



Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection report for **Brownedge, St Mary's Catholic High School**

URN: 119784

Carried out on behalf of the Title. Right Rev. Bishop John Arnold, Bishop of Salford on:

Date: 9th-10th November 2022

Overall effectiveness The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school.....	2
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 curriculum requirements laid down by the Bishops' Conference	✓
The school is fully compliant with all requirements of the diocesan bishop	✓
The school has responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection	Fully

Summary of key findings

What the school does well

- The pastoral provision is exceptional and is founded on the schools' mission that is lived and permeates the whole school
- There are extensive and varied opportunities for students to give witness to their faith through acts of collective worship and service to the most vulnerable in society
- Chaplaincy provision is embedded and is at the heart of developing students' and staff personal and spiritual growth

What the school needs to improve:

- To close the gap between the performance of Religious Studies and other core subjects in the school

This Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection was carried out under canons 804 & 806 of the code of canon law. For maintained schools and academies in England it fulfils the statutory requirements of s.48 of the Education Act 2005. For maintained schools and academies in Wales it fulfils the statutory requirements of s.50 of the Education Act 2005.

- To take the opportunity to adapt and improve schemes of work and resources in Religious Studies as the new 'Religious Education Directory' is finalised by the Bishops' Conference.
- To further develop the explicit signposting of Catholic Social Teaching, already embedded in religious education and SMSC provision within the wider curriculum of the school

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:.....

1

Pupil outcomes

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

1

Provision

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

1

Leadership

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

1

Students clearly understand they are part of a Catholic family whose core values come from Jesus. They embrace this, value it highly and actively contribute. For example, the GIFT (student chaplaincy) team supports a thriving chaplaincy provision, with lunchtime Lectio Divina and pastoral welcome and support, as well numerous other groups such as Alpha, SVP, Cafod and Laudato Si'. There is exceptional readiness to take on roles of leadership, responsibility and service resulting in a strong community that reflects the diversity of St Mary's. Students are extremely respectful and their faith in action is exemplified by extensive fundraising and a real sense of respect for those of diverse backgrounds and faiths. This is underlined by the work of the student Equality and Diversity group and the aspiration to become an international Green Flag Award Eco-school. Catholic Social Teaching is embedded within SMSC provision, evident in plentiful charity work and increasingly evident within curriculum progression models. Students give excellent feedback to leaders and readily speak of Gospel Values and Catholic Social Teaching. Chaplaincy provision is extensive, embedded and resources created are accessible and facilitated personal encounters with Jesus, spiritual growth and progress in individual faith journeys.

Stakeholders are fiercely proud of the school's mission, which is *'Let your light shine'*. This is underpinned by five core values; courage, kindness, patience, hope and justice. These values are lived out, permeate the school and are exemplified by strong positive relationships resulting in a united and joyful community. Weekly high-quality resources make the week's Gospel more accessible for staff and the delivery is quality assured by heads of House. Commitment to leading the mission is absolute, with a genuine buy-in from all staff, including those who are not Catholics. One staff member stated, *'As someone who is not Catholic, the school does an amazing job of supporting staff and giving us the opportunity to participate in prayer and reflection'*. The school is extremely welcoming, and the sense of community is palpable, reflecting the importance of the Benedictine heritage the school has evolved from. Staff have excellent relationships with students

and as a result they are trusted and asked questions about their own faith journeys, providing opportunities for witness. Pastoral care is exceptional, and a large effective pastoral team shows detailed knowledge of, and commitment to, vulnerable students. Wall display have been designed in-house and is rooted in faith and scripture, celebrating St Mary's Catholic identity, promoting love, acceptance and encouragement. The relationships and sex education curriculum, called *'Learning for Life'*, complemented by drop down days, is grounded within the Catholic faith and is based on the *'Ten:Ten'* programme.

