



ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

INSPECTION REPORT

THE DE LA SALLE ACADEMY

LIVERPOOL

Inspection Date: Tuesday 1 May 2018

Inspectors: P. Mannings and E. Dolan

Unique Reference Number: 136409

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: 11-18

Number on roll: 325

Chair of Governors: G. Proctor

Principal: D. Hayes

Head of School: A. Freeman

School address: Carr Lane East
Liverpool
L11 4SG

Telephone number: 0151 546 3134

E-mail address: hello@de-la-salle.co.uk

Date of last inspection: June 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

- The De La Salle Academy is a Catholic 11-18, voluntary aided, boys 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 325 pupils on roll of whom 162(50%) are baptised Catholics, with 93(29%) from other Christian denominations and 10 (3%) from other world faith or religious traditions.
- The school serves the associated parishes in the pastoral area, with some admissions from the wider area.
- The school has 25 teaching staff, 38% of whom are Catholic.
- The Chair of Governors has been appointed since the last inspection.
- The Principal, Head of School and Deputy Head have all been appointed since the last inspection.
- The coordinator for Relationships and Sex Education has been in post since September 2017.
- The Religious Education Department has two full time members, with additional part time teaching from the deputy head. All are qualified in Religious Education.

Key for inspection grades

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

© 2018 copyright – Archdiocese of Liverpool. This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

The De La Salle Academy requires improvement in its provision of Catholic Education. The Catholic Life is good.

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.
- Some of those interviewed confidently explained how the school's Five Core Principles of Lasallian Education enables them to be part of a global network, focus on the needs of others, keep personal faith, respect themselves and each other, reach their educational potential and ensure that boundaries are broken to ensure an inclusive community. This developed into a wider conversation whereby they linked these with the vision and mission of the school. Pupils regard the whole Mission as a goal to strive for; with an emphasis upon their involvement in school, local and international communities, particularly through vibrant interaction with fellow pupils in Mexico.
- Pupils are encouraged to participate in evaluating how Catholic Life is realistically lived. This takes place during Collective Worship and mainly in Religious Education. They regard the daily gathering to commit themselves to always being faithful as true to their school motto and a fitting challenge to living Catholic Life.
- Certainly, the school's preparation for participating in the Faith in Action award will further strengthen pupils harnessing of home, school and parish interaction.
- Pupils at this school are increasingly encouraged to be responsible young people. They have an innate sense of justice which promotes their generous levels of fundraising and interaction with the neighbouring community.
- Their level of maturity enables forgiveness and the ability to move on and learn from mistakes. Some show a refreshingly positive openness to speak about their own strengths and to celebrate the qualities of each other.
- Pupils value the school's pastoral support because it ensures their wellbeing. They are clear about the reason for safeguarding procedures and how to seek help if it is required.
- They show a maturity in their level of respect for the importance of loving relationships and sexual development within a Christian context.
- Whilst pupils value their Lasallian tradition, the school seeks to further include their participation in Archdiocesan events.

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 and five principles guide the Catholic Life of the school in a practical and measurable way inspired by Lasallian ethos.
- As a small community whose membership includes increasing numbers of other Christian denominations and world views, the school strives to ensure that Catholic Life is as inclusive as possible.
- There is a growing sense of community which is shown through its levels of mutual support and encouragement.

- The campus reflects the Catholic character through its signs and symbols. A recent innovation has been the establishment of the Chapel on a mezzanine overlooking the campus atrium, which is an ideal place for public and private reflection at the heart of school life. Its furnishing is liturgically meaningful, and the atmosphere is conducive to prayer and stillness. This space makes a significant contribution to the school's continuing development of its spiritual character.
- There are positive attempts to restore full time chaplaincy provision. Consequently, a senior leader is co-operating with the Archdiocesan network of chaplains until the post is filled.
- The School has significant numbers of pupils with varying educational needs and therefore provided commitment in ensuring a holistic curriculum with strong provision for the most vulnerable and needy.
- These are very challenging times for the school overall, which has resulted in the need to make extra effort to ensure effective pastoral care and support of staff and pupils.
- Relationships and Sex Education is well planned and coordinated. The policy readily identifies the Catholic context, which determines the appropriate content. Lessons form part of cross curricular provision for Personal, Health and Social Education together with support from Religious Education and Science. Good quality resources are readily available on the school's shared drive. There is access to relevant training for staff.

