



ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

INSPECTION REPORT

ST. BEDE'S CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

ORMSKIRK

Inspection Date	Thursday 8 March 2012
Inspectors	Dcn. Paul Mannings Mrs. Elizabeth Dolan
Unique Reference Number	119792
Inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005	

Type of School	Catholic voluntary-aided, mixed comprehensive
Age range of pupils	11-16
Number on roll	689
Chair of Governors	Mrs. Cathy Jenkins
Headteacher	Mr. Richard Varey
School address	St. Anne's Road Ormskirk, L39 4TA
Telephone number	01695 570335
E-mail address	admin@stbedes-ormskirk.lancs.sch.uk
Date of last inspection	10 June 2009

Introduction

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

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 the school

St. Bede's is a Catholic voluntary-aided, mixed comprehensive in the Lancashire Authority. There are 689 pupils on roll, drawn in the main from feeder schools in local pastoral area. Baptized Catholics account for 92% of the roll, with 5.7% from other Christian denominations, and 0.4% from other world faiths or religious traditions. There are 44 teachers of whom 57% are Catholic. The Religious Education department has four members. All are qualified in Religious Education.

Key for inspection grades

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

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Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school.

Inspection Judgements

Overall effectiveness:

How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main Findings:-

St. Bede's is an outstanding Catholic high school committed to its Mission to live as '... a Catholic, caring community striving to develop the talents and abilities of all.'

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils are outstanding. This is reflected in achievement, attainment and the quality of pupils' learning in Religious Education. It is also reflected by the extent to which they contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school. Their response to and participation in Collective Worship is outstanding.

Provision for Catholic Education is outstanding. This is evident in the quality of teaching and purposeful learning, together with assessment in Religious Education. The quality of the curriculum is outstanding. Provision for Collective Worship is outstanding.

There is outstanding leadership and management of the development of the Catholic Life provided by governors and senior leadership. Leadership and management of Religious Education is outstanding. The promotion of community cohesion is outstanding.

The school's capacity for sustained improvement is outstanding. The combination of School Improvement Plan and Section 48 Self-Review is strategic. There is regular and thorough monitoring by leadership. Parents, staff and pupils are wholly confident in their support of the school.

What the school needs to do to improve further

- Continue to maintain and develop the outstanding practices already evident in Catholic Life and Religious Education through:
 - Regular monitoring and review of the Section 48 Self-Evaluation.

How good outcomes are for individuals and groups of pupils

Pupils' achievement in Religious Education is outstanding. Progress in both Key Stages has gained rapid momentum in recent years. By the end of Key Stage 3, 45% of pupils are working within Level 7, with an overall 87.8 attaining Level 6+. This provides firm foundation for progress in Key Stage 4. The 2011 GCSE cohort gained 94% A*-C in Year 10 and 88% in Year 11. Attainment at GCSE remains well above the national average and ranks Religious Education as the best performing subject in the school. Achievement and attainment is

supported by sound teaching, learning and quality curriculum. It is also supported by pupils' enjoyment of Religious Education and their outstanding behaviour in class and around the school.

The quality of pupils' learning and their progress in Religious Education is outstanding. Pace and progress in class is commensurate to their age and stage. Differentiation is evident within all learning strategies. High expectations drive standards. Pupils undertake independent and shared study pathways. Full use is made of prior learning. Thorough monitoring keeps pupils on task. Celebration of progress is accompanied by extension work that enriches knowledge and understanding.

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the School is outstanding. This is expressed through pupils' understanding of the Mission Statement. They confidently articulate its aims and provide examples of how these aims are lived in daily life. This in turn is exemplified by the high rate of pupil involvement in school activities related to living the mission. They are equally confident to express their faith values and world views. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of Church teaching and tradition is expressed through its application to their lives.

Pupils' response to and participation in Collective Worship is outstanding. During the inspection pupils in both the selected year group and randomly chosen form group were actively involved in personal and shared prayer. They were able to reflect quietly and to have personal space generally. They responded to the challenges set and applied the content to their own experiences. Pupils are clear about developments that have enabled greater participation either in group or individual prayer and worship. They provide examples of their readiness to participate not least through music, drama and readings. They are encouraged to participate in planning, delivery and evaluation of Collective Worship. This has led to their increased confidence in to volunteer and to reflect on prayer as integral to their lives.

