



ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

INSPECTION REPORT

ST BEDE'S CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

ORMSKIRK

Inspection Date Wednesday 29 March 2017

Inspectors Deacon Paul Mannings and Mrs Barbara Melia

Unique Reference Number 119792

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 687

Chair of Governors Mr. Stephen Marston

Headteacher Mr. Christopher Horrocks

School address St. Anne's Road
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Date of last inspection 8 March 2012

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. Bede's is a voluntary-aided, 11-18, mixed comprehensive, under the trusteeship of the Archdiocese of Liverpool and situated within the Lancashire Authority.
- The Chair of Governors, Headteacher and the Religious Education Curriculum Leader have each been appointed since the last inspection.
- There are 687 pupils on roll of whom 93.74% are baptised Catholics with the remainder from other Christian denominations.
- Pupils are drawn from associated Catholic primary schools in the local pastoral areas.
- The school has 46 teaching staff, 65.2% of whom are Catholic.
- The Religious Education department has five members, three are full time, with a further two who teach part time in addition to other subjects and responsibilities. Four are qualified in Religious Education.

Key for inspection grades

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

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Overall effectiveness:

St. Bede's provides outstanding 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 outstanding.
- Pupils who were interviewed readily associated with the Mission Statement's reference to the Parable of the Mustard Seed (Matt.13: 31-32), which in their words inspires them, "To all start at their own stages and be open to help and growth."
- They respond to school faith links with the local parish communities. This is exemplified by those who are Minsters of the Eucharist. The Faith in Action Award too, gives them appreciation of how Catholic Life is lived in the Archdiocesan and global community.
- Pupils understand that living Catholic Life is about being role models of good practice citing the Dream Team as an example of older pupils encouraging younger members.
- They readily accept the invitation of the Lay Chaplain to share this ministry, not least through their support of wide-ranging charities, so contributing to the wellbeing of others. This is further exemplified by fundraising for and participation in the annual pilgrimage to Lourdes.
- They respond to the ethos which promotes school as a place in which personal faith can grow through the nurturing of spiritual and moral development. Consequently, this is the reason they like school. At St Bede's personal progress is twofold, encompassing strong pastoral care and academic direction.
- Furthermore, pupils are confident that they belong to a community in which their views count. School Breakfast Club with the Headteacher enables them to review progress in living the Mission. Recently this was further enriched by the well acclaimed Mission Week.

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education

- Pupils show outstanding levels of achievement and attainment in Religious Education.
- This is the result of high standards of teaching and learning which in turn promotes pupils' motivation and enjoyment in lessons.
- Pupils want to succeed. They are in set groups. Herein the strongest levels of differentiation determine individual progress and rates of intervention.
- Monitoring and assessment of pupils' formative work challenges and enables personal progress. Marking provides pupils with well-focussed critiques of their work. Peer assessment enables pupils to motivate each other and so move forward in their learning. Pupils are aware of their targets and they are well directed in reaching them.
- Baseline assessments take place in Year 7. These and subsequent assessment tasks are carefully structured to include Religious Education Levels of Attainment and GCSE grading. Pupils are given annual levels of progression. There is evidence of intervention and targets. Here too, pupils are realistic in recognising any personal barriers to learning because they are given focussed targets for improvement.
- Through the *Yearly Progress Checker* and the *Flight Path* pupils can clearly see the progress they are making.
- Attainment in class is well practiced over time to determine maximum achievement.

- This results in consistent rates of pupils in Key Stage 3 achieving at least three levels of progress with the majority making four and a number reaching five levels.
- That rate of performance provides the foundation for progression in Key Stage 4. In the last three years, pupils' performance at GCSE for A*-C has been 82%,86% and 89% respectively. This indicates sustained high standards and outcomes that are well above the national average for Religious Studies.

