



ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

ST. EDMUND OF CANTERBURY CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

HUYTON

A Section 23 report from the Department for Christian Education

ST. EDMUND OF CANTERBURY CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL
HUYTON

Names of Inspectors: Mr. Paul Mannings Miss Barbara Hunt

Date of Inspection: 11 - 12 May 2004

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Copies of this Report may be obtained from the Governors of the School.

INTRODUCTION

This inspection was carried out under Section 23 of The School Inspections Act 1996.

Its purpose was to report on:

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- Standards
- Teaching and learning
- Pupils' response
- Curriculum
- Leadership and management

WHOLE SCHOOL ASPECTS

- Mission Statement
- Collective Worship
- Spiritual and Moral Development

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 School Inspections Act 1996).

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

Name of School:	St. Edmund of Canterbury Catholic High
Type of School:	Comprehensive Secondary
School Category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	11 - 16
Headteacher:	Mrs. Marie B. Quayle
Address of School:	Lordens Road, Huyton, Liverpool, L14 8UD
Telephone:	0151 489 3944
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Chair of Governors:	Mr. John Romney
Date of last inspection:	13 - 14 October 1998

SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St. Edmund of Canterbury High School is a Catholic voluntary aided, mixed comprehensive school within Knowsley Education Authority. Students are drawn in the main from the four feeder parish primary schools from the Huyton district that includes many areas of significant social and economic deprivation. There are 705 students on roll. Baptised Catholics account for 84% of the roll with 16% of students from other Christian denominations and 0% from other faith traditions. Twenty-three students have statements of special educational needs. There are thirty-eight full-time and two part-time teachers employed by the school, of whom 57.5% are Catholic.

The Religious Education Department is in a process of development with a new head of department who has been in post since September. The current targets set by the school in relation to Religious Education are to:

- * continue to ensure that the Mission Statement provides the focus of the school community;
- * appoint a full-time teacher of Religious Education;
- * review the curriculum time available;
- * further develop the Key Stage 3 schemes of work to link directly to *ICONS*;
- * introduce a new GCSE course for Key Stage 4;
- * work towards raising the standards of A*-C achievement in GCSE Religious Education;
- * further develop teaching and learning strategies;
- * standardise marking and assessment in the department;
- * introduce level descriptors to allow consistent assessment;
- * ensure students and parents have a clear understanding of what is taught in Religious Education;
- * invite key speakers for lessons and assemblies;
- * develop provision for gifted and talented students;
- * assist in further developing the role of the lay chaplain;
- * further develop the use of the prayer room;
- * continue to provide resources for the whole staff in relation to Collective Worship;
- * provide more opportunities for meditation and reflection;
- * continue to monitor and develop the policies for spiritual and moral education.

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school in regard to Religious Education.

MAIN STRENGTHS OF THE SCHOOL

- The school has made very good progress on the three key issues since the previous inspection.
- The school has completed a very good self-review document.
- Quality of display in the Religious Education room and adjoining corridor is very good.
- The Mission Statement is a very good expression of the philosophy of education in this Catholic school.
- The quality of Collective Worship is very good.
- The provision for spiritual and moral development is very good.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- The provision of 10% of curriculum time for Religious Education in Key Stage 3 to fulfil the requirements of the Bishops of England and Wales.
- The department should ensure that there is consistent use of the marking policy and assessment tasks throughout the department, the monitoring of corrections and the completion of unfinished work. The majority of teachers are providing helpful comments along with marks and grades. This should also be developed throughout the whole department.
- Further progress in areas of development already identified by the department namely the appointment of another full-time member of the department, in-service support for teachers from other subject specialisms, progress in the quality of teaching and learning, the departmental sharing of teaching strategies, more detailed lesson planning throughout the key stages and the improvement of GCSE results through the successful implementation of a new course.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made very good progress on the three key issues identified in the last inspection.

The first key issue was to undertake a whole school review of the Mission Statement. All areas of the school community have been consulted. The Mission Statement inclusive of vision and school motto has been consistently reviewed. It is understood and owned by all.

The second key issue was to develop the governors' Collective Worship policy. The policy is in place and all staff have copies. Details of school Collective Worship are published in students' diaries and in the staff handbook. There is also a rota for leading Collective Worship and this indicates whole school involvement.

The third issue was to continue to develop the Religious Education Curriculum. There is a detailed staff handbook in place. Learning objectives are shared with the students who are also included in the target setting. There has been a development of departmental resources that have increased markedly.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Seventeen parents returned the questionnaire and thirteen of these contained only positive comments. From the small amount of questionnaires returned the parents approve of the values and attitudes the school teaches. They appreciate the encouragement parents are given to play an active part in the school and the welcome they receive. They have a clear understanding of what is taught in Religious Education, the good standards achieved and the information available on their children's progress. Their children are happy in school.

There were four questionnaires containing negative comments. Three parents feel the school does not enable their children to achieve a good standard of work in Religious Education. Three parents do not feel they are kept well informed about their children's progress in Religious Education. Two parents feel they are not encouraged to play an active part in the life of the school. Two feel they are not given a clear understanding of what is taught in Religious Education. One parent does not feel their child is happy in school.

There were fifty-four student questionnaires returned; eighteen from Year 9, twenty-six from Year 11 and a further ten from a mixture of the two key stages. There were a lot of positive comments about the friendly atmosphere of the school, the quality of staff and the fact that the school environment is safe because any incidents of bullying are dealt with effectively. Students were particularly appreciative of the range of extra curricular activities that take place especially those operating at lunch times.

SCHOOL'S SELF-REVIEW

The school has completed a very good self-review document.

Concerning the opportunities offered to students in Religious Education, *ICONS* is the framework of study offered at Key Stage 3, thus meeting diocesan and national guidelines. At Key Stage 4 a new GCSE course is available. These courses are supported by the ongoing development of schemes of work.

The school monitors, evaluates and develops the quality of Religious Education teaching through the head of department's monitoring of staff in line with school policy.

Assessment, reporting and recording within the department is supported by whole school policy. All Religious Education reports are on disc and the students are involved in self-assessment each term.

The school provides for the additional educational needs of students through the provision of individual education plans and additional support from teaching assistants. There is also the development of provision for *Gifted and Talented* students.

The school resources the teaching of Religious Education through clear aims and objectives with explicit vision. Resources within the department have increased markedly and continue to develop. Currently there is also a programme of support provided by the Archdiocese.

The effectiveness of leadership and management has been measured against the criteria of progress in completing the key issues from the last inspection. All key issues have been addressed and a development plan is in place to support ongoing progress.

There are opportunities provided for senior staff to consider Church teaching and implications for developments in Catholic Education. This occurs when the headteacher attends the Archdiocesan annual conference for headteachers and provides a report for the senior management team.

Opportunities for the spiritual and personal development of the staff are provided through in-service training days. There are opