



ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

INSPECTION REPORT

ST. EDWARD'S COLLEGE EDMUND RICE ACADEMY TRUST

LIVERPOOL

Inspection Date: Thursday 2 May 2019

Inspectors: Deacon Paul Mannings and Mrs Barbara Melia

Unique Reference Number: 131320

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

Type of School: Catholic Converter Academy, Co-educational

Age range of pupils: 11- 18

Number on roll: 1094

Chair of Governors: Mr John O'Brien

Principal: Mr Stephen Morris

School address: North Drive,
Sandfield Park,
Liverpool
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Date of last inspection: Wednesday 25 June 2014

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

- St. Edward's is a Catholic, 11-18, coeducational college and member of the Edmund Rice family of schools.
- The school situated within the Archdiocese of Liverpool.
- St Edward's is the Choir School for Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral.
- There are 1094 pupils on roll of whom 1005 (92%) are baptised Catholics, with 64 (6%) from other Christian denominations and 9 (1%) from other world faith or religious traditions. There are 16 pupils (1%) who express no religious affiliation.
- The school draws pupils from pastoral areas within the Archdiocese.
- The school has 67 teaching staff, 55% of whom are Catholic.
- The Religious Education Department has four full time members, together with two who teach part-time in addition to other full-time responsibilities. Five are qualified in Religious Education.
- The Chair of Governors, Principal, Chaplain and Coordinator for Education in Personal Relationships have all been appointed since the last inspection.

Key for inspection grades

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

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Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

St Edward's College is outstanding 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 outstanding.
- Pupils strongly express the extent of their commitment to Catholic Life because it is entirely inclusive of their religious and cultural beliefs and identities. They understand the concept of vocation in their lives and how school nurtures maximum development of their potential, both pastorally and academically. They readily embrace the Mission Statement, using it as a benchmark for their lives within and beyond school.
- In school pupils are confident and secure because they are enabled to thrive in being themselves. Strong pastoral care ensures they are mature individuals, who are willing to encourage and support each other. Their behaviour is of the highest standard. They share an all-pervading commitment to restorative justice and purpose, ready to learn from experiences and to forgive and move on where this is necessary through dialogue and by reconciliation. School prefects serve by personal example.
- Pupils commitment to the common good is wide reaching. It is underpinned by their realisation of and participation in what it means to serve as part of an international Edmund Rice network of schools and associations throughout the world, with appointed youth ambassadors. Locally this is expressed by support of *Faith in Action* (both as an accredited award and by way of life), *Nugent Care*, *CAFOD*, interaction with a local day centre for the homeless, through involvement within parish communities and by a wide range of other projects through which pupils give the gift of their presence and time as well as generous financial support.
- Conscientious and careful delivery of Relationships and Sex Education ensures pupils have a clear Catholic understanding of the meaning of loving relationships and the purpose of sexual love.
- The school constantly increases its networking with all of the pupils supporting parishes. Traditionally the Metropolitan Cathedral is the school's mother church, through which pupils have extensive religious, musical and cultural links.
- The school is at the forefront of all Archdiocesan initiatives, most recently expressed by its support for the Adoremus Eucharistic Congress and in preparation for Synod 2020.

The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school

- The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.
- The Mission Statement is owned, lived and reviewed as necessary. Its content is focused on trust in God, which is expressed through meticulously planned and challenging aims which embrace commitment to the Lord's demanding way of life. The key outcome is to nurture leaders for now and the future; readily willing to express this by their lives and as active members of the Church.

- The school's rootedness in the charism of Blessed Edmund Ignatius Rice means it shares in a worldwide responsibility that ensures provision to be engaged in justice, compassion, support for the poor and marginalised and life that is centred on Catholic Social Teaching. This is reflected within every aspect of the school's delivery of Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Education.
- The school has recently reviewed and where necessary reviewed College Council in liaison with City Council initiatives. This provision has enriched pupils' confidence in the fact that they are included in school policy decision-making, with their views and opinions taken seriously.
- The environment of the campus provides first class tangible artistic and creative witness of the school's Catholicity.
- Chaplaincy provision is valued highly by pupils and staff. There is a part time priest chaplain working closely with the Liturgy Coordinator. Both provide exemplary spiritual support for pupils and staff. They readily facilitate members of the community (staff, pupils and parents) in a wholesale sharing of the ministry of chaplaincy.
- The school provides detailed policies for pastoral care which reinforces the school's highest standards of safeguarding and commitment to wellbeing of pupils and staff. This responsibility is structurally shared between heads of houses, team tutors and school prefects.
- Relationships and Sex Education is a strong work in progress. The policy is detailed and practical. The content is delivered in the main through a cross curricular process. Clearly itemised objectives direct what is to be taught, where this takes place and how it upholds Church Teaching.

