



## DIOCESE OF BRENTWOOD

### Denominational (S48) Inspection Report

**Name of School:** Trinity Catholic High School  
**Local Authority:** London Borough of Redbridge

**Inspection Date:** 20th January 2020

**Reporting Inspector:** Mr Tom Cahill (Lead Inspector)  
Mrs Judy Strong (Associate Inspector)

This Inspection was carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005 and 2011.

<b>Type of School:</b>	Secondary	<b>School Address:</b>	Trinity Catholic High School
<b>School Category:</b>	VA Comprehensive		Mornington Road
<b>Age range of pupils:</b>	11-19		Woodford Green, Essex
<b>Gender of pupils:</b>	Mixed		IG8 0TP
<b>Number on roll:</b>	1683	<b>Tel. No.</b>	020 8504 3419
<b>Appropriate Authority:</b>	The Governing Body	<b>Headteacher:</b>	Dr. Paul Doherty, OBE
<b>Date of previous inspection:</b>	10 <sup>th</sup> December 2014	<b>Chair of Governors:</b>	Mrs. Susanna Musiu

## Information about the school

Trinity Catholic High School is a large oversubscribed Catholic Comprehensive school situated in the London Borough of Redbridge and within the Diocese of Brentwood. As a Voluntary Aided school, it is maintained by the London Borough of Redbridge. The school serves a large number of parishes including: St Thomas of Canterbury, Our Lady of Grace and St Teresa of Avila, St Anne Line (South Woodford), St Edmund of Canterbury (Loughton), St Thomas More (Debden) and Our Lady of Lourdes (Wanstead). There are currently 1683 pupils aged 11-19 on roll including 477 in the very large sixth Form. 95% of the pupils are baptised Catholics and the majority of the pupils are of White British heritage whilst 40% are from ethnic minority groups. The prior attainment of pupils entering the school is broadly average and the school is able to attract a fully comprehensive intake even though there are selective schools nearby. The proportion of pupils with special needs with an EHCP plan (1.4%) is below the national average, as is the 6.3% of pupils entitled to free school meals. The school has successfully addressed the recommendations of the previous inspection in December 2014.

The school has achieved many accolades to recognise the excellence that pervades all aspects of the work of the school. These include: Beacon School Status, International School Award, Fair Trade Status, Healthy Schools, Altogether School Status and Youth Sports Trust.

## Key grades for inspection

1: Outstanding      2: Good      3: Requires improvement      4: Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of this Catholic school

## Grade 1

Trinity Catholic High School is an outstanding school and a beacon of high quality Catholic education. It has an excellent reputation in the local community and beyond and it is rightly seen as a flagship school for the Diocese of Brentwood. Pupils derive many benefits from being part of this flourishing Catholic learning community which is highly inclusive and where the Eucharist and prayer are at the centre of school life. They respond to the school's high expectations with excellent behaviour which reflects the love and respect they have for one another, strongly encouraged by the all-pervading Catholic ethos promoted by the school. This results in an exceptionally calm and safe environment where all pupils can reach their potential and develop a strong moral compass to guide them in their adult lives. They really are excellent and loyal ambassadors for their school and wear their uniform with a sense of pride.

The long serving and highly experienced Headteacher provides outstanding Catholic leadership to the school community. He is held in high regard and his unique vision of Catholic education is one which is widely shared and supported by all members of the school community. He is very well supported by a strong senior leadership team and indeed, all the staff, who are excellent role models for the pupils. The school has an experienced and effective governing body that supports school leaders but also provides the appropriate challenge to hold the school to account. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and clearly evidenced and an example of excellent practice. Leaders and Governors have correctly identified the many strengths of the school as well as the few areas that require improvement and are taking appropriate action to address these. The capacity of the school to maintain and further enhance as a Catholic school is exceptionally strong.

Parents are overwhelming supportive of the school. They spoke warmly of the care and support provided to pupils by the staff. They feel fortunate that their children are part of this Catholic family where everyone is valued.

## What the school should do to improve further:

- Keep the curriculum under review to ensure the amount of time allocated to Religious Education meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference.

- Continue the focus on transforming the quality of teaching in Religious Education leading to more outstanding teaching experienced by all pupils.
- Review the current practice of music and singing during Collective Worship so it further enhances the 'Catholic Life of the School' and spiritual development of the pupils.

## **CATHOLIC LIFE**

## **Grade 1**

Catholic life at Trinity Catholic High School is outstanding and is of the highest quality. The school has a distinctly Catholic ethos, as reflected in the excellent relationships between all members of the school community whether pupils or staff. As a result, pupils thrive in this safe and highly inclusive learning community. The behaviour of the pupils is outstanding which reflects the very high expectations of the school. They show great respect for one another and spoke warmly of their teachers and support staff who 'go the extra mile' to support them. Pupils and staff see the school as one large family where Christ's maxim that, "We love each other as we love ourselves", pervades every aspect of school life.

