



ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

INSPECTION REPORT

DE LA SALLE SCHOOL

ST HELENS

Inspection Date: Thursday 1 November 2018

Inspectors: Deacon Paul Mannings and Mrs Barbara Melia

Unique Reference Number: 104834

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: 1,177

Chair of Governors: Mrs Teresa Sims

Headteacher: Mr Andrew Rannard

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Date of last inspection: Wednesday 9 October 2013

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

- De La Salle School is an 11-16, Catholic voluntary aided, mixed comprehensive.
- The school is under the trusteeship of the Brothers of the Christian Schools (De La Salle Brothers) and situated within the Archdiocese of Liverpool.
- There are 1,177 pupils on roll of whom 794 (67%) are baptised Catholics, with 75 (6%) from other Christian denominations and 8 (1%) from other world faith or religious traditions. There are 300 pupils (26%) who express no religious affiliation.
- The school serves the associated parishes in the local pastoral area, which accounts for 61% of the roll, with a significant number of pupils drawn from schools in the wider area.
- The school has 75 teaching staff, 45% of whom are Catholic.
- The Religious Education Department has five full time members, together with one who teaches part-time in addition to other full-time responsibilities. All are qualified in Religious Education.
- The Chair of Governors (a long-standing member of the governing body), Headteacher, Lay Chaplain, Head of Religious Education and Assistant Head of Religious Education have all been appointed since the last inspection.

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

De La Salle School is good in its provision of Catholic Education.

CATHOLIC LIFE

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

- The extent to which the pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.
- Pupils affirm that the Mission Statement is constantly reinforced through every aspect of their school lives. They understand its content as a call to effectively belong to the Lasallian home, school and parish community. They are challenged by the Mission values and aims, to work for the common good and promote social justice; to strive in making the most of the quality education offered and to promote inclusivity and mutual respect, all underpinned by faith.
- Indeed, they have contributed well to the recent and thorough process of reviewing the Mission Statement within the context of the overall evaluation of Catholic Life.
- This in turn has encouraged pupils to embrace the demands of living life in the image and likeness of God. A key expression of this is provided by their wholesale involvement in the 1719 Society. This group began with older pupils being encouraged to express their lives and works in the spirit of Jean Baptiste De La Salle and serve as examples in encouraging younger pupils. The result is a developing community of quality behaviour, mutual respect and encouragement.
- Pupils are generous in their wide-ranging support for fundraising and social interaction with those in need. The Greenhouse Project is a strong example of faith-filled generosity.
- They fully support the school's provision for chaplaincy because it is shared in a spirit of interaction and constant challenge for them to become fully developed young people. This support is shared by those who don't necessarily subscribe to faith but do feel involved and regard chaplaincy as fully inclusive.
- Pupils take full advantage of the school's provision for their personal support and development. Leadership, Organisation, Resilience, Initiative and Communication (LORIC) is being rolled out from Year 7 and already pupils are confident in the value and purpose of their faith, cultural and academic development. This initiative, together with secure pastoral care, enables pupils to be happy, secure and motivated in their stages of holistic physical, emotional and spiritual growth.
- Pupils are provided with Relationships and Sex Education fully rooted in the understanding of loving relationships in the context of a Christian understanding.
- Faith in Action as a way of life and also through its introduction as a programme, ensures that pupils have constant interaction with parish and archdiocesan celebrations and activities. This recently included participation in Adoremus. Pupils are on course to be fully involved in Synod 2020.

The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school

- The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.