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

- The headteacher, senior leaders and governors are outstanding in promoting, monitoring and evaluating the provision for the Catholic Life of the school.
- Catholic Life is the school's *raison d'être*. Governors and leaders are firmly guided by their own faith, life experiences and professional skills in ensuring that the deposit of faith nurtured by past generations is cherished, enriched by the present and passed on securely to future generations.
- Catholic Life is the vocation, lived by the Principal through every aspect of his leadership, best expressed by personal and professional example.
- Governors and leaders use the Mission Statement as their benchmark for regular monitoring of Catholic Life. Visitation reports are undertaken annually. Outcomes inform the provision of annual continued professional development for staff, which is rooted in the charism of the school's trusteeship and as a result, entirely fit to embrace the needs of the community.
- There is continuous evaluation of the ongoing extent to which the school fulfils its partnership with parents and parishes. This includes great investment in supporting its role as choir school to Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral.
- Parents speak highly of the tangible sense of parish that exists between school and the Metropolitan Cathedral. For some it is their only experience of parish whilst for others it extends their interaction within the wider Archdiocese.
- The quality of Catholic Life may be best expressed by the generations of pupils' vocations to the priesthood and to religious life. Four former pupils are currently studying at seminary, one of whom is due to be ordained to the priesthood this year.

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 outstanding overall.
- Results for GCSE Religious Studies in 2018 remained, as always, significantly above the national average. This was a considerable achievement in light of the challenges and demands of the new specification.
- For Advanced Level, achievement was good or better. Whilst some of the candidates were challenged by the increased demands of the reformed specification, an increased number achieved the higher grades.
- Progress indicators in each key stage shows high percentages of pupils continuing to make outstanding progress over time.
- These rates of achievement are testimony to the standards of teaching and learning employed throughout the department.
- Accurate and therefore meaningful data is used regularly to track pupils' performance. This ensures prescribed intervention that is capable of stretch and challenge according to the starting points and capabilities of all pupils.
- In class, pupils' progress routes are well defined. This enables them to work independently and collaboratively, demonstrating high levels of motivation and outstanding behaviour. They concentrate well and ask for help when it is required. Pupils are confident in expressing personal strengths and indeed areas in which they need to make progress.
- Pupils enjoy Religious Education because of its rigour and sense of purpose. They achieve because they are given clear indicators about how to succeed. They highly rate the ample opportunities to debate, to think, to reflect spiritually and at all times apply their knowledge and understanding to the challenges of everyday life.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education

- The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding overall.
- Teachers' high expectations challenge pupils to make outstanding progress.
- Teachers have high levels of expertise. They are creative, lively in approach and particularly well skilled in asking searching questions. Pupils responses are encouraged and affirmed. Where development is needed, they are given clear direction. This motivates their contributions.
- Lessons are well-planned and full use is made of time. There are effective momentary pauses whereby the pupils share their findings. This enables them to return to work with increased sense of purpose.
- There is ongoing monitoring of progress. In all of the lessons observed, pupils remained on task. They collaborated well in assessing progress. Independent learning included ample scope for extension work.
- Marking and annotation is well founded upon the whole-school framework. This provides the structure for pupils to check where they are at and how to improve. In Key Stages 3 and 4 pupils books have a marking progress chart. This includes provision for formative and regular end of task assessment commentaries by teachers and pupils. Teachers are consistently involved in monitoring how well pupils are achieving through self and peer assessment. Frequent feedback from staff enables all pupils to make progress. They can respond in a

systematic way because they have direction. In Key Stage 5 much of the same applies with deeper focus on what skills they need to acquire. Consequently, pupils value the time taken to by staff study their work. They respond with an overall standard of work that shows originality, detail and understanding of key concepts and vocabulary.

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

- Leaders, governors, line and departmental managers are outstanding in promoting, monitoring and evaluating the provision for Religious Education.
- There is the required provision of 10% curriculum time in Key Stages 3 and 4.
- In Key Stage 3 *People of God – Called to Serve* has been well implemented.
- In Key Stage 4 all pupils undertake GCSE Catholic Christianity with Judaism as the second religion.
- Advanced Level has a well subscribed cohort following an approved specification.
- Post 16 General Religious Education is well established and subject to diocesan verification. The content has undergone substantial modification specifically through the introduction of a module on Catholic Life, together with scope for additional community enrichment.
- Other world faiths and religions are contained within each of the programmes of study. British Values are expressed within the context of Gospel and resultant faith informed values.
- Consequently, the content fulfils the requirements of the Bishops *Religious Education Curriculum Directory* (2012).
- Leadership and management of Religious Education is outstanding at every level. The Principal, governors and senior leadership ensure it is at the core of the school's Catholic Life, a leading department within the school. The link governor is a highly experienced former headteacher of a Catholic school. Line management is highly informed. Departmental leadership is highly efficient, rooted in hard work and support for and communication with the staff. Teachers are highly capable and committed members of the team. Ongoing monitoring, challenge and evaluation ensures maintenance of the highest standards, together with provision of structured continued professional development. The latter includes scope for higher professional qualifications as well as access to the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies (CCRS) for the wider staff community.

