

DIOCESE OF LANCASTER EDUCATION SERVICE

INSPECTION REPORT ON THE PROVISION OF DENOMINATIONAL EDUCATION

School name: Christ the King Catholic Maths and Computing College
 Address: Lawrence Avenue, Frenchwood, Preston
 PR1 4LX
 Unique Reference Number 119781
 Name of Headteacher: Mr A D Perry
 Date of Inspection: 22 -26 June 2007
 Name of Inspector: Mr A Slade
 Type of school: Catholic Secondary
 Age range of pupils: 11 - 16
 Number on roll: 450
 Appropriate authority: The Governing Body
 Chair of Governors: Mrs J Allen
 Head of Religious Education: Mrs M Routledge
 Date of previous inspection: May 2002

| The inspection judgements are: | Grade | Explanation of the grades 1 = Outstanding 2 = Good 3 = Satisfactory 4 = Inadequate |
|--|-------|--|
| Overall effectiveness of the college | 2 | |
| Leadership and management of the Catholic life of the college | 2 | |
| The quality of Collective Worship | 1 | |
| Religious Education - Achievement and standards | 3 | |
| Religious Education - Quality of provision | 2 | |
| Religious Education - Students' needs and interests | 2 | |
| Religious Education – Curriculum leadership and management | 1 | |
| <i>The following pages provide reasons to support these judgements</i> | | |

Information about the school:

Christ the King is a voluntary aided comprehensive Catholic School and is a specialist Maths and Computing College. It has a standard admission number of 120. 37% of the pupils are baptised Roman Catholics, 16% are from other Christian denominations and 34% are from other world faiths. There are 38 teachers 42% of whom are Roman Catholics. It serves mainly the Preston parishes of St Augustine, St Ignatius, St Joseph, St Teresa, St Walburge and St Wilfrid and the majority of pupils are from the primary schools linked with those parishes.

The social background of pupils and their attainment on entry is very wide with a significant proportion from areas of social and economic deprivation and almost half from minority ethnic groups. Some are at an early stage of learning English. There are 122 pupils with special needs provision of whom 20 are statemented. 34% of pupils qualify for free school meals (well above the national average).

Overall Effectiveness of the school

Christ the King is a **good** Catholic school with many outstanding elements. Its Mission Statement was recently re-written The Statement's essence is "to love another as I have loved you" and it goes on to state that "we strive to develop a community in Christ which supports all in achieving their potential, spiritually, academically and personally." Very rapidly it has become embedded in the school's policies and aims.

Improvement since the last inspection

Following the last Section 23 report in May 2002, all the recommendations have been acted upon. There has been a thorough review of Eucharistic celebrations. Collective worship is monitored (within a framework of exceptionally high standards of delivery). There have been meaningful courses and meetings which have enhanced the professional development of the RE staff and widened the experience of pupils in matters of faith and justice.

Capacity to improve

The school's self-evaluation is **good** and this is confirmed by inspection. The documentation of the school has a realistic assessment of the current situation and a clear methodology for future improvement and development. The Religious Education Department documentation is wide-ranging with many excellent ideas in these respects.

What the school should do to improve further:

- Raise standards of attainment at Key Stage 4 by adopting procedures which will enable Religious Education to be delivered with maximum flexibility, **and** by means of:
- The Religious Education Department ensuring that examination success is maintained as a focus throughout Key Stage 4.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

