

**INSPECTION REPORT**

**Loreto High School, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester, M21 7SW**

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Inspection date 18<sup>th</sup> March 2015

Reporting Inspector Sister Judith Russi  
Donna Kiernan

Inspection carried out in accordance with Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

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Type of School Catholic High School

URN 105574

Age range of pupils 11-16 years

Number on roll 750

Appropriate authority The Governing Body

Chair of Governors Mr Peter Cassidy

Head teacher Mr Peter Tite

Date of previous inspection April 2010

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<b>The Inspection judgements are:</b>	<b>Grade</b>	Explanation of the Grades
Overall effectiveness of the school	2	
The quality of Catholic Leadership	1	1 = Outstanding
The quality of the Word of God community	2	
The quality of the Welcome community	1	2 = Good
The quality of Welfare	1	3 = Requires Improvement
The quality of Worship	1	
The quality of Witness	1	
<i>The following pages provide reasons to support these judgements</i>		

## **CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT OF THE SCHOOL**

Loreto High School is a smaller-than-average-sized Roman Catholic secondary school and is affiliated to the Loreto International Family of Schools under the trusteeship of the Diocese of Salford serving a very diverse community, ranging from Chorlton-cum-Hardy, to Hulme and Moss Side; the latter districts having high levels of poverty and deprivation. The school is in the highest quintile for deprivation, mobility, SEN, Free School Meals are all twice the national average. The extent of the schools diversity places it in the highest quintile for Minority Ethnic at 55% and a high proportion have pupils with English as an additional language. Thirty five different languages are spoken in the school. This diversity is celebrated as a real strength and the relatively small size of the school helps to celebrate and ensure the school community is fully integrated and cohesive. 61% of the students are Catholic and 63% come from six partner primary schools of St John's, St Kentigern's, Our Lady's, St Wilfrid's, Holy Name and Divine Mercy. The remainder are 13% other Christian denominations, 7% Muslim and 8% no faith. 39% of the staff are Catholic and the whole Senior Leadership Team are practising Catholics. The school makes arrangements for a very small number of students to receive their education in pupil referral units away from the school site in Proctors, Manchester Settlements, Aim Vocation, Ed Start, Manchester Young Lives and Mersey Valley. The school meets the government's current floor standards.

## **OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL IS GOOD**

Loreto High School is a good school with many outstanding features. The ongoing rapid improvement is driven by the inspirational Loreto vision of education calling all to *'use their gifts and talents to make a difference both globally and locally; men and women of courage, who will challenge accepted notions and modes of society when they are at odds with the values for which we stand'*. The school has undergone many significant changes both to the leadership, staffing and environment since the previous inspection: all of which have made a major contribution to the upward trajectory of the school. The option for those in the greatest need is a priority and clearly articulated by the leaderships commitment of resources to ensuring that the many and diverse learning and development needs of all pupils are met to the highest possible standard. The vision and values of the Gospel and the Loreto community of schools, *'sincerity, excellence, truth, freedom, justice, joy, and internationally'* act as a living reference point for the whole community. The high levels of staff dedication and commitment to providing a place of learning which the local community can recognise as part of the realisation of a *'vision of outstanding local Catholic education from 4 to 18'* is inspirational. Results are in line with national averages and the school is heavily oversubscribed with three applications for each place.

## **KEY STRENGTHS OF THE SCHOOL INCLUDE:**

- The innovative and inspirational leadership at all levels within the school is outstanding.
- The relationships, behaviours for learning and warmth of welcome of the school are outstanding.
- The high levels of welfare and support for all pupils are outstanding.

## **THE QUALITY OF LEADERSHIP IS OUTSTANDING**

The outstanding leadership of the governing body is witnessed through their commitment to taking actions which have a high level of risk essential for the transformation of the school. Governors have a detailed and accurate understanding of their school and ensure that they are fully informed at all times. Governors visit the school regularly, meet with staff, and are involved in the formulation of departmental

SEF's. Governors monitor and evaluate performance, targets and progress at all levels. Subcommittees and annual validation meetings are used to hold the school and individual leaders to account. This gives Governors a depth of knowledge of the school and enables them to be thorough and effective in their decision making. Their role as 'critical' friend is much appreciated by the Headteacher. The appointment of a new Headteacher two years ago has ensured that the rapid progress of the school has been accelerated and will shortly be outstanding in all areas. Key to the successful leadership of the school is the rigour and accuracy of the leadership's monitoring and self-evaluation. A detailed monitoring calendar is produced each year which involves leaders at all levels evaluating performance using a variety of sources of data. A clear line management structure ensures that monitoring takes place, is accurate and feeds into school improvement. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is fully embedded across all areas of the curriculum and is well-mapped and coordinated by an outstanding Head of Religious Education. A culture of celebration of achievement and success permeates the school from the work of the staff wellbeing group and the weekly GEM award for staff who "Go the Extra Mile" to the celebration assemblies for students who have achieved highly or made the most effort. Student work and achievement in extra-curricular activities is prominently displayed around school, on the website, in newsletters and online, as are the achievements and rewards of each individual pupil. The school actively seeks ways in which pupils can take leadership roles such as the prefect system, pupil Chaplains, advocacy for justice and peace and Caritas Ambassadors.