Pupils and staff are all clearly proud and highly value being part of this thriving faith community. This is also demonstrated by the care and respect they show to their physical surroundings which are bright, clean and maintained to a very high standard. This is a school which lives out its mission statement on a daily basis. The impact of this mission and ethos of the school can be seen in the large numbers of teachers and support staff who are past pupils. It is also reflected in the fact that around 80% of pupils choose to remain at the school for their Sixth Form studies.

Excellent pastoral care ensures all pupils are happy and feel safe and the wellbeing of each pupil is at the heart of the work of the school. Bullying is rare and pupils have every confidence that if they have any concern, the school will take swift action. Pupils are encouraged to support one another in many ways. Each year, the Headteacher selects and commissions peer mentors from each form known as 'Raphaelites'. They are tasked to support pupils in their forms who may be having difficulties to express their voice to pastoral staff and the Chaplain. The Headteacher meets each week with those whose birthdays are being celebrated and pupils very much value this personal approach. The latter reflects the very strong culture of praise and thanksgiving which encourages pupils to feel valued as individuals as well as members of the school community. Pupils also benefit from an extensive programme of extra-curricular activities including the Duke of Edinburgh programme, field trips and trips overseas such as the recent trip to Panama.

Pupils have many other opportunities to develop their leadership skills and to serve others as part of the school's vision to support the 'Common Good'. An excellent example of this is the work of the senior pupils known as the 'Guardian Angels'. They are tasked to support younger pupils in their own classes to help with reading and other classroom activities. A large number of pupils in the Sixth Form are involved in this initiative and very much value being able to give back something to their school community. They also have a strong student voice through their school council whose representatives are elected by their peers.

Pupils are also strongly encouraged to support those less well off than themselves, whether in the local community or further afield. Pupils have raised significant amounts of money for CAFOD and recently raised over £6,000 for Fr. Stan Fortuna's 'Mission of Hope' based in Canning Town and New York City. They also bring in food and clothing to support the local food bank, SVP hampers, as well as other charities such as St Mungo's, which supports the homeless. A highlight of the school year is the Christmas party senior pupils organise for pupils from St John's School which caters for those with special needs. Pupils have also participated as volunteers on the HCTP scheme to Lourdes.

Pupils also gain hugely from the school's "Discipleship Award Programme", which actively encourages all pupils to engage in the 'Catholic Life of the School'. The attendance of pupils at voluntary Masses and other liturgical celebrations is recognised by this award. Over 95% of pupils achieve this award during their time at the school. A number of senior pupils have also been commissioned to serve as Extraordinary Eucharistic Ministers at the school. Some pupils act as Liturgy Leaders whilst those who are Sacristans are paid the hourly rate of the 'London Living Wage' as part of the school's commitment to the 'Common Good' and supporting the Church's social teaching.

The quality of provision to support the 'Catholic Life of the School' is also exceptional. The school has 2 dedicated and consecrated chapels where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved and both play a central role in supporting pupils on their faith journey and developing their spirituality. The school has many beautiful icons and imagery both in the chapels and around the school, including outdoor areas, proclaiming its distinctive Catholic ethos. The school has many photographs and mementos dedicated to pupils and staff who have died so they are never forgotten and prayed for regularly.

The school also provides a number of opportunities for pupils to participate in retreats, including a trip to Aylesford Priory, as well as visiting other places of worship such as the local synagogue.

The strong and highly effective Chaplaincy Team together with local parish priests support the pupils on their faith journey. The school is also blessed to have a number of Franciscan Friars based at Thomas of Canterbury Church which is located midway between the upper school and lower school site. The school makes excellent use of the parish church to celebrate Mass on major occasions. The Headteacher also leads Tauist prayers every Friday in the local parish church.

The school has an up to date policy for Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) which is in accordance with the requirements of the Diocese. The school uses appropriate resources such as the 'Ten Ten' programme to support the teaching of RSE much of which takes place through Religious Education lessons.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

### **Grade 1**

Pupils enjoy their Religious Education lessons and make excellent progress taking into account their ability when they join the school. The department actively seeks the views of pupils and surveys show very high levels of enjoyment of the subject. Their outcomes and grades achieved at GCSE and A' Level Religious Education are outstanding and the results achieved by more able pupils are in line with other core subjects such as English and Mathematics. This judgement is also supported by national data and the high progress score achieved by the school which places it in the top 15% of schools in England for pupil progress. As is the case nationally, girls perform better than the boys in Religious Education but the gap is not as wide at the school because it has taken clear action to close the gap. More able pupils are performing exceptionally well with 26 pupils gaining Grade 9 at GCSE Religious Education in 2019. Three year data provided by the school shows that all pupils performed at levels at least above the national average and in most key performance indicators, well above the national average. The school ensures that all pupils are entered for GCSE whatever their ability making the results achieved by the school even more impressive. The mature attitudes to learning shown by the pupils in their Religious Education lessons is impressive as is their excellent behaviour. They particularly enjoy learning about other world faiths and generally show high levels of engagement. They take great pride in their work which is well presented and books showed their work is regularly marked and assessed by their teachers. Pupils are encouraged to read widely as part of a whole school approach to developing literacy. Books recommended by teachers to support their moral and spiritual development are highlighted in classrooms which also have a number of Catholic newspapers and magazines for pupils to read.

