



22<sup>nd</sup> July 2019

Mr Sheldon Logue  
Headteacher  
St Damian's RC Science College  
Lees Road  
Ashton-Under-Lyme  
Lancashire  
OL6 8BH

**Assessment Date: 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> July 2019**

### **Summary**

St Damian's RC Science College is an outstanding Catholic secondary school in Tameside, Greater Manchester, deeply committed to providing a fully inclusive ethos in accord with its mission as a Catholic school. Governors, Headteacher and senior leaders provide very strong direction and a clear vision, ably supported in achieving this by hardworking and dedicated teams of staff in all areas of the organisation.

The school has achieved significant improvement since being placed in Special Measures in 2010. The school is now heavily oversubscribed. Currently there are 820 pupils on roll and the school's popularity is evidenced in the high number of first choice places from parents. In recent years the school has increased its Pupil Admissions Number (PAN) from 150 to 165 to cope with the demand but due to the size of the building this cannot be increased further. The population of the school is made up of mainly baptised Roman Catholics, currently this figure stands at 89% (730 pupils), whilst the remaining population (11%/90 pupils) is made up of Christians, Muslims and Hindus.

Of the 820 pupils at St Damian's RC Science College, 64 pupils (7.8%) are classed as having a special educational need with 8 of those pupils having an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), there are 15 looked after children (1.8%) and 70 pupils classed as EAL (8.5%). Pupil Premium children or disadvantaged pupils account for 26% (211 pupils) of the school population.

The school was inspected by the Diocese of Salford (Section 48) and was graded as 'outstanding' in March 2016. The school is extremely proud of this recognition as it illustrates that St Damian's encapsulates the true values of a Catholic school, of which inclusion is at its heart. This is evidenced by high levels of respect, equal opportunities regardless of ability and outstanding personal relationships. More recently the school was inspected by Ofsted in November 2017 and was judged 'outstanding' in all areas.

---

#### **Award Offices**

#### **Inclusion Quality Mark Award**

Ling House  
173 Slieveboy Road  
Claudy  
BT47 4AS  
United Kingdom

#### **Contact**

**Tel. 028 7127 7857**  
**Fax. 028 7127 7856**  
[info@iqmaward.com](mailto:info@iqmaward.com)  
[www.iqmaward.com](http://www.iqmaward.com)

#### **Company Registration No.**

07748285  
Inclusion Quality Mark (U.K.) Ltd  
Company Registered Address:  
Grove House  
Lutyens Close  
Chineham  
Hampshire  
RG24 8AG

Contained within the school's mission statement, there is clear evidence that the school values everyone stating that "We welcome all people into our community and we are committed to learning and achieving our best in all we do" and "We care for all and promote mutual respect in our school community." Further to this, the school also states that "every individual deserves recognition, respect and is unique."

In my meetings with the Chair of Governors, Headteacher and other senior leaders it was clear that inclusion is a given and is not negotiable. The school also makes clear that by 'inclusion' they mean everyone; "Indeed, we believe that every person matters, not just every child matters!" In June 2018 the school achieved the Investors In People (IIP) Gold award.

The school building is very well maintained and is adorned with a vast array of display including inspirational quotes, displays of pupil's work, information and celebrations of achievements. Classrooms are welcoming places and are very well organised and set out. The glass walls adjacent to corridors are a positive feature of the classrooms and throughout my several tours of the school, it was possible to witness the consistent engagement of learners in all classrooms. Teacher and Teaching Assistant planning is thorough and appropriate to need and is well supported by good resources generally and more specifically for children with additional needs, for example, there is a hygiene room with space for physiotherapy sessions to be administered to one pupil with cerebral palsy.

Everyone in the school consistently demonstrates mutual respect and together create a most welcoming and inclusive feel to the school. Behaviour of the pupils is excellent at all times and the standard of uniform never stalls regardless of the time of day or the activities in which pupils are engaged. High expectations are a palpable feature of St Damian's RC Science College and from the many discussion I had, it is clear that pupil aspiration is high and they flourish in this caring and ambitious school.

Pupil outcomes are outstanding and as Ofsted Inspectors found "pupils are thirsty learners and make exemplary progress." Whilst progress is strong across all subjects and all pupil groups, it is worth noting the exceptional results that disadvantaged pupils make, in part because the pupil premium funding is used effectively.

