

Notre Dame High School



Information for Applicants

"Outstanding in all areas"
OFSTED Inspection 2008



Introduction – Steve Davies

Notre Dame High School is a popular and successful Catholic comprehensive school within the Catholic diocese of Hallam.

We offer a distinctive Catholic education where we seek to educate the whole person; Spiritual, moral, social and academic. We are committed to inclusivity, meeting each person where they are and respecting the dignity of every individual. In practical day to day terms, this means that we have a very strong focus on excellent relationships as the basis of everything we do.

We believe in high quality professional development as the main way to maintain and improve the quality of education for students. This is the driving reason behind our decision to become one of the first wave of teaching schools.

Notre Dame draws students from a very wide catchment area across the city of Sheffield and beyond. It has almost 1500 students, including 400+ in the Sixth Form. The school population includes around 30% of children from various ethnic minority groups.

The school has been graded outstanding in every category and sub-category in Ofsted inspection reports in 2005 and 2008. The school is also graded as outstanding under the section 48 inspection, which looks at the way in which we meet our mission to provide distinctive Catholic education. Inspectors commented that:

“Students thrive in an atmosphere where each is cherished as an individual, and all are challenged and supported to achieve their best”.

“All students make very good progress, consistently, throughout the school.”

“Throughout the school relationships are exemplary”.

“High levels of tolerance and respect are evident in the way students react to each other, to staff, and to visitors”.

“Students’ enjoyment is seen in both the consistently high level of attendance and the extremely rare use of exclusion”.

Students “are diligent about litter and outstandingly sensible and prompt in movement between lessons”.

“Teaching and learning are outstanding because of the consistently high quality of many lessons”.

As an outstanding school, Notre Dame has not been inspected by Ofsted since 2008. This has not changed our commitment to rigorous evaluation and continuous improvement. We work with a range of people and organisations who provide feedback about the quality of education at Notre Dame and we are actively engaged with research and evidence of the best practice within our school and beyond, through our work as a teaching school. Since our last Ofsted inspection the school has maintained levels of progress, attainment, attendance and successful progression beyond school that are significantly above national averages. We continue to be very popular, enjoying a strong reputation for being a caring community, with excellent behaviour and a high quality of education.

History of Notre Dame High School – Steve Davies

Notre Dame High School is situated in the Ranmoor area of the city in 20 acres of ground, which includes Smith Wood, believed to have been once part of Sherwood Forest. It was here that Mark Firth, famous son of the city of Sheffield, steel manufacturer, philanthropist, Lord Mayor and Master Cutler, built his dream mansion in 1860. His mansion became an Officers' Convalescent Home in the First World War, and was bought by the Sisters of Notre Dame in 1919, meaning that we have had a presence on our current site for 100 years.

The school's history goes back even further than the Firth estate. It was in 1855 that the Sisters of Notre Dame came to Sheffield from Liverpool to set up a much needed school for girls in the city centre. The school was established in Holy Green House on the Moor, now replaced by a busy shopping centre.

In 1862, the school was moved to Cavendish Street where it developed and expanded to such an extent that further space was required for the many girls who sought admission.

The Sisters moved their living quarters to Oakbrook in 1919, leaving more room for classrooms and in 1935 built another secondary school in the extensive grounds. This remained a separate school until amalgamation was recommended in 1948.

In 1976, the school changed its status from that of a girls' grammar school to become a mixed comprehensive. Cavendish Street housed the lower school until 1988 when the Victorian buildings were finally vacated and later demolished by the new owners.

To accommodate the whole school on the Oakbrook site, extensive internal improvements were made and this development has continued through to the present day. Alongside our wonderful historic buildings which were refurbished in 2012, our facilities include; a purpose built technology block, an Open Learning Centre combining traditional library with first rate ICT facilities, a fitness suite and an Environmental Learning Centre which serves as an impressive base for 21st century education centred on the ancient woodland that forms part of our site.

