

**DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION  
REPORT (Section 48)**

**on**

**THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL  
AND  
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

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**School:** Newman Catholic School

**Address:** Lismore Place, Carlisle, CA1 1NA

**Telephone Number:** 01228 404942

**Email address:** office@newman.cumbria.sch.uk

**School URN:** 112399

**Headteacher:** John McAuley

**Chair of Governors:** Mike Shovlin

**Inspectors:** Anthony Finnerty and Paul Wawszczyk

**Date of Inspection:** 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> October 2012

The inspection report is produced for the Rt. Reverend Michael Campbell O.S.A., the Bishop of Lancaster (c.f. Code Canon Law, 804, 806), and for the Governing Body of the school (Education Act 2005, Section 48). The inspection reviews, evaluates and plans further improvements in the school's witness to the Catholic faith and Curriculum Religious Education. This process begins with the school's own self-evaluation.

The inspection schedule follows criteria set by the National Board of Advisers and Inspectors.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Newman Catholic School is a smaller than average secondary school in Carlisle. It provides education for young people from 11 to 18. The school has engineering college status. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above the national average, and the number of young people with learning difficulties or disabilities is also above average. Pupils are mainly of White British backgrounds with pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds accounting for about 10% of the school population. The percentage of students joining or leaving the school at times other than the start or end of an academic year is greater than that seen nationally. Newman School has been awarded the Inclusion Charter Mark award.

## FACTUAL INFORMATION

### Pupil Catchment:

Number of pupils on roll:	603
Planned Admission Number of Pupils:	120
Percentage of pupils baptised RC:	36.0%
Percentage of pupils from other Christian denominations:	54.1%
Percentage of pupils from other faith backgrounds:	1.7%
Percentage of pupils with no religious affiliation:	8.0%
Percentage of pupils from ethnic groups:	12.1%
Percentage of pupils with special needs:	21.0%

### Staffing

Full-time teachers:	35
Part-time teachers:	5
Percentage of Catholic teachers:	45%

### RE Department Staffing:

Number of full-time RE teachers:	4
Number of part-time RE teachers:	0
Percentage of Catholic teachers:	100%
Percentage of teachers with CCRS:	25%

### Percentage of learning time given to RE:

Yr 7	8%	Yr 10	8%
Yr 8	8%	Yr 11	8%
Yr 9	8%		

### Parishes served by the school:

Our Lady and St. Joseph's	153	St. Bede's	86
St. Margaret Mary's	125	Christ the King	113
St. Augustine's	47	St. Edmund's	46
Others	33		

**Overall Effectiveness**

**3**

**Capacity for sustained improvement**

**1**

## **MAIN FINDINGS**

Newman Catholic School has a calm and welcoming atmosphere. The ethos is one of a positive and inclusive learning community where everyone is valued and everyone has a voice. The personal, spiritual, and emotional well-being of all its members is the central concern. The staff show great commitment and work hard to enhance all aspects of the school. Strong relationships exist at all levels. Pastoral care and guidance underpin the life of this community. The shared vision rooted in the school's distinctive nature results in a community that has a strong sense of its own identity and students who are safe, co-operative and happy. Blessed Cardinal Newman, the school patron, saw relationships as central to the process of teaching and learning; this wise vision is manifest in this school.

The school's capacity for sustained improvement in pupil outcomes is outstanding. Students are served well in this school and care is given to them as individuals. They know themselves to be respected and supported. Different learning needs are recognised and standards in Religious Education are increasingly good. The clear vision and the determination of senior leaders have led to thorough planning for improvement in the outcomes for students.

Leadership at Newman is good and is distributed throughout the school. The students' learning and well-being are the key focus of all leadership. Leaders and managers are proactive in making the necessary interventions to improve the classroom experience of students and the provision for Religious Education. Leaders and managers are open and honest and are informed by a shared understanding of strengths and weaknesses regarding the provision for Religious Education. This honesty, coupled with effective monitoring strategies, provides a strong capacity to improve.

The provision of Catholic Education is satisfactory and has some good features. Senior leaders and managers have acted decisively and effectively to create a strong and improving Religious Education department. Self-evaluation in this area is realistic and determined. Plans for improvement and further development are firm and carefully considered and therefore the capacity to improve is outstanding.

