

Archdiocese of Cardiff



Inspection Report St Richard Gwyn Catholic High School, Barry

Inspection dates	12 – 14 June 2017
Reporting Inspector	Mr Garry Maher
Accompanying Inspector	Mrs Kathryn Burke
Type of School	Secondary
Age range of pupils	11-16
Number on roll	756
Local Authority	Vale of Glamorgan
Chair of Governors	Mr Paul McLoughlin
School Address	Argae Lane Barry CF62 1BL
Tel No.	01446 729250
Email Address	info@strichardgwyn.co.uk
Parishes served	St Helen's, Barry St Joseph, Penarth St Mary, Dinas Powys Our Lady and St Illtyd's, Llantwit Major St Cadoc's, Cowbridge
Date of previous inspection	31 January – 3 February 2011
Headteacher	Mr Steven Grech

Canonical Inspection under Canon 806 on behalf of the Archdiocese of Cardiff and Inspection of denominational education under Section 50 of the Education Act 2005

During each inspection, inspectors aim to answer three key questions:

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?

Inspectors also provide an overall judgement on the school's current performance and on prospects for improvement.

Judgement	What the judgement means
Excellent	Many strengths, including significant examples of sector leading practice or practise that is both consistent and highly effective.
Good	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
Adequate	Strengths outweigh areas for improvement
Unsatisfactory	Important areas for improvement outweigh strengths

The table below shows the terms that Archdiocesan inspectors use and a broad idea of their meaning. It is for guidance only.

Proportion	Description
With very few exceptions	Nearly all
90% or more	Most
70% or more	Many
60% or more	A majority
Close to 50%	Half/around half
Below 40%	A minority
Below 20%	Few
Less than 10%	Very few

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Archdiocesan website: www.rcadcschools.org

Context

St Richard Gwyn Catholic High School is a voluntary aided mixed 11-16 community school. It is a school within the Catholic Archdiocese of Cardiff and is maintained by the Vale of Glamorgan Local Authority.

There are currently 756 pupils on roll. This compares with 629 pupils at the time of the previous inspection in 2011.

St Richard Gwyn Catholic High School draws pupils from a wide catchment area that includes the parishes of Llantwit Major and Cowbridge in the west, and Barry and Penarth in the east. It also admits a small number of pupils from the west of Cardiff. Their social and economic circumstances vary with around 27% of pupils living in the 20% most deprived areas in Wales. Around 13% of the pupils are eligible for free school meals (eFSM) compared with the national average of 17.1%.

34% of pupils are baptised Catholics which is lower than other schools in the Archdiocese. An additional 41% of pupils come from other Christian denominations and 5% come from other World Faiths.

Most pupils speak English as their first language. Around 27% of pupils have special educational needs which is higher than the national average of 25.1%. Around 2% of these pupils have a statement of special educational needs compared with the 2.4% for Wales as a whole. Most pupils are from a white British background. Around 3% of pupils speak English as an additional language. Around 1% of pupils speak Welsh fluently.

The leadership team is made up of the headteacher, who has been in post since 2015, a deputy headteacher, three assistant headteachers and four associate headteachers.

The individual school budget per pupil for St Richard Gwyn Catholic High School in 2016-2017 is £4,167 per pupil. The maximum per pupil in the secondary schools in the Vale of Glamorgan is £4,836 and the minimum is £3,889. St Richard Gwyn Catholic High School is fifth out of the seven secondary schools in the Vale of Glamorgan in terms of its school budget per pupil.

How effective is the school in providing Catholic education?	Good
<p>Catholic education at St Richard Gwyn Catholic High School is based on its Mission Statement and its ethos is firmly rooted in Gospel values. The school provides a good level of Catholic education because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the headteacher has a clear vision of the school’s mission which is shared by all staff and stakeholders. • the governing body is effective and knowledgeable, and supports the school well. • the chaplain provides good support for the Religious Education department and makes a significant contribution to the ethos of the whole school. • the school is a welcoming and inclusive community. • pupils are very proud of their school and its Catholic identity. • excellent pastoral care provided to pupils is an outstanding feature and supports pupils’ well-being effectively. • relationships within the school are strong and this contributes to the sense of cohesiveness. <p>However</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the quality of teaching within the Religious Education Department is adequate in the majority of lessons, with elements of good practice. • expectations of pupils in many Religious Education lessons are not sufficiently challenging, which leads to a minority of pupils under-performing particularly at key stage 4. • monitoring of pupil progress in the Religious Education department lacks sufficient rigour to identify key areas for development and enable pupils to make good progress. • assessment and monitoring processes are underdeveloped. • recommendations from the previous Inspection have been met only partially. 	

