



ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

INSPECTION REPORT

ST. AUGUSTINE OF CANTERBURY CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

ST. HELENS

Inspection Date	Thursday 16 January 2014
Inspectors	Deacon Paul Mannings Mrs. Barbara Melia
Unique Reference Number	104833
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	649
Chair of Governors	Mr. Ian Davies
Headteacher	Mrs. Linda Mousdale
School address	Boardmans Lane Blackbrook St. Helens WA11 9BB
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Date of last inspection	Wednesday 10 July 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. Augustine of Canterbury Catholic High School is a voluntary-aided, mixed comprehensive in the Archdiocese of Liverpool.
- The school is situated in the St. Helens Authority.
- There are 649 pupils on roll of whom 65% are baptised Catholic, with 32% from other Christian denominations and 3% from other world faith or religious traditions.
- Pupils are drawn from associated Catholic primary schools in the pastoral area.
- There are 48 teachers of whom 50% are Catholic.
- The Religious Education department has five members. Three are full time (core). Two are part-time (in addition to other responsibilities). All 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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Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school.

Overall effectiveness:

St. Augustine of Canterbury is a good Catholic high school.

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 respond with dedication to the call of the school's mission to, "Respect each other in the spirit of Jesus Christ." They express this tangibly through their responses to wide ranging community projects for the needs of others locally, nationally and internationally.
- Pupils speak of the Mission Statement as 'real'. It makes them feel wanted and cared for. This in turn generates positive attitudes within the school. They appreciate the school's emphasis upon their working as a family.
- Pupils are proud of both their school and local community. They are confident to share their own beliefs.
- Religious Education enables them to live the Gospel through their actions. They can clearly articulate how this is done.
- Pupils identify what makes their school Catholic. This includes strong appreciation of chaplaincy support. They know that school strives to enable fulfilment of their personal potential. They appreciate high standards set by the school for their moral development.
- Opportunities for pupils' spiritual development are identifiable in the whole Catholicity of the school. Pupils look out for each other and confidently praise achievement.

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education

- Pupils' levels of achievement and attainment in Religious Education are good.
- Over time pupils achievement by the end of Key Stage 3 is good. Currently in Year 7 progress targets are set from individual baselines. In Years 8 and 9 very high aspirational targets are set according to individual pupils expected rates of progress. In the Section 48 Self Evaluation document details of pupils' individual performance set against this criteria indicates shortfalls. However, progress overall by the end of Year 9 is good when set against their baseline performance, with 83% working within Level 5+ and 47% achieving Level 6+. There are 13% working securely within Level 7.
- In Key Stage 4 achievement at GCSE is good. Over time, performance by the end of Year 11 has continued to rise. In the 2013 cohort 64% achieved A*-C, with 25% gaining A*-A. This ranks Religious Education amongst the school's lead departments.
- Most pupils are enabled to make good progress that is commensurate with their age and stage. In some areas this is outstanding.
- Pupils enjoy Religious Education. Their behaviour in class is good. In some areas it is outstanding. These factors make a significant contribution to achievement overall.

How well pupils respond to and participate in Collective Worship

- Pupils' response to and participation in Collective Worship is good.
- Outstanding elements include their active participation. They listen attentively. Others use the time for silence or for personal reflection.
- Pupils relate well to the themes for prayer and worship. They relate these to their daily needs. The content supports their understanding of the Liturgical Year. This in turn reinforces their sense of belonging within the school's Catholic life.
- In Collective Worship pupils respond to questions and challenges. They readily express their views. Many feel that prayer enhances their understanding of Catholic social teaching.
- Pupils feel empowered to include wide ranging social and moral issues when preparing their own Collective Worship. Consequently their perceptions of world events are well informed.
- Pupils state that in some form groups their participation would be better facilitated by more structure for their involvement. In these instances they felt themes and resources could be exposed more creatively.
- Other pupils whilst appreciating the opportunities for their involvement would like these to include more back-stage invitations such as helping with preparation, music and where appropriate staging and scenery for major events. This too would further reinforce the school's expertise in Visual Arts.

