



Catholic Diocese of Wrexham.

## **Report following an Interim Monitoring Visit**

**St. Richard Gwyn Catholic High School, Albert Avenue, Flint, CH65JZ**

Level of Follow up:

This report is focused on the progress made against the recommendations and findings since the Denominational Inspection under Section 50 in May 2016.

Date of Visit: 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> December 2017

Reporting Inspector: Mr. John Wilbraham.

## Outcome of the Monitoring Visit

St. Richard Gwyn Catholic High School is judged to have made very good progress since the last inspection in May 2016 in successfully addressing all recommendations. From the findings of this visit, the school is judged to be on a confident path of improvement as a Catholic school.

The monitoring visit included the analysis of data, documents and policies, students' work, lesson observations and visit to the school's collective act of worship. The Head Teacher, the Chair of the Interim Executive Board (IEB) were interviewed, as were key leaders, managers, the school Chaplain, and two panels of students.

The school has made significant and rapid progress in addressing the key recommendations. This includes transforming many aspects of governance, leadership, management and curricular provision, whilst also developing further, aspects of chaplaincy, prayer and collective worship and moral and spiritual development. The school clearly has accepted the challenge and with a common vision, has set in place effective and sustainable systems which are embedded. These are producing positive outcomes and are embedded in practice at all levels.

### **Progress against the Main Recommendations.**

#### *Recommendation 1.*

*Leaders, managers and governors should develop more rigorous monitoring and evaluation of the academic standards and outcomes across the curriculum in Religious Education*

There has been very good progress in addressing this recommendation. This has been achieved in several ways; through the establishment of the Interim Executive Board, its rigorous and regular review; through the impact of new Head teacher, supported by the staff at all levels; particularly, by the assistant head teachers. A senior staff member is assigned to religious education and chaplaincy and there is a curriculum leader for religious education. New systems have been established which provide regular review and intervention; revised assessment and marking policies are effective and consistent; half termly 'support and challenge' meetings have made a significant contribution to raising standards and there is sharing of successful methods.

Examination results at GCSE in 2017 indicated positive progress, with an increase in grades at A/A\* and the meeting of FFT 20 targets (69% A\*-C). The department has revised their monitoring and assessment strategies at AS and A level, in order to improve the ALPS measure of performance in Philosophy, Ethics and Christianity.

#### *Recommendation 2*

*Leaders, managers and governors should regularly and rigorously review all aspects of assessment and levelling of work to enable consistency and meaningful, challenging target setting*

There has been very good progress in response to this recommendation. The curriculum leader for religious education reports on progress to the IEB. Data points are established within the Quality Assurance calendar requiring the department to undertake regular data analysis of performance. Intervention strategies are in place where data and work scrutiny indicate it is required. Half-termly support and challenge meetings are embedded as part of regular practice. The department's self-evaluation document and the improvement plan are regularly updated. Marking and assessment are delivered consistently across all key stages and are underpinned by documentation such as target sheets, level ladders and literacy and numeracy trackers. These are kept in the students' workbooks. There is good use of colour coding applied to assignments at AS and A level that is effective in helping students evaluate and improve their work.

### *Recommendation 3*

*Further develop assessment for learning in Religious Education so that it empowers students to improve the quality of their own learning*

There has been very good progress in response to this, in addition to strategies indicated in the foregoing responses. SMART learning is developing well in the department and books and assignment sheets indicate that students benefit from the process. There is evidence of tailored and differentiated learning opportunities and support for students, including effective support by teaching assistants. Regular standardization of work has ensured greater consistency in assessment and this gives the students more ownership of their work and progress.

### *Recommendation 4*

*Consider ways of further developing chaplaincy provision within the school to consolidate the work of the chaplain and chaplaincy team*

There has been very good progress in response to this recommendation. The priest who serves as the Chaplain, works in school on four days each week. This includes celebrating Mass twice each week and this is well attended. Mass is offered on special occasions and with other services and times for reflection. The Chaplain provides a significant, supportive presence within the school and the wider community. There is now a newly established Chaplaincy Team, drawn from all areas of the staff that meets regularly. This has been further enhanced by the commissioning in Advent 2017 of a Student Chaplaincy Team which works alongside the staff team. A full review of prayer and collective worship was undertaken in summer 2017 and many of the findings have resulted in the implementation of its recommendations which impact on daily policy and practice.

### *Recommendation 5*

*Ensure that students in all years receive the required curriculum time allocation for Religious Education specified by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales*

There has been strong progress in meeting this recommendation. All students have the required time allocation in key stages 3 and 4, while 'drop down' days make up a shortfall in the Sixth Form. In 2018-9 the required time allocation will be fully met.

### *Recommendations following on the monitoring visit*

It is recommended that the school maintains its focus on improvement and direction through regular review and clear ambitious aims as a Catholic school.

It should aim to raise the ALPS score to reflect performance at AS and A level and ensure that at GCSE, boys consistently reach their full potential.

The school should continue its highly effective integration of its religious mission within the whole-school planning and evaluation process.

This visit has rightly focused on the progress made against the key recommendations from 2016. It is fair to note there were many aspects of the school's provision which it does, and continues to do, well. The school provides a safe and welcoming environment, much appreciated by the students. Students behave well and show positive attitudes, a sense of responsibility and concern for the welfare of others. They appreciate and recognize the school's Gospel values. Under the school's leadership and governance, the school shows good capacity and confidence to improve further as a Catholic school.

---