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. This should continue to be further exemplified within the Section 48 Self – Evaluation Document so supporting its value as the foundation document for development.
- There is continued and planned improvement in place, which includes using the current mission and principles as the tool for monitoring review and development.
- Continued professional development focusing on Catholic Life is available for staff through the Lasallian network.
- There is a good network in place for engaging with parents and carers. This ensures that pupil progress is celebrated. It also enables their awareness of strategies in place to assist those pupils experiencing difficulties.
- Governors and leaders continue to strive in enriching the engagement between school and the wider community. For this reason, since 2016, a member of staff has fulfilled the role of Community Engagement Manager. This has produced a significant impact upon revitalising partnership. It has supported the existing good practice in fundraising and care for those in need. There has been a focus upon pupils spiritual, social, moral and cultural development as central to the range of successful activities promoted, which includes the Community Choir, Community Champions and Cultural Citizens programme. This remains the catalyst in getting pupils involved and enriching pride in their school, whilst encouraging the wider community to do the same. This enterprise has the scope to further strengthen support for Archdiocesan initiatives and vision. It is making a major contribution to fulfilling 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 requires improvement. This judgement applies to the whole package of achievement, teaching, learning, provision and pupils' negative perception of the subject.
- This is being strategically addressed and there are clear signs of improvement albeit with much remaining to be achieved.
- Concerning pupils' capabilities and starting points, there have been inconsistencies in progress at Key Stage 3. In Key Stage 4 performance for GCSE in 2017 was inadequate.
- Over time pupils have lacked study pathways offering clear direction for progress. Evidence from books shows limited encouragement or signposts for development. Some pupils cite this, together with too little work challenge and past changes of staff, as the key reasons for their disengagement.
- However, there is a rising number of pupils using their knowledge, understanding and skills to reflect and think about the demands of religious commitment in everyday life.
- Equally, there remain significant pockets of pupils that lack the motivation to make progress. This is further exacerbated by poor levels of behaviour from some, that seriously impedes the progress of others.
- Yet, when teaching is good or better, they are stimulated to make progress. At this stage they still need the re-assurance that consistent improvement will be maintained. Amongst those pupils interviewed, there was the recognition that improvement is taking place. They want to enjoy Religious Education and indeed some already do.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education requires improvement.
- On the day of inspection there was some outstanding teaching, the remainder requiring improvement.
- The high quality-teaching and learning targeted all pupils to share ideas. There was first class differentiated of resources. Learning outcomes were challenging. Planning was effective with sharp timing. Teaching constantly inspired confidence in pupils by enabling them to succeed. They made rapid progress and were able to evaluate their new learning. There was skilled use of high level thinking skills.
- Teaching and learning that required improvement needed rigorous planning. There was a lack of challenge for the majority. Progress was hindered by low level disruption. There were pupils who showed interest, but slow rates of pace and progress caused distraction. There was an overall need for greater differentiation. These classes needed greater rates of teaching flair and enthusiasm to capture their interest, with greater use of targeted questions and discussion. Teachers needed to communicate high expectations and seek pupil feedback at regulated intervals. Equally there were some instances whereby achievement was celebrated.
- The school has a clearly structured marking policy, which will benefit from the proposed review process in September 2018. In Religious Education, scrutiny of pupils' workbooks provides evidence that the implementation of the policy is ad hoc. Their standards of written work require considerable improvement. Incomplete work is largely unchallenged. There are many gaps in workbooks and much evidence of work green-ticked which is of an unacceptable standard. Where diagnostic and formative comments have been made, pupils responses that are in line with the process for Dedicated Improvement and Reflection Time are rare.

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

- Leaders and governors require improvement in promoting, monitoring and evaluating the provision for Religious Education. The Section 48 Self- Evaluation Document should continue to be populated as the key tool for the identification of departmental development. Indeed, two versions of this document were submitted prior to inspection, the latter demonstrating greater clarity and perspective.
- The school is taking strategic steps to make improvements. An additional full-time member of staff has been appointed to the department. Areas for improvement have been accurately identified. The school is professionally realistic in its appraisal of current needs. Senior leadership and the curriculum leader are working together with direction and purpose. Consequently, whilst the capacity to improve is good and progress is now evident, there are many steps still to be taken to raise pupils' achievement and establish teaching that is consistently good or better.
- Pupils receive 8% curriculum time. Whilst the requirement is 10%, the Archdiocese does have a toleration level (8%) when timetabling is an issue. The allocation of 10% should be made when possible so as to drive pupils' rates of progress.
- The content meets Archdiocesan requirements. *People of God – Called to Serve* is in place in Key Stage 3. This should be developed further. All students are entered for the approved GCSE specification in Catholic Christianity, with Judaism as the second religion. Whilst the school has maintained its 11-18 registration, there is currently no whole school Post 16 provision.
- Other world faiths and religions are carefully included in all programmes of study.
- Over time the department has developed wide ranging resources that focus on Scripture and Church Teaching. For the most part they are differentiated. There is continued appraisal and enrichment to ensure it meets the demands of curriculum reform.

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 requires improvement. However, there is growing evidence of good and better practice.
- They take part in the prayer life of the school. There are varying degrees of pupil participation in prayer, which during inspection was at its best when all pupils met at the start of the day. On another occasion one of the gatherings provided time for stillness and reflection, to which they responded extremely well. Elsewhere there were occasions of pupil disengagement and significant elements of low level disruption.
- Some of the pupils interviewed spoke of how they value the quiet times in Collective Worship. Other spoke about how the Chapel has enabled them to gain from personal time for quiet and stillness.
- They agreed that there are some opportunities for them to lead acts of worship and would welcome this becoming more frequent. The school has noted this as an area for improvement.
- Some pupils have more than a basic approach to prayer, which is indicative that standards are rising. Others regard it merely as a process and offer limited thought and expression. The positive exception to this occurs amongst those involved in the Community Choir and within the process to serve as Community Champions. They speak of how this is prayer in action not least because it gives them a sense of purpose and drive.

