



Archdiocese of
Liverpool



Diocese of Liverpool

Report on the Denominational Inspection
carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005 of

THE ACADEMY OF ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI JOINT ANGLICAN AND CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Gardners Drive
Liverpool
L6 7UR

Inspection date:	Tuesday/Wednesday 6 and 7 March 2018
Date of previous inspection:	Monday/Tuesday 18 and 19 March 2013
URN	101857
Inspectors:	Deacon Paul Mannings Mr. David Thorpe

Type of School:	Academy (Non-maintained)
Age range of pupils:	11 – 16 (mixed)
Number on roll:	760
Chair of Governors:	Mr. Peter Alcock
Executive Head:	Mrs. Anne Pontifex
Head of School:	Mrs. Tracey Greenough
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Introduction

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

The report of the inspection is produced for the Anglican Diocese and the Archbishop of Liverpool (Code of Canon Law 804 and 806) and for the governors of the school.

Description of the school

The Academy of St. Francis of Assisi (ASFA) is a joint Anglican and Catholic 11-16 mixed school. The Academy is under the joint sponsorship of the Archdiocese and Diocese of Liverpool. It is a constituent member of the All Saints Multi - Academy Trust. All Saints Sixth Form College is the natural progression route for Year 11 students. The Academy predominantly serves pupils from central areas of Liverpool, with smaller numbers drawn from up to 24 Liverpool postcodes. Students from minority ethnic backgrounds account for 63% of the role and 50% are classified as having English as an additional language (there are 40 languages spoken at the Academy). Currently 65% of students are supported by the Student Premium and 29% have special educational needs. Since the last inspection the Executive Head and Head of School were both appointed in 2015. Also, in 2015, the new Head of Religious Education was appointed. The Religious Education Department has four staff.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

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The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Christian Life at the Academy is outstanding.

The Academy of St Francis of Assisi has maintained and further strengthened its definition and living of Christian Life according to the school's mission and values. This includes all sectors of the community, especially through determined outreach to church, other faith and religious groups and by an overwhelming response to the needs of others through fundraising and outreach.

Grade: 1

The effectiveness of Collective Worship is outstanding.

Collective Worship continues to underpin Christian Life. There are increased rates of staff and student leadership and participation, together with a maintained focus on inclusion of other world faiths, religions and views. Provision has been further enriched by new and meaningful strategies for the sharing of prayer and reflection.

Grade: 1

The effectiveness of Religious Education is good.

Leadership and departmental staff provide good or better standards in class according to students' capabilities and starting points. Whilst achievement currently falls short of national performance requirements (meanwhile having produced the school's highest results for GCSE in 2017), students are being challenged to make progress through well differentiated teaching and learning.

Grade: 2

Improvement in Religious Education since the last inspection

In the last inspection was outstanding. It is now good because the department continues to restructure teaching and learning with highly increased focus on the rising number of students that require additional support. This was an area identified in the subsequent external monitoring process. Rates of achievement have been maintained for higher ability students.

Grade: 2

Capacity to improve

The capacity to improve is outstanding. Both the Executive Head and Head of School are highly experience and proficient in driving challenge and monitoring outcomes. This is evident from the detailed document entitled "Actions Taken from the Previous Self Evaluation," which linked to the current Section 48 Self Evaluation Document, constitutes a robust plan for continued and accountable development.

Grade: 1

Focus for development

To continue the successful process for raising students' attainment and achievement in relation to their starting points and capabilities by: -

- Further embedding the strategies for improvement of teaching and learning already in place;
- Establishing the revised skills-based curriculum in Key Stage 3;
- Maintaining effective and strategic use of prior learning;
- Ensuring staff continue to be fully supported by Archdiocesan and Diocesan training, particularly for GCSE and in meeting the wider needs of the school's joint denominational status.

The development of the school's distinctive Christian nature is outstanding at meeting the needs of all learners.

