



DIOCESE OF BRENTWOOD



Inspection Report

Name of School: De La Salle Catholic School and Language College

LEA: Essex URN: 115237

Inspection Dates: 30th June 2010

Reporting Inspectors: Ms Colette Dawson and Mr Anthony Castle

This Inspection was carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of School: Secondary
School Category: Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils: 11 - 16
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 747
Appropriate Authority: The Governing Body
Date of previous Inspection: June 2007

School Address:
Ghyllgrove
Basildon Essex SS14 2LA
Tel. No. 01268 281234
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Chair of Governors: Mrs M. Collis
Headteacher: Dr M Curnock

Introduction:

The Inspection was carried out under Section 48 of the Education [Schools] Act 2005 by Inspectors appointed by the Diocesan Bishop at the request of the Governing Body of the school.

The Inspectors acknowledge and are appreciative of the full support, co-operation and courtesy they enjoyed from the Governors, Headteacher, Staff and Pupils of the School both before and during the Inspection. The Inspectors wish to express their gratitude to all concerned.

The focus of the Section 48 Inspection was:

- Classroom Religious Education
- The Catholic nature of the school through:
 1. Worship
 2. Links with the Catholic and wider community
- Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development

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Basildon
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SS14 2LA

Head Teacher: Dr M Curnock

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Description of the School:

De La Salle is a mixed Voluntary Aided Catholic School and Language College serving the needs of the Catholic community of a large area of South East Essex. It is run by the De La Salle Brothers at the request of the Diocese of Brentwood. 'To help them in this service the school has a Christian caring ethos in which all students can develop spiritual and moral, physical, intellectual and social facets of their being.' (Prospectus) The students at De La Salle thrive in an environment which values their social and cultural differences. The students are socially confident and receptive to learning. They respond well to the ethos of the school, learning to support each other and to be sensitive to those who are in need. The Christian ethos and practise of the Catholic faith permeate the life of the school and underpin the excellent relationships with all staff and students and its concern for the individual.

Record of Evidence Base:

Two Inspectors were in the school for the equivalent of two inspection days.

- The study of pre-inspection documentation including the Self Evaluation Form / Denominational Provision (SEF/DP).
- Observation of complete lessons.
- Scrutiny of students' work.
- Participation in a two Assemblies.
- Meetings with the Head teacher, the Parish Priest, the Chair of Governors, the Chaplaincy Co-ordinator, a member of the Basildon Team Ministry who is the R.E. link governor, the R.E. Team and the Pupil Council.
- Observation of displays in the R.E. rooms and around the school.

What the School does well.

De La Salle is an outstanding Catholic School in many areas. It has the capacity to develop further those areas which are good. It is firmly committed to developing its Catholic Christian identity under the outstanding and inspirational leadership of its Head teacher, and Senior Leadership Team, Governors, Staff, Students and their Parents/Carers

Religious Education (R.E.) is at the core of the curriculum at De La Salle. The overall quality of teaching and learning in R.E. is good or outstanding. Lessons are well planned and paced, learning objectives are clearly stated, explained and revisited. In the lessons observed the students were on task, engaged, highly motivated and challenged. Behaviour is excellent. Relationships and class management are strengths of the school. Consideration should be given to other alternatives to St Mark's Gospel at GCSE. Only R.E. specialists should deliver GCSE in years 9 – 11. There is excellent support for the R.E. Department from the R.E. link governor.

Assessment in R.E. at all Key Stages is judged to be very good. Bible skills are excellent. Marking needs to be reviewed with a view to introducing targets/grades so that students can see progression and aim for higher achievement.

The leadership and management of the R.E. department by the Head of R.E. are outstanding. The development of literacy skills through R.E. has made a significant impact on the work of the department across all Key Stages. Students are theologically and scripturally literate and are able to express clearly the beliefs, values and way of life of the Roman Catholic Church and other Christian and Faith traditions.

De La Salle School promotes an outstanding and tangible Catholic Christian ethos. This is subscribed to by all stakeholders – Governors, the Head teacher and Senior Leadership Team, Staff, Students and their Parents/ Carers. The school provides excellent opportunities for the students to develop a strong sense of community through activities which engender feelings of loyalty and belonging. The school has strong links with the two feeder primary schools. This ensures that the Year 6 students, who transfer to De La Salle are familiar with the school and members of staff that they have already met. The emphasis on community is an outstanding

strength. Community cohesion is judged to be excellent. There is a part time Community Cohesion Co-ordinator whose work to date is outstanding. When asked, the students expressed the opinion that they felt safe, secure and cared for while at school.

Displays and artefacts in the R.E. classrooms and around the school are of good quality. They highlight creatively the Catholic beliefs of the school.

Collective Acts of Worship and liturgical celebrations are well prepared and reflective. The standard of Assemblies is exceptionally high. Every classroom has a crucifix as a prayer focus. The Chaplaincy Co-ordinator who is outstanding and inspirational provides excellent support to the liturgy provision.

De La Salle values its links with parents/carers. There is a good level of attendance at meetings arranged for them. Links with governors are excellent. They act as critical friends and are very supportive of the school. Primary liaison is an outstanding feature with the deanery feeder schools. Links with the deanery parishes are in place and developing. There are long established links with CAFOD and the Brentwood Catholic Children's Society (BCCS) who receive monies raised during Advent and Lent.

The students are given many opportunities to become responsible citizens. These include events off timetable with citizenship themes.

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all the students is outstanding. Their personal development and well-being are excellent. De La Salle has excellent links with schools in Africa and China and this enhances the students cultural development.

What needs to be improved?

There are no specific areas for development other than those identified in the Self Evaluation document (SEF/DP) and mentioned in this report.

Overall, De La Salle Catholic School and Language College is outstanding in many areas and has the potential to become outstanding in every area. De La Salle prepares its students so that they leave school happy, well adjusted young adults who are a credit to themselves, their parents/carers and their school. The school owes much of its success to the outstanding leadership of its Head teacher and his Senior Leadership team and to the valued support of his staff and governors.