



Dear Parents/Carers

***“The Catholic ethos of the school pervades all it does, with a culture of faith, hope and love.”***

As you know, earlier this month Saint Bede's was visited by a team from the Catholic Schools Inspectorate for a routine inspection. This was the first such inspection since 2016. I am pleased and proud to share their report with you.

Saint Bede's was the first secondary school in the Diocese of Lancaster, and one of the first schools in the country, to be inspected under a new, much more challenging national Catholic inspection framework. It is anticipated that far fewer schools will receive 'Outstanding' judgements under this new framework.

As you will read, the inspectors reached a judgement about Saint Bede's in 3 broad areas:

- Catholic life and mission, judged to be Outstanding (Grade 1)
- Religious Education, judged to be Outstanding (Grade 1)
- Collective Worship, judged to be Good (Grade 2)

Although the majority of the judgements in the report are Outstanding, under the new inspection framework the school was judged to be Good overall, because one of the three areas was Good.

In many ways it is impossible to 'measure' the strength of the Catholicity of a school, and certainly our Catholic ethos could never be meaningfully summed up in a single word judgement. Nevertheless, within the detail of the report there is a huge amount of feedback which is lovely to read.

I am particularly pleased with the section of the report relating to RE. This describes a "considerable transformation in the standard of Religious Education since the last inspection." Results in the department were seen to be "exceptional, bearing witness to thorough planning and the high degree of subject and teaching expertise among staff." I was also thrilled to read that inspectors saw that pupils "clearly feel part of a community where they are valued as unique individuals" and that "overall, leaders, staff and students at Saint Bede's demonstrate a strong sense of being a part of the Body of Christ and work hard to ensure that their school continues to move forward in its Catholic mission."

The report identifies that we can further strengthen Collective Worship by increasing the role of pupils in the planning and leading of spiritual activities such as liturgies and retreat days, and also recommends that we review our mission statement with the involvement of pupils. These useful suggestions will inform our development plan moving forward.

I would like to thank all our staff and Governors for their support before and during the inspection process, in particular Miss Newsham and the RE Department, Paula Burdess, our Lay Chaplain and Father John Millar, our Priest Chaplain. Most importantly, thank you to our pupils for representing our school and our Catholic ethos so well not just during the inspection but every day, and to all our parents and carers for your love and guidance which makes this possible.

Thank you for your continuing support.

Yours sincerely

Mr P Marsden  
Headteacher