

THE DIOCESE OF SHREWSBURY

**All Hallows Catholic College,
Macclesfield**



URN No : 111458

5th & 6th July 2011

**Report on the
Inspection of Denominational Education**

Lead Inspector: Mr John McCann

Link Inspector: Mrs Pat Barker

**The inspection of the denominational education of
All Hallows Catholic College, Macclesfield,
was carried out at the request of the Governors of the School
in fulfilment of their obligation under the requirements,
and according to the directives of, the School Inspections Act 2005.
The school was inspected within the framework
approved by the Bishop of Shrewsbury
for the conduct of inspection of the denominational education of
Catholic Secondary Schools within the Diocese.**

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

DESCRIPTION OF THE SCHOOL

All Hallows Catholic College is a larger than average 11-18, voluntary aided, coeducational comprehensive school. The college is under the trusteeship of the Diocese of Shrewsbury and within Cheshire East Local Education Authority. The college draws students from a large number of parishes and serves a wide geographical area. Students are drawn in the main from partner primary schools including five Roman Catholic schools, a shared Roman Catholic-Anglican faith school and an Anglican primary school at the request of the Diocese of Chester. The college has specialist status in business, ethical enterprise and languages. There are 1110 students on roll of whom 204 are in the Sixth Form. 62% of the students are baptized Catholics with 29% from other Christian denominations and no students are currently from other World Faith traditions. The percentage of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is lower than average; the proportion of students with a statement of special educational needs is much lower than average but increasing. The proportion of students known to be entitled to free school meals is lower than average. There are 74 members of teaching staff (including 11 part-time) of whom 37% are Catholic and 63% from other Christian denominations.

The college holds a number of nationally recognized awards including the Artsmark Gold, International Schools Award, Inclusion Quality Mark, Fair Trade School, Excellence in Enterprise Education, Sportsmark and ICTmark.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

GRADE 1

All Hallows is an outstanding Catholic college with a strong sense of Christian community and successfully lives out its mission, "aspire not to have more but to be more." The Governors, headteacher and senior leaders ensure that its Catholic mission and purposes drive all aspects of the life and work of the college. The core values identified by the college, drawn from the Gospels, are evident in planning, policies, procedures and relationships. Provision for collective worship is outstanding with the emphasis towards student ownership. Student achievement and progress in Religious Education has been good and is now outstanding. Leadership and management of Religious Education and Catholic Citizenship (RECC) are also outstanding and are key strengths of the college.

CAPACITY FOR SUSTAINED IMPROVEMENT

GRADE 1

The college has an outstanding capacity to sustain improvement because review, evaluation and reflection are part of the culture of All Hallows. Monitoring and planning for the further development and strengthening of its life and work as a Catholic college are rigorous and embedded. The Head and senior leadership team are well supported by staff at all levels in demonstrating exemplary levels of personal and professional commitment to the college's Catholic character and purpose.

The college has responded positively and effectively to the two areas identified in the Section 48 Inspection of 2008:- continue to increase student participation in planning activities, participation and evaluation in the prayer life of the college: further develop target setting in RE in dialogue with the students. This has been confirmed through student interviews, examination of planning sheets, RECC student assessment records, 'student voice' surveys and staff questionnaires.

The capacity for sustained development is evident from the detailed and thorough RECC Self-Evaluation. Quality statements are supported by strategic plans for development and identified improvements. The document is linked to whole college initiatives, which targets improvement within realistic timescales.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT

- Continue to work in collaboration with partner feeder schools to secure maximum transfer of students.
- Review the time allocation to curriculum Religious Education in KS3, to ensure it explicitly meets the Bishops' Conference level of entitlement.
- Make Levels of Attainment descriptors in RECC available to parents and students in KS3 to enhance the rigorous assessment and reporting structures already in place.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF THE CATHOLIC LIFE AND ETHOS

GRADE 1

Leadership and management of the Catholic Life and Ethos of All Hallows are outstanding.