### **THE QUALITY OF WORD IS GOOD**

The vision and leadership of religious education was found to be good and in many aspects outstanding. A new head of department was appointed two years ago and has been relentless in her transformation of the department, implementation of appropriate teaching and learning strategies, assessment for learning and the raising of pupil and teacher expectations. The leadership of the school is investing in training and ongoing development of all the RE staff to assist the rapid improvement and raising of standards across all key stages. GCSE results are improving with 61% achieving A\* to C in 2014 and a prediction of 74 % for 2015. Three members of the department are currently on the CCRS course. Teaching and learning was seen to be good with outstanding features. Marking and assessment clearly inform planning and pupils of their next steps for learning. The Loreto values are instrumental in promoting and informing SMSC education across the curriculum. Pupils were clearly able to make connections with their values and beliefs and respond to challenging questions of purpose and meaning in other areas of the curriculum. Parents were particularly appreciative of the spiritual and moral values which are *'really embedded in the children by the school'* Scripture is displayed throughout the buildings, in every room and walk way. Inspirational sayings from Mary Ward greet pupils and staff at every point in the school. The use and understanding of scripture is seen as every teacher's responsibility. The excellent practice by form tutors of the weekly sharing and discussion of scripture, focusing on the Sunday Gospel readings is well developed and appreciated. Engagement with the home and parish is seen as a high priority and the active involvement of over 50 pupils in liturgy, youth group activities and catechesis in the local parish bears testimony to the school's emphasis on preparing young people to be active in their local faith communities.

### **THE QUALITY OF WELCOME IS OUTSTANDING**

Welcome within Loreto is outstanding and unique. Members of the SLT meet and greet every pupil on entry into the school on a daily basis. Parents spoke of the warmth and sincerity of the welcome and assistance they received on arrival. As one parent said *"It makes no difference who you are here, we are all valued in the same way"*. Parent support and passion for the school was clearly evident as they spoke of the fact that regardless of the challenges and difficulties any pupil had *"everyone is important to Loreto"*. Structures and procedures for visitors are clear and well understood. Supply teachers receive a welcome pack which explains school procedures and the vision and values of the school. All

new staff are inducted into the Catholic life of the school and the Loreto charism, vision and values. Pupils go out of their way to engage with and welcome visitors. The dignity of the individual is built into all policies and is displayed prominently in the reception where a sign greets the visitor with '*you are sacred and unique*'. There is a real sense of joy throughout the school, Teachers and pupils were seen to smile easily and clearly enjoy being part of the school. Teachers actively welcome and greet each student at the door of their classrooms and are recognised by pupils and parents as clearly '*going the extra mile*' in order to help where ever it is needed.

### **THE QUALITY OF WELFARE IS OUTSTANDING**

A very high level of respect and care is shown by every member of the school community. The WWJD club and awards encourages students to be of service to others. The mission statement and charism of the school calls for an inclusive and outward looking concern for all. This is evidenced by the wide variety of activities and support given to outreach work and charities such as L'Arche, support for persecuted Christians, CAFOD, Cornerstones, and local projects for social justice. There is a well-established Justice and Peace group who campaign for social justice and the promotion of Fairtrade, toilet twinning; providing toilets in developing countries. The school has received the CAFOD award for Commitment to Social Justice, one of only two secondary schools to receive this award at the time. Concern for staff wellbeing is encouraged through the weekly GEM award and the annual staff wellbeing week. Behaviours for learning and the general manners of the pupils were seen to be outstanding. The school's safeguarding and behaviour policies and procedures are well established and clearly understood by all. An extensive anti-bullying programme has reduced incidents of bullying to a low level. Students and parents were clear in their appreciation of the fact that they feel safe at school. Pupils and parents spoke of the exceptional care for the most vulnerable pupils and the wide and personalised provision provided to support their needs and learning. In one case, the mother of a boy who joined the school after being permanently excluded from another school and spending time in a PRU thanked the school for "*giving her son back*" to her. There are weekly meetings of the school's own multi-agency team to ensure that the needs of the most vulnerable are met. The SRE programme has been developed and embedded into the RE curriculum over a number of years. Lessons are age appropriate and are taught in the context of Saint John Paul II's Theology of the Body and are modelled on the Called to Love scheme of work. A full time Parent Support Officer and the services of a Caritas family social worker assist parents to engage with school and to understand how to support their child.

