of engagement and concentration and students enjoy strong working relationships with their subject teachers. Consequently, behaviour and attitudes in the classroom are outstanding. Independent learning is a strength of the department. Students take pride in all that they do and the work in their books is completed to a very high standard.

All religious education staff have comprehensive subject knowledge and regular departmental training focuses on the sharing of this expertise. This collaborative approach to developing skills has ensured that all staff have an agreed vision of excellence. Staff use shared lesson resources to ensure consistency of content across classes and this is tailored to suit the needs of individual students. They are adept in using questioning to encourage deeper thinking from students, enabling them to make links between different theological concepts and understand more deeply. Staff provide students with a range of opportunities and assessments which allow them to express their ideas in a number of creative ways. Students have a good understanding of

other faiths. However, they do not have the opportunity to formally engage with others from outside the school community to develop their understanding further. There is evidence of purposeful, targeted feedback on assessments with clear points for development that students have acted upon. Consequently, students are able to articulate where they are in their learning and know what to do to make progress. The strong culture of praise within the department ensures that students respond well to the encouragement given by all members of staff. This happens through a combination of the school's rewards system alongside affirming and personal approaches adopted by the department. The department recognises the importance of religious education in the curriculum. They see the development of the whole child as their responsibility.

Leaders and departmental staff have crafted a well-sequenced religious education curriculum based on the new Directory. Religious education is the core of the core at Cardinal Heenan and the department is clearly outward facing in its approach. The subject leader has an inspiring vision and knows the strengths of his department. He works hard to ensure that all students have a high-quality experience in religious education lessons and he utilises his department's expertise well to the benefit of the students, his staff and other diocesan schools. The head of department's open-door approach ensures that all staff feel supported and are confident in their roles. Senior leaders and governors have a comprehensive overview of the department's work, offering appropriate and timely support and challenge. They recognise the importance of the work the department does and support them in helping other subject areas with their developmental work.

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

1

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

Prayer is an important part of the day at Cardinal Heenan and staff are successful in making liturgical content relevant. This is recognised by students, who can make the link between the daily scripture and their own lives; resulting in high levels of engagement. Students display excellent behaviour and show great respect during these times, with prayerful silence being a notable feature when groups of students come together. Students appreciate these opportunities for quiet contemplation. Prayer is also reactionary and responds to the particular needs of the community. This ensures a more meaningful prayer experience for both staff and students. Leaders and staff are skilled in offering a variety of ways to pray which are linked appropriately to the liturgical year and students are aware of this, with the readings of the liturgical year giving the focus for weekly worship. During prayer and liturgy, students participate fully and engage deeply with the activities that take place. Through the leadership of the school's chaplaincy team, students are confident in taking on ministry and planning and leading celebrations of the word. The majority of students know the meaning of the Church's liturgical year and understand how this shapes their prayer experience. For example, they know that the Stations of the Cross are prayed and reflected on during Lent and the Hail Mary is said in the months devoted to Our Lady.

The centrality of prayer and liturgy is paramount to all, with the chapel being at the heart of the school. It is used for religious education lessons and tutor time prayer sessions. Routines for prayer are well established with all aspects of this being faithfully Catholic. However, they are also accessible to the small minority of staff and students of other faiths. Staff at all levels are adept at modelling activities and this gives students the confidence to explore and develop their own understanding of prayer in a variety of ways. Students play an active part in creating high quality religious display which is updated regularly to reflect the liturgical year and other

significant days. The local parish priest offers regular Masses in school and the Sacrament of Reconciliation during Advent and Lent. He is a frequent visitor to the school, known by all, and his work enhances the work of the chaplaincy team. The school has good links with families and its feeder parishes but more has yet to be done to provide opportunities for students to strengthen their faith and share their talents through active ministry in local parishes and the wider community.

Leaders, including governors, ensure that ample time and resourcing are dedicated to celebration of the word at Cardinal Heenan. This is because all leaders care deeply about the spiritual formation of all members of the community. They ensure that the majority of students are involved in the planning and preparation of prayer and liturgy. Governors visit school regularly and play a key role in robust and incisive monitoring and evaluation. Students have a voice in this process and clearly articulate how their input is used to shape prayer and liturgy. This informs the future development of celebration of the word and any associated training opportunities. Particular care is given to the induction of new staff. A comprehensive programme ensures staff who are not Catholic gain the confidence to authentically lead students in prayer. Through weekly briefings, all staff further develop their prayer and liturgy skillset. This results in all staff competently delivering high quality prayer and liturgy during tutor sessions. Staff acknowledge the generous amount of time given to training and welcome this.

Information about the school

Full name of school	Cardinal Heenan Catholic High School
School unique reference number (URN)	108095
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	3834751
Full postal address of the school	Cardinal Heenan Catholic High School, Tongue Lane, Meanwood, Leeds, LS6 4QE
School phone number	0113 8873240
Headteacher	Dominic Kelly
Chair of governors	Michael Gardner
School Website	http://www.cardinalheenan.com
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	6-7 June 2018
Previous denominational inspection grade	Good

The inspection team

Mark Taylor	Lead
Marianne Wilkinson	Team
Clare Masterman	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