

# Questions and Answers



## Cardinal Newman High School

A member of the Federation of Catholic High Schools  
in Warrington

*"Together we can make a difference.  
Everyone in our school is valued."*

# Questions and Answers

## Where do your pupils come from?

Like all Catholic schools we take pupils from a very wide area. We take children from the parishes of Our Lady, St Augustine, St Benedict, St Bridget, St Mary, St Monica, St Oswald, St Peter and St Stephen and St Winifride. We also welcome children from other faith backgrounds and none. 85% of our pupils come to school on one of our many school buses.

## What makes your school special?

First and foremost we are a Catholic school and our principle aim is to raise standards and give 'life chances' to children of all abilities and all backgrounds, developing each and every child fully by offering effective teaching and learning.

The school was inspected by Ofsted in November 2011. The inspector said 'The school is a welcoming and harmonious community where students are happy and behave well. Student's awareness of spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues and respect for diversity are good.'



*Inspire • Challenge • Support • Empower*

## Is Cardinal Newman a big school?

We pride ourselves on being a smaller than average school. We have chosen to limit the school to a maximum of 825.

## What are the benefits of this?

The staff know all children really well. We are able to identify their potential and monitor their progress very closely. Equally important, we are able to develop them as individuals and encourage the values at the heart of the school.

## How do you arrange your teaching groups?

Children are taught in mixed ability groups and sets. We identify pupils' potential via a range of national standardised tests in Years 7 and 9. We review progress every term.

## How were your GCSE results this year (2013)?

96% achieved 5 or more A\*-C passes; 67% including both English and Mathematics.

Most of our pupils achieve 10 or more good GCSE grades, many achieving 12 or more. These are our best results ever, this year we are the top performing school in Warrington.

## What provisions are made for gifted and talented children?

Pupils with exceptional gifts and talents are encouraged to pursue them to high standards. A number of our pupils are members of the National Academy for Gifted and Talented Youth (G&T). Every department has provision for G&T pupils and there is a member of staff who co-ordinates whole school provision.

There is an 'Express' set in Mathematics who take their GCSE early and the school provides them with the opportunity to study AS level.

## What provisions are made for children with special educational needs?

The Special Needs and Social Inclusion departments provide in-class or one-to-one support for pupils with a variety of needs. The school provides support for pupils who have English as an additional language. Gifted and talented pupils also benefit from a range of enrichment and extension activities.

The Oasis Centre provides support at different levels according to need and may take the form of in-class support, differentiation of materials, withdrawal for intensive tuition in basic literacy and numeracy, the use of individual Educational Programmes/ Behaviour Support Plans access to specialist equipment or resources such as computers, counselling and guidance sessions.

The Oasis Centre also houses the Serenity Suite from which our inclusion team also operates. We offer counselling advice and support on a wide range of issues which affect some of our children.

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## What is the purpose of the Federation?

In September 2009 we federated with St Gregory's Catholic High School.

The purpose of the two schools federating is to utilise the individual strengths of the two schools for the mutual benefit of both schools by working together collaboratively.

## What are the benefits of the Federation?

Federal structures have common values, common interests and common goals which operate underneath an umbrella organisation to coordinate these for the best interests of its community whilst maintaining each school's separate and distinct identity. The Catholic community and its Catholic schools share common goals, interests and values, as well as both being very good schools with excellent track records.

The Federation recognises the real strengths in both schools and that both schools have a lot of expertise which could be shared for the benefit of all. But it is also recognised that each school is uniquely individual and that is part of its strength.

## What are the objectives of the Federation?

The scopes of the benefits of a federation are principally.

- The Catholic School System within Warrington and outside is strengthened by the two schools in a federation both as witness to the Catholic Community and of the Catholic community to outside bodies.
- To enhance and develop the educational provision by working together collaboratively to share expertise, and best practice and to build upon that.
- To identify and develop innovative strategies to extend the educational provision of the two schools e.g. Diplomas and the joint provision of 14-19 education for the Catholic schools in Warrington.

## How are parents informed about their child's progress?

All children receive a detailed report every term and we also have Parents' Evenings to discuss progress. On a regular basis teachers will keep in touch with you in the same way.

All pupils' work is given a progress grade so that it is clear to all how well a child is progressing.

How do you know what your children are capable of achieving? We identify pupil's potential with a range of national standardised tests. We are therefore quickly able to identify any pupil who is underachieving and ensure appropriate support is put in place to enable them to achieve in line with their potential.

We have an established system of targeting pupils at risk in all years with individual tutor mentoring and have recently extended intervention strategies into KS4. The results show how successful this has been. Intervention strategies are implemented, this is monitored and delivered by the Progress Manager.

## What about discipline?

We want our children to look forward to coming to school. They need to feel safe and secure so we will not tolerate any behaviour which disrupts their learning or general well-being. We operate a consistent Code of Conduct based upon self-discipline and we will not hesitate to apply the strongest sanctions to maintain good order and a purposeful atmosphere.

Ofsted commented that our children "behave well in lessons and have a growing desire to improve their learning. Students are motivated to learn because of the good relationships with staff and each other."

## How do you deal with bullying?

We have a strict anti-bullying policy which encourages pupils to speak up if they feel that they or others are being bullied. The Ofsted inspectors commented that "students feel very safe at school and are confident that the rare cases of bullying are addressed promptly." We do not tolerate any level of bullying and are prepared to exclude pupils if necessary.

## Do you think homework is important?

Yes we do. All subjects set at least one homework per week, children are expected to spend 30 minutes on each subject. As they move through the school homework demands are increased.

We expect parents to support us in this by checking their child's planner every night and signing it once a week.





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