How well pupils respond to and participate in Collective Worship

- Pupils' response to and participation in Collective Worship is good.
- Collective Worship that aims to instil pupils with a sense of personal development, shared values and celebration within the local community is outstanding.
- At best their involvement in preparation and delivery through music, drama and reading is outstanding. This area continues to develop for prayer during form time.
- In the main, particularly in year groups and other larger gatherings, pupils are given time to reflect upon themes and outcomes. They readily contribute to discussion and feedback. They link the content to their own life experiences. There is no pressure to evangelise and this results in pupils feeling at ease with their own thoughts and contributions. Pupils are confident to express their own beliefs and for the most part to listen to and respect the thoughts and opinions of others.
- Where prayer intentions are shared in class, this brings about a feeling of closeness with each other's needs and their connection with homes and families.
- They know how the Liturgical Year unfolds and associate specific actions and celebrations with those seasons. Pupils acknowledge and respond to the variety of styles and expressions. They regard the weekly celebration of Mass as a time to voluntarily be part of a year group celebration. They value the retreat experiences as a welcome and indeed popular dimension of prayer that brings about a sense of school community participation.
- Collective Worship is inclusive because by its very nature it contributes to faith development. Moreover, pupils acknowledge that it is as relevant to the needs of those who hold world views.

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

- On the day of inspection, the quality of teaching and purposeful learning was outstanding. Those elements that were good aspired to the overall standard.
- Teachers have a thorough subject knowledge and are vocational in their pursuit of providing the best learning experiences for pupils.
- Content of lessons was thoroughly prepared. Lesson objectives and outcomes were concise, structured and directive. Pupils knew exactly what was being asked of them.
- Teaching was in the main creative, exciting and productive. Starter activities enthused pupils and built upon prior learning. Main tasks were appropriately demanding. Pupils were given a firm foundation of new knowledge and understanding. Skills were practised to provide firm foundations for each stage of the unfolding content. Imaginative plenary activities celebrated success and provided progress routes to the next lesson.
- At all stages pupils were included through encouragement to question and to share their outcomes. Timings were realistic and progress pauses well used to encourage confidence. Teachers were particularly adept in appropriately staged task changing, which stimulated interest.
- There was well pitched balance between teaching and learning. Pupils were enabled to work independently and to collaborate.
- Standards of teacher questioning were searching and open. Pupils readily responded with confidence. They were given the confidence to develop their answers.

- Some pupils spoke about how Religious Education encourages a sense of hard work because they know how committed their teachers are. They experience a great sense of purpose and relevance in lessons. Furthermore, they want to apply their learning to Catholic Life overall.

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

- The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum content promotes pupils' learning is outstanding.
- Pupils receive the required 10% curriculum time. The entire content is faithful to the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory (2012)*.
- In Key Stage 3 *People of God – Called to Serve* is being introduced within a three-year timeframe (2015-2017). The framework is enriched by the department's existing programme and resources. This includes the study of Islam.
- GCSE is taken by the entire Years 10 and 11 cohorts. This provides pupils with an overall sense of purpose in terms of academic pursuit. The new 2018 specification has been introduced to include the required two elements of Catholic Christianity and Judaism.
- Philosophy for Children (P4C) continues to provide a highly effective forum based approach whereby pupils can take charge of their own learning and confidently share facts, thoughts and consequences.
- Catholic Belief, Practice and Social Teaching is carefully and meaningfully exposed within departmental resources.
- There is effective use of Scripture which encourages pupils to apply it to their own lives and to make sense of the contemporary world. This is supported by careful use of reflective time in lessons whereby pupils can pause to take stock of their learning and to consider its meaning and purpose.
- The teaching of other world faiths and religions includes much emphasis upon the celebration of diversity as well as ways in which all can work together.
- Classrooms are well appointed and organised learning bases with quality display materials produced by pupils and staff.
- The overall quality of the curriculum gives credibility to the pupils' high regard for Religious Education.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school

- The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is good.
- Leadership understands the extent to which Collective Worship is a vital element of Catholic Life and for this reason is proactive in its provision. There is conscientious and informed co-ordination.
- The aim is to keep Collective Worship developmental, so ensuring that pupils positive experiences from primary school are continually enriched to promote their spiritual and moral advancement throughout the secondary phase. Care is taken to make Collective Worship speak meaningfully as an act of worship rather than as a show or performance.
- Staff are encouraged to pray and or reflect together so maintaining their spirit of purpose and sense of community.
- Provision for the weekly celebration of the Eucharist, together with a range of wider prayer experiences, including the recent Mission Week and the established retreat programme are outstanding. This has reinforced bonds between school and the local parish. Links have been made with other church communities and guest speakers.
- Resources are provided for the weekly year group gatherings and daily form time prayer. Adaptable resources are provided for staff and pupils.