## **What the school needs to do to improve further**

- Provide the full time-entitlement for Religious Education in every year group.
- Provide regular retreat opportunities for students to deepen their engagement in prayer and to enrich the school provision of worship.
- Promote the development of intrapersonal, collaborative and independent learning styles and opportunities to continue the process of improvement in Religious Education.
- Provide spiritual and religious formation for staff to give them confidence in areas of faith and in knowledge of the mission of the Church, so that they can continue to engage effectively in the Catholic life of the school.

## PUPILS

### **How good outcomes are for pupils, taking particular account of variations between different groups**

3

Pupils generally work steadily, enjoy lessons and manifest positive relationships with staff and with each other. Behaviour is excellent. Learning is good at all key levels with correspondingly good outcomes in progress and attainment, but could be improved further especially by the development of more collaborative, intrapersonal and independent learning experience. At Key Stage 3, this is being put into effect with initiatives to allow for greater creativity in homework and in critical skills. The RE department has significantly improved pupils' learning at Key stage 4 over the last two years and the introduction of a new GCSE course has boosted motivation. Attainment in RE at Key Stage 3 and 4 is generally satisfactory with some good features. The department is working hard to reach its targets in GCSE at A\* and A and at A\* to C levels and recent results have confirmed its strategies in this respect. The school caters well for students with disabilities and those with significant educational needs who make progress in line with their peers. At Key Stage 5, the introduction of the Award of Religion in Contemporary Society is encouraging a higher quality of learning.

Students benefit by being at Newman and make a good contribution to the Catholic life of the school. Students' participation is encouraged through the Student Parliament, which plans and organises events. They are aware of the core values and teachings of Christianity. There is care and respect for Catholic practices and worship throughout the liturgical year. A Spiritual Development Group meets regularly to plan opportunities for students to participate in the spiritual life of the school. Care and concern for each other and for staff are apparent in behaviour around the school and pupils respond to the needs of people beyond Newman by supporting such charities as the Eden Valley Hospice, e.g. through sale of a cookery book, collecting for CAFOD and by supporting other agencies. The small community allows confidence to build, and seeing each person as having a unique vocation encourages individuals to flourish.

Pupils' engagement in Collective Worship is satisfactory with good features. Pupils behave respectfully in prayer and services and some pupils help prepare and lead in these situations. Daily prayer is mostly followed by all classes throughout the school. Pupils are aware of the seasons and feasts through the programme of assemblies and liturgical events. Whole school Masses are celebrated every half term and to mark special occasions. Although the response of pupils is largely positive, their involvement is underdeveloped. The chapel is used for prayer and reflection at lunchtime. Voluntary groups including a rosary group and a choir to assist at Masses are also supported by students.

## **LEADERS AND MANAGERS**

### **How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic life of the School**

**2**

Leadership at Newman is good and takes a variety of forms. There is a distributive model at the centre and this works effectively in conjunction with the strong sense of community. This model allows everyone to recognise the responsibilities that they have to each other and they are trusted to fulfil that responsibility. Newman has an ethos that inspires the whole community and underpins everything the school does. Middle leaders are encouraged to develop their skills and talents by internal secondments. A commitment to the Church's mission in education is implicit in the life of the school. Monitoring and evaluation processes are now robust and a clear direction for the future of the school has been articulated.

In the past three years, there has been significant improvement in use of data and in the establishment of increasingly robust systems of monitoring and evaluation. These systems are assisting the policy of ensuring that what is good (or example, the school's very effective informal systems) is maintained and what needs improving is developed so that the experience and the outcomes for students will continue to improve. Concern for individual students is rightly given high priority and systems are created and deployed to serve staff and students in their shared endeavour. Pastoral care and mentoring are embedded in the school's life and enrich the learning opportunities of many students in Religious Education.

The governing body demonstrates high levels of commitment. It provides leaders and managers with an appropriate balance of support and challenge. More involvement in the completion of the Section 48 self-evaluation form (SEF 48) would further enhance this. Efficient systems and close working relationships with senior leaders enable governors to identify the school's strengths accurately and areas for development. Clear systems to seek the views of parents, students and staff help to inform their decision-making.