The College is driven by the Headteacher's dynamic and inspirational vision for All Hallows to be a Catholic learning community in which everyone is valued and the search for excellence flows from this. He is passionate in articulating his vision which energises every aspect of the college's life. He and the other senior leaders work with enthusiasm and dedication to translate this vision into a lived daily experience for students and staff alike. Five core values underpin the work of the college; honourable purpose, respect, compassion, cooperation and stewardship. These informing values are known and understood by all staff and students alike. Students are able to talk about the college's vision and values, referring freely to the guiding principle 'Aspire not to have more but to be more.' Students speak of college as being a 'welcoming, inclusive community'. This view was mirrored by all who were interviewed and experienced by the inspection team. New staff and students felt welcomed, respected and supported. Newly appointed staff appreciated the induction programme the college provides and in addition all newly qualified teachers attend the diocesan induction course to which All Hallows makes a strong contribution. The behaviour of students in and out of class as well as in whole year assemblies is outstanding. During lessons the college is calm and settled with a purposeful atmosphere. Students are friendly, articulate, outgoing and helpful and as the Chair of Governors described "the College's greatest strength – they epitomize everything the college is".

The college's 'Spiritual, Social and Ethical Enterprise Team' makes an excellent contribution to the life of the college and is a significant strength of All Hallows. The team consists of approximately 10 voluntary members of staff representing a range of faculties including the performing arts and RECC as well as members of the Senior Leadership Team under the direction of the chaplain. The strength of the team is its flexible approach to planning and the sharing of skills and expertise. The team prepares liturgies to celebrate the major seasons of the liturgical year with the support of priests from the parishes. A number of residential retreat programmes are offered each year covering six of the year groups. In interviews students were very positive and valued the retreats mentioning their visits to different centres. The retreat programme is fully supported by the college, and pastoral teams. Year 10 and 12 students help to lead students from partner primary schools in a retreat day held in the college. Students are well motivated to achieve through the opportunities to extend and enrich classroom activities and through contributions to the community. Students' merits are linked to the concept 'Pay it forward' and making a difference to the wider world. The reward system is also linked to local firms who make donations to the college's named charities on the basis of merits achieved.

The College Council is valued and appreciated by the students who believe it has a voice and is listened to. The students believe the behaviour policy is fair and effective. Sixth Form students take responsibility for monitoring student behaviour on college buses and regard this as a natural extension to the role they have in the college, acting as role models for younger students. Students spoke positively about the role of the SENCO, teaching assistant staff and the staff in the 3R (Reflection, Reconciliation, Reform) area in the college as being there to support all students. The structure and delivery of care, guidance and support through the SEN Department and the 3R Centre are strengths of the College and add significantly to the inclusive nature of the Catholic life of the college and living its mission. Students have pride in themselves and show respect for the college environment. The work of students and their achievements in and out of the college is celebrated throughout the building with high-quality displays.

The promotion of community cohesion is outstanding. The College undertakes wide-ranging social interaction and fundraising projects at local, nation and international level working for the common good. The college community is linked to many projects local and international e.g. The Catholic Children's Society, The Well Spring Centre and Cafod. The college has also raised large sums to support the building of a clinic in Tamil Nadu, India working in partnership with the Presentation Sisters. Four students accompanied by staff will visit the clinic later in the year for its official opening. The RECC curriculum promotes community cohesion through its focus on knowledge and understanding of other World Faith traditions to some extent in KS3 but particularly in Key Stage 4, together with its emphasis on Catholic Citizenship through Gospel values in all Key Stages. In Collective Worship themes are inclusive of current affairs, issues and moral dilemmas.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

GRADE 1

The provision for and quality of Collective Worship is outstanding. There are weekly themes focused on the Liturgical Calendar and published focused topics. Year group prayer and worship takes place once each week and form groups gather daily. The themes are thoroughly planned and supported with relevant and well presented materials, which are prepared by the Chaplain whose role is defined as Leader of Spiritual Learning and Catholic Social Enterprise. He plays a key role in both arranging and supporting the liturgical life of the college. He is also involved in a weekly outreach to feeder primary schools. Students have opportunities for a practical involvement, especially in Year Assemblies, which they value. The students entered the Hall respectfully and with a sense of purpose. The focus on screen was matched to an activity of the week which was Sports Day and a student delivered the presentation well. The Head of Year directed the remainder of the assembly which gave opportunity for personal and shared reflection with a 'shoulder partner' and feedback. The prayer was reflective and encouraged students to recognize God's presence in their lives. Within form time the practice is less consistent and the quality of the experience offered to students and the opportunities to actively participate are more variable. The college is working hard to ensure more consistent practice. Some excellent practice was observed whereby staff related the provided prayer/thought for the day to personal college life and experience and made very valuable links to appreciating the difference our actions can make in the lives of others. Mass is celebrated in college and at St Alban's Parish Church on Holydays. Two forms each week attend the local parish mass which is celebrated in the school chapel. In interviews students were enthusiastic about collective worship, whole school masses, and especially the residential retreats.