- The Mission Statement is understood and is firmly at the heart of all that the school undertakes. It is dedicated to the school's family community focus and supported by aims that express values and ethos in a clearly practical context.
- Its review has encouraged staff to fully participate in Catholic Life, particularly as a result of continued professional development and retreats.
- The school has significantly restored its strong sense of being a Catholic community at all levels. This is well reflected in the tangible expression of Catholic character displayed around the campus.
- The staff community offers best example and practice both in the curriculum and in pastoral life. They encourage pupils at every stage. They are quick to celebrate achievement and to encourage pupils to learn and to move on from any negativities.
- Provision for spiritual and moral development of pupils and staff is best promoted by the local, national and international Lasallian network. This ensures the promotion of its shared Principles of Education. There are frequent opportunities for educational and social exchanges between schools which provide a global awareness and practice of shared charism.
- The school has maintained its provision of quality full-time lay-chaplaincy. Its model of practice is firmly rooted in community support. Initiatives ensure facilitation of mutual sharing and cooperation at the widest level. This includes consistent support from several local clergy. The Chapel is a dedicated sacred space that is well used for private and shared prayer and services.
- Policies for pastoral care strongly reflect the school's Catholic character in ensuring welfare and personal development for each member of the community. There is explicit and lived commitment to the most vulnerable and needy.
- Relationships and Sex Education is delivered within the framework of Personal, Social, Health, and Careers Education (PSHCE). The coordinator of PSHCE was appointed in the last academic year. The policy document and the entire cross curricular programme is focused on what it means to be Catholic in terms of growing up, establishing meaningful relationships and remaining healthy and safe.

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school

- Leaders and governors are outstanding in promoting, monitoring and evaluating the provision for the Catholic Life of the school.
- Much work and dedication to Catholic Life continues to be undertaken by the school's highly proficient, practising and committed governors and leadership. The headteacher is a founder member of the United Kingdom Lasallian Board of Educators as well as an active contributor to the Archdiocesan Secondary Schools Trust. This, together with many years of local Catholic educational leadership, ensures firm steering and promotion.
- Governors in their own right readily support and challenge Catholic Life. Through the Progress Board and The Big Ask (half term evaluations) they continually engage with staff and parents about how to actively live the school's ethos both pastorally and academically.
- The school has prioritised its strategies for engaging with parents. Pastoral Support Managers conducts home visits which have resulted in parents' growing understanding and support of the school's mission. This has been accompanied by increasing levels of interaction with local primary schools which serves to increase their knowledge and understanding of the need for effective partnership.
- The draft structure of the 1719 Society highlights the prioritised strands for the enrichment of Catholic Life through leadership, chaplaincy, communication, student support and extra-curricular dimensions.

- Through its support of Archdiocesan policies, training and participation in initiatives, the school demonstrates its collegiality with the family of schools. The School Improvement Plan prioritises this support as key to its mission of living Catholic witness through action.
- The Section 48 Self Evaluation Document contains rigorous monitoring, analysis and challenge of Catholic Life. Consequently, there is well targeted and planned improvement, supported by appropriate professional development for staff. There is provision for wholesale inclusion of pupils because they are regarded as essential to the school's mission.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education

- The extent to which pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education is good.
- Overall, in class pupils make good progress in relation to their capabilities and starting points.
- In Key Stage 3 the majority of pupils continue to make targeted rates of progress, with a notably improving trend in Key Stage 4. Good and continually better teaching and learning is contributing to this. There is consistent focus on the school's process for pupils' progress expressed by levels of bronze, silver and gold rates of achievement and attainment. This structure is contained within formative and summative assessment. There is effective intervention, together with increasing rates of engaging parental support for improvement.
- Performance at GCSE in 2018 was considerably below national average and clearly this is an area that requires improvement. However, set in the context of standards of achievement and attainment overall, this result does not detract from the prevalence of good standards in class. Mitigating circumstances include the considerably increased rate of challenge for GCSE together with the need for intensively continued practice at examination style questions and techniques.
- There are high levels of teachers' good engagement with pupils who are duly motivated and want to learn. This contributes to behaviour that is good or better. Pupils are increasingly reflective and evaluative in their learning. At all stages they are encouraged to apply learning to their everyday lives. Their opinions are valued. They like Religious Education because they are taught about the world and how to treat people correctly. They say that the content supports their daily lives.
- They are clear about how to make progress because at all times they are in full partnership with their own learning through negotiated progress routes. These are closely monitored thereby ensuring teacher assistance as required. Some 87% of the pupil questionnaires indicated they are assessed helpfully, with 93% affirming that Religious Education promotes high standards.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education

- The quality of teaching, learning in Religious Education is good.
- During inspection there were a number of outstanding elements which included use of pupils prior learning, occasions for structured reflection, evaluation and application of Scripture and Church Teaching.
- Lessons were good overall due to thorough planning and teachers' creativity. Their high expectations motivated pupils to work hard and make progress. Teachers were confident in their subject expertise. They employed a range of teaching strategies, including independent and collaborative study. There was effective differentiation.
- The very few areas requiring improvement were due to learning activities not matching the needs of the pupils which in turn limited progress and caused some to stray from the task.