Leaders, including governors, are committed to the Church's mission in education and could proudly articulate how it shaped decisions and the school vision. The termly newsletter, *'Shining Lights'* is an excellent example of celebrating the community's success. Policies and practice are rooted in Gospel values. For example, the PoD [*Path of Damascus*] is a Christ-centred restorative programme based on forgiveness and renewal. Diocesan links are strong and the school has established itself as a 'Laudato Si' hub with creative use of outside spaces highlighting the ecological responsibility and growing food to feed the more vulnerable in society. Experienced governors have appropriate skills to challenge and are ambitious. Their ethos committee provides strong direction, holds leaders to account and evaluates provision. The staff workload working party demonstrates staff are valued by leaders. Leaders' self-evaluation is honest and they have the capacity to implement comprehensive plans. Recognising post-Covid 19 challenges to students' pastoral and social development they brought in external expertise to build resilience in Year 9. This was received positively by the students who demonstrated great openness, respect and trust in their participation. Annual Ethos staff training days are meticulously planned, focus on scripture and are at the heart of staff formation. The senior team draws its strength both from practical experience and reflective study, including experience in many Catholic schools, CCRS study or MA in Catholic Schools Leadership.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade:.....

2

Pupil outcomes

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education.....

2

Provision

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

2

Leadership

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

2



Student outcomes are generally comparable with other core subjects. A dip in GCSE outcomes in 2022 however, is being addressed by leaders in school, including a new religious education subject leader. Evidence from key stage four students' books show that the curriculum intent is followed and that there is appropriate challenge. The focus is on boys' attainment and the progress of the more able. Tracking of these groups' progress is evidenced. Lesson visits and student voice show students are developing a good understanding of the content of the Religious Education Directory and are well prepared, from an early stage, for the vocabulary and concepts they will encounter at GCSE. In most lessons visited, students used scripture well, were challenged to elaborate on their responses and to draw on knowledge from prior learning. Students are generally positive and in the better lessons, well-structured planning allowed appropriate opportunities for both individual work and group work. Work scrutiny, at both key stages, shows curriculum intent being followed and covers key religious concepts. The vast majority of responses from the parent survey states that students enjoy learning in their religious education lessons. Assessment practices allow teachers to identify gaps in knowledge that informed future planning and intervention.

Teachers' subject knowledge is good and teachers are very committed to the relevance and importance of religious education as a core subject. The quality of teaching observed was good overall. In most lessons observed, high expectations provided suitable challenge and in the better lessons observed, questioning was excellent, leading to deeper reflection and engagement. Students were usually very confident in their responses. Quality assurance of teaching and curriculum implementation is less well developed. However, the new, but experienced, religious education subject leader has coherent plans in place to drive forward the department. Classroom relationships are affirming and based on mutual respect. This creates a positive environment where students are unafraid to ask questions and were appropriately praised for their participation,

particularly when students linked their studies to their lives. The school's approach to the concept of the Catholic Curriculum, where non-RE subjects showed the connection with the Catholic life and mission and gospel values, was commendable. For example, in English, the Church's concern for refugees was integrated with the choice of literature and the way it was taught. Spiritual and moral development is integrated throughout the curriculum and, consistency is achieved through common materials. High quality resources are mostly created internally to ensure they meet student needs, are consistent and align with the teachers' own specialisms.

Key Stage 3 curriculum plans are mapped against the Religious Education Directory and at Key Stage 4 all students are entered for GCSE Religious Studies. Religious education has parity with other core subjects and curriculum allocation meets the 10% expected time and increases to 12% in Year 11, demonstrating commitment to its centrality. Scrutiny of students work showed that the subject has the same systematic demands and rigour as other subjects. Religious education is line managed by the deputy headteacher, which gives it status. Both the religious education subject leader and teachers are knowledgeable and enthusiastic about their subject and understand the importance of religious education within the wider curriculum. The subject leader has identified areas for further development and the subject improvement plan is based on robust and honest self-evaluation. The Year 11 improvement plan has developed and lesson plans include a strong awareness of the needs of particular students in the group. Questioning is sensitive, and teachers seek to help the students move forward from their answers on difficult and challenging concepts in ways that will support their progress. Students are encouraged to think for themselves and can speak in their own words about what they learn in religious education. Enrichment opportunities are extensive, including retreats, diocesan training and visits to Wardley Hall. Collectively these support student's faith journey.

