



# ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

INSPECTION REPORT

HOLY FAMILY CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

THORNTON

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Inspection Date: Tuesday 14 November 2017

Inspectors: Deacon Paul Mannings & Mrs Barbara Melia

Unique Reference Number: 104962

Inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Acts 2005 and 2011

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Type of School: Catholic, voluntary aided, mixed comprehensive

Age range of pupils: 11-18

Number on roll: 845

Chair of Governors: Mr. Gus Van Cauwelaert

Headteacher: Mr. Matthew Symes

School address:

Virgins Lane

Thornton

Liverpool

L23 4UL

Telephone number: 0151 924 6451

E-mail address: [head.holyfamilyhigh@schools.sefton.gov.uk](mailto:head.holyfamilyhigh@schools.sefton.gov.uk)

Date of last inspection: 31 October 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

- Holy Family is a Catholic 11-18, voluntary aided, mixed comprehensive, situated within the Sefton authority and under the trusteeship of the Archdiocese of Liverpool.
- There are 845 pupils on roll of whom 631 (75%) are baptised Catholics, with 143 (17%) from other Christian denominations and 7 (1%) from other world faith or religious traditions. There are 64 (7%) of pupils who express no religious affiliation.
- The school serves the associated parishes in the pastoral area, with admissions from primary schools in the wider area.
- The school has 55 teaching staff, 43% of whom are Catholic.
- The Religious Education Department has three qualified core members and one part-time member who also teaches another subject specialism.

### Key for inspection grades

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

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# OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

Holy Family 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 good.
- Pupils are confident to get involved because they feel valued, cared for and have an overall sense of belonging. They regard their staff as welcoming and encouraging.
- They are rightly proud of their inclusion in the Mission Statement review and appreciated this invitation to contribute to the school's ethos.
- Pupils understand the Mission Statement's call for them to be, "Inspired by the spirit of God," in their determination to enrich this caring community and to celebrate their own and others' talents and achievements.
- This in turn promotes their personal respect and the ability to relate to and respect others. Pupils demonstrate maturity in their resolution to celebrate each other's successes, to learn from mistakes and to focus on right moral conduct. For this reason, their behaviour is good or better.
- Pupils regard their school as an essential part of the local community. They are highly active in fundraising and social outreach. They regard this as faith in action, a living of the call of Jesus expressed in their Mission.
- They realise the extent to which such activities support their own spiritual and moral growth as they gain experience of a life of personal fulfilment through service.
- Through Relationships and Sex Education they are assisted in their understanding of how loving relationships are founded upon respect and commitment within a Christian context.
- Pupils also understand how Religious Education underpins their sense of personal vocation to do well and to consider their life choices. The content encourages their involvement in the whole Catholic dimension of the school.
- They know how and why the distinctiveness of this Catholic school encourages their Gospel vision that goes beyond the campus. There is significant and increasing engagement with parish and Archdiocesan life. Furthermore, pupils of other faiths and religions together with those who express world view, feels fully included and welcome to contribute, because their diversity is celebrated.

### **The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school**

- The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school is good.
- The Mission Statement's recent and comprehensive review clearly expresses the key elements of the Church's educational mission.
- Staff work towards its implementation because of their own understanding of what it means to be a Catholic school. They are invited to take a full part in school activities, which for them is an essential part of leading by example.

- Consequently, there is a good level of contribution to this whole sense of community because of their interaction and determination to work toward providing the best classroom and wider curriculum practice.
- Staff are good role models in promoting hard work and mutual respect.
- Chaplaincy is currently provided by a small team that interacts with local clergy. The local parish provides a significant contribution. There is ongoing development in increasing involvement with the wider parish communities.
- Catholic Life is underpinned by a strong process for pastoral care, which is appreciated by parents who feel that their children gain a positive experience by being at this school.
- The programme for Relationships and Sex Education has been well planned and implemented with enthusiasm. The policy identifies the school's commitment to its curriculum delivery as essentially about upholding the dignity of the pupils. The content is focused upon pupils' safety and the development of informed relationships. Its delivery is implicit within the school's package for Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Education. It is effectively organised throughout the wider curriculum with Religious Education providing key inputs.

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

- Leaders and governors are good in promoting, monitoring and evaluating the provision for the Catholic Life of the school.
- The governing body has a full quota of Catholics. This has guided their planning of and interactive participation in the renewal of the Mission Statement, together with their informed drive to ensure widespread involvement. They regard this as pivotal to their role.
- The fact that the Catholic Life of the school is a priority is reflected in the school's Section 48 Self-Evaluation which is a team contribution between governors, senior leaders and staff. Key strengths and evidence accurately inform planned improvements.
- Continuous Professional Development enables staff to share outcomes for the common good. Provision includes a regular contribution to staff from the Chair, a former head of two large Catholic secondary schools, on the meaning and value of Catholic Education in its holistic sense. This is shared at induction for new staff. It is also shared at gatherings of parents.
- Evidence makes it clear that governors challenge the whole community to strive toward being a model of best Catholic practice. There is an open-door policy to encourage interaction with parents and eliminate any difficulties or tensions that may inhibit their children's progress. A key example is the service provided by the school's POD, which is appreciated by pupils and parents.
- Holy Family respond well to Archdiocesan policies and through its Mission Statement promotes the vision of the Archdiocese to work collaboratively with the family of Catholic schools.