Many opportunities exist for staff to engage in prayer and reflection. During Lent and Advent staff meet in the well-appointed chapel in briefing time one morning a week for staff prayer led by a different faculty each week. For the past three years the college has developed and leads a one day retreat for staff with the focus on personal reflection, prayer and spirituality. This practice is highly commendable.

ACHIEVEMENT AND STANDARDS IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

GRADE 1

Achievement and standards in Religious Education are overall outstanding and a major contributor to the colleges academic standards. The subject is core in every sense. End of Key Stage 3 figures (Y8 the college runs a shortened KS3) for summer 2010 indicated 67% achieving Level 5, 21% Level 6. In 2011, 70% Level 5, 27% Level 6. The faculty has achieved above the national average in KS4 and been one of the leading faculties in the College. GCSE results have shown a consistently high achievement. In the last three years the Y11 rolling average is 75% of entry achieved gaining A*-C with 33% of year gaining A*-A. These figures remain above the national average and also above the College target. Over the last three years at least 98% of entry have achieved a GCSE grade. In the Sixth Form Religious Studies there is a 100% pass rate at A2 grades for 2010 with 83% of entry gaining a A*-B grade.

In Key Stage 4 all learners undertake GCSE over two years in Y9 and Y10 following Edexcel Catholic Christianity, and Christianity and Islam course. In year 11 students have the option of a short course in Catholic Citizenship and philosophy of religion. A vertical AS option has also been introduced into Y11 for more able students. In the Sixth form the AS/A2 course in Religious Studies is a well-established. At present 24 students across the Sixth Form study Edexcel Philosophy of Religion and Ethics.

High standards in class focus on the capabilities and starting points of all learners. Standards are supported by the continued rise in the quality of teaching and learning, together with structures and systems to support quality assessment. A significant contribution is made by the positive attitude of the vast majority of learners in class. For most students their enjoyment of RECC is obvious and they are further motivated by the enthusiasm of the staff. Relationships between students and staff are outstanding and are firmly rooted in mutual respect.

TEACHING AND LEARNING IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

GRADE 2+

On the days of inspection six ninety minute lessons and one forty-five minute lesson were observed and in the main the quality of teaching and learning was good with many outstanding features. Outstanding lessons were observed in each Key Stage. Teaching is organized, well structured and creative. Full use is made of a common methodology used by all staff. A small minority of lessons still require development of activities that will address the needs of the more able and maintain pace throughout. Within the faculty there is a wealth of experience and expertise that is readily shared. The overall quality of learning is exemplified by both interactive and independent activities that the students readily engage in. There is effective differentiation provided through careful planning, teacher-led presentation, choices of activities and by outcome. Students are confident and engaged in their learning.

There was a consistently high level of display in all specialist RECC rooms. Some displays reflected whole college approaches to learning techniques. Display work covered each Key Stage, as well as key words and prompts to improve the quality of work produced. The work of students was displayed and celebrated. All teachers used ICT confidently and appropriately to support and reinforce learning. There could be the opportunity to display descriptors of Key Stage 3 National Levels of Attainment to enable students to more easily realise their performance against national criteria.

