



ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

INSPECTION REPORT

ST MARY'S CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

LEYLAND

Inspection Date 28-29 June 2016
Inspectors Dcn. Paul Mannings Mrs Elizabeth Dolan
Unique Reference Number 119816
Inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Acts 2005 and 2011

Type of School Catholic, voluntary aided, mixed comprehensive
Age range of pupils 11-16
Number on roll 545
Chair of Governors Mr. John Lumb
Headteacher Mr. Philip Mooney
School address Royal Avenue
Leyland
PR25 1BS
Telephone number 01772 421909
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Date of last inspection 6 May 2011

Introduction

This inspection was carried out under Section 48 of the Education Acts 2005 and 2011

The report of the inspection is produced for the Archbishop of Liverpool (Code of Canon Law 804 and 806) and for the governors of the school.

The inspectors are members of the Christian Education Department and their associates approved by the Archbishop of Liverpool for this purpose.

Information about this school

- St. Mary's is a Catholic 11-16, co-educational high school situated within the Lancashire authority and under the trusteeship of the Archdiocese of Liverpool.
- The campus has benefitted from extensive rebuild and adaptation.
- There are 545 pupils on roll of whom 68% are baptised Catholics, with 20% from other Christian denominations and 12% from other world faith or religious traditions.
- The school serves associated parishes in the pastoral area.
- The school has 40 teaching staff, 35% of whom are Catholic.
- The Religious Education Department has two qualified core members and four who also teach other subjects, one of whom is qualified in Religious Education.
- The Chair of Governors has been appointed since the last inspection.
- There have been two successive headteachers appointed since the last inspection. The current Headteacher was appointed in January 2016 after serving in an executive capacity.
- A second Deputy Headteacher has been appointed.
- Due to management re-structure the Head of Religious Education has gained increased responsibility for leading and managing the department.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Requires Improvement
Grade 4	Inadequate

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Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school.

Overall effectiveness:

St Mary's provides good Catholic Education.

Inspection Judgements

The extent to which the pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school

- The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school is good.
- Outstanding features include pupils understanding of the Mission challenge to let their light shine out through the development of personal talents and commitment to the needs of others.
- Pupils value the support of the Lay Chaplain through dedicated care for their wellbeing and the provision of wide ranging projects to serve the needs of others.
- They are particularly proud of the Years 10 and 11 chaplaincy group that enables their contribution to social justice and to take an overall lead in working toward a strong and identifiable Catholic outlook that serves to inspire younger pupils.
- It is the latter that the school is enriching by providing awareness about what it means to be Catholic and how this has to impact upon all daily actions, so living the call of Baptism.
- Pupils are aware of the increased challenge to personally live their mission in a way that is practical in everyday life. They understand this as a signal to move on from past difficulties and to benefit from the dedication of staff towards their wellbeing and success.
- The pupils show a restored awareness of how this school is part of the local community. They feel encouraged by the breadth of successful changes taking place.
- They appreciate the increased sense of belonging that encourages celebration of success academically and pastorally.
- Pupils are motivated in their preparations for the 2017 Mission and not least by more imminent participation in the Faith in Action Project.

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education

- Pupils' achievements and enjoyment in Religious Education requires improvement.
- This judgement is based upon results of assessed pupil performance in the last three years amidst a challenging period of serious staffing issues and consequent de-motivation of pupils.
- However, this report also emphasises the already good rates of swift, significant and strategic progress in addressing achievement through an incisive drive toward efficient teaching, learning and assessment.
- GCSE performance over three years has ranged from 50%, to 51% to 48% attainment for A*-C, set against a national average of broadly 70%.
- In Key Stage 3 for the same period pupils in Year 7 have maintained acceptable progress from Key Stage 2 benchmarks. Performance in Years 8 and 9 have indicated the need for significant catch-up to enable progression in Key Stage 4.
- Consequently, the school has overhauled the process for assessment and intervention. There is a positive drive to ensuring effective differentiation.
- In class pupils are notably more challenged and motivated. They can articulate their strengths and areas for improvement.

- Their behaviour in class is broadly good. Any underlying minimal disruption is effectively challenged.
- Pupils speak about the school's insistence on their increased rate of achievement as strengthening the status of Religious Education. They understand there is a way to go but they have a clear and underlying sense of purpose. This has been significantly addressed through greater staffing stability which has enabled teachers to have consistent time with classes so as to secure good rates of pupil performance. Pupils are clear that where lessons are good they want to succeed.