## **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.

- Whilst pupils make particularly good progress in the lower and higher ability bands in all subjects, their progress in Religious Education ranks amongst the school's highest performing departments. The school has identified the need for development of the middle ability band in all subjects. Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities are making particularly good progress in Religious Education.
- Religious Education is enabling pupils to develop in religious literacy. They are attaining levels of knowledge and understanding, supported by their maturity to reflect spiritually and think ethically and theologically and in particular to apply their Religious Education to everyday life.
- Pupils are encouraged to take an active part in their learning and to realise its relevance to their own development. They regard Religious Education as enjoyable because they are enabled to share their beliefs and views. They refer to staff as being supportive and determined to make this subject interesting and accessible.
- They are well focused by detailed individual progress routes which in turn enables them to remain motivated. This ensures behaviour in class that is at least good and in many areas outstanding.
- Pupils' attainment and achievement, as indicated by both teacher assessment and public examination results, is good. In Key Stage 3 they all meet age related levels of progress and targets. Performance at GCSE remains consistently at or slightly above the national average for \*A-C. In the Sixth Form progress in the general course remains good or better.
- The quality of pupils' work, both practical and written, is good or better. Teachers and pupils are involved in evaluating how well they are achieving. Evidence of book scrutiny indicates that the department is following the whole school marking policy. Positive marking enables pupils to focus on what they are doing well, how their work can progress and the next steps for improvement. This contributes to their good progress and confidence to make further improvements.

### **The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education**

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education is good.
- Lessons are planned with the highest levels of efficiency and specifically linked to individual pupils' assessment pathways so they are confident and learn well. This results in teaching that for the most part is good with a number of outstanding features, namely the identification of precise learning outcomes that provide pupils with clear direction that in turn promotes their motivation.
- Most teachers are confident in their subject expertise and have a precise understanding of how their pupils learn.
- Teachers provide a range of appropriate strategies including independent and collaborative study. Differentiation focuses on enabling pupils to draw from personal experiences and are entirely relevant to each of their needs. Their tasks in class offer scope for all pupils to reach individual outcomes. This too maintains their motivation and concentration.
- Good time management in lessons ensure that every minute counts. There is effective recall of prior learning and how current progress leads to development.
- Teachers are particularly skilled in monitoring, observations and questioning during lessons, so maintaining pupils focus.
- There are carefully prepared and differentiated quality resources that are used effectively to optimise learning.
- Most teachers communicate high expectations about Religious Education to their pupils. There are frequent opportunities for pupils to share and celebrate progress and achievement, which sustains their encouragement to respond positively in terms of motivation and behaviour.

## **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 ensure that the Religious Education curriculum content meets the requirements of the Bishops of England and Wales.
- The required amount of curriculum time is given to Religious Education in Years 9-13. In Years 7 and 8 there is 8% due to timetable constraints. The Archdiocese accepts this percentage which should not be further decreased.
- Religious Education is comparable to other core curriculum subjects, in terms of professional development, resourcing, staffing and accommodation. There is regular attendance by staff at Archdiocesan training. Whole school in-service is well focused on raising pupil attainment and the sharing of good practice amongst teachers.
- Any additional requirements and policies of the Archdiocese regarding the Religious Education curriculum are fully implemented. *People of God – Called to Serve* has been implemented in Key Stage 3. The reformed GCSE programme is now in its second year and is undertaken by all pupils. In the Sixth Form, all follow the validated course in General/Core Religious Education. This is efficiently delivered in weekly extended tutor time and students personal enrichment time. Its provision should now be clearly identified on the timetable. Across all phases the content includes provision for the study of other world faiths and religions. British Values founded upon Gospel faith-informed values are implicit in every aspect of curriculum content.
- Leaders' and governors' self-evaluation of Religious Education is an accurate appraisal of progress that results from rigorous scrutiny and tracking of pupil performance data and areas for improvement.
- The curriculum leader for Religious Education maintains a confident and clear vision for teaching and learning and a high level of expertise in securing this vision. There is leadership by example, which is used efficiently to improve teaching and learning in Religious Education, resulting in teaching that is for the most part consistently good or better. Members of the department meet weekly. They are a hardworking team, dedicated to maintaining pupil progress using their own strengths and creativity.
- Leaders and governors ensure that Religious Education is well planned and monitored. There is effective line management by senior leadership through fortnightly meetings. The link governor has specific expertise in Religious Education and twice-yearly reviews progress, offering affirmation and appropriate challenge.

