

Archdiocese of Southwark

Guidelines on provision for 14-19 education

Introduction

In the light of the National Curriculum and Qualifications Entitlement for all aged 14-19, which is to be fully implemented from 2013, the entitlement of young people to a Catholic education must also be secured. Provision within the Catholic sector is distinctive, offering students the opportunity to grow in knowledge, understanding, skills, beliefs and values within a community founded on Christian principles and based on the teachings of the Catholic Church.

"The Catholic vision of education promotes the dignity and freedom of every person as created in the image and likeness of God". (Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, *Religious Education Curriculum Directory for Catholic Schools*, 1996, p.10) As an integral part of the mission of the Church, "the aim of education is, literally, to draw out of young people their God-given potential, to enable them to fulfil their unique role in creation within the human community." (CES, *The Common Good in Education*, 1997.)

The Bishops' Conference guidance on 14-19 religious education states: "Students who leave our schools and colleges will have been enriched personally and intellectually. They will have been inspired and challenged by the person and teaching of Jesus Christ and drawn into the community of faith with its conversations and reflections reaching from the origins of all life to eternity. They will be encouraged to recognise the presence of God in themselves and in creation; to reflect seriously on their personal faith and to respect the faith and religious traditions of others; to think imaginatively; to question critically; to grow in maturity and wisdom; to discern their identity and vocation and to acquire the knowledge and skills for future work. They will become increasingly aware of education at the service of human flourishing, as an "inclusive, distinctive and holy endeavour" not simply as a utilitarian means to employment." (Bishops' Conference Department for Catholic Education and Formation, *14-19 Curriculum Guidance*, 2006)

Entitlement for all students

Every Catholic young person up to the age of 19 has the right to receive education in a Catholic setting, where this can be offered. Such provision enables personal and spiritual growth and ensures time for reflection, worship and timetabled religious education within a rich and challenging curriculum.

It is unlikely that Catholic schools and colleges will be able to offer the breadth of curriculum required without working in partnership with other institutions. Catholic schools and colleges must be confident in their own identity and ethos so that they can ensure that any new arrangements take account of the needs of students and the common good.

Where there is a need for collaborative arrangements, partner schools should agree to uphold the values and traditions of the home school which a particular student has attended to age fourteen. It is important for the pastoral care of individual students that they feel they belong to their home school. Collaborating schools should agree a common mission statement for this area of work.

Religious education and the provision for a daily act of worship remain statutory and should be the responsibility of the home school.

Practical implications

Each school or college needs to have effective strategies for 14-19 education in order to fulfil the Catholic vision of education, raise achievement and increase participation in education and training. These strategies should be shared and agreed with partners, parents and employers and should include:

- recognition of the school's responsibility for ensuring that each student in its care has programmes of education, teaching and pastoral support appropriate to his or her needs;
- provision to promote equality of opportunity in terms of gender, race and ability;
- provision leading to increased participation and retention, as well as high levels of attainment and appropriate progression for learners at all levels;
- establishment of effective structures and partnerships for implementation, including provisions for review.

In order to ensure the school or college is effective in meeting the needs of all learners, employers and the community the school or college must:

- be clear about its mission as a Catholic school both in serving its students and in the way in which it works collaboratively to serve a wider community;
- have robust evidence about student achievement, value-added outcomes, course completion and progression, to ensure that the attainment of young people meets all their needs in terms of spiritual and academic progress and development, and that the attainment of students meets the skill needs of employers;
- have evidence to demonstrate that the curricular requirements, including religious education, of the school or college are understood and accepted by the local learning partnership;
- collaborate both with other Catholic schools and colleges and the local authority to increase access and participation, especially by vulnerable and disaffected young people, in further and higher education and training;
- have targets for post-16 progression and arrangements in place for monitoring outcomes and taking follow-up action;
- ensure that the information, advice and guidance available to students are appropriate to individual needs and that outside agencies respect the Catholic school's values and distinctive ethos.

The governors of the school or college are responsible for the effective development and implementation of the school's 14-19 strategy. This means that:

- the leadership of the school should provide the governing body with sufficient information and advice to enable it to fulfil its role;
- a member of the governing body should have a specific remit for 14-19 education;
- the school must be proactively involved with the local authority, the Diocese and the local LSC, so that it can contribute to the development of 14-19 provision.