I observed a number of lessons and was impressed by the quality of teaching and the positive contributions of pupils. In a year 7 lesson I witnessed some particularly effective questioning by the teacher to elicit deeper understanding of the text that they were reading. During form time, I was invited to observe teaching assistants supporting targeted pupils in a variety of ways. I saw intervention groups for literacy and mathematics which support those pupils currently achieving below expectation.

Parents with whom I met, were gushing in their praise for the school. They were unequivocally supportive of the school's relentless drive to maintain high standards and generate a culture of high aspiration and ambition for all. Parents were rightly concerned that their children were well looked after and were safe and they were unanimous and resounding in their praise for this aspect of the school's provision. They were equally effusive about the quality of teaching and support commenting that all teachers were "very good, there are no weaknesses." Parents spoke openly about some

of the emotional and special education needs of their children and were extremely grateful for the excellent support that their child had received but also made the point strongly, that the whole family was supported. They felt a part of the school community and involved in their child's journey.

Governance is exceptionally strong. I met with two Governors including the chair and I was so impressed with their deep understanding and knowledge of the school and also their unswerving resolve to ensure that the school offers the very best for everyone. They were unassuming yet quietly assertive and it was an inspiration to meet with them and discuss their involvement with the school. Amongst many other responsibilities, they are undoubtedly the guardians of inclusion.

I met with a number of representatives of external agencies that the school draws upon and from discussion it was evident that the school actively engages with these services. The school ensures that there is a good programme of extra-curricular activities including residential trips and lunchtime clubs including craft club, games club and film club. A striking feature of the school is the support they offer to charities. They have raised in excess of £10,000 for a variety of charities and do so consistently, year after year. In the staff briefing I attended, I heard about the school's production of 'Matilda' which had run the week prior to my visit. It was a huge success and was well attended by members of the community.

This is a school that is providing an outstanding experience for its pupil and their families. All staff are dedicated, work hard and are very skilled at what they do. Outcomes are excellent across the board. There is a strong sense of warmth and an ethos and culture that ensures that everyone is respected and offered every opportunity to achieve their potential. The school most definitely lives up to its motto "In all things faithful" and demonstrates a genuine drive to provide a fully inclusive and aspirational education for all of its pupils. That said, it is far from complacent and is constantly seeking to improve. It was a pleasure to visit this inspiring school.

I am of the opinion that St. Damian's RC College fully meets the standard required by the Inclusion Quality Mark and therefore recommend that the school is awarded the Inclusion Quality Mark and is reassessed in three years' time.

**Assessor: Mr Barry Carney**

**Findings confirmed by Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd:**



.....  
Joe McCann MBA NPQH  
Director of Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd



## Element 1 – The Inclusion Values and Practice of the School

### Strengths:-

- Inclusion is central to the school's vision and purpose and alongside its Catholic values this sets the framework in which all work takes place in this warm and welcoming school.
- The Headteacher and Chair of Governors provide exceptional leadership which is appreciated and supported by staff, pupils and parents.
- There is a strong emphasis on establishing and maintaining high standards of behaviour and appearance alongside high aspiration for all. This in turn has helped to turn around a failing school to one that is now outstanding.
- Analysis of need is thorough and planning is detailed. This contributes to the outstanding outcomes for pupils.
- Primary liaison and transition to secondary school is well managed ensuring the early identification of a range of educational, social and emotional needs.
- The school has put in place extensive interventions and support to meet the needs of individuals and groups of pupils. These include mentoring, counselling, in-class support and additional support for literacy and numeracy.
- There is a thorough system of data analysis and meetings with parents to ensure that all pupils' needs are identified and that any pupils who are not progressing as expected are highlighted and targeted for appropriate interventions.
- The needs of pupils on pupil premium, including LAC are carefully tracked and they make exceptional progress.
- Safeguarding procedures are robust.
- Staff are excellent role models for the pupils and relationship are warm and positive.

### Areas for Development:-

- There are no significant areas for development. The school shows exemplary practice in enacting its Inclusive ethos and practice.



