

# Our Lady's Catholic High School



A NATIONAL TEACHING SCHOOL



# Being One of Ours

## Welcome to Our Lady's Catholic High School.

This booklet celebrates what we truly believe to be a story of exceptional success at our school. Children who become **'one of ours'** embark on an educational path that encourages the development of personal faith, integrity of action, independence of learning and the perseverance required to achieve one's absolute best.

**Our values** are drawn directly from **the Gospels**; they are at the heart of all that we do and everything else flows from this. The expression of the individual personality that God gives to each child is encouraged from the outset through numerous opportunities to take responsibility, commit to school life and work hard as members of teams.

In 2014 the Department for Education awarded to Our Lady's the prestigious status of, **'Teaching School'**. In this role we lead a consortium of schools that together form the Catholic Teaching Alliance. Our shared responsibility is to train the next generation of teachers and leaders in our Catholic primary and secondary schools. Such responsibility is given to only a select number of **'Outstanding'** schools and recognises the exceptional quality of education provided here at Our Lady's.

**The highest standards** of behaviour, manners and respect are fundamental aspects of life at our school. We are very proud of our pupils and of their achievements and in turn our pupils are very proud of their school and uniform because, **'when you put on our uniform you put on our school'**. Our teachers and staff are exceptionally motivated, conscientious and achieve outstanding success for all our pupils.

Please ask others about us and come and visit to see for yourself.

**N. Ranson** Headteacher

**"This is an outstanding Catholic school that provides an education which enables students to flourish."**

SECTION 48 INSPECTION

**"Students are focused, mature, confident... friendly and happy."**

LANCASHIRE SCHOOL ADVISER

**"One of the top 10% of non-selective schools in England."**

CHIEF EXECUTIVE SSAT

**"I was struck by the relaxed and at the same time hardworking atmosphere of the school..."**

VISITOR TO THE SCHOOL



“ I cannot think of a more cheerful and engaging group to be with. It was a great privilege to have them here with us at Castlerigg. ”

FR PHILLIP CONNER,  
DIOCESE OF LANCASTER  
YOUTH CHAPLAIN



# Our Faith Community

**Our Lady's is a Catholic school** and this is at the heart of who we are and all that we do. Our Mission is to **'support everyone to develop their faith in a supportive context,'** and we take this Mission very seriously.

What separates us from none faith schools is that we regularly **worship together**. This binds us and strengthens our sense of community and togetherness. Each school day starts and ends in prayer and pupils are encouraged and supported to lead these acts of collective worship. We celebrate Mass every Wednesday in our Chapel with each Form Group having responsibility for the preparation. Holy days of obligation are celebrated with voluntary Mass in our Arts Theatre. **The school year concludes with our Whole School Mass** when every person in our school community gathers in our Sports Hall to give thanks for all we have received.

**The Chaplaincy Team** are an integral part of our school and lead us in many events, including: 'Faith and Justice Days' with year teams; Services of Reconciliation during Lent; a Mass of welcome and celebration for Years 7 and 11 respectively, as they join and prepare to leave our school; **retreats to Castlerigg Manor** in Keswick and Year 7 'Days with a Difference' to help our newest pupils settle in at school.

The school year is defined by our **Collective Worship themes** that set the tone for so much of what we do. Pupils are encouraged to put their faith into action in a variety of ways, including active and vibrant charity events. At Our Lady's everyone is welcomed into and included in the spiritual life of our school.



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“ In all my years of school Masses, I have never experienced such a wonderful, prayerful celebration of Mass. ”

MICHAEL CAMPBELL OSA,  
BISHOP OF LANCASTER

“ The Catholic ethos of the school has gone from strength to strength. ”

YEAR 10 PARENT



In our most recent inspection OFSTED judged our school to be **“Outstanding”** in all areas; as did the Diocese of Lancaster when they inspected us in 2018.



# Our Outstanding School

## The Achievement of Pupils

We have an outstanding record of progress and results which Ofsted confirmed when they stated that **“the school’s record of students’ success places it in the top 10% of schools nationally...”** and that **“...the standards they reach at GCSE are significantly higher than those found nationally.”** Our pupils show excellent attitudes to their learning and this is reflected in their achievements.

## The Quality of Teaching

The Quality of Teaching was graded as **“outstanding”** and they recognised that **“all students make outstanding progress”** because **“teachers plan lessons that are expertly matched to the needs of all learners.”** To ensure we have highly skilled and well trained teachers we make time each week for staff development.

## The Behaviour and Safety of Pupils

Behaviour at Our Lady’s is **outstanding** and this is down to our clear Behaviour for Learning policy and the outstanding relationships between staff and pupils. Ofsted noted that, **“Absolute respect between students and staff results in outstanding behaviour.”** Our pupils enjoy coming to school and they relish the opportunities they are given.

## The Leadership and Management

All levels of leadership and management at our school were recognised as outstanding by Ofsted. Principal Teachers work hard with their teams. Inspectors noted, **“they know strengths and areas to improve and have effective plans to make a difference.”** Learning Managers lead their teams of form tutors in devising and checking individual learning plans for students. This, Ofsted stated, **“results in students making effective progress in all areas of school life.”** The Senior Leadership Team rigorously pursue excellence and led by the Headteacher **“create a climate where staff feel valued and contribute to providing an education where students thrive.”**



“Exciting and well-structured teaching enables students to make outstanding progress. Lessons are purposeful, highly relevant and stimulating. As a result, students are motivated to learn, as one told an inspector, ‘I enjoy school because lessons are interesting’.”

OFSTED



## Our Learning Community

We have a strong reputation for **academic excellence** and we offer a broad and balanced curriculum which meets the needs of our pupils.