How good outcomes are for individuals and groups of pupils	
How well pupils achieve in Religious Education	1
• pupils' standards of attainment in Religious Education	1
• the quality of pupils' learning and their progress in Religious Education	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school	1
How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship	1

How effective the provision is for Catholic Education

The quality of teaching and purposeful learning in Religious Education is outstanding. Personal, learning and thinking skills are embedded into all strategic planning and delivery. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their learning. The Community of Enquiry is a key example which has increased their confidence in group learning through interaction and sharing outcomes. All lessons are thoroughly prepared. Teaching styles are creative and exciting. There is skilled questioning, plentiful availability of differentiated

resources and constructive monitoring. Consequently learners are enabled to succeed.

Assessment in Religious Education is outstanding. Robust assessment strategies provide accurate information and up-to-date evidence of pupil achievement. There is a detailed assessment policy. Scrutiny of pupils' work shows regular and systematic assessment in both Key Stages. Assessment is formative, diagnostic and summative. Assessment for Learning and Religious Education levels of attainment are well embedded. The latter are contained in pupils exercise books. They clarify the direction for achievement of each level in each task. Pupils interviewed demonstrated how levels of attainment enable their progress. Teachers set targets. Pupils too are given the opportunity for self-assessment by reflecting on their own achievements and setting personal targets for improvement.

The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum meets pupils' needs is outstanding. There is now 10% curriculum time in both Key Stages. In Key 3 Icons is supported by high quality programmes of study and resources. GCSE is the key study pathway in Key Stage 4. Differentiated materials support pupils specialist needs. Consequently the terms of the national Religious Education Curriculum Directory are being met. Provision makes an outstanding contribution to pupils' spiritual and moral development.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is outstanding. There are weekly year group and daily form gatherings. All themes and resources are related to the Liturgical Year. The wider prayer experiences are exemplary and include voluntary weekly Eucharists together with other services in appropriate seasons. A significant number of pupils have been commissioned as Ministers of the Eucharist. Each lesson begins with prayer. Staff pray together at meetings. There are systems in place to monitor Collective Worship. These include appraisal of year group gatherings and resources by Senior Leadership, Heads of Year, Religious Education, Chaplaincy Team and Student Council. There is monitoring of provision in form groups, which is being further refined. Meanwhile pupils are clear that it is taking place consistently. Collective Worship provides an outstanding contribution to spiritual and moral development.

How effective the provision is for Catholic Education	
The quality of teaching and purposeful learning in Religious Education	1
The effectiveness of assessment in Religious Education	1
The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum meets pupils' needs	1
The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school	1

How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic Life of the school

Leaders and managers provide outstanding promotion, monitoring and evaluation of the provision for the Catholic Life of the school, together with good planning and implementation of improvement to outcomes for pupils. The

Mission Statement is regularly reviewed. The process is thorough and includes the whole community. The headteacher and senior leadership is focused in supporting Catholic Life. This includes in-service training. At all meetings parents receive clear direction about the distinctive nature of this Catholic school. A major impact is provided by the lay-chaplain employed currently for twenty hours per week. When funds are available it is recommended this post becomes full-time. The nature of lay-chaplaincy has been robustly reviewed. Consequently there is development to embrace support for parents, staff and pupils, together with outreach to local pastoral areas. The Strategic Chaplaincy group has open membership to maximise participation. The Director of Christian Education is a key managerial role within school leadership to direct and enrich every facet of Catholic Life. The whole Catholic dimension is reviewed regularly as a core strand of the School Improvement Plan.

Senior leaders and managers provide outstanding monitoring and evaluation of the provision for Religious Education. The head of department provides outstanding leadership and management of a highly qualified and committed staff. Development is supported by their individual expertise. It is also expressed clearly within the Section 48 Self-Evaluation, which is regularly reviewed. There is concise identification of areas for improvement, supported by explicit success criteria.

Governors provide outstanding challenge and support for the Catholic Life and for Religious Education. They are actively involved in monitoring through receipt of Self Evaluation and Self Review reports, together with reports each term. They too are aware of success criteria and confidently join in the challenge to maintain outstanding practice. Governors are an active strand of school team leadership, not least through their own faith and professionalism.

Leaders and managers provide outstanding promotion of community cohesion. St Bede's holds the specialist Gold Award for Community Cohesion. Promotion is expressed through wide-ranging community social interaction and fundraising locally, nationally and globally. Parents and the local community are invited to be an integral part of this outreach. They understand and value the Catholic dimension and how this is practically expressed. Religious Education expresses citizenship through the sharing of gospel values. Pupils receive knowledge and understanding of other world faiths and traditions. They are taught to respect other world views. Collective Worship has inclusive themes related to social challenge and action. The school strives for the common good.

How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic Life of the School	
How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils	1
How well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils	1
The extent to which the governing body provides effective challenge and support for the Catholic dimension of the school so areas needing development are addressed decisively and responsibilities met	1
How effectively leaders and managers promote community cohesion	1