What are the school’s prospects for improvement?	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • self-evaluation processes are developing, and the headteacher, governors and head of Religious Education understand what is needed to move the Religious Education department forward. • the link governor for RE provides good support and challenge within the Religious Education department and in the Catholic life of the school. • the Religious Education Department improvement plan accurately identifies areas for improvement, but does not yet include measurable outcomes for learners or identify key milestones well enough to enable pupils to achieve expected outcomes. • the recommendations from the last inspection have been met only partially. 	

Recommendations and Required Actions

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- R1: Continue to improve the quality of teaching in Religious Education so that all teaching is considered good or better
- R2: Embed a more rigorous assessment, monitoring and tracking system to identify pupils who are under-performing and plan timely interventions, in particular at key stage 4.
- R3: Review the consistency and accuracy of marking across the Religious Education department, ensuring quality feedback which enables pupils at all key stages to progress.
- R4: Continue to develop opportunities for all children to be involved in the preparation, leading and delivery of worship

What happens next?

The school will submit a Post-Inspection Action Plan to the Director of Religious Education that shows how it will address the recommendations. Submission should be within 45 working days of publication of the report.

Progress in addressing the recommendations will be monitored by the Archdiocese.

MAIN FINDINGS

KQ1 How good are outcomes?	Good
-----------------------------------	-------------

Catholic education at St. Richard Gwyn Catholic High School is based on its Mission Statement 'successful, resilient, Gospel values'. It is well known and understood by all and nearly all pupils are proud of their school. Most pupils understand the distinctive nature of a Catholic school and participate reverently in prayer, assemblies and important celebrations during the liturgical year. Although planning and preparation for assemblies and acts of worship is encouraged, there are no pupil lead assemblies and pupil participation in voluntary prayer and tutor period prayer are underdeveloped. This was a recommendation in the previous inspection and has been addressed only partially.

Pupils are aware of their responsibility to help those less fortunate through extensive, planned charitable activities, including support for CAFOD, Tŷ Hafan, Marie Curie Cancer Care, British Legion and the Education Project in Zambia. Pupils are involved in the student council and appreciate the opportunities to take responsibility and participate in decision-making through their elected representatives. The work of the liturgy group is developing and their planning for liturgies and acts of worship is good. However, this needs to be extended to allow more pupils to be fully involved in the prayer life of the school.

Pastoral care is an outstanding feature of the school and has a clear link to the school's mission statement. All pupils are cared for equally and this reflects the inclusive nature of the school's ethos. Transition arrangements are effective and parents and pupils believe the opportunities to visit the school when children are in Year 6 are very beneficial. Planned transition activities include the preparation and celebration of joint Masses within the local parishes which contributes to the sense of ownership that pupils have for their school.

The majority of pupils arrive at lessons ready and willing to learn. Most pupils listen attentively and work diligently when provided with appropriate tasks and guidance. Many pupils make the required level of progress given their starting points. However, the majority of pupils lack confidence in improving the quality of their work. Book scrutiny reveals that marking is inconsistent across the department and does not offer pupils' sufficient guidance on how to improve the quality of their responses to the tasks set. Comments need to be more specific and not rely so heavily on reference to 'Strategies for Achieving Level 6'. A minority of pupils do not always follow up on the advice they are given from their teachers particularly regarding spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Many pupils at key stage 3 enjoy their lessons and participate in lessons enthusiastically. The 'People of God: Called to Serve' scheme is used, enabling learners to monitor their own learning and reflect upon their lives. However, the lack of differentiated activities, an over-reliance on booklets and the imbalance between teacher-talk and pupil-led learning often inhibits discussion at key stage 3 and does not allow pupils to explore their faith or develop their knowledge, understanding and skills well enough. This results in a few pupils becoming disengaged, which also leads to low level disruption in a very few classes which

makes an impact on the learning of others. Although pupils' are becoming religiously literate, progress is slower when compared to pupils in similar schools.

