



DIOCESE OF
SHREWSBURY

**REPORT ON THE
MONITORING INSPECTION
OF OUTSTANDING SCHOOLS**

**Upton Hall School FCJ
Upton, Wirral**

URN: 105115

1 May 2013

Inspector - Mr J Wilbraham

Q R - Mrs P Barker

The areas of focus in this monitoring Inspection were:-

1. OUTCOMES FOR PUPILS - How well students achieve and enjoy learning in RE.

2. LEADERS AND MANAGERS – How well leaders, governors and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school and plan and implement improvement outcomes for pupils.

3. PROVISION – The quality of Collective Worship

The school's Self Evaluation as outstanding in all areas is confirmed and following comments summarise findings in the key areas.

1. OUTCOMES FOR PUPILS

The standards of achievement in Religious Education are very high and significantly above average. Good progress is being made across the Key Stages. The students enjoy their learning and this was demonstrated by their interest and enthusiasm and behaviour, observed during the Learning Walk. Students actively seek to develop and improve their competence and skills. During the interview with students a Year 10 student keenly expressed how her learning has progressed within the smaller cohort in which she is now taught. A variety of resources and methods support highly effective teaching. A recently appointed Parent Governor who was interviewed described the RE Department as a "beacon of excellence within the school".

2. LEADERS AND MANAGERS

The leaders, governors and managers of the school are deeply committed to the Church's mission in education. This is evidenced by the way in which the FCJ values are embedded in the policies, practices and consciousness of the school community. The six core values identified in the Vision Statement of all FCJ schools are: - Excellence; Companionship; Dignity; Justice; Hope; and Gentleness. These values are constantly monitored and lie at the heart of the Head teacher's vision.

Evidence indicates that the Catholic life of the school is a priority and is developed within the partnerships fostered by the wider FCJ family of schools. Staff, governors and students understand the school's mission and purpose and are keenly and actively involved in their implementation. In interview, an ITT student confirmed that she thought that what was outstanding about the school was that it was a nurturing community where all were encouraged to develop their potential.

3. PROVISION

Collective Worship and prayer are an integral part of the daily life of the school, and involve pupil ownership and participation. Other activities such as the Faith Council and Retreat experiences enrich this aspect of school life. The worship and prayer activities reflect a clear indication of the Church's mission and include the spiritual aspirations and needs of the students. The assembly observed, reflected the school's core values in a creative and imaginative way. It was planned and led by students and was typical of the weekly assembly routine. The Form time prayer observed was deeply reflective and students and teacher were so engaged in the prayer that the presence of the Inspector went unnoticed for some time.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

Outcomes for pupils, the provision for Catholic Education, leadership and management in the development of the Catholic life of the school are all confirmed by this Inspection as outstanding.

Mention must be made in this report of the Interview with students. This was an extraordinary experience because of the open and wholehearted affirmation of the outstanding nature of this Catholic school. Students confirmed overwhelmingly that they were valued, supported and shown compassion. They felt loved and had a strong sense of community. One student remarked that life at Upton Hall was like - 'a home from home'. Another commented that – 'our teachers go beyond what is expected'.

IMPROVEMENT SINCE THE LAST INSPECTION

- KS3 Allocation – this facilitates excellent progress and standards
- KS4+5 Retreat – 6th Form Retreats to Kintbury have been re- introduced and in addition Day retreats are in the Calendar for all members of the 6th Form at a local venue, thereby ensuring that students across all Key Stages are provided with a retreat experience.
- Chapel and Chaplaincy Accommodation – This is on-going, and there have been attempts to address the recommendation in different ways. Currently it is provided for by the Faith Council which is made up of Staff and Student members, in addition to regular Collective Worship practices across the school.
- KS3 Levelled Tasks – Book scrutiny and pupil feedback confirmed that this recommendation had been met.
- Agreed Marking Policy – This had also been met as evidenced in the book scrutiny where clear feedback was given on how to improve, and learning targets set.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Continue to explore ways of developing the Chaplaincy provision in the school and in particular create a post for a full time Chaplain at the earliest opportunity.
- Continue to ensure that the timetable allows the entitlement of General RE for all Students in the 6th Form to be met.