The school is proud to retain contact with the Sisters of Notre Dame, who are still represented on the School's governing body. Notre Dame High School Sheffield is an active participant in the world wide Notre Dame community and we are committed to staying true to those roots, expressed in the Hallmarks of the World Wide Notre Dame Community (available on our website). We are deeply proud to be associated with the legacy of the Sisters of Notre Dame in Catholic education in Sheffield and their ongoing service of the most vulnerable young people in England and around the world.

Being rooted in that strong tradition does not mean we stand still. In fact, part of our tradition is to be forward looking. Recent milestones for the school have included:

- Recognition as a an outstanding school and a National support school
- In September 2011, Notre Dame High School became one of the first 'wave' of teaching schools
- Conversion to academy status in July 2012
- Became accredited as a School Centred Initial Teacher Training provider (SCITT) in 2015

Staff

Staff are committed, experienced and friendly. There are over 160 members of staff, of which 95 are teachers. People often comment that our school has a strong sense of community, even a 'family' feel.

The Senior Management Team currently consists of a Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, Director of School Improvement, Director of Business, two Senior Assistant Headteachers and four Assistant Headteachers.

All members of staff have a line manager who serves as their appraiser. Our appraisal system is focused on helping each member of staff to accurately evaluate their own effectiveness in their role and to help plan continuing professional development which builds on strengths and addresses areas of relative weakness.

All teachers in school serve as a form tutor or are attached to a year team. These year teams are at the heart of Pastoral Care in the school and they are supported by an experienced Pastoral Team. The team is led by a Senior Assistant Headteacher and includes five Heads of Year, a SENCO, two Pastoral Managers and a Pastoral Administrator.

Every teaching team is led by a Head of Department. We believe in the importance of strong teams, who work effectively together to deliver outstanding education from Y7 to Y11 in their subjects. We look to give teams as much autonomy as possible, while providing support, challenge and coordination across teams through a link between each department and a member of the senior management team. This work is coordinated by a Senior Assistant Head.

The Director of School Improvement leads the work of the teaching school and also has a responsibility for developing the way in which we evaluate the effectiveness of our work and use evidence well.

The Director of Business oversees the school's Finances, Contracts, IT, Personnel and Premises.

Our Assistant Heads serve as:

- Lead on ethos and Catholic life of the school
- Head of 6th form
- Lead on curriculum and timetabling
- Lead on pedagogy and classroom practice

Our Assistant Head with responsibility for ethos is supported in their work by a Chaplaincy Co-Ordinator. Together they provide support for all members of staff so that we can each play our part in ensuring that our distinctive Catholic Mission and the Hallmarks of the Notre Dame Community are not just words on a page.

School Ethos – Joe Cain

The ethos of the school is strongly Christian and it provides a distinctive Catholic education whilst respecting and welcoming children from other denominations and other world faiths.

In the inspection of the Catholic life of the school and Religious Education which took place in September 2008 the feedback from the inspector included the statement “the Catholic life of the school is outstanding, actually exceptional, and I am sad there is not a higher grade I can give”.

All staff employed by the Governing Body of Notre Dame High School are asked to guarantee that they will uphold the Catholic/Christian ethos of the school and they are required to sign the Catholic Education Service contract. Consequently, all teachers are expected to pray with students and accompany them to acts of worship held in the school.

The school chaplaincy provides extensive support for staff in this important area of school life. The school has achieved recognition because of a participative approach to prayer and worship and development of student leadership which is proving to be pivotal in the faith development of all members of the school community. A significant aspect of this development is the special relationship which exists between the school and the Catholic Chaplaincy of Sheffield University.

School Day

The school operates a five one-hour period day. The school day begins at 8.55am and finishes at 3.35pm.

Recent Curriculum Developments – Robin Nixon

Key Stages 3 and 4

Notre Dame has always endeavoured to ensure access for all our students to a broad, balanced and stimulating curriculum and encourages and expects all students to achieve their full potential. During 2015-2016, we undertook a significant review of our curriculum, drawing views from parents, students and staff, in the light of national reform.