Attainment in Religious Education at key stage 3 has shown a marked upward trend over the past three years for the level 5+ indicator with pupils achieving 97% in 2016. This is 0.3% below that achieved in English and at key stage 4 is 14% lower than that achieved in English. The performance of boys at both key stage 3 and key stage 4 is below that achieved by girls although the difference has decreased to 1.7% at key stage 3 and 12% at key stage 4. The performance of pupils entitled to free school meals has also improved by 6.8% at key stage 3 and improved by 3% at key stage 4. When more able and talented learners are challenged appropriately they achieve well. The monitoring of different groups of pupils is in place but has not been effective in raising standards particularly for more able boys at key stage 4.

Pupils at key stage 4 appreciate the opportunity to discuss and explore their faith, in order to develop a deeper understanding of what their faith means and how it influences them in their daily lives. Pupils' attainment at level 2 A* - C demonstrates a steady improvement over the last three years with pupils achieving 59% in 2016. This is slightly below the average achieved by other schools within the Archdiocese. The performance of girls is higher than that achieved by boys and is significantly higher at the A* - A grade indicator, the difference being 17%. Work at key stage 4 is well presented and includes evidence of independent work and extended writing tasks are completed well.

KQ2 How good is provision?	Adequate
-----------------------------------	-----------------

Around half of lessons observed were adequate with some good features. However, most teachers do not employ a range of teaching styles or plan a variety of activities that challenge or engage pupils sufficiently. The majority of lessons are teacher led and tasks can be repetitive and do not cater for the needs of different pupils well enough. In addition, teachers talk too much and mainly ask questions that are not searching or thought-provoking. In a few lessons, teachers do not ensure that pupils stay on task throughout the lesson. As a result these pupils do not make sufficient progress in lessons.

Most teachers mark work regularly. However, the quality of marking varies too much across the department. For example, many comments are not specific enough and a minority of teachers do not provide pupils with enough guidance on how to improve their work. Marking focuses appropriately on the accuracy of pupils' written work, for example, teachers identify errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar. However, a minority of pupils do not consistently follow up on the advice given by their teachers. Planning for independent learning needs to be developed further to support pupils understanding of what and how they learn particularly at key stage 3.

Planning for the development of skills is in place but evidence in books is very limited. The assessment of skills is inconsistent although there are opportunities for pupils to assess their own work and the work of other pupils. Questioning is

used in nearly all lessons but rarely probes deeply enough to allow pupils to use higher order thinking skills to more fully develop their knowledge and understanding of religious concepts. As a result, around half of pupils' written work at key stage 3 lacks the depth and detail necessary to achieve higher levels.

Tracking is in place and is robust, using the SIMS system. However, this is not used effectively enough to monitor individuals and groups of learners, making it difficult to identify those pupils who are under-performing and plan appropriate interventions for these pupils to enable them to succeed. This is particularly so for more able boys at key stage 4. The accuracy of assessment is inconsistent and is not embedded sufficiently across the department in order to raise standards for pupils. A few teachers use WWW (what went well) and EBI (even better if) whilst others use 'two stars and a wish'. Assessment needs to be consistent across the department and more focussed to identify those pupils who are under-performing and to plan rapid interventions for these pupils to ensure they achieve their full potential.

Religious Education is currently taught by two specialist and two non-specialist RE teachers. The long term sickness absence of one specialist Religious Education teacher is of concern and needs to be addressed. Religious Education staff make the best of their learning environment by ensuring rooms are tidy and displays support and enhance the learning. The school follows the Archdiocesan guidelines in terms of its programmes of study. 'People of God' is delivered at key stage 3 and the WJEC syllabus, Catholicism 1 and 2, is followed at key stage 4. Pupils receive 10% curriculum time for Religious Education in years 7 and 8 and 10% curriculum time at key stage 4. The exception currently is year 9 pupils who receive 8% curriculum time although this has already been addressed for the new academic year. This meets the requirements of the Bishop's Conference. The Religious Education department receives an equitable share of the school's capitation and is well resourced.

The school is an inclusive community and pupils with additional learning needs and pupils for whom English is an additional language are supported well. This is a strength of the school which enhances the sense of community cohesion and good relationships which exist between staff and pupils. The Chapel is situated in the centre of the school and is a focus for pupils in times of need. The Chaplain provides good support for the Religious Education department and makes a significant contribution to the ethos of the whole school. Good links exist between the parishes, and local clergy make themselves available for the Sacrament of Reconciliation during Lent and to celebrate voluntary Mass at various times throughout the year.