The school's distinctive Christian values enables members of the school community to develop as individuals. The mission statement recognises the community's diversity and strives to enable achievement. There are many challenges which serve to unite the school in working together in aspiring to offer the best for its members. The Christian character underpins the curriculum through teaching and learning that enables good or better rates of attainment and achievement in relation to students starting points and capabilities. Students are confident in how they are valued and treated with respect in accordance with the aims of the mission. Consequently, for them, school is a place where they are proud to belong. They are encouraged to take leadership roles. They express the mission values through the numerous projects and initiatives that motivates their call to increase personal worth and self-image by serving the needs of others. These values serve as outstanding foundations that underpin the development of Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development in daily life. Such activities as *Human Utopia*, *Priceless* and *Smart* involve staff in enabling students to connect with their inner qualities of uniqueness and potential. The whole curriculum is planned to identify these elements and to support continued development. Restorative Practice guides the school's work in establishing right behaviour and conduct. There are outstanding opportunities to develop social skills, a prime example being *Debate Mate*, which is aimed at personal confidence through articulate discussion and listening. The school's diverse culture ensures mutual inclusivity and support. The environment of the school creatively expresses both its religious character and pursuit of excellence. Outstanding worship and good quality provision for Religious Education includes an outstanding emphasis on the living of faith and personal belief in everyday life. The school has an explicit and readily identifiable interaction with the local community. This is expressed through a strong sense of collaboration and pursuit of the common good. There is the highest regard for diversity and difference. Students commend the school's focus on personal strengths and learning from mistakes, in a spirit of forgiveness and moving on.

Grade 1:

The effectiveness of the provision for Collective Worship is outstanding.

The importance of Collective Worship is reflected in its quality provision. There are daily gatherings either in form time or in year groups. The Anglican and Catholic traditions are clearly expressed. Other denominational groups, world faiths and religions are consistently included. There is a maintained conscientious drive to ensure that those who do not express any faith or religious views are welcome to contribute to any aspects of Collective Worship and so share their own world views and beliefs. The content and expression of prayer and worship is efficiently differentiated to ensure opportunities for voluntary contributions from all members. Provision is well planned. There is evidence of many styles of delivery within and beyond the campus, including retreats and contributions to community celebrations and events. The process for evaluating its quality is effective in identifying best practice and training

needs. Worship areas are well prepared and include focus materials. There is high quality community response to Collective Worship because it reinforces the schools' Christian values and their expression. Staff and students are keen to be involved in its leadership and participation. There are frequent occasions throughout the year when parents and governors are invited to attend and to participate especially in celebrating student achievement and landmark events at the beginning and end of school years. Collective Worship serves to enrich spiritual and moral development through focus on times for silence and contemplation; through opportunities for the community to experience prayer using personal gifts and talents that include highest quality music and singing, drama, creative arts and discussion. Consequently, Collective Worship develops students understanding of Anglican and Catholic Faith in practice. Provision ensures the life and mission of Jesus expressed through the Gospel is made relevant to contemporary society. Students confidently give examples of how and when this takes place and extends beyond the boundaries of practiced faith and religion. They are equally confident in their knowledge and understanding of how the Church Year is lived and celebrated. Students have the highest regard for the well-established participation of local churches, parishes, ministers, clergy and other faith and religious groups, which serve to increase their sense of how Collective Worship is a celebration of unity.

Grade: 1

The effectiveness of Religious Education is good

Standards in class are good or better. Achievement by the end of Key Stages show less than good rates of performance when measured against national performance date. In 2017 this slippage was evident in GCSE full cohort results for A*-C when compared with higher achievement in previous years, despite its remaining the highest performing subject in the school. However, the judgment of good overall takes into account the maintained rates of individual student progress sustained in class in relation to their capabilities and starting points. Their knowledge and understanding of Religious Education is good. They are set challenging and well differentiated targets in acquiring skills and concepts. The fact that students highly rate and enjoy the subject supports their motivation, behaviour in class and overall sense of purpose. Teaching is good with significant outstanding features. Planning and delivery of lessons show high expectations. Learning outcomes are used as benchmarks for progress. Content is well differentiated. Teachers use wide ranging strategies. There is effective use of questioning to ensure students development in thinking and evaluation. Regular assessment provides them with clear indicators for progress. Good work is affirmed. Areas for development are negotiated between teachers and students and closely monitored. This ensures good rates of learning in class. Written and practical responses draw well upon prior learning. Progress and extension tasks maintain effective use of lesson time. Students are confident to ask for help. They are clearly aware of their strengths and areas for improvement. All years receive the required curriculum time. In Key Stage 3 the content is currently being realigned to ensure a firmer foundation for GCSE. All content is fully inclusive of the schools Anglican and Catholic character. There is also full inclusion of other world faiths and religions,