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

- The quality of teaching and purposeful learning in Religious Education is good.
- In a number of areas teaching and learning is outstanding. In a minority of instances it requires improvement.
- Outstanding elements include planning led by pupils' prior learning. Pupils understand how to improve their work. Teaching is consistently challenging. There is a high rate of pupil achievement. Teaching and learning strategies are of the highest quality. They are enriched by differentiation pitched to all levels of ability.
- Good teaching aspires to the above criteria. Planning is good. There is positive rapport between pupils and staff. Pupils are well motivated and reflect on their learning. Achievement and effort are celebrated.
- Some areas require improvement due to a lack of pupil engagement and an element of low-level disruption. There should be an appropriate rate of pace and progress. This should be linked more closely to differentiation focused on the engagement of all pupils. There should be more encouragement of those who achieve.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is good. In some areas it is outstanding.
- Resources are creative and well deployed.
- Assessment is good and well matched to Religious Education levels of attainment.
- Pupils' written work is good. The content matches the Religious Education programmes. There is understanding of key vocabulary and concepts. Recording is completed in a variety of ways to reinforce pupils' understanding. A variety of differentiated scaffolding and supportive materials and resources are used to meet the needs of all pupils. Marking and annotation is, in the main, according to the policy. It is supported by grades and positive comments.
- In the sample scrutinised there were some inconsistencies in the standard of marking and annotation. Where it is good, challenging targets are given. Pupils are able to judge their own work and that of their peers against clear assessment criteria. They can set their own targets for improvement. They can accept and respond to focused critiques of their work. This is particularly evident in Key Stage 4 This good practice requires development in both Key Stages.

The extent to which the Religious Education Curriculum promotes pupils learning

- The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum promotes pupils learning is good.
- The Key Stage 3 programme of study follows the process of Research, Revelation and Response. The content is comprehensive and well delivered.
- GCSE Religious Studies is undertaken from the start of Year 10 by most pupils.
- The specification is appropriate to pupils needs. In a number of areas the content requires further enrichment to ensure maximum challenge.
- The quality of time provision is 8% in Key Stage 3. This is acceptable due to the constraints of a two week timetable. This should not be reduced. In Years 10 and 11 there is the required 10%.
- The curriculum content makes a strong impact on pupils' spiritual and moral development. Church Teaching is presented authentically and in a style that encourages pupils to reflect and to make informed decisions.
- Other world faiths and religions are carefully included and fittingly interwoven within the programmes.
- Consequently the content provides a good response to the Religious Education Curriculum Directory for Catholic Schools in England and Wales (2012).

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school

- The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is good.
- There are a number of outstanding features namely co-ordination and resources.
- House groups (both in form and larger gatherings) are supported by weekly themes interlinked with the Liturgical Year. There are well prepared supporting materials. Additional resources are available within the school's online facility.
- The content is inclusive of other world faiths and religions.
- Potentially controversial local and world issues are embraced.
- Presentation and sharing in Collective Worship provides challenge. There is abundant provision of opportunities for thought, reflection and personal space.
- Strong provision encourages pupils to respond well. Most are encouraged to train for leadership and participation roles.
- Monitoring of this provision is good. The process identifies those form groups where delivery of Collective Worship requires strengthening. Good practice, such as that observed on the day of inspection, should be shared through the existing programme of in-service training. There should be continued focus upon teachers maximising the use of available resources.
- The school's Catholic life and mission is well underpinned by Collective Worship. There are frequent references to the strands of the Mission Statement. Pupils recognise this as an aid to their understanding and practical support of its content.

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 and developing the Catholic life of the school and show good understanding of and commitment to the Mission of the Church.

- This commitment is well expressed by governors and leaders in the School Improvement Plan and in the Section 48 Self Evaluation document. The Mission Statement is pivotal. They know how to apply it. Crucially they are aware of how to share the task. It is this sharing that has enabled pupils to provide an outstanding response.
- Governors and leaders continually update the Section 48 Self Evaluation document to highlight progress made in monitoring Catholic life.
- The quality of lay chaplaincy is a driving force. This role too is motivated by Mission. It is expressly inclusive of pupils and staff. The time allocation enables untrammelled support for wider ranging initiatives. Equally the lay chaplain is available for individual needs.
- Catholic life is further enriched by the developing chaplaincy team. The team already includes good representation from staff and pupils.
- Links between the school and community are well established and interactive.

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 their promotion, monitoring, evaluation and provision for Religious Education.
- The extent to which they plan together and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils is good.
- The Section 48 Self Evaluation document and School Improvement Plan contain decisive strategies for implementation. They are supported by realistic timescales for completion.
- There is a focus on raising pupils' achievement.
- The capacity for improvement is good. Governors and senior leaders understand and promote the contribution made by Religious Education to Catholic life. This is underpinned by effective and qualified link governance and line management.
- The subject leader demonstrates expertise and commitment to continued development. There is support from a professional and motivated departmental team.
- There is an effective programme for continued professional development. This includes attendance at diocesan in-service.

What the school needs to do to improve further:

- Continue to raise pupils' achievement by:
 - increasing the rates of individual progress in Key Stage 3, specifically in Years 8 and 9 by strategic personal target-setting and intervention;
 - furthering raising of performance in GCSE;
 - ensuring consistency in the quality of marking and annotation of pupils work that includes challenging personal targets.

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	1
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education	2
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

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