Collective worship

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

Religious education key judgement grade:.....

1

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



Student participation and conduct in liturgical celebrations is exemplary. They reflect on worship experiences and speak of them in an articulate way. Some have come to faith through school experiences, others speak of continuing to develop what they have learnt and enjoyed at school as they move on to college and beyond. In essence, students find the school's ethos inspiring. Acts of worship follow the liturgical year and include wider national commemorations, for example Remembrance services. Careful commentary ensures that the Gospels taken from the Lectionary are understood by the students. Chaplaincy work affects every area of school life, and the students constantly bear witness to this. Student leadership opportunities are varied and extensive; groups include those mentioned above and others, such as Rainbows, a group to support those suffering from bereavement. These opportunities give young people the confidence to be active in other areas of school life, and in their lessons. A local primary headteacher stated that *'formation of the children is strong, and faith is lived and breathed'*. This epitomises the culture of the school.

Carefully planned prayer and liturgy are embedded and central to school life. Students engage at all levels of planning and execution and they respond enthusiastically to the invitation to lead prayer. Indeed, this is a normal part of form time, where students often write their own prayers as well as lead prayers. All students, not just those who are Catholic, are able to participate. Prayers frame the beginning and end of each day, and weekly sessions explore in depth the Gospel from Sunday Mass. Staff are creative and use music, meditation, art and silence in leading prayer, with senior leaders active in this. Biblical quotations link subjects to the Catholic ethos and excellent use of the visual arts expresses faith around the school. Each classroom has a 'sacred space', maintained in part by students, where their own creativity has a place. The chapel is a beautiful, dignified space that enables the celebration of Mass. Furthermore, it is enhanced by faith-based artwork where students have been involved in key choices. The parish priest is proactive, working with the Cafod

group, supporting the confirmation process and inviting local parishioners to partake in the recent vocation day at school.

Encouraging students to get involved, take responsibility and to lead is central to the school's strategy for collective worship. They learn skills by participating, and this gives them confidence to try new things. Some already show considerable potential for further leadership in their ministries of service and caring, or their discussion groups, and they look forward to college and beyond as providing them with other opportunities to develop their skills. Leaders systematically evaluate collective worship and are refreshingly honest in their self-evaluation. The lay chaplain ensures that Holy Days are celebrated: SS Peter & Paul saw the Chaplaincy Team and other students involved in Mass at the parish church. Mass is celebrated with each Form as part of the school's welcoming approach, and there is good liaison with the parish over Confirmation. The lay chaplain also promotes the importance of reflection and uses this to make effective use of professional development. The lay chaplain leads on the formation of students as they seek to develop their own ministries through the groups on offer. More widely, all students get the opportunity to lead House assemblies through their Forms, and to take part in leading worship and prayer in their own tutorial groupings. Chaplaincy provision is outstanding, creative, and multi-faceted. Students engage as co-workers with staff in serving their peers in Chaplaincy because they are well supported, trained, and confident in leading, for example, Lectio Divina. The lay chaplain continually develops her skills, with the support of senior leaders, to ensure both creativity and fidelity in the liturgy offered and stated that *'just as Jesus interacts with people, this school walks with the children'*.

Information about the school

Full name of school	Browndedge, St Mary's Catholic High School
School unique reference number (URN)	119784
Full postal address of the school	Station Road, Bamber Bridge, Preston, PR5
School phone number	01772339813
Name of head teacher or principal	Nicola Oddie
Chair of governing board	Frances Fordyce
School Website	www.st-maryshigh.lancs.sch.uk
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	N/A
Type of school	High
School category	Voluntary aided
Age-range of pupils	11-16
Trustees	Salford Diocese
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	17 th November 2014
Previous denominational inspection grade	Good

The inspection team

Sheldon Logue	Lead inspector
Daveth Frost	Team inspector
Name of inspector	Lead/team
Name of inspector	Lead/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