## **COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

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

- Pupils response to and participate in in the school's Collective Worship is good.
- They regard it as relevant, educational and supportive of the school's values. They feel that acts of worship bring the school community together in its celebration of regular prayer as well as commemorative national events. They understand its importance in upholding Catholic Life and the Mission Statement's aspirations to follow Jesus by being caring, celebratory and supportive of each other.
- Pupils are reverent and attentive during Collective Worship. They are willing to sing, to join in prayer and to contribute to interactive discussion. On the day of inspection several of these elements were particularly evident in both tutor and year group gatherings.

- Pupils are invited to prepare and lead worship. This is an area that the school continues to develop.
- They respond positively to a variety of approaches, ably and meaningfully led by staff. Pupils feel that Collective Worship enables staff to further demonstrate their commitment to being role models and to offer encouragement.
- Pupils comment favourably on the variety of approaches to prayer. They are helped to understand in greater depth the meaning and living of Scripture. They appreciate the challenge offered by Collective Worship in their pursuit of living the Gospel both in their everyday school life and through their outreach toward those in need.
- Collective Worship enables pupils to benefit from a positive start to the school day, a time in which they can reflect personally and make resolutions.
- Pupils are confident in their understanding of the Church's Liturgical Year, its seasons and feasts and the approaches this requires in the overall planning of appropriate worship opportunities. They have knowledge and understanding of how the major seasons and feasts unfold with greater enrichment and meaning over their years at school.
- Collective Worship gives pupils a sense of sharing experiences inspired by either faith or world views. These views are mutually respected. Active participation supports their growth in spiritual and moral development.

### **The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school**

- The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is good.
- Collective Worship is an essential part of school life. Pupils gather daily either in year or tutor groups. There are regular seasonal celebrations.
- The purpose, message and direction of Collective Worship is directed by the Chaplaincy Team. There are high quality weekly themes and resources made available for all staff. These clearly reflect the school's Catholic Life through its Mission Statement.
- Resources include accurate and creative inclusion of other world faiths and traditions.
- British Values are expressed through the Gospel and by a whole sense of inclusion of all participants in the pursuit of responsible citizenship.
- Provision of Collective Worship is monitored to ensure it takes place consistently across all years. Its quality is determined through practical and shared delivery.
- Staff now have a good or better understanding of the Church's Liturgical Year and how it can be lived by all participants.
- They are becoming increasingly skilled in helping pupils to plan and deliver quality worship when appropriate. Thanks to effective coordination and support they have growing understanding of the purpose of Collective Worship and the wide variety of methods and styles of prayer.
- There has also been a growth in encouraging members of the wider community to participate in and where appropriate to lead Collective Worship.

### **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.
- Leaders know how to provide policies and guidelines to plan and deliver quality Collective Worship. Consequently, there is a clear and concise policy document founded upon the school's Catholic Life and Mission.

- Through their own experiences and practises they have a good understanding of the Church's Liturgical Year. They understand too the importance of inclusion of everyone so respecting world faiths, religions and world views.
- They clearly understand how Collective Worship is made relevant to pupils' daily lives. This is because they are aware of the weekly themes and variety of seasonal celebrations not least through their own attendance and participation.
- There is developing promotion of pupils' planning and leading of Collective Worship.
- Leaders offer professional development of staff incorporating liturgical formation and the planning for Collective Worship. This will benefit from increased frequency and focus upon the sharing of existing strengths.
- Leaders and governors regularly review Collective Worship as part of their self- evaluation processes. Key strengths and evidence, together with developmental points are made explicit.
- They ensure that the Chaplaincy Team is supported in its coordination role and in turn receive reports of progress.

## **What the school needs to do to improve further**

Further enrich Catholic Life by:

- Continued regular monitoring of the revised Mission Statement that ensures its impact within the school and in sustaining the growth of deeper community links;
- Extending membership of the Chaplaincy Team to include pupils;
- Considering the restoration of the role of Lay Chaplaincy .

Ensure the continued development of pupil achievement in Religious Education by:

- Ongoing participation in the whole school drive to increase performance of middle band achievers though tracking and intervention;
- Use of peer marking especially in Key Stage 4, so enabling pupils to judge their own and others work against criteria and gain practice in setting targets for improvement.

Maintain progress already made in the quality of Collective Worship by:

- Increased training for pupil leadership;
- Focused and regular training for groups of staff to ensure their maximum usage of the high quality weekly resources and sharing of best practice;
- Greater provision of away day and retreat experiences.

# INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

## OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

|   |   |
|---|---|
| How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education | 2 |
|---|---|

## CATHOLIC LIFE

|  |   |
|--|---|
| The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school                      | 2 |
| The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school   | 2 |
| How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school | 2 |

## 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***