which is a particular strength. British Values are exposed in light of Gospel values. There is fully committed application of Religious Education to students' daily lives and their moral development as responsible people. The curriculum contributes well to their spiritual development through lesson times set aside for personal reflection and analysis of their uniqueness and vocation to develop full personal potential. Classrooms are well appointed and purposeful work bases containing creative and stimulating displays. There is good leadership and management of Religious Education. The department continues to revise its lesson planning to further ensure students receive a skills-based approach that secures progress. Teachers in the department are highly committed. They are supportive of each other, share best practice and are confident in being held accountable for progress. Governors and senior leadership line manage and support the subject well. They ensure a good rate of staffing and resourcing. They share an incisive vision for the subject's continued development.

Grade: 2

The effectiveness of the Leadership and Management is outstanding

Governors and senior leaders are totally committed to the living and practical expression of the school's vision and values through the mission statement. Its ownership by the community is evident from how it challenges them to provide joint Anglican and Catholic determination to focus on the best expression of Christian life. This is identified further and clearly within the Academy Development Plan, though its promotion of "Leading Christian Distinctiveness across the Academy." Through these high expectations, appropriate provision and continued challenge, the school strives toward achieving holistic personal best. This concept is the driving force for senior leaders in driving student progress and achievement that is at least good given their starting points. Development and enrichment of the "whole child" is the reason for the school's *Sanctuary Status*, a safe place where the individual is encouraged to belong and thrive. Safeguarding and special educational provision is paramount. Through such initiatives as *Literacy and Library* students can share in the school's commitment to academic development beyond the school day. The provision of *Charities and Community* outreach highly impacts the schools' place in the community to generously share with and support those in need. *Staff Voice*, *Student Voice* and *Student Parliament* ensure that the say of the community is vital to the continued development of partnership in monitoring whole school life. Governors and senior leaders, through their active commitment and participation, continually challenge the school to implement a Christian vision by their active participation in and monitoring the lasting effects of all stands of its life, which serve to support staff personally and professionally. Religious Education is secure as a core subject that makes a vital contribution to expression of mission. Its continued development is prioritised. Relationships and Sex Education is implicit within provision for Personal, Social, Health and Cultural Education, with content well focused on mutual love and respect. Whole community ownership of and involvement in putting the distinctive Christian vision into practice is best defined through governors and leaders robust monitoring and provision of full time lay chaplaincy. Here is the successful impetus that works with a vibrant chaplaincy team to facilitate Christian action in the community, embracing all faiths, religions and views.

Chaplaincy is pivotal to the school's rigorous interaction with parish, church, other faith and religious communities. The Academy of St Francis of Assisi is about living according to the nature of its patron, by harnessing, enriching, protecting and shaping the environment according to Christian witness through action, inclusion and community that wholly underpins British Values.

Grade: 1

INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

How effective the school is in developing its distinctive Christian nature	1
The effectiveness of Collective Worship	1
The effectiveness of Religious Education	2
The school's capacity for sustained improvement	1

OUTCOMES FOR PUPILS

How good are outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils?	
How well pupils achieve and make progress in Religious Education	2
How well pupils attain in Religious Education	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Christian life of the school	1
How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship	1

PROVISION

How effective is the Religious Education?	
The quality of teaching and purposeful learning in Religious Education	2
The effectiveness of assessment in Religious Education	2
The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum meets pupils' needs	2
How effective is the provision for Collective Worship?	
How well Collective Worship supports spiritual and moral development	1

LEADERS AND MANAGERS

How effective is the leadership and management of the Christian life of the school?	
How well leaders and managers use the Mission Statement to promote, a distinctive Christian vision for the school.	1
The extent to which the governing body provides effective challenge and support for all aspects of its distinctive Christian nature so areas needing development are tackled decisively and responsibilities met.	1
How effectively leaders and managers promote community cohesion	1

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