The curriculum plan is described in more detail below for each Key Stage:

Key Stage 3 (Y7 and Y8)

All students follow the same broad, balanced curriculum consisting of:

Religious Education, Mathematics, Technology, English, Modern Foreign Languages, Science, History, Geography, Physical Education, Drama, Music, Art and IT.

In Years 7-9 cross-curricular areas such as PSHE, Citizenship and Enterprise education are integrated into all the subjects in the curriculum as well as being supported through specific lessons, form time and Enrichment Days.

Key Stage 4 (Y9-11)

At KS4 all students follow a core curriculum consisting of:

Religious Education, Mathematics, English, Science, Physical Education and IT (the latter two non-examined).

In addition to the core programme outlined above, students make an additional 3 subject choices. There is a range of courses to choose from including academic GCSEs and more vocational courses.

The choices available include:

History, Geography, Business, Product Design, Food and Nutrition, Physical Education, IT, Drama, Music, Art, Photography, Child Development and Health and Social Care and Triple Science.

Each student will study one option subject over 3 years (x2 lessons a week) and two subjects over two years (x3 lessons a week).

Through the KS4 curriculum, we aim to offer a broad education, with a range of progression routes, in which all students can develop their own strengths. All courses lead to public examinations and the results achieved are well above both the local and national averages.

Key Stage 5 (Y12-Y13)

In Key Stage 5 the majority of students will study 3 A-levels. There are a wide variety of courses available-in total we offer almost 30 different courses. We also offer btecs and Tec level qualifications.

Sixth Form – Martyn Birch

The Sixth Form has grown in size in recent years and now has around 400 students with 60% coming from our own year 11 and the remaining 40% from around 30 other local schools. We are an inclusive Sixth Form and welcome students from all faith backgrounds as well as those for whom faith is not a part of their lives.

There are 28 A-Level courses on offer as well as the provision to re-take GCSE Maths or English Language.

To support our students' spiritual awareness and to develop their individual potential, they follow a Religious Studies programme. We encourage students to take on roles of service within the School and wider community e.g. working with the School Chaplaincy Team, providing support in a local primary school and paired reading with our younger students.

We have a strong tradition each year of enabling our Sixth Form students to secure places on to the most competitive courses at some of the country's highest regarded universities.

Academic Achievements – Steve Bunting

Notre Dame continues to demonstrate excellent academic achievement at all levels of the curriculum. We are consistently within the top 20% of schools nationally for our performance at GCSE in all of the key measures such as Progress 8 (0.35 in 2018, top 17% of schools) and percentage of students achieving 5A*-C (85% in 2018) and percentage of students achieving grade 5 or above in English and Maths (63% in 2018, Local Authority and National average is 40%). The percentage of students who achieved 3 or more grades of 7 or above, increased to a 3 year high of 47%. Over 99% of our students achieve at least 5 A*-G grades at GCSE.

At Key Stage 5 we celebrated another excellent set of results in 2018 with a positive Level 3 Value Added score of 0.05 placing our Sixth Form in the top half of all national Sixth Forms or colleges. Over 50% of our results at A Level were B or above. Performance at A level is consistently above national and regional averages and the progress made by our students consistently sees us ranked highly in the national ranking of post-16 providers.

Future Plans

During the last few years the school has become more successful, better resourced and greatly over-subscribed. Three five-year development plans have been completed with all targets (and much more) achieved. For the future we aim to continue to:

Promote Gospel values through liturgical and other curriculum experiences, by ensuring high standards of religious education and liturgical experience across the curriculum and maintaining our distinctive ethos.

Build a caring community by ensuring a considerate, orderly community with good relationships based on mutual respect and recognition of individual differences and achievement.

Enable all members of the school community to realise their potential by;

- ensuring good value added performance at Key Stages 3, 4 and 5;
- providing training and development which enables staff to achieve personal and school targets;
- managing a programme of capital investment to provide improved accommodation for teaching and learning;
- improving school attendance with fewer school days lost by students.