- Teachers demonstrate considerable skills in asking searching question and encouraging pupils to develop their responses. There is an overall tone of positivity in lessons because achievement and effort are celebrated.
- Learning assistants are well deployed in assisting individual pupils and also contributing as required to whole class progress.
- The department follows the whole school policy for marking and assessment. Good quality feedback maintains pupils' engagement, interest and progress. Emphasis is placed on the development of key concepts and vocabulary. Subject specific literacy is highlighted. There is evidence of recording in a variety of ways, so demonstrating individual and collaborative work. There is use of the marking and diagnostic process, What Went Well (WWW) and Even Better If (EBI) to enable pupils to evaluate achievement in the relation to their individual flight paths. Pupils are provided with time and support to improve their assessments.

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education

- Leaders and governors are good in promoting, monitoring and evaluating the provision for Religious Education.
- They are outstanding in their work toward the ongoing development of Religious Education, placed at the core of Catholic curriculum. Governors and leadership have jointly contributed to the Section 48 Self Evaluation Document so making it entirely fit for purpose as the key tool for departmental improvement.
- The headteacher provides incisive key line management and regular consultation with the department. The appointment of the Head of Department and more recently the Assistant Head of Department has proved highly successful in promoting and maintaining a successful department.
- In Key Stage 3 *People of God – Called to Serve* has been fully implemented. Its programme of study is a good work in progress ably enriched by the Assistant Head of Religious Education who is a key member of the Archdiocesan writing group. The required GCSE specification (Catholic Christianity and Judaism) is undertaken by all pupils. Here too the content is subject to thorough development and resourcing. In both programmes there is abundant coverage of other world faiths and religions. Gospel values, the use of Scripture and Church Teaching together uphold full inclusion of British values. The 10% curriculum entitlement has been applied since the last inspection. Consequently, Bishops and Archdiocesan curriculum requirements are fully met.
- The Head of Religious Education has a clear vision for teaching and learning. This is best expressed through organised departmental management. There are weekly meetings. The departmental handbook is concise and practical. The curriculum overview, learning maps, programmes of study and assessment tasks are all in place. There is regular analysis of data to ensure efficient pupil support and intervention. Members of the department in turn are committed, hardworking and professional. They work well as a productive team and share best practice.
- The governors Progress Board and Evaluation Committee ensures departmental accountability, so ensuring Religious Education is effectively planned and continually well supported.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship

- Pupils response to and participation in the school's Collective Worship is good.
- Those interviewed regard it as relevant because the content helps in focusing on their own lives. It "normalises" their own faith so enriching it and making it apply to all that they do each day, so putting faith into action.
- These are the reasons why they are reverent and respectful during worship. They want to participate. The new Community Song has added both a new dimension to pupils' sense of unity and further encouraged their singing with enthusiasm.
- Members of the Chaplaincy group take a responsible part in preparing and leading worship. As membership increases so too does their willingness to help plan liturgy and encourage their peers in being part of prayer and worship.
- Pupils experience a variety of approaches. They hear and reflect upon Scripture and apply it to their daily lives and to community projects.
- The Section 48 Self Evaluation Document refers to pupils as being, "Grounded in the liturgical calendar." Indeed, the weekly themes assist in their understanding and living of the Church's seasons through Collective Worship. One key example was their 2018 performance of *God's Chisel* during the school Easter Service. The production enabled all pupils to examine their lives in the light of the Passion.
- Pupils continue to benefit from a growing and structured experience of living and working in a faithful and praying community, which in turn is having a positive impact on their spiritual and moral growth. This experience is inclusive of all abilities and relevant to all faiths and those holding world views. Pupils show mutual respect through their willingness to listen to each other and share their beliefs with confidence.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school

