



ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

INSPECTION REPORT

ST. FRANCIS XAVIER'S COLLEGE CATHOLIC ACADEMY

LIVERPOOL

Inspection Date Tuesday 11 June 2013

Inspectors Deacon Paul Mannings Mrs. Elizabeth Dolan

Unique Reference Number 138463

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

Type of School Catholic academy, boys' comprehensive,
with mixed Sixth Form

Age range of pupils 11-18

Number on roll 1,247

Chair of Governors Dr. A. Keeley

Headteacher Mr. L. D. Rippon

School address Beaconsfield Road
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Date of last inspection Wednesday 24 February 2010

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. Francis Xavier's College is a Catholic, 11-18, boys comprehensive with a mixed Sixth Form.
- The school is under the trusteeship of the Brothers of Christian Instruction.
- The school became an Academy in August 2012.
- There are 1,247 pupils on roll of whom 97% are baptised Catholic, with 3% from other Christian denominations and 0% from other faith or religious traditions.
- 75% of pupils come from associated Catholic primary schools in two pastoral areas. The remainder come from other Catholic schools across the city.
- There are 81 teachers of whom 84% are Catholic.
- The Religious Education department has seven members; four full – time and three members of Senior Leadership. All are qualified in Religious Education.

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. Francis Xavier's College provides outstanding Catholic Education.

Inspection Judgements

The extent to which the pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.

- The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.
- Pupils understand the Mission Statement and know how to live its aims in and beyond school. There are interactive links with several parishes in the pastoral area.
- Pupils regard Catholic Life as a dimension that embraces all of their actions. With pride they name the range of charities and social projects supported by each year group. Pupils describe their support of international links.
- Pupils are aware of the effect of the charism of the De La Mennais Brothers. They regard the brothers' residential presence on campus as a dimension of Catholic Life.
- Pupils are conscious of the Gospel challenge to live for themselves and each other. To this end they refer to the school as a facilitator in helping them achieve both socially and academically.
- They are confident to express their beliefs and to listen to each other. This confidence is prevalent in their personal bearing and commitment to work.
- Pupils are proud of their school specifically because it is Catholic. They know how to live as Catholics. Essentially they are immersed within a community and know how to respond to each other. The pastoral care enables them to be themselves and support each other. They are clear about what constitutes right behaviour. To this end there is a prevalent sense of justice. There is a collegiality and security that enables pupils to congratulate effort and achievement.

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education

- Pupils show outstanding levels of achievement and attainment in Religious Education.
- Raising attainment in each Key Stage has been the main focus since the last inspection.
- Pupils make at least good progress according to their age and stage. Many make exceptional progress.
- Quality teaching has raised standards of learning. Pupils concentrate well in class. Their behaviour is outstanding. The popularity of Religious Education is a motivational factor.
- Pupils offer their best efforts and move on to the next level of challenge. This is supported by the use of Levels of Attainment, and GCSE/GCE grading. Pupils are given direction toward meeting the Aspire Challenge. This is supported by personal target setting and regular monitoring of progress.
- Consequently 2012 results for the end of Key Stage 3 show all pupils making at least three assessed levels of progress; 92% for level 5; a further 73% moving to within Level 6 and 31% to within Level 7. This has risen considerably from Levels 5 – 6 in 2010.
- 2012 GCSE performance shows 69.4% of pupils achieving A* - C, 18.3% of these reaching A* - A. This is significant improvement from 51% in 2009 (although that was

a decrease from previous years). In the last three years results have risen to above national average. Projected GCSE performance for 2013 is 75% A* - C.

- Results for GCE AS/A Level remain 100% for grades A – E.
- In Post 16 General Religious Education achievement is commensurate with the ability of each student. Since 2009 a rising number have been entered for the accredited course (as an alternative to AS Level) at Levels 2 - 3

How well pupils respond to and participate in Collective Worship

- Pupils' response to and participation in Collective Worship is outstanding.
- Pupils refer to prayer and worship as a means of promoting community spirit. They regard it as inclusive because they are encouraged to participate. They have maximum opportunities to organise and to lead Collective Worship.
- They contribute with confidence. Some of the roles they undertake are challenging. Their participation demonstrates a sense of being at ease with their own peers.
- Pupils are also confident to share their own beliefs in public. They respond to questions posed during acts of worship.
- Pupils say that Collective Worship often invites them to take action either in the improvement in their own lives or the service of others.
- They appreciate the space offered for quiet time and reflection during form and year group worship.

The quality of teaching and how purposeful learning is in Religious Education

- The quality of teaching and purposeful learning in Religious Education is outstanding.
- This has improved since the last inspection.
- Outstanding and good elements include quality planning. Learning outcomes are challenging. Differentiation is supported by task and by outcome. Levels of pupil interaction and response have improved significantly. They remain on task with enthusiasm. There are frequent opportunities to evaluate progress. Pupils benefit from time for personal reflection. Quality practical tasks provide an exciting dimension to learning.
- Pupils are confident in class because they are well supported.
- Teacher's outstanding subject knowledge is applied practically.
- Assessment for Learning is a key factor in each lesson.
- Assessments are rigorous and varied. Most offer pupils clear direction for improvement.
- There is individual good practice in marking and annotation. There is commentary and target setting. Some teachers are more focused on sharper commentary and progression routes. The good practice requires standardisation for consistent use by the department. The process in Key Stage 4 for pupil assessment feedback should be mirrored in Key Stage 3. However, in Key Stage 4, there are some instances whereby care must be taken to ensure grades awarded meet the demands of the mark scheme.
- Achievement and effort are celebrated in class.