Procedures for assessment are well defined within the faculty and adhere to the whole college expectations. The RECC faculty assessment policy includes formative (4 occasions during the year), matched to national levels of attainment in Key Stage 3 and end of task activities matched to the whole school assessment scheme. Within Key Stage 4 and the Sixth Form assessment is against the accredited course marking scheme as well as the whole school marking policy depending upon the task set. Assessments provide evidence that students are challenged to explain, show understanding and to defend their judgements and opinion. Some excellent examples of formative marking and annotation of learners work was observed. The vast majority of work is being marked according to the marking policy. When given, comments are predominantly diagnostic and developmental especially in KS 4 and 5. Many students' written work show high standards of presentation. The content matches the frameworks of study. There is clear knowledge and understanding of key vocabulary and concepts. Effective tracking of progress includes learners' evaluations. Assessment outcomes are supported by detailed reporting and meetings with parents and carers so ensuring a high level of involvement in the education of their children. This is evidenced through parents' questionnaire returns and comments.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF THE RECC FACULTY

GRADE 1

The leadership and management of the RECC faculty are outstanding. The subject is at the core of Catholic Life of the College. Until recently the faculty was led by an Assistant Headteacher who is also Head of Sixth Form. The faculty is line managed by the Headteacher who is himself a former Head of RE. They have a clear shared view of the role of Religious Education within the college and the steps needed to make further improvements. This view is shared by the recently appointed Head of Faculty who was part of the college's RECC team of specialists.. The Headteacher greatly values and appreciates the work of the Faculty and its academic and pastoral impact upon the life of the college. The Assistant Headteacher has provided high quality management and coordination within the department. The faculty has a clear understanding of its strengths and the areas for future development which can be evidenced in the Faculty Self Evaluation Form.

There are four full time specialist staff who deliver the curriculum plus 5 staff who make a contribution; four in KS3 and the Headteacher to the general RE programme in the Sixth Form. Two of the KS3 contributing teachers are members of the senior leadership team which adds significantly to the strength and depth of the team. Together they are an active, committed and high profile team, which accounts in part for the status and success of the subject within the college. Systems for performance management are well embedded and documented. The process includes peer observations of teaching, and detailed monitoring of assessment to enable sharing of good practice and continued professional development.

The curriculum is well managed and coordinated. In Key Stage 4 and 5 the allocation is explicitly at or above the Bishops' Conference requirement of 10%. At KS3 due to the flexible arrangement of some of the timetabled activities care needs to be taken that the full entitlement is achieved. Regular and careful monitoring will need to be in place so that all aspects of entitlement at KS3 are met through the curriculum. The curriculum in each Key Stage is excellently supported by text and ICT resources, in most cases prepared by, and shared within, the department. Equal opportunities are promoted through the continued development of teaching and learning and by learners' access to accredited courses. Consequently the curriculum makes a strong response to diocesan and national requirements. It provides a significant contribution to learners' spiritual and moral development.

Governors monitor Religious Education through the Faculty Annual Review and some by their own active participation in College life. The promotion of the Catholic ethos of the college forms an element of the Headteacher's performance management. A number of the local parish priests are making a significant and valued contribution to the Catholic Life of the College. In addition many governors are well informed and rooted in the understanding of the faith dimension of the RECC Faculty and its contribution to the overall Catholic Life of the community.

INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Key to judgements: Grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory and grade 4 inadequate	Judgement
---	------------------

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

How effective is the school in providing Catholic Education	1
The school's capacity for sustained improvement	1

OUTCOMES FOR PUPILS

How good outcomes are for individuals and pupils	1
How well pupils achieve in Religious Education	1
pupils standards of attainment in religious Education	1
the quality of pupils' learning and their progress in Religious Education	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the School	1
How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship	1

THE QUALITY OF PROVISION FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

How effective the provision is for Catholic Education	1
The quality of teaching and purposeful learning in Religious Education	2+
The effectiveness of assessment in Religious Education	1
The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum meets pupils' needs	1
The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school	1

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic Life of the School	1
How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils	1
How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils	1
The extent to which the governing body provides effective challenge and support for the Catholic dimension of the school so areas needing development are addressed decisively and responsibilities met	1
How effectively leaders and managers promote community cohesion	1

Results of Parental Questionnaire – 108 responses

Question	Strongly Agree %	Agree %	Disagree%	Strongly Disagree%	Don't Know %
My child enjoys College	38	59	3		
I am happy with the values and attitudes that the College teaches	58	41			1
I am made to feel welcome in College	59	38			3
The College seeks the views of parents/carers and takes account of their views and concerns	34	58	3		5
The College gives me a clear understanding of what is taught in Religious Education	41	50	4		5
The College enables my child/ren to achieve a good standard of work in Religious Education	58	40	2		
The College keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress in Religious Education	49	47	2		2