Develop links between schools, the Parish, the home and the local wider community by;

- ensuring schools and groups from the wider Catholic community benefit from the experience and expertise of this specialist and leading edge school;
- ensuring students continue to benefit from specialist school status.

Teaching School Status – John Coats

Notre Dame has been designated as a DfE designated Teaching School since 2011. This means it is the hub of an alliance of schools across South Yorkshire who collaborate together on school improvement with Notre Dame providing the strategic lead. Only outstanding schools can bid to become teaching schools and Notre Dame was successful in becoming one of the first 100 teaching schools.

Our largest role is in the training of new entrants to the teaching profession where we own and operate the first SCITT in Sheffield (accredited to train teachers in our own right). Our view is that the best way to improve student outcomes is to recruit and train the best possible new teachers! Last year over 70 trainees successfully complete our teacher training course and are now qualified teachers working with young people.

We oversee a wide offer of ongoing professional development of teachers. We leading the South Yorkshire Maths Hub which provides professional development for in excess of 100 schools in our region, with a particular focus on Teaching for Mastery. The South Yorkshire Science Learning Partnership training hub is also based at Notre Dame.

The education system in England is waking up to the value of research in informing what happens in the classroom – in exactly the same way that the medical profession engages with research, the education profession is starting to do the same. We are involved with a number of exciting research projects, the largest of which is a national trial of our SMART Spaces Chemistry Revision materials that is funded by EEF and the Wellcome Trust. This involves over 100 schools and follows a smaller funded trial of the same that showed promise

We also have a number of contracts with the Department for Education and others to deliver projects across the wider East Midlands, South Yorkshire and Humber region.

Teaching School status makes Notre Dame an exciting place to work as our staff have access to a wide range of professional development opportunities, along with the chance to work with teachers from schools across South Yorkshire and beyond. Many staff have had opportunities through Teaching School roles that would not be available in other schools. The school has a voice on a national stage around educational policy and as an innovative school much of what we do is promoted nationally through work with the National College and DfE. We recognise though that all of this is built on the talent and hard work of the staff who work for us in every role, it is very much a team effort.

Safeguarding Policy

The school's is committed to safeguarding children which is outlined in the following extract from the School's Safeguarding Policy:

“We believe that everyone is unique and of equal value regardless of academic ability, class, creed, gender, race or wealth.”

‘Notre Dame High School fully recognises its responsibilities for child protection and the need for procedures to ensure that children and young people have their welfare safeguarded.’

The school complies with the DBS code of practice in regards to criminal record information in that it will not discriminate unfairly against any applicant on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed during the application process.

Employee Benefits – Heather Hazleton

There are a range of benefits available to employees working at Notre Dame High School and these include:

The option to join the Westfield Foresight Health Insurance Scheme (Level 1 is provided by the Governing Body for eligible employees).

Free tea, coffee and fruit available in the staffrooms;

Cycle to Work Salary Sacrifice Scheme is in operation;

A Staff Committee who organise social events at key times throughout the year;

Free use of hi-tech gymnasium facilities;

The opportunity to work in beautiful, well kept surroundings.

How to Apply

We will be happy to receive informal telephone enquiries and requests for further information. If you decide to apply for a post at Notre Dame, please return the following:

A fully completed application form (if this is being sent electronically, it will require signing at interview);

Curriculum Vitae (only necessary if you have further information to add to the application form).

To: Notre Dame High School
Fulwood Road
Sheffield
S10 3BT

Tel: 0114 2302536

Email: recruitment@notredame-high.co.uk

If you have any requirements for special arrangements to be made in order to take part in the recruitment and selection process please let the school know what these are prior to the closing date. If this is done in writing please submit the information separately from your application form and we will make every effort to provide assistance.

May we take this opportunity of thanking you for your interest in this position. If appointed, we can assure you that you will work in a caring, supportive, Christian environment.

Good luck!

Steve Davies
Headteacher

If there are any dates in the near future when you would be unable to attend for interview, please state these clearly in your application.