The extent to which the Religious Education Curriculum promotes pupils' learning

- The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum promotes pupils' learning is outstanding.
- Programmes of study and accredited specifications are rich in content. The content enables teachers to deliver according to their own expertise. It is structured to enable

differentiation. The content is supported by learning outcomes focused on *Learning From* and *Learning About* Religious Education. This in turn supports the relevance and challenge of the accompanying assessment tasks.

- There are abundant opportunities for pupils to reflect on the content and then apply it to themselves.
- The content is well linked to pupils' prior knowledge and experience. It focuses well on movement toward the next Key Stage.
- The time allocation at Key Stages 3 and 4 is 8%, the equivalent of two lessons out of twenty-five. Whilst the Bishops of England and Wales require 10%, in this diocese there is an acceptance of two lessons if warranted by local circumstances. The current allocation should never be decreased. If a thirty period week ever becomes the norm, there would be the expectation of three lessons.
- The content provides an outstanding contribution to pupils' spiritual and moral development.
- It meets all of the requirements of the Religious Education Curriculum Directory for Catholic Schools and Colleges in England and Wales - 2012

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school

- The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is outstanding.
- Routine provision for daily form and year groups is central to the life of the school. This is evident from the response of pupils.
- Further evidence is abundant in the quality of themes and supporting resources. These are distributed amongst staff and pupils for their own prayer and presentation. The results are creative, confident and memorable.
- The content takes account of the need to plan pupils own liturgical formation in relation to seasonal services and celebrations. It also includes opportunities for delivery on a wider diocesan scale.
- The content is well related to the Mission and Catholic Life of the school by inclusion of community needs and aspirations. It strongly impacts upon pupil's spiritual and moral development.
- There is an informal and effective system for monitoring operated by senior leadership. This covers delivery, sharing of good practice and identification of needs for further training.

How well leaders, governors and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils.

- Leaders, governors and managers are outstanding in promoting and developing the Catholic Life of the school and show good understanding of and commitment to the Mission of the Church.
- They have an historic pride in the Catholicity of the school. This is expressed practically and spiritually.
- In practice the Section 48 Self Evaluation identifies how Catholic Life is realised. It describes the systems in place for annual review. It clarifies that Catholic Life is the responsibility of all pupils, staff and parents. It also clarifies the co - existence of school with neighbouring pastoral areas and the wider community. At all stages it is rooted in the shared expression of the aims of the Mission Statement.
- Spiritually the Catholicity is lived through the expressed knowledge and understanding of governors and leadership. The number of foundation governors has increased. They remain active participants of the school's prayer, pastoral and academic life.

- Time and thought continues to be invested in the role of lay chaplaincy. This is currently a shared role between two teachers. This ministry is effective in reaching out to pupils and staff. The role is committed to bringing alive the Mission on an everyday basis. It is assisted by a committed voluntary chaplaincy team. The role continues to develop.

How well leaders, governors and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Religious Education of the school and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils.

- Leaders, governors and managers provide outstanding monitoring and evaluation of Religious Education. Together they plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils.
- The evidence base is the Section 48 Self – Evaluation. It is focused on in-depth challenge. Current successes are abundant and consistently monitored. For future reference the sections specifically about Religious Education should be more streamlined to ensure a speedier identification of needs and outcomes. Development strategies could simply refer to accompanying documents. This will result in a concise Section 48 Self – Evaluation that eliminates the need for an alternative development plan.
- Line management by governors and senior leadership is committed and informed. Religious Education is at the core of the curriculum and incisive in its contribution to Catholic Life.
- The subject leader is outstanding in all areas of management. With demonstrated faith, skill and not least determination the department is on a solid footing of organisation and success.
- This has been specifically expressed through the continued raising of standards in pupils attainment and achievement.
- It is a task shared by a professional and highly skilled group of teachers. Amongst the staff there are three senior leaders (of each Key Stage) contributing specific additional skills.
- The outcome is a successful department where pupils progress accurately matches ability.

What the school needs to do to improve further:

- A standardised departmental approach to marking and annotation of pupils work by:
 - Sharing individual good practice already in place;
 - Use in Key Stage 3 of the Key Stage 4 Pupil Assessment Feedback pro – forma, to enable pupils to be clear about individual progress routes;
 - A consistent approach to sharper target – setting;
 - Ensuring grades awarded for Key Stage 4 assessments meet the demands of the mark scheme.

INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education	1
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OUTCOMES FOR PUPILS

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

PROVISION

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

LEADERS AND MANAGERS

How effective leaders, governors and managers are in developing the Catholic Life of the School	
How well leaders, governors 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, governors and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils	1

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