



Archdiocese of Birmingham

Section 48 Inspection

BISHOP MILNER CATHOLIC COLLEGE

Part of the St John Bosco Catholic Academy

Burton Road, Dudley, DY1 3BY

Inspection date	6 th -7 th June 2017
Reporting Inspector	Paul Nutt
Assisting Inspector	Ben McArdle

Inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

Type of College	Academy
Age range of pupils	11-18 years
Number on roll	821
Appropriate authority	Board of Directors
Chair of Governors	Tracy Causer
Telephone number	01384 816600
E-mail address	info@bmilner.dudley.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	20 th -21 st February 2012
DFE College Number	332/4800
Unique Reference Number	140126

Headteacher	Steve Haywood
--------------------	----------------------

Previous inspection:	Good
----------------------	------

This inspection:	Good
------------------	------

Evidence

- The inspection was carried out by two Diocesan Inspectors.
- The focus of the inspection was on the quality, leadership, and impact of the college's provision of Catholic life, collective worship, and religious education (RE).
- The inspectors observed teaching across six RE lessons to evaluate the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Some of these observations were conducted jointly with senior leaders.
- The inspectors completed a work scrutiny and held discussions with pupils to evaluate their understanding of Catholic life, worship, and the impact of teaching on their learning over time.
- Meetings were held with the chair of directors, the principal, the person in charge of Catholic life of the college (PICCLS), the RE subject leader, the data manager, the priest chaplain and lay chaplain.
- The inspectors attended a class Mass and four tutorial sessions, and undertook a learning walk to look at aspects of learning and teaching, the presentation of the Catholic life of the college and pupils' behaviour.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of documents including the college's self - evaluation, data about pupils' attainment and progress, RAISEonline, the college development plan, as well as the RE and chaplaincy development plans, and a range of policies.

Information about the college

- Bishop Milner Catholic College is a smaller than average, oversubscribed secondary college. The closest church is St Peter's, Lower Gornal. The college also serves the parishes of St Chad's, Sedgley, St Joseph's, Dudley, and St Mary's, Brierley Hill.
- The college has a higher than average number of pupils from minority ethnic groups, but the number of pupils speaking English as a second language is below the national average.
- The percentage of Catholic pupils is currently 47%.
- The percentage of disadvantaged pupils in the college is close to the national average.
- The college has a lower than average number of pupils receiving support for special needs.
- Attainment on entry, from a range of Catholic and non-Catholic feeder primary colleges, shows wide variations. Baseline assessments are used to identify needs for targeted classes and individuals, and interventions are developed to address these and secure good progress.
- Since the last inspection, the college has become part of the St John Bosco Catholic Academy.
- The current lead practitioner in RE was previously second in the department. They are leading the subject on a temporary basis for this academic year. A permanent appointment has been made for next year. A new chaplain began their ministry in January when a lay chaplain was also appointed.

Main Findings

- The Catholic life of the college is good with some outstanding features, notably the strong personal witness of the principal to the college's Catholic mission. This commitment to Catholic education is supported by senior leaders, the acting lead

practitioner for RE and the academic committee. The college's drive towards outstanding Catholic life and collective worship has been further enhanced by the recently-arrived priest chaplain and lay chaplain.

- Provision for collective worship is good and it is clearly a part of the college's daily life and routine. The lay chaplain has recently extended opportunities for prayer and worship. They provide daily prayer resources for teaching staff to use with pupils, and daily access to the college's chapel. Pupils respond to opportunities for collective worship quietly, demonstrating respect and reverence.
- The quality of RE teaching and learning is good. The acting lead practitioner of RE is well supported by senior leaders and they have a clear vision for the subject. Although there have been significant staffing challenges throughout the present academic year, pupils' attainment has remained good. This is due in large part to the flexibility and dedication of the core members of staff in the RE department.
- Leadership of all aspects of college life is good. There is evident commitment to the mission of the college shown by college leaders and the academic committee, and a determination to continue the drive towards raising standards and improving on previous best. However, there is a need for greater rigour in the academic committee's challenge to leadership. More emphasis should be given to the evaluation and interrogation of information presented to them, and assessing the impact of the college improvement plan.
- The college has made two teaching appointments for September which will ensure consistent delivery for all RE classes by specialists. Leaders have appointed a permanent lead practitioner for RE for the new academic year.

THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE COLLEGE

Catholic life, collective worship and spiritual, moral and vocational development: provision and outcomes

- The Catholic life of the college is good, with outstanding features. Collective worship is also good.
- An inclusive ethos pervades every aspect of daily life, and is evident immediately on entry to the college.
- Moral development is obvious in the pupils' growing mature sense of right and wrong. They articulate clear links between the college's values, their personal beliefs and behaviours, and understand the consequences of the choices they make. Pupils feel very safe and valued, and they appreciate the strong pastoral care they receive from staff.
- The spiritual dimension of the curriculum supports opportunities for growth in an awareness of God and the importance of faith. Pupils experience the presence of faith integrated within other curriculum areas. In science, for example, prominence is given to celebrated scientists of faith. These opportunities encourage pupils to be reflective and enquiring.
- Working closely with the college priest chaplain, college leaders are creating an extensive programme of opportunities to support pupils' spiritual and moral development. Many of these have the Eucharist at their centre, such as weekly adoration and a planned day of adoration. The priest chaplain has also led a number of voluntary sessions, outside of lessons, reflecting on issues that both challenge pupils' thinking and develop their faith; for example "Where was God in Auschwitz?"; and for younger pupils "Why Mary?"
- Behaviour, conduct and interpersonal relationships at all levels are of the highest order. New members of the college community, both staff and pupils, speak with enthusiasm and gratitude of the inclusive welcome they received. For example, a non-Catholic pupil who joined the sixth form felt able to approach senior leadership

and suggest college support for Save the Children, a suggestion which was welcomed and adopted.

- Pupils take on responsibilities and participate constructively in the Catholic life of the college, including beyond routine lessons and activities. For example in the development of the mission statement and engagement with charitable works.
- Pupils' views and opinions, through pupil voice and questionnaires, are taken into consideration when evaluating the college's provision for Catholic life. They welcome these opportunities to contribute, which make them feel valued.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of vocation and how it relates to the mission of the college and the Faith. They learn about selfless service to God and neighbour, and this impacts very positively on career choices and charitable actions within the community. This was clearly evident in the college community's response to the recent tragic death of a pupil. Prospective sixth form students are invited to consider the vocational potential for studying RE at A Level, in combination with Law and other disciplines, leading to a range of career possibilities beyond sometimes more limited perceptions.
- Pupils know that they are called to use their God given talents in a life of service, as reflected in the college motto. Consequently, they are eager to take part in acts of charity such as fund raising for CAFOD and food banks, taking part in a sponsored 24-hour Lenten fast, supporting the annual Christmas party for local senior citizens and accompanying the sick on pilgrimage to Lourdes.
- Catholic Christian virtues and values are displayed around the college and are incorporated into classroom practice and planning for tutorials. Pupils' understanding of their importance is developing, and they feel ready and able to express their own views and beliefs within the secure environment of the college.
- There is overwhelming parental support for the Catholic life and ethos of the college, as shown in their responses to questionnaires. They value the college's communications with them, for example through newsletters and the website.
- Collective worship is good. Worship has a regular place in the daily life of the college, and all pupils feel included. They respond appropriately with quiet attention and reverence, and many make an active contribution to the opportunities offered.
- In the Mass celebrated during the inspection, the chaplain outlined direct links with English, the subject it replaced for the day. This relevance proved very engaging for the pupils, some of whom were involved in readings and bidding prayers, all of whom behaved with quiet reverence. The chaplain plans to sustain such curriculum links in future class Masses.
- Planning for collective worship is thorough. A chaplaincy development plan has been produced which is regularly monitored. Pupil numbers in the chaplaincy team are growing. It is too early to determine the lasting impact that this will have, but progress so far is encouraging. Pupils' benefit from chaplaincy work would be further enhanced if they led and took responsibility for the evaluation of their work, and contributed towards the chaplaincy development plan.
- The pupil's contribution to the prayer life of the college is evident in their heartfelt prayers posted on the chapel prayer wall. Some pupils have expressed their desire to prepare and lead their own acts of worship more regularly.
- Opportunities for worship have been further enhanced since the arrival of the college chaplain. These have included the introduction of the Sacrament of Reconciliation for pupils across the college. The college has successfully provided opportunities for staff and pupils to take part in retreats in the past and they plan to repeat a similar programme of events. This will heighten the spiritual development of the whole college community even further.
- The college has supported the spiritual development of Year 6 pupils from within the MAC through a joint service of Reconciliation with Year 7 pupils.

- Recently arrived staff in a range of disciplines speak well of the support and guidance they have received in providing collective worship with pupils. Many feel confident in using the resources developed by the lay chaplain in their daily tutorial sessions. These resources provide a good structure and suggested content for collective worship. When used at their best, they also link to Catholic Christian virtues and values, include different forms of prayer and time for reflection.
- Staff would now benefit from training about how to adapt these resources to meet the specific needs of individual tutor groups. This would ensure greater consistency in the high quality of form collective worship.
- The college has identified that music led by pupils in Mass, and assemblies where appropriate, would enhance collective worship even further.