- Pupils on the one level have a limited knowledge of the unfolding of the Liturgical Year; yet when matched against their community interaction it comes alive and gathers meaning. This occurred during conversations about Advent as the season of joyful preparation and Lent as a time when they can practice charity through service. This proved pupils' openness to learning liturgical language and understanding its context when linked to meaningful everyday events.
- Whilst for the most part pupils' experiences of living and working in a praying community is currently limited they are indeed keen to respond to the growing opportunities for their participation.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school

- The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school requires improvement.
- Much work is being undertaken to improve the quality of its centrality to the school's mission and values. This is evident within staff briefings and their weekly gatherings in chapel.
- The whole school 'line-up' at the beginning of the day maximises how a relatively small school community can benefit from being together and united in purpose.
- There is a current growth in the provision of good and better practice, Collective Worship so making every effort to eliminate those areas where it is routine and lacking in creativity and challenge.
- There is a practical policy for Collective Worship supported by themes that are related to the Liturgical Year and well supported by Scripture and Church Teaching. There is ample inclusion of the Lasallian charism. Resources include other world faiths and religions, well focused on their specific beliefs and ways of life.
- Staff do readily lead prayer and require further training in bringing life to the themes, using their own creativity and expertise, not least in maximising pupils' involvement. They understand that Collective Worship is about prayer. Further enrichment would relate prayer to their own contexts and skills.
- Through the Community Engagement project guest speakers are invited to Collective Worship.
- Provision is inclusive, offering a rising degree of meaning and purpose to the whole community regardless of faith or world view.

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. This judgment supports the fact that the infrastructure for progress is already supported significantly by the improvement strategies in place. This continues to be directed by the governors Ethos Committee, which is responsible for spiritual development. Supported by senior leadership the committee strives towards providing over time the best possible sharing and celebration of Collective Worship.
- Senior leaders' planning of Collective Worship is rooted in their own faith commitment and practice. They are experienced in best practice and the delivery of training. There is a steady promotion of its celebration in different areas and contexts throughout the campus, most noteworthy being the gatherings outside school and within the atrium and Chapel.
- Their understanding of the Church's Liturgical Year and feasts is tangibly expressed to pupils in a way that demonstrates relevance to their lives.
- They are promoting pupil planning and leadership which over time will enrich their confidence and rates of challenge and purpose.
- There is a programme in place for continued staff training, with an emphasis on staff sharing their own gifts and talents and making the most of the resources available.

- Monitoring and evaluation walks have identified areas of best practice and revealed inconsistencies in delivery and quality. This has formed the basis for improvements identified in the Section 48 Self- Evaluation Document.
- Furthermore, leadership has pulled together and further promoted those liturgical services, events and community practices already enriching Collective Worship, most notably through Community Engagement.

What the school needs to do to improve further

Continue to re-structure all areas of the Section 48 Self Evaluation Document, so making it the key development plan for Catholic Life, Religious Education and Collective Worship by:

- Maintaining its focus on noted areas for improvement;
- Ensuring its current use of concise statements, cross referencing and accuracy of judgements;
- Regular updates that record impact.

Ongoing enhancement of the school's Catholic Life by:

- Using the rising popularity and scope of the *Faith in Action Award* to harness projects by which pupils can further forge links between home, school, parish and Archdiocese.

Consistency in the process for raising of achievement and attainment in Religious Education by:

- Establishing a new process for tracking and intervention;
- Targeted progress indicators for pupils;
- Pupils mastery of assessment techniques through practice.

Maintained improvement in the quality of teaching and learning in Religious Education by sharing best practice in:

- Structured planning;
- Stretch and challenge;
- Inclusion of high-level thinking skills to promote challenge;
- Making every minute count in lessons;
- Growth in the use of pupils' reflection and evaluation.

Strategic use of the policy for marking and assessment of Religious Education by:

- Raising standards in the presentation of written work;
- Following up pupils' work that is incomplete;
- Diagnostic and informative marking that develops a dialogue between teachers and pupils;
- Sufficient time for pupils to reflect on comments, correct errors and set targets for improvement.

Increase the quality of curriculum Religious Education by:

- Provision of the required 10% curriculum time;
- Further enrichment of the Key Stage 3 programme;
- Monitoring of resources to ensure maintained differentiation and application to programmes of study.

Ongoing development of the quality of Collective Worship by:

- Considering the re-timing of form group worship;
- Consistent training for staff focused on maximising their personal creativity in the use of resources;
- Ensuring staff have thorough knowledge and understanding in both following and applying the Liturgical Year to themes and practice;
- Sharing of best practice amongst staff;
- Training for pupils in leading and contributing to Collective Worship, with a specific focus on public speaking.

INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education	3
---	---

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	3
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education	3
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education	3

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship	3
The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school	3
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