Opportunities to develop prayer and collective worship across the school are provided through the liturgy group. The year group assemblies observed were delivered well and pupils participated willingly when singing and responding to questions. Form assemblies were also good with form tutors being provided with a 'theme for the week' which provides good opportunities for reflection and discussion. However, opportunities for spontaneous prayer and leading assemblies are limited. The school acknowledges that pupils' involvement in planning their own liturgies and voluntary prayer are areas to be developed.

KQ3 How good are Leadership and Management?	Good
--	-------------

The headteacher has a clear vision for the school. Leadership and management of the Catholic life of the school are very effective and continue to improve and all staff are fully committed to the ethos of the school. The strong and focused leadership of the governing body, headteacher and leadership team has benefitted all learners. The school is highly effective in promoting Catholic values. Governors are very supportive, and the Catholic nature of the school is a high priority. Religious Education is treated as a core subject and governors are actively involved in discussing standards. However, Religious Education still needs to link with progress leaders, in the same way as other core subjects already do, in order to further improve. The RE link governor has strong links with the Religious Education department and meets on a regular basis to discuss issues for improvement.

Governors are well informed and know the overall strengths and areas for development. They understand the challenges that the school is facing and provide both support and challenge to the headteacher. The governing body holds members of the Religious Education department to account effectively which will ensure continued improvement.

The headteacher, governing body, leaders and managers work together to ensure the school is a truly cohesive community which reflects Gospel values. There is a strong sense of belonging in the school and all are welcomed in a spirit of equality, inclusiveness and respect, and this is a strength of the school. The school has made excellent partnerships with partner primary schools and transition arrangements were judged by parents to be excellent.

Leaders and managers develop excellent partnerships to promote learning and pupils' wellbeing. The school works closely with Archdiocesan officers. Staff attend meetings and are encouraged to participate in Diocesan training, including the CCRS and CAREC courses. The support provided for non-specialist teachers is in place but needs to be more focussed on raising standards particularly at key stage 4. Regular planned meetings to discuss the progress of pupils against targets will ensure that all pupils achieve expected outcomes.

The Head of Religious Education has been in post for eighteen months and is working hard to ensure that the department is fulfilling its mission. Self-evaluation processes are developing in the Religious Education department but are not yet fully embedded. Department improvement planning identifies area for improvement accurately. However, this planning lacks rigour and does not identify measurable outcomes, or milestones well enough for pupils at key points to ensure they achieve expected outcomes.

Nearly all parents who responded to the Questionnaire agreed that they are completely happy with their child's Religious Education and with the Catholic life of the school. Parents and carers feel valued and listened to and appreciate the way that issues or concerns are dealt with. Parents also commented on the caring ethos of the school and its good reputation in the local community.

Appendix 1

Responses to parent questionnaires

- 49 parents/carers completed the parent questionnaire.
- Nearly all were completely satisfied with all aspects of the school.
- Nearly all parents/carers are happy with the values and attitudes that the school fosters and are made to feel welcome in the school.
- Most also believed that the school sought their views and concerns and took them into account.
- Nearly all parents and carers believed that the school gave them a clear understanding of what is taught in Religious Education and nearly all agreed that the school enabled their children to achieve a good standard of work in Religious Education. They were also happy with the help and guidance available to their children and believed that the school enabled their children to develop spiritually through prayer and worship.
- Most parents and carers believed that the school kept them well informed about their children's progress in Religious Education.
- Parents and carers stated that they chose St Richard Gwyn Catholic High School because of its Catholic teaching, discipline and reputation in the local community. Some parents and carers had themselves been educated at the school. What they found distinctive about the school was the inclusive atmosphere, its caring approach and that their children achieved. They commented that St Richard Gwyn is a 'school with a difference'.

Appendix 2

Evidence base

- The school's self-evaluation report and school improvement plan.
- Meetings with the headteacher, head of Religious Education, school chaplain, key stage 3 and 4 Progress Leaders, ALN co-ordinator and mentoring co-ordinator.
- Meeting with the vice-chair of governors.
- Lesson observations.
- Scrutiny of planning and assessment.
- Scrutiny of pupils' work.
- Attendance at school assemblies.
- Attendance at tutor time.
- Discussions with pupils.
- Parent questionnaire returns.
- A meeting with parents.