LEADERSHIP

Leadership of Catholic life and collective worship

- Leadership of Catholic life and collective worship at all levels is good.
- Leaders and academy representatives demonstrate commitment to the mission of the Church and place it as a priority of the college. They ensure that the wider curriculum is broad and balanced. As a result, pupils develop well spiritually, morally and most noticeably in their understanding of vocation.
- The principal bears strong witness to the Catholic faith and the mission of the college. He is given dedicated support by other senior colleagues in pursuing the vision of the college and the Church in realising a community of faith that is inclusive for all. As a result, all members of the college family feel safe, secure and valued.
- The Catholic life of the college and its collective worship are a clear priority in planning and daily activities, as witnessed by the appointment of and support for the lay chaplain. The college ensures that the Catholic faith is well taught, that there is respect for other faiths, and that there is a link between faith and action. Charitable works are correspondingly good, frequent and varied.
- There is robust and energetic leadership for Catholic life, and members of the team work well with other leaders. The current sharing of the PICCLS role with the leadership of RE has been reviewed by college leaders and these two roles will be carried out by separate practitioners in the new academic year.
- Systems are managed by the lay chaplain to ensure that Catholic life and collective worship are thoughtfully planned, delivered and monitored. Strategies for evaluating impact and informing subsequent improvement planning more formally should now be developed.
- Leaders conduct a range of monitoring activities relating to provision and outcomes of Catholic life and worship, and their analysis provides a firm basis for accurate diagnosis of the college's strengths and areas for development.
- To continue the development of Catholic life and collective worship, leaders should consider how to further develop pupils and staff spiritually, giving them greater opportunities for personal prayer and reflection.
- Governors have a good knowledge and understanding of the college, its aims and mission, and support and defend them well. They visit the college regularly, and report formally about their observations. At present, this reporting is more descriptive than evaluative. Presentations are made to the full committee meetings about the Catholic life and collective worship of the college. However, the rigour employed by governors when holding the college to account in its evaluations of Catholic life and collective worship and subsequent improvement planning now needs to be increased.
- Governors fulfil their statutory and canonical responsibilities well, with the exception of general RE provision in Year 13.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Leadership, outcomes from and provision for religious education

- RE in the college is good overall, though some groups have not made expected progress.
- The current lead practitioner of RE is fully committed to ensuring the best provision and outcomes for all pupils. There is a clear vision about how to move forward, and there is strong, consistent support from the college's senior team.
- There is a scheduled, half-termly programme for monitoring and evaluating RE. This comprises a data trawl four times annually, learning walks and lesson observations conducted by senior leaders three times a year, and themed work scrutiny (eg extended writing) at departmental level. Outcomes are shared with staff, linked to appraisal, and reported regularly to parents.
- Outcomes are strong in Key Stage 3, with pupils securing consistently high levels of attainment. The college's internal monitoring predicts this attainment will be sustained for 2017. The academy committee have undertaken an extensive exercise in testing the accuracy of teachers' predictions of pupil outcomes.
- Attainment in Key Stage 4 is broadly in line with national averages. The attainment of pupils eligible for free college meals (FSM) is good: this group of pupils attain higher than non-FSM pupils, which is the opposite of national trends. Non-FSM pupils' attainment is significantly below the national averages and attainment overall is below diocesan averages. Raising attainment overall should be a priority for the department.
- All progress measures in Key Stage 4 are broadly in line with national averages and represent a reasonable level of success for the college, though pupils overall and groups of pupils have not made better than expected progress under any measure. Like attainment, improving the progress of pupils to above national averages is a realistic aim for the college.
- Attainment at Key Stage 5 is good.
- Teaching within RE lessons is good. Lessons are well planned. They include an appropriate range of tasks that meet the needs of pupils' and they provide appropriate levels of challenge. RE is well resourced, and teachers use a range of learning strategies, including pair and group work.
- A good range of questioning is well used by all staff to ensure that students are able to fully access the curriculum. However, higher level questioning could be used more consistently throughout the department, to ensure that all pupils are challenged to substantiate religious beliefs with evidence and reasoning, and to evaluate contrasting views.
- Learning is most effective when teachers use pupils' responses and ideas to challenge their preconceptions in order to further their knowledge and understanding of the Faith and its application.
- There is a comprehensive marking policy within the department. When it is used accurately and consistently, there are clear benefits to pupils' learning. Although work is regularly marked by staff and pupils are given next steps to complete these are not always followed up.
- The department has developed its own level descriptors, which have been shared with parents.
- There is currently provision for general RE in Year 12 but not in Year 13. The college is aware of the failure to meet this recommendation from the Bishops' Conference. There are firm plans in place for the next academic year to rectify this.
- Uptake at A Level is very good and has been broadly sustained. There are provisionally 30 students for September and the college is aspirational to increase this number further.

Recommendations

In order to improve the college should:

- Adapt collective worship resource materials to meet the needs of individual tutor groups, and allows pupils to plan and organise their own acts of worship.
- Increase the rigour employed in governance when holding the college to account in its evaluations of Catholic life and collective worship and subsequent improvement planning.
- Monitor and evaluate plans to ensure effective provision for RE at Post-16 level.
- Improve RE outcomes at Key Stage 4 to exceed diocesan and national averages.