The quality of teaching in Religious Education is overall outstanding. During the inspection, teaching observed was consistently good and some was outstanding. Where outstanding teaching was seen, pupils were fully engaged, working in pairs or small groups and the pace of the lesson was rapid. Pupils were posed challenging questions which encouraged deeper thinking and it was clear pupils were learning and making progress. Pupils benefit from having well qualified teachers who have excellent subject knowledge. Lessons are well prepared taking into account the prior learning of the pupils and are mostly differentiated to take into account that pupils are taught in mixed ability groups. The department has a clear focus on the quality of teaching and has the capacity to further increase the amount of outstanding teaching experienced by all teaching groups.

The provision for teaching Religious Education is strong reflecting that Religious Education is both a core subject and at the heart of the school curriculum. Leaders and Governors have recently reviewed

the curriculum and more time has been allocated to Religious Education lessons, requiring a significant increase in staffing for the department. At the time of the inspection, 10% of the curriculum time was allocated to Religious Education at key stage 4 (Years 10 & 11) and 8.3% at key stage 3 (Years 7-9). In Years 12 and 13 it is 17.5% for A' Level and 5% for General Religious Education. Inspectors recommend that the school continues to keep the curriculum under review to ensure it remains compliant with the requirements of the Bishops' Conference and diocesan guidelines. Overall the department is very well resourced and has very good accommodation, which is well maintained and has high standards of display.

Courses offered by the Religious Education department are appropriate and in accordance with the Curriculum Directory for Religious Education in Catholic schools. At key stage 3, pupils follow a course based broadly on 'The Way, The Truth and the Life'. At key stage 4, pupils follow the Edexcel course which includes the study of Catholic Christianity, Judaism and the more challenging module of St Mark's Gospel. For post 16 pupils, A' Level Philosophy and Ethics is a popular option and all students follow a Sixth Form General Religious Education programme.

Leaders and Governors have an excellent understanding of the many strengths and few areas of development of the Religious Education department. The Head of Department provides outstanding leadership to her growing team some of whom are new appointments to the school. A deputy head acts as line manager to the department and provides appropriate support and challenge. The school is data rich which enables teachers and leaders to monitor the progress of pupils and groups of pupils and ensure action is taken where pupils may be struggling. A member of the Governing Body acts as a link governor to the Religious Education department and the subject leader presents updates about her department to the Governing Body on a regular basis. The school also receives excellent support from the advisory team of the Diocese and their reports of visits are made available to Governors as part of their monitoring role.

## **COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

### **Grade 1**

Every aspect of Collective Worship at the school is outstanding. Pupils are keen to participate in prayer and Collective Worship which are at the heart of daily life at the school. Their behaviour is always very respectful and reverential. They are keen to lead prayers and assemblies and to read or serve at Mass. Liturgy leaders take responsibility for the daily Act of Worship reflecting the theme of the week and using resources in each form room. Pupils felt that whilst participation levels are high, more music played by pupils and community singing could further enhance their liturgies and assemblies. Inspectors agreed with these views and recommend that the school reviews current music liturgy to see how it can be further enhanced for the benefit of the pupils.

The quality and extensive provision for Collective Worship and prayer at the school is exceptional. Mass is offered at the school each morning before school commences, in the Chapel of the Divine Child on the lower school site. At the same time, a Eucharistic service is held in the Chapel of the Holy Spirit on the upper school site. These liturgical celebrations are always very well attended by both pupils and staff and it is often standing room only! Masses also take place on major feast days in the local parish church where the school is warmly welcomed by the Friars. These include Masses for: The Feast of St Francis of Assisi, All Saints Day, The Feast of the Immaculate Conception, as well as the start of the academic year. Pupils are also able to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation during Advent and Lent, pupils have many opportunities to pray during each day in form time, assemblies and in lessons. An acclamation is made by pupils and staff at the start of each lesson. The Angelus is recited across the whole school community prior to lunch and a prayer is recited, again across the whole school, at 3pm to remind the school community of the hour of the death of Jesus. Many pupils mentioned the uplifting experience of Collective Worship during the school's Lenten 'Mission of Hope' led by Fr. Stan Fortuna in 2019.

Leaders and Governors are fully committed to supporting prayer life and Collective Worship so it becomes an integral part of daily life at the school. They ensure time is properly allocated for such celebrations despite the pressure on the school timetable. The commitment of senior leaders to Collective Worship is reflected in the appointment of a chaplain as well as having a deacon on the staff

of the school. Leaders often lead Collective Worship or attend such celebrations so they are able to monitor the quality and provision. The Headteacher regularly reports to the Governing Body on Collective Worship, prayer life and the 'Catholic Life of the School' and Governors are regular visitors to the school. The Governing Body has adopted a detailed policy for Collective Worship to assist them in promoting and reviewing this aspect of work of the school.