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 is outstanding.
- Pupils interviewed formally and around school affirmed that Collective Worship is well related to life and helps them to put Gospel values into practice. Significantly noteworthy was how articulate they were in linking prayer and worship to the school's values of personal pride in themselves and others, the ability to work as a team, to grow in faith, to treat others well and to work hard. They agreed that Collective Worship challenges them daily to live and promote school values in daily personal life.
- Pupils appreciate the abundant opportunities to lead and to participate in Collective Worship. As an example, they offered their participation in the life of the Chapel, a place they love. Herein they are provided with so much inspired guidance in and opportunities for the sharing and of leading prayer with confidence and joy. A number serve the school as Ministers of the Eucharist. Pupils readily respond to the call to serve as sacristans, a task

undertaken with pride and commitment. Above all, for many pupils the Chapel is a place in which they can reflect quietly.

- Collective Worship shared during inspection demonstrated the extent of their enthusiastic participation in Liturgy through music, singing, and sharing of the Word.
- Pupils value time for daily personal reflection in all aspects of Collective Worship. They affirm the opportunities given for *Circle Time* and for other occasions in which they can express their beliefs and views in the knowledge that others listen and are respectful.
- Pupils agree that Collective Worship is shared, expressed and celebrated in so many ways throughout the school. They referred to house celebrations, liturgies and retreats, as meaningful experiences of prayer and times for personal space.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school

- The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is outstanding.
- The school by its designation is rooted in an internationally established tradition of excellence in music, which enriches so many aspects of Collective Worship.
- The school provides daily voluntary morning and noon time prayer creatively based upon *The Divine Office*. There are two occasions for weekly Mass. During inspection, House Mass provided evidence of the value of this celebration in both enriching a community dimension and providing pupils and staff with the regular practice and participation in celebrating the Eucharist. There are daily house gatherings for prayer either as a full group or during form time.
- Several of the school's traditions have been restored, which includes the annual celebration of the Feast of Corpus Christi with prayer, rosary procession, Solemn Exposition and Benediction.
- Cathedral liturgies are led by the choir each Sunday and several times during the week. The school's combined musical expertise is used annually for school concerts, liturgies for the celebration of the Feast of St Edward and for Prizegiving.
- The refurbished and re-ordered chapel exemplifies the school's significant focus on prayer as central to Catholic Life. Thanks to generous funding from the trustees, this remains a worthy and highly respected and well used sacred space.
- Provision is fully inclusive of the participation of staff who provided informed and encouraging guidance for pupils in planning their own delivery.
- There is regular and widespread inclusion of parents and the wider community so emphasising the nature of prayer and worship that is truly collective.

How well leaders, governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship

- Leaders and governors are outstanding in promoting, monitoring and evaluating the provision for Collective Worship.
- Their experiences, knowledge, understanding and faith commitment means they are best placed to ensure that prayer and worship fulfils their policy statement by being "central to Catholic education ... an essential part of the school's overall provision ... of (everyone's) entitlement."
- The statement further expresses the school's philosophy for Collective Worship through its contribution to the community's spiritual growth and provide a summary of provision.
- The Liturgy Coordinator manages daily and seasonal acts of worship. The Liturgical Calendar is accurate and illustrates the wide range of prayer and worship that is offered.

- Over time, leaders and governors have striven to ensure that Collective Worship is about participation; the celebration of personal gifts and occasions to have personal space. They continue to ensure that provision at all times faithfully reflects the Catholic character of the school. Equally leaders are insistent that in the spirit of true Catholicism, the themes are inclusive. This philosophy is instrumental in ensuring that Collective Worship has meaning and purpose.
- There continues to be many trials of effective processes for its monitoring and evaluation. This in turn generates relevant training in the sharing of best practice. Here too the process takes full account of pupils' judgements, opinions and training needs.
- Consequently, Collective Worship is accurately described by one parent who has written, "I have attended numerous colleges services, both in school and at the Cathedral, and they have been wonderfully uplifting experiences ... commitment to choral music being a major strength."

What the school needs to do to improve further

Since the last inspection and monitoring, the school has efficiently addressed the single area for improvement. The marking policy was reviewed and now ensures a flawless process for maintaining pupils' individual rates of challenge and achievement.

The Section 48 Self-Evaluation Document is outstanding in quality, with clear and concise statements linked to supporting points of reference. Each of the three sections represents a shared response from leaders and governors in Catholic Life, Religious Education and Collective Worship. The document identifies strengths and areas for improvement upon which the school is continually focused. Therefore, the school should:

Continue to maintain the high standards in each of the three sections by:

- Strategically completing the development points;
- Ensuring the document retains its use as a succinct directive for ongoing success.

INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education	1
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CATHOLIC LIFE

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school	1
The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school	1
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school	1

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education	1
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education	1
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education	1

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship	1
The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school	1
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship	1

Key to judgements: Grade 1 is Outstanding, Grade 2 Good, Grade 3 Requires Improvement and Grade 4 Inadequate