- Themes have been carefully constructed for each year group which include *Welcome, Vocation, Global Awareness* and *Living with Integrity*. These express the Liturgical Year. They include enriching exposition of other world faiths and religions.
- Prayer books are supplied for pupils to use as a personal resource and as creative journals.
- The Mission Statement is embedded throughout all themes and resources. This ensures Gospel values continually enrich the community in its challenge to live responsibly and for the common good.
- Monitoring includes gathering the views of staff and pupils to consider strengths and areas for action. This process will benefit from structured refinement that will continue to inform staff training needs.

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 outstanding in promoting and developing the Catholic Life of the school and show the same degree of understanding of and commitment to the Mission of the Church. The Section 48 Self-Evaluation document and the School Improvement Plan consistently steers and reviews provision.
- The Director of Christian Education has responsibility for managing and facilitating all aspects of Catholic Life. The work undertaken is of the highest value.
- For the Lay Chaplain, employed part-time, the role is a vocational drive to, “Keep God alive in school.” Here to is immense involvement with and availability for the whole community, which in its entirety is appropriately described as an active chaplaincy team.
- The Mission Statement is an invitation to the school community to model Catholic Life as people created in the image and likeness of God, using the person of Jesus Christ as the ultimate role model in living for the common good.
- There are frequent reviews and ongoing processes to maintain abundant initiatives and welcome new ideas.
- British Values are modelled on Gospel values lived in the spirit of the Beatitudes to maintain a vibrant ethos whereby parents, staff and pupils experience democracy, justice, liberty, tolerance and mutual respect.
- The policy for Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Education provides a secure basis for right social behaviour that upholds the mission. This directs pastoral care that is about securing a safe environment where all can succeed and live as personal examples.
- Partnership with the local parish and clergy has continued to grow significantly. The school has maintained established links with local schools. There has been much focus on what the school refers to as, “Extending its borders.” This has resulted in active exchange and bonds of friendship with a school in China.
- The result is a school which is held in the highest regard by parents, staff and pupils because they are enabled to belong to a place, “Where Jesus is not a stranger.”

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 line managers provide outstanding monitoring and evaluation of Religious Education. Together they plan and implement challenging improvement to outcomes for pupils. The subject is firmly secured in its core position as a major contributor to Catholic Life.

- Structured line management including the Link Governor and Director of Christian Education provides well informed and enthusiastic support. The Section 48 Self-Evaluation is a shared, concise and strategic document that directs progress. The content informs the three-year departmental development plan. There are regular half term reviews of outcomes and continued progress.
- The Curriculum Leader for Religious Education has been in post for almost three years. The existing high standards of departmental leadership and management have been maintained and developed. Departmental staff are extremely supportive. They are enabled to flourish in their professional commitment in providing only the best for pupils. This is reflected in the regular meetings to review the impact of assessment, achievement, attainment, teaching and learning. There are frequent learning walks, sharing of best practice and scrutiny of pupils work to ensure consistency in standards.
- Every aspect of departmental organisation and delivery is comprehensively documented. The content is accessible, concise and entirely practical.
- Continued professional development includes the Curriculum Leader's participation in a Catholic Leadership programme, a national research project and regular input for the Archdiocesan programme for new heads of Religious Education. Members of the department have access to school network and diocesan training.
- These are the reasons why Religious Education at St Bede's is highly respected by home, school and parish.

What the school needs to do to improve further:

- Maintain and constantly enrich the outstanding Catholic Life and Religious Education by:
 - continued implementation of areas for development identified in the Section 48 Self-Evaluation document.
- Improve further the good provision for Collective Worship by:
 - developing the monitoring process to identify and share best practice in staff training;
 - continuing to develop involvement and leadership strategies for pupils during form time, thereby ensuring their maximum engagement and use of time for personal reflection.

INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education	1
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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	1
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education	1
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	1
The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum promotes pupils' learning	1
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	1
How well leaders, governors and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils	1

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