How well pupils respond to and participate in Collective Worship

- Pupils' response to and participation in Collective Worship is good.
- Outstanding features include their participation in singing and involvement in diocesan liturgies. Both help them to understand the breadth and variety of Collective Worship.
- Pupils fully appreciate how and why the frequent celebration of voluntary masses and services enrich Catholic life by increasing their sense of belonging to a community that is bonding through a united sense of purpose.
- Similarly, they regard the retreat programme as a celebration of prayer that enables them to build personal relationships and commitment to service.
- Pupils comment upon how chosen themes for weekly Collective Worship encourages and challenges their response to the needs of others. They feel the content serves to increase their knowledge and understanding of world issues and how to work toward social justice. Pupils are increasingly practised in acquiring time for personal reflection and stillness. They highly regard the Chapel as a place for their own space as well as community prayer.
- Year group celebrations are well prepared and in the main include pupils in practical delivery.
- The same is true in a number of form groups. However, in this area there is a need to increase capacity for pupils to take a lead. There are a significant number who expressed this wish. Others whilst not necessarily wishing to lead, commented upon the need for more pupil interaction as opposed to being a passive audience.
- Pupils appreciate that Collective Worship enables them to celebrate personal achievement. Whilst recognising the difference between prayer and awards assemblies they understand how the two are linked as an affirmation and appreciation of personal talents, thus encouraging their sense of worth and purpose.

The quality of teaching and how purposeful learning is in Religious Education

- During the inspection, the quality of teaching and purposeful learning in Religious Education was good.
- Teaching maintains the majority of pupils' interest and participation. Content is well planned and enables most to keep on track and engage in meaningful discussion and feedback.
- Accurately pitched differentiation enables pupils to work independently and in groups. Teacher monitoring of progress is efficient. Learning support assistance is particularly well deployed.
- Teachers are focused on engaging pupils in a rapport that celebrates progress and encourages achievement. Questioning is searching. Answers are affirmed with pupils encouraged to develop their arguments.
- Learning is promoted through teachers' creativity and enthusiasm.
- The few areas of disengagement are the result of the rate of pace and progress being less brisk and efficient in challenge.

- Some lessons contain too much content with little time for consolidation.
- Marking and annotation of pupils' work is based around the school's marking policy and guidelines for feedback. The department should use this as a basis for formulating its own policy that clearly defines the rationale, principles and strategies of assessment for learning. This will ensure pupils know where they are in their learning journey and through a step by step approach contribute to their already established directions for progress. Written feedback should include a process for dialogue between pupils and teachers.
- Self-assessment should be further developed so that pupils revisit their assessed tasks and undertake an in-depth analysis of their work. This too will enable pupils to take responsibility for their learning, identifying where they can improve and therefore progress.

The extent to which the Religious Education Curriculum promotes pupils' learning

- The extent to which the content of the Religious Education Curriculum promotes pupils' learning is good.
- Serious timetabling constraints in the last academic year resulted in a request to the diocese (that was granted) to enable 8% curriculum time for lessons. Already the required 10% has been restored in Key Stage 4 and will follow suit in Key Stage 3.
- In Key Stage 3 the existing programmes of study have begun to be interwoven with the content of the new national framework *People of God – Called to Serve*. This is particularly evident in Year 7. Further development is taking place in Years 8 and 9.
- In Key Stage 4 the GCSE specification is undertaken by all pupils. The new specification for September 2016 has been selected and is currently undergoing thorough preparation.
- Content in both key stages is well supported by Scripture and Church Teaching. Resources are in place for the practical delivery of Catholic Social Teaching.
- There is comprehensive and inclusive coverage of other world faiths and religions.
- British Values are implicit within the curriculum's delivery of Gospel and faith informed values.
- Consequently, the content meets the requirements of the 2012 Religious Education Curriculum Directory.
- Programmes of study are now being evaluated and where appropriate more closely matched to whole school spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The curriculum is further enhanced by well organised teaching bases. There are two specialist rooms. Over time the establishment of a suite would further contribute to raising the profile of Religious Education.
- There is evidence of quality display, which enriches learning and celebrates achievement.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school

- The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is good.
- There are outstanding features. The lay chaplain has provided an explicit policy document that defines prayer in its many dimensions. Collective Worship is revealed as a revelation of God's presence to be shared with and inclusive of the whole community. The policy identifies the need for reverence, contemplation, reflection, interpretation, empathy and meditation. It focuses upon shared expression between home, school, parish and diocesan communities and retreat experiences. The terms of this policy are fulfilled through carefully constructed themes and liturgies shared with staff, year groups and forms. The school's tradition of prayer through music and singing remains a key strength.
- Collective Worship should be further enriched by ensuring annual training includes sessions for maximising leadership and participation by pupils.

- The school is aware of the need for a wholesale revision of the process for monitoring form group provision. There are a significant number of areas where daily worship takes place on an ad hoc basis. The monitoring process should also include regular evaluation of the effective use of available resources. Staff should be aware that resources are not meant to be used verbatim, but rather as a basis for their own adaptation and creativity.
- Pupils have responded positively to the call to be ministers of Holy Communion. This has increased their sense of purpose in ministry to parish and school through Collective Worship.
- Voluntary liturgies held centrally in the learning resource base ensures celebration literally at the heart of the campus.