We believe that each child is most likely to achieve when **great things are expected of them**, when they are fully engaged and thoroughly enjoying their learning. Every year we set very ambitious individual targets which encourage our pupils to always strive for their best in all that they do.

The progress pupils make towards their individual targets is **monitored rigorously and reported to parents** each term ensuring that both pupils and parents are always clear about what they need in order to improve. Attainment is assessed and reported to parents each term alongside grades for progress, homework and behaviour.

We place a very high emphasis on **outstanding teaching and learning** and teachers use a range of engaging and stimulating approaches to deliver the curriculum. We use homework to extend learning beyond the classroom and provide regular written feedback so that pupils always understand what they need to do in order to continue to improve their learning.

At the end of Year 9 all pupils are able to choose from an **impressive range of over twenty courses**, including both academic and vocational options. In addition to the compulsory core subjects of Religious Education, Mathematics, English and Science, pupils are able to study up to two languages: French and Spanish, three separate sciences, Computer Science, Geography, History, Sociology, PE, Art, Music, Drama and a range of vocational courses.

“All students make outstanding progress because teachers plan lessons that are expertly matched to the needs of all learners.”

OFSTED

“The revision timetable is fantastic.”

YEAR 11 PARENT



“One of the best schools in the country for securing superb GCSE outcomes, addition value to their students’ achievements and outperforming expectations for their pupils.”

SUE WILLIAMSON,  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE, SSAT



# Our Caring Community

At Our Lady's we provide a **strong pastoral framework** of support and guidance for all pupils to ensure that they are able to learn well and achieve their full potential from year 7 through to year 11 and beyond. Integral to this is our **rewards system** which ensures that pupils are rewarded for being punctual, organised and ready to learn. We recognise commitment to school life through **'One of Ours'** points and our **'Star Badge'** scheme.

For pupils who are transferring to Our Lady's from primary school we provide a **specific programme of support and guidance**. We aim to enable all Year 7 pupils to settle in quickly, make new friends and thoroughly enjoy the challenge and excitement of their first few weeks at Our Lady's.

In the summer term before they join us, pupils are placed in one of six tutor groups. The Learning Manager (Head of Year) for Year 7, will provide support and guidance on a daily basis to ensure that the transition is smooth and free from anxiety. This is complimented by very close liaison between the pastoral team and **our excellent Learning and Pastoral Support teams**.

**"Behaviour is consistently outstanding."**  
LANCASHIRE SCHOOL ADVISOR

**"Since day one we have been delighted with the support our son has got from the school ... and have felt there has been a real collaboration to delivering his educational needs."**  
YEAR 11 PARENT

**"Absolute respect between students and staff results in outstanding behaviour. Students enjoy coming to school and relish the opportunities they are given. They feel safe and support each other in a wide range of activities."**  
OFSTED

**"I was worried on the first day that it might be big and scary, but everyone was so friendly and helpful that I felt totally settled in by the end of the week."**  
YEAR 7 PUPIL



ARLO IS OUR SCHOOL THERAPY DOG





“ A real pleasure to see so many pupils so proud of their school and so enthusiastic. ”

SCHOOL GOVERNOR

At Our Lady’s we expect all of our pupils to also **develop themselves outside of the classroom** by showing commitment to the wider school life and our global community. As such we provide opportunities for significant personal development, complementing our outstanding academic curriculum and building qualities of **resilience, leadership and responsibility.**

We are proud of the fact that our pupils constantly excel in all aspects of life beyond the classroom **nurturing their God given talents.** In recent years we have achieved local, regional and national success in events such as Young Enterprise, dance festivals, art exhibitions and numerous sporting events.

**Our annual school production** is much admired with huge numbers of pupils acting, dancing, singing and performing to packed houses in our Arts’ Theatre. So extensive has been our involvement in the performing and visual arts that in 2018 we were awarded the prestigious **Platinum Artsmark.**

**The Duke of Edinburgh** programme is well established and sees large numbers of pupils undertake and achieve the Bronze Award in years 9 & 10. So popular is it that the expedition has to be split into two groups over 3 days to accommodate all who wish to take part and over 20 staff go along to supervise and support. There really is a huge cross section of pupils taking part. We have recently introduced the Silver Award and are looking to see this grow over the coming years.

We have an enviable reputation for **exceptional sporting success.** Pupils at Our Lady’s have many opportunities to represent school in areas such as football, rugby, basketball, cricket, athletics, netball, hockey, climbing and rounders.



“ The school’s wide-ranging extra activities enrich students’ lives and are very enthusiastically supported. ”

OFSTED

“ My daughter transferred to Our Lady’s in Year 10 and life transformed for her. My son, very shy and retiring when he first arrived, has flourished beyond recognition. I put this down to the well-disciplined and excellent education they have both received. ”

YEAR 11 PARENT

# Our Enriching School

A wide range of **residential trips** take place each year, including visits to France, Spain and Italy. Closer to home there are regular visits to London, Liverpool and Castlerigg. We take part in many visits to centres of specific interest, museums, theatres, concerts and we run regular reward events.

Opportunities such as these provide **invaluable life experiences** that develop great relationships and foster positive life long memories of our school community.



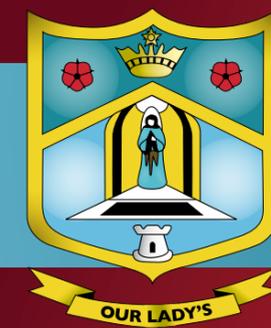


“ My work has taken me into many schools over the years and Our Lady’s really stands out, in a positive way. ”

INDEPENDENT EDUCATIONAL CONSULTANT

“ Behaviour is consistently outstanding. ”

LANCASHIRE SCHOOL ADVISER



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CHIEF EXECUTIVE SSAT