- The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is good.
- During inspection the year and form group communities quietly gathered, acted with reverence and focused upon the day's celebration of the feast of All Saints. Scripture was well applied. The life of St. Oscar Romero was seamlessly linked to how the 1719 Society continues to impact upon community daily life. Later in the day Mass was celebrated in the chapel. The voluntary community assembled respectfully and were included in the celebration.
- Praying together is part of the daily experience for staff and pupils both in form and year groups.
- Content has a clear message, purpose and direction. The two lay- chaplains as coordinators provide weekly themes and materials to all staff, available on the school's Learning Area site. Additional support is provided for staff at their request.
- This in turn enables staff to assist pupils in their preparation and presentation of Collective Worship. This is effective because ideas can be shared, resources prepared, and practices arranged. There is rightly no sense of show or performance in Collective Worship, rather the focus upon meaningful prayer and reflection.
- There are occasions when parents are invited particularly for welcome and leavers masses. There are a range of guest speakers invited throughout the year. CAFOD has recently visited and invited pupils to share and use its resources toward their *Faith in Action* projects.
- Collective Worship continues to benefit from the fact that it is of value and the community want to be part of it and to share in whatever way members feel comfortable.

How well leaders, governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship

- Leaders and governors are good in promoting, monitoring and evaluating the provision for Collective Worship.
- Together with lay chaplaincy, they have the experience, knowledge and expertise that has resulted in the existing policies, guidelines and resources.
- The Collective Worship policy has recently been updated and the content is concise and practical. This provides guidance for staff in how to make Collective Worship accessible and meaningful for pupils.
- Members of staff want to be part of Collective Worship because regardless of faith commitment they understand the place of prayer in the Catholic Life of the school. They are willing to share best practice. There is written guidance to support those who require extra support. A programme of training has been established for staff and pupils.
- The whole process for evaluating Collective Worship is developing with strength. This includes learning walks by senior leadership and lay chaplaincy. Pupils who contribute are given award points for their, "special contribution to school life". This process is not about rewards for prayer. Rather it is to enable pupils to understand that Collective Worship is special because it enhances their school life with meaning, purpose and challenge.
- Here too, governors, senior leaders and coordinators of Collective Worship ensure that the Section 48 Self Evaluation Document highlights the centrality of prayer in the school. Here as well they highlight the fact that Lasallian key themes and ideas are celebrated to enable pupils to remain attuned to their global community of schools as well as to the Archdiocesan family. The content of the document is expressed as a collaborative statement. This along with the supporting documents is reviewed on a regular basis.

What the school needs to do to improve further

The school has implemented all areas for action identified in the last inspection and subsequent monitoring process. Governors and leadership at all levels continue to revitalise Catholic Life, Religious Education and Collective Worship through their own commitment and expertise. The Section 48 Self Evaluation document in its own right is a shared strategy for improvement. Its own recommendations form part of the school's continued process for development. In addition, the school should:

- Sustain the successful development of Catholic Life by:
 - Maintaining the process of *Faith in Action* as a means of further harnessing the restored links between home, school and parish.

- Continue the rates of development in Religious Education by:
 - Participating in all diocesan continued professional development and schools networking for the improvement of performance in GCSE;
 - Implementing the continued strategies for teaching and learning in Key Stage 3 through consistent membership of the diocesan writing group;
 - Regular sharing of best practice in departmental teaching and learning;
 - Ensuring the completion of specific written feedback in pupils' books, in the few areas where this requires attention.

- Maintain and further enrich the quality of Collective Worship by:
 - Maximising the process for evaluative learning walks as a means of sharing the abundant best practice in the delivery of weekly themes;
 - Providing pupils with some more time for personal reflection during acts of worship to enable their interaction through personal feedback and discussion.

INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education	2
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CATHOLIC LIFE

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school	1
The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school	1
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school	1

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education	2
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education	2
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education	2

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship	2
The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school	2
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship	2

Key to judgements: Grade 1 is Outstanding, Grade 2 Good, Grade 3 Requires Improvement and Grade 4 Inadequate