### **THE QUALITY OF WORSHIP IS OUTSTANDING**

Prayer and worship throughout Loreto is seen as essential to the life of the community by pupils, staff and parents. The Senior Leadership Team, Head of RE and Lay Chaplain have developed a systematic, age appropriate and age related programme of prayer and worship which allows for all pupils and staff to find their place in it and where appropriate play a leading role. The development of prayer across the school is well embedded. Formation Tutors are provided with regular training and support to help them to lead the daily act of worship. The RE team email the Sunday Gospel with a meditation each week and a daily devotion for tutors to use. The chaplain also supports the delivery of prayer in formation groups and assemblies when required. Tutorial Periods (Formation time) are regularly monitored by the Raising Standards Leaders and this is reviewed by their line manager as part of the whole school monitoring calendar. Observations show that a high proportion of worship is student led and that acts of worship are varied, inclusive and relevant to the child and their age group.

There is a very high level of attendance at voluntary school Masses; over 100 students attending on average which is about 15% of the entire school. The local parish priests also offer the opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation during Lent and Advent. The leadership team and staff have worked hard over the years training students to be leaders in their faith, particularly with the Justice

and Peace group and the Student Chaplains who have undergone the Salford Diocese training; these play a role in leading liturgy in school. There is a newly formed Parents' Justice and Peace group which is part of the Friends of Loreto organisation developing prayer and social action among parents. Governors and the leadership of the school have invested considerable resources for the development of prayer and worship. The creation of a chapel to seat over 150 students and a small chaplaincy room have all been created despite the many obstacles presented by national funding regulations. The funding for Chaplaincy is generous and RE is funded in line with the other core departments.

### **THE QUALITY OF WITNESS IS OUTSTANDING**

The Loreto core value of 'sincerity' is very much at the heart of the school and this is encapsulated in Mary Ward's instruction to *'be such as you appear to be and appear to be such as you are'*. Loreto stands as a beacon of hope and inspiration in an area of high deprivation with a strong Catholic core of staff and students. The diversity of the community only serves to strengthen the school's witness to its core values and the centrality of Christ within the school. Chaplaincy is a real strength of the school and the significant investment in this area is having an outstanding impact on the life of the school. The investment by leadership of the school in the formation and training of all staff, identifies the Christian values and beliefs as expressed by Mary Ward, accessible to all members of the community. This is seen in the interactions between all members of the community: which show a deep understanding of the sacredness of the individual; in the commitment to social justice and the common good across the curricular and extra-curricular activities; in the full engagement in prayer and the sacraments; and in the core value of Joy which is seen in the Arts, Music, Sport and many additional activities seen in the school day. The formation of all pupils as active citizens with a strong commitment to the common good is central to the mission of the school. Pupils confidently witness to Christ and are happy to articulate their faith. The school day includes twenty minutes with tutors renamed "Formation Tutors" to emphasise their responsibility in helping to form the adults of the future. The 7 themes of Catholic Social teaching are evident across the RE curriculum and play a fundamental part in the formation of all pupils. All policies and procedures begin with the mission statement and an explanation how they are to be understood in the context of the core values. It is these values which have been at the centre of the rapid turnaround of the school.

### **AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT:**

- Continue the support and drive to raise standards in RE through a strengthening and further professional support for all the RE department as they continue their efforts to become the leading department of the school.
- Further develop the very good student leadership at both SLT and governor levels, through more regular presentations by pupils such as Pupil Chaplains, Pupil Council and Prefects.
- In order to take the school to outstanding at all levels, continue to develop higher order thinking skills and debate in SMSC education and RE.

March 19 2015

Dear Pupils

Thank you so much for the wonderful welcome you gave us when we came to visit you. Much of what is happening in your school is good and in many areas it is outstanding. This is because you are really striving to live up to your challenging values and vision.

Your work is of a good standard and in some cases it is outstanding. We could clearly see that you take your learning very seriously and are proud of your achievements. To help you even further your teachers are going help you develop your higher order thinking and critical analysis skills.

We could see that you can make connections between what you are learning in RE with other areas of the curriculum and your daily lives. Your governors and Mr Tite would like you to have more responsibility in leading in the Catholic life of the school and have the opportunity of sharing your ideas with the senior leadership team and governors so that they can discuss and explore your ideas in depth.

We were very impressed by many aspects of your school, by the wall displays in classrooms, your improving work, assemblies and prayer times but most of all it was the way in which you cared for and supported each other as a family learning together to be the people God has created you to be.

God bless you all.

Yours sincerely

Sr. Judith Russi  
Donna Kieran

(Section 48 Inspectors)

### **Summary Report to Parents**

On the 18 March 2015 the school was inspected in accordance with Section 48 of the Education Act 2005. The full report has been made available to the school and can also be accessed via both the school website and the Education section on the website of the Diocese of Salford.

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