How well leaders, governors and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life of the school and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils

- Leaders, governors and managers are good in promoting monitoring and evaluating the provision for the Catholic life of the school and in the way they plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils.
- They take to heart and express in practice the call of the Mission Statement to holistically educate pupils, with Catholicity at the heart, by ensuring the whole community is valued care for and enabled to achieve.
- Leadership and governors are committed to actively embedding Catholic life within every strand of the curriculum, pastoral systems, enrichment activities and Collective Worship.
- The Chair of Governors leads by example to ensure that membership of the governing body reflects the Catholic status. He is committed to governors taking a greater and more visible contribution to Catholic life.
- Governors and leadership provide annual training in Catholic life and occasions for their staff to grow in personal spiritual development. This is essential because of the lower percentage of Catholic teachers and the resultant need for all staff to realise they have a valued part to play not least by offering their talents and personal examples.
- The full time Lay Chaplain is well supported in making a key contribution in this area by facilitating cooperation from staff, parents and pupils. He in turn is highly capable of ensuring that Catholic life is on course to reach and maintain the standards required. This is evident within the lay chaplaincy development plan and his overall personal enthusiasm and vision.
- Already pupils express their commitment to be part of this whole process of development. This is because they have a sense of belonging and a realisation that their contributions matter.

How well leaders, governors and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Religious Education of the school and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils

- Leaders, governors and managers are good in promoting monitoring and evaluating the provision for the Religious Education of the school and in the way they plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils.
- The Headteacher is outstanding in providing strategic reform of Religious Education. His vision and expertise gathered over many years of leadership, is expressed within the accurate and meticulously detailed team response to the Section 48 Self Evaluation document. His drive is shared by senior leadership. Consequently, the Head of Department has high level support, direction and a resultant growing confidence in restoring the status of Religious Education after a prolonged period of challenge.

- Key to raising pupils' achievement is the existing highly structured programme for improving teaching and learning provided by senior leadership. They regard this as a vocational and strategic promotion of the school's Mission. Each member of staff and pupil is part of this transformational promotion of stretch and challenge through planning, differentiation, marking for literacy, emotional wellbeing and strategic intervention that meets the needs of all pupils. Staff and pupils are responding positively.
- The school has been conscientious in providing an increased level of permanent departmental staff. This is further enriched by staff from other departments who are committed to teaching Religious Education on a part time basis. This in turn is restoring pupil confidence in consistency and quality.
- The Head of Department and staff have been enabled to attend all diocesan training and establish networks for support from other schools.
- Whilst much remains to be achieved it is evident that Religious Education is firmly on route to continued success and has already attracted the increased confidence of pupils and parents.

What the school needs to do to improve further?

- Continue to develop Catholic life by:
 - Maintaining and further enrich pupils increased awareness of how to live their faith on a daily basis through developing their own talents in serving the needs of others;
 - Ensuring all staff benefit from practical understanding of how their own contributions are vital;
 - Providing thorough preparation for the 2017 Mission, which should include widespread involvement of home, school and parish.
- Further improve Collective Worship by:
 - Establishing a process for monitoring provision and quality delivery particularly within form groups;
 - Training for greater pupil leadership and participation;
 - Ensuring staff training that encourages their effective use of weekly themes and resources.
- Increase the rate of pupils' achievement by:
 - Maintaining the effective practice identified in the Section 48 Self Evaluation Document and already in place;
 - Continuing the existing successful drive in developing quality teaching and learning;
 - Ensuring the departmental marking policy and feedback guidelines both reflect whole school requirements and embeds assessment for learning strategies that are diagnostic, formative, evaluative and summative;
 - Restoring the whole provision of 10% curriculum time as soon as soon as possible.
- Continue to support leadership and management of Religious Education by:
 - Maintaining systems for guidance and monitoring already in place;
 - Safeguarding the restored attendance of staff at all diocesan training;
 - Making full use of diocesan advisory support;
 - Remaining connected with other schools of best practice.

INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education	2
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OUTCOMES FOR PUPILS

How good outcomes are for individuals and groups of pupils	
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school	2
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education	3
How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship	2

PROVISION

How effective the provision is for Catholic Education	
The quality of teaching and how purposeful learning is in Religious Education	2
The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum promotes pupils' learning	2
The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school	2

LEADERS AND MANAGERS

How effective leaders, governors and managers are in developing the Catholic Life of the School	
How well leaders, governors and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life of the school and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils	2
How well leaders, governors and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils	2

Key to judgements: Grade 1 is outstanding, Grade 2 good, Grade 3 requires improvement and Grade 4 inadequate