The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting Catholic learning and pupil well-being is good. Links with feeder primary schools including meetings with RE co-ordinators, organising the "Top Link" sports festival and Newman student delivery of Spanish lessons, have encouraged the smooth transition of pupils from year 6 to secondary school. The school has developed contacts with the SVP and collaboration with local parishes is good. Positive relationships with other providers such as the One World Centre, the police and the courts have also been promoted to enhance pupil well-being. Priests from local parishes belong to the school chaplaincy team and many parents have close relationships with the school.

Newman is a school with a strong family ethos marked by concern, respect, reconciliation and support, which permeates the pastoral life of the school. The contribution of leaders and managers towards this internal community cohesion is outstanding. The Inclusion Charter mark is just one indicator of success. There are no marked divisions between different age groups, backgrounds or abilities; interaction between year groups is encouraged, for example, by Sixth-form reading mentors working effectively with younger students. The RE and Citizenship curriculum promotes an attitude of respect for all faiths and encourages mutual understanding and integrity which goes beyond the school grounds. Global links are fostered through cross-curricular themes. Parents help strengthen ties with the school through participation in various events. Pupils from varying backgrounds, whether social or national, and particularly the more vulnerable, are well integrated into the school.

# PROVISION

## How effective the provision is for Catholic education

3

The quality of teaching and purposeful learning provided in Religious Education is strong and never less than satisfactory. In most classes pupils will have well focussed and clearly paced lessons and will know what is expected of them. There is a good range of resources in the department. The classrooms are well equipped for a variety of learning experiences and new technology is employed as an effective support to teaching and learning. Relationships between pupil and teacher are consistently good.

The school has an accurate picture of pupils' achievement. Appropriate interventions are made to tackle underachievement. Pupils generally know how well they are progressing and what they need to develop further. Assessment systems in RE are secure and time is given for conversations which will lead to personalised guidance. Challenging targets are set and students are supported by routine feedback and by special intervention where necessary.

The RE curriculum has been developed to take account of students' needs. There have been bold and imaginative steps taken to ensure that the students are well served in this area. The amount of time scheduled for RE is not yet in line with the recommendations of the Bishops' Conference. Well-constructed schemes of work are in place for all key stages. The department has worked hard to incorporate a wider range of the active engagement techniques which students say they prefer and enjoy. At Key Stage 5 an innovative RE programme, using the Extended Project Qualification, has been trialled and is now embedded. RE plays a vital part in the religious, spiritual and moral formation of students.

Prayer and worship are given a high profile in the life of the school. The assemblies aim to be relevant and take into account the diverse backgrounds, ages and aptitudes of students. Daily prayer is well resourced and delivery is monitored. However, the quality of worship varies, particularly in tutor groups, and there is an over-reliance on adults. The disciplined environment in the school provides the necessary base upon which there is now great potential to build.



# SUMMARY OF INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

**Key for inspection grades:**

Grade 1 **Outstanding**

Grade 2 **Good**

Grade 3 **Satisfactory**

Grade 4 **Unsatisfactory**

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The school's capacity for sustained improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>PUPILS How good outcomes are for pupils, taking particular account of variations between different groups</b>	<b>3</b>
• how well do pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education?	<b>2</b>
❖ the quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
❖ the quality of learning for pupils with particular learning needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
❖ pupils' attainment in RE	3
• to what extent do pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school?	<b>2</b>
• how well do pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship?	<b>3</b>
<b>LEADERS AND MANAGERS How effective are leaders and managers in developing the Catholic life of the School?</b>	<b>2</b>
• how well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life of the school and plan improvement to outcomes for pupils?	<b>2</b>
• how well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for RE and plan for improvement to outcomes for pupils?	<b>2</b>
• the extent to which the governing body provides effective challenge and support for the Catholic dimension of the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory and canonical responsibilities met?	<b>2</b>
• how well leaders and managers develop partnerships with other providers, organisations and services in order to promote Catholic learning and well being?	<b>2</b>
• how effectively leaders and managers promote Community Cohesion?	<b>1</b>
<b>PROVISION How effective is the provision for Catholic Education?</b>	<b>3</b>
• the quality of teaching and purposeful learning in?	<b>3</b>
• the effectiveness of assessment and academic guidance in Religious Education?	<b>2</b>
• the extent to which Religious Education curriculum meets pupils' needs?	<b>2</b>
• the quality of Collective Worship provided by the school?	<b>3</b>