The leadership and management of the Catholic life of the school are **good**. The leadership team is fully committed to fulfilling the Catholic aims and purpose of the school. The mission statement was recently revised after widespread consultation and is now fully rooted in all aspects of school life – particularly aspects relating to the pastoral welfare of pupils, and a policy of inclusion where forgiveness and reconciliation play a key role. For these reasons, there has been the appointment of a lay chaplain, a priority given to the RE department and especially the delivery of outstanding collective worship. School policies on matters such as sex education are in line with the teachings of the Catholic Church. The non-Catholic staff and pupils are viewed very positively and valued for the contribution they can make to a variety of faith and cultural issues. Hence they are fully integrated into school life. The governors are supportive: they have a well-informed and enthusiastic chair who has had long and warm-hearted contact with the school. The Governors' Pupils Support Committee is another way in which they not only keep themselves informed but are able to celebrate the positive achievements of pupils. They attend many of the functions and services at the school. There are very good relationships between pupils and staff and with each other. Evidence of this is seen in remarks of so many people that they saw the cohesion and friendliness as one of the school's greatest strengths. The school shows great concern for those who are struggling – personally or academically – and help is readily given from many sources, formally and informally, as well as the use of many strategies. The use of internal exclusions is a reflection of the school's inclusion policy. There is a positive policy in regard to issues such as bullying. Pupils can exercise responsibility through the school council which makes a positive contribution to school life. There is a lay chaplain who plays an active role in the school's liturgical and pastoral life, supported by a chaplaincy team. He is undertaking further training, particularly in regard to behaviour management. Additionally, the school enjoys the co-operation of many local priests. There is some good parental support as shown by the replies to the parental questionnaire. "Faith and Justice days" are another means of underlining the school's Catholic life. The chaplain is involved in organising these and there are outside speakers from many and diverse local centres and services, coupled with workshops for exploring issues further.

The pupils are very generous in their attitude towards others. They support the work of CAFOD (partly through a Fair Trade stall) and thanks in part to their efforts a nursery school has been built in Pemba, Zambia (also named "Christ the King") and it is hoped to maintain links with it. They observe family fast days and have a very popular talent show as a means of raising money. They wrote to the Prime Minister to urge the cancelling of world debt and they helped to fund a student physiotherapist working with landmine victims in Cambodia.

THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

This is an **outstanding** feature of the school. The school has a beautiful and centrally located chapel. It is used for a different house assembly each day. The support and delivery of daily worship is quite exemplary. Thanks to hard work by the chaplain and others, all the daily house tutor assemblies include prayers and readings for the day (they are planned for a period at a time but adjusted as required weekly). These are supplemented by a picture electronically displayed and this provides a focus for the meditation. Pupils are often involved and the whole experience is very meaningful. All the prayers, readings and pictures are delivered via the tutor's laptop, though copies are delivered earlier in a beautiful folder. In this way, the liturgical seasons and special days are celebrated whilst retaining a variety of style and content. It would be hard to find a better system. The themes are predominantly Catholic, but use is made of Muslim and Hindu prayers. Staff briefing starts with a prayer and thought for the day, led by different members of staff. There is a weekly voluntary Mass each Wednesday (celebrated by local clergy on a rota and attended by local people and governors) and a Eucharistic Service each Friday. School Mass is celebrated on special occasions (start of the year, Holy Days) and attendance is voluntary: this has resulted in a more meaningful experience for those attending. There are special celebrations for Carol Services, Easter, Faith and Justice Days and school leavers. Recently the school held the celebration of the baptism and first Holy Communion of two of its pupils. The chapel is also used for meetings with the chaplain, for "time-out" and by the RE department when pupils are taken there for lesson-time meditation. Each half-term there is a staff meditation held there. The prayer-life of the school is systematically monitored. The role of the recently appointed chaplain is very significant and the appointment has had a positive impact on the prayer life of the school. His role is also linked with the pastoral welfare of pupils. Year 7 pupils attend a day retreat and community building exercise at Brettagh Holt. There are youth events held in the school, organised by the Diocesan Youth Leader. The school has a good collective worship policy which links with its Mission Statement.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION - ACHIEVEMENT AND STANDARDS

The achievements and standards in Religious Education are **satisfactory**. All pupils are entered for either GCSE or the Certificate of Achievement and this is very admirable. In 2004, 44% of those pupils entered for GCSE obtained grades A* to C and 87% obtained grades A* to G. In 2005, this was 43% and 92% respectively. In 2006 this was 51% and 87%. These results are below the national average and somewhat below the results for other major subjects in the school as a whole. The percentage of boys with these grades is marginally lower than that of girls. The difference is such that it is a matter which should be monitored but is not a major concern. In the last three years, all those pupils entered for the Certificate of Achievement passed, many with distinction or merit, except for two who failed. For administrative reasons, some pupils have been allocated to an inappropriate teaching group and there is no flexibility for them to be re-allocated. From September 2007, the department will be able to exercise setting in Key Stage 4 and this should have a positive impact on results. At the same time there is a need for the department to adopt a higher focus or profile towards examination success. There is a commendable policy to ensure that pupils learn the excellent topics in RE for their personal welfare. There is a system of study support and the department organises revision periods, but it would do well to introduce a conscious element of examination requirement throughout Key Stage 4. Progress in Key Stage 3 is monitored in line with the diocesan and national attainment targets of the Bishops' Curriculum Directory. There are exceptional standards of internal moderation. Pupils are aware of the levels they have attained and receive advice on what they need to do to improve. Pupils speak highly of their RE – they particularly value those lessons which they see as relevant and challenging. They appreciate the varied style of teaching, especially some high quality debates, thanks to the professional awareness and competence of the teachers. Progress and attainment are also assisted by very good standards of behaviour seen throughout the inspection period.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION - QUALITY OF PROVISION

The quality of provision for RE is **good** with some outstanding features. The school observes the Bishops' curriculum directive to allocate 10% curriculum time to RE. The head of department is a senior post within the school's staffing structure. The three RE rooms are well resourced with wide access to ICT a well used facility – even homework and extended work are available on the RE web pages. There is a wide variety of attractive and up-to-date books. All RE is taught by specialist and well qualified RE teachers. There is an outstanding Department Support Assistant who provides invaluable clerical and research and practical assistance thanks to her additional qualifications, enthusiasm and organisational skills. All are fully committed to providing high quality teaching within the framework of a pastoral knowledge and concern for all the pupils. The department is cohesive and aware of current developments. The teaching observed during the inspection was invariably of a good standard, some of it outstanding. Lessons were well planned, delivered confidently and suitable work produced for pupils of varying ability. Teachers attracted the interest of pupils who thus made good progress. A variety of teaching styles was observed: discussion, empathy work and independent research. One pupil remarked *"I like RE because we can really express our opinions – but we have to think about them."* Pupils were studying topics such as suffering, marriage, Hindu gods and the life of Mohammed. There was a very good "atmosphere for learning" – calm, reflective and mixed with good humour – further enhanced by good quality relationships. This high quality classroom practice is not fully reflected in the examination results. Good independent and group work and extended, thoughtful writing were observed. Many pupils show real pride in their work. Marking is up-to-date and the use of target/level stickers enables pupils to know what quality of work they have produced and what they must do to progress. There is excellent display work in and out of the classroom – again the Support Assistant ensures that these displays are kept up-to-date and include pupils' work.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION - STUDENTS' NEEDS AND INTEREST

The needs and interest of students are provided for in a **good** way. The schemes of work are in line with the Curriculum Directory, meet national and local requirements and have been recently adapted to meet the needs and interests of pupils. Full use is made of the diverse faith background of pupils, building upon awareness that many of them have little or no religious background. Relevant contemporary issues are fully addressed, including prejudice and discrimination, human rights and personal relationships. These are popular with the pupils but teachers handle them carefully and sensitively. There is a thorough teaching of the basics of the Catholic faith: the sacraments, spiritual and moral teachings. At the same time, diversity of faith background of pupils is used wisely to enhance the lessons. This has beneficial results as one pupil said, *"I think that there are no racial issues at this school and it's largely thanks to the RE."* The religious education department makes a good contribution to the spiritual and moral and cultural development of students. These issues and studies are enhanced by means of theatre trips to plays such as "To Kill a Mockingbird" and to Liverpool Catholic Cathedral. Thirty pupils represented the school at the Diocesan Mass at Lancaster Cathedral.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION – CURRICULUM LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the religious education department are **outstanding**. The head of department gives outstanding leadership by means of her example, knowledge and enthusiasm. She has produced excellent documentation and aims which harmonise with the school's documentation. She is well-informed and up-to-date. She stimulates excellent team work. The members of her team are dedicated and share their ideas and expertise. Their style reflects that of the head of department: they are anxious for pupils to progress well but have a real awareness of the needs of pupils. She and the rest of her team are good role models. Their style includes high quality lesson preparation and delivery. There are regular department meetings. Monitoring and evaluation of teaching is systematic and robust. The departmental development plan is good. The department has obtained learning resources which are up-to-date and well used. There is a good team spirit and this is another of the strengths of the department.

Full use is made of the many qualities of the Departmental Support Assistant. The department has the financial and philosophical commitment and support of senior management as shown by their positive response to the issue of setting in Key Stage 4. The department enjoys the enthusiastic and informed support of the governors, thanks especially to the dedicated chair of governors.