## Element 2 – The Learning Environment, Resources and ICT

### Strengths:-

- The school's learning environment is very well thought out with excellent learning spaces and is continually being enhanced. Display is very good and clearly demonstrates the school's inclusive ethos.
- The Learning Resource Centre is well stocked and there are ample ICT resources including two ICT suites, PCs in several rooms and eight iPad banks. ICT is well supported by two full time technicians.
- SEND support offers a variety of resources including sloping boards, specialist seating, wedge cushions, overlays, stress balls and pen grips. In addition, the senior LSA is a specialist assessor for access arrangements.
- The school building has lifts to enable all pupil areas to be accessible.
- The school's website is informative, engaging and interactive. It is a resource that is used by all members of the school's community.
- The Benedict suite contains specialist equipment including a ceiling mounted hoist to help move around those pupils who have physical needs. The suite is also a fully equipped hygiene room.
- The school celebrates achievements and communicates with members of its community regularly through newsletters, social media and a well organised and up to date website.

### Areas for Development:-

- The school should consider how it can develop its existing multi-sensory provision including for those children with a visual impairment and multi-sensory impairment.



## Element 3 - Learning Attitudes, Values and Personal Development

### Strengths:-

- The behaviour and attitude of pupils is excellent. They demonstrate respect for each other and the staff which is mutual.
- There are excellent arrangements for induction and transition including in-year admissions.
- The school works with other schools to provide temporary, alternative provision for those pupils at risk of exclusion. The school's work is valued by other schools and is successful in making an impact upon the behaviour of those who access the provision.
- There is a wealth of leadership opportunities for pupils including, for example, Head Boy and Girl, prefects, Liturgy Group, Language Ambassadors, STEM Ambassadors, ELF and MAC (promoting literacy and mathematics).
- There is also a Pupil Learning Forum made up of twelve year 10 students who actively support interventions in literacy, mathematics and science for pupils in years 7-10.
- There is a vibrant Duke of Edinburgh programme with 19 pupils pursuing the silver award and 31 working towards bronze.
- There are many extra-curricular activities and clubs including sports teams, drama club and school performances, music clubs including instrumental bands, groups and choir and the lunchtime clubs including games, film and craft clubs. In addition, there are revision groups and homework groups.
- Each term the timetable is suspended for Aspire Days which support the Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) curriculum.
- Charitable work is a regular feature of life at St Damian's RC Science College.
- Provision for Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) is outstanding and contributes significantly to the high aspirations that pupils have for their future.
- Pastoral support is strong and work to promote emotional and mental well-being is excellent including the Well-being Box which is situated in every room of the school.
- Work with Tameside Youth Service to provide additional Sex and Relationship Education and 'Safe Space' a lunchtime club to discuss and support LGBT.
- Pupil voice is strong.



## IQM Assessment Report



- Throughout my two day visit I met with and talked to groups of pupils and individuals in class, during intervention and at break and lunchtime. I was impressed with how they conducted themselves and were adept at responding in a social context. They are excellent ambassadors for all that the school wishes to promote.

### Areas for Development:-

- The school is investigating, devising and trialling approaches to restorative justice protocols. I recommend that the school considers IPeace, an innovative school and community restorative programme being developed by Dr Hilary Cremin, a Senior Lecturer at Cambridge University, and the charity Alternative Resolution to Conflict (ARC).
- The school is encouraged to continue developing its links with external agencies particularly those that offer support for emotional well-being, Sex and Relationship Education and LGBT+.



## Element 4 - Learner Progress and the Impact on Learning

### Strengths:-

- Data analysis is forensic and provides accurate information to enable astute identification of need. It is presented to all stakeholders in appropriate format and is highly accessible.
- Staff respond well to the information from data analysis and are able to provide suitable support for individuals.
- The curriculum model is well designed and plays a significant role in facilitating the excellent outcomes that pupils achieve. It allows for a range of need and interests and builds upon primary school and prepares pupils well for post-16.
- The recently appointed Assistant Headteacher responsible for Teaching and Learning is developing good strategies to improve the quality of teaching still further. The main strategy is to adopt a more middle leader led approach.
- Recent initiatives introduced include the Educational Book Club for staff who meet each Friday, the establishment of a Twitter account to keep abreast of current educational thinking and the creation of a Teaching and Learning Bulletin.
- New staff receive a 'Welcome Box' in which there are a number of useful resources such as board markers, the Teaching and Learning Handbook and a personalised letter of welcome.
- Teaching is consistently delivering excellent outcomes for pupils.
- Progress 8 for disadvantaged pupils including Looked After Children (LAC) and low prior attainers is in the top quintile as is overall Attainment 8.

### Areas for Development:-

- The school should look to develop its teaching still further by initiating forms of action research or teacher led enquiry. There are many avenues to explore and seek support and guidance including the National College, National Research Schools, Teacher Development Trust and numerous individuals and groups through social media.



## Element 5 - Learning and Teaching (Monitoring)

### Strengths:-

- Performance management is robust and leads to excellent outcomes for pupils.
- There is a culture of promoting the emotional and mental well-being of all staff. Strategies include a variety of 'Random acts of Kindness' such as presenting each member of staff with small gifts of appreciation. Staff also organise for a car valeting service to visit school each half term, flu jabs and for NHS supported well-being clinics to be available at the school.
- There is a new Teaching and Learning Policy which has been written collaboratively between the Assistant headteacher for Teaching and Learning and all middle leaders.
- The move to involve middle leaders more closely in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning is a good decision.
- The process for monitoring is well documented and evidence is thorough.
- The Teaching and Learning Handbook is informative and sets out clear expectations.
- There are three phases to monitoring teaching and learning which include Subject development stage, learning walks and monitoring pupil progress. It is a coherent model which is well resourced with templates to ensure consistency of evidence collection and reporting.
- Evidence shows that teachers are very well informed about individual pupils and their needs. There is a simple colour coding scheme which lends itself to easy identification.
- Professional development is focussed upon areas of need.
- Parents are kept well informed of their child's progress.

### Areas for Development:-

- There are no significant areas for development. The school shows exemplary practice in enacting its Inclusive ethos and practice.



## Element 6 – Parents, Carers and Guardians

### Strengths:-

- Parents feel involved in their child’s education and say that they have plenty of opportunity to be involved. They also commented upon the approachability of staff including the Headteacher and other senior leaders.
- There are effective means of communication between school and parents. The range of communication is good and includes traditional newsletters as well as taking advantage of social media. The website is good quality and accessible.
- Parents are confident in the school. They spoke highly of the support that their children receive especially so those with additional needs and emotional needs.
- Parents value the pastoral system, the work of the SENCO, LSAs and the Student Support Officers.
- There are regular, formal updates on progress and well attended parents evenings.
- The school is oversubscribed and very popular.

### Areas for Development:-

- There are no significant areas for development. The school shows exemplary practice in enacting its Inclusive ethos and practice.



## **Element 7 - Governing Body and Management: External Accountability/Support**

### Strengths:-

- Ofsted inspectors found that ‘The highly experienced Governors are unwavering in their support and have an exceptional oversight of the school. They hold leaders firmly to account in securing outstanding outcomes for pupils.’
- The Chair of Governors is unwavering in her commitment to inclusion. This is shared by all Governors.
- The twelve Governors that make up the Governing Body have received appropriate training and between them have a wide range of expertise and experience.
- Governors are dedicated and hardworking. They hold twelve monthly meetings each year which all Governors attend.
- Each Governor has a particular area of responsibility and oversees the work of aspects of the school. These include named Governors for pupil premium, SEND and safeguarding.
- Governors are frequent visitors to school and nearly always visit classrooms and speak with pupils.
- The Headteacher is an Ofsted Inspector and section 48 inspector.

### Areas for Development:-

- There are no significant areas for development. The school shows exemplary practice in enacting its Inclusive ethos and practice.



## **Element 8 - The School in the Community and how this Supports Inclusion**

### Strengths:-

- The staff and pupils are prolific in their fundraising for local and national charities. Sums in excess of £10,000 are raised each year.
- The school is proactive in supporting its pupils who are Young Carers. There is an established programme which is highly valued by those young people who have a caring role.
- During ASPIRE days and careers weeks, good use is made of contacts in the community and local businesses.
- The school maintains excellent relationships with the local parish and the Parish Priest is a regular visitor to the school.
- Excellent relationships exist between St. Damian's RC Science College and its feeder primary schools and local colleges and sixth forms.
- The school is committed to working with external agencies in support of their pupils, examples of strong working relationships include Healthy young Minds, Off the Record, MIND, Phoenix, Bridges, Tameside Youth Service, Early Help Advisors and Team around the school.

### Areas for Development:-

- There are no significant areas for development. The school shows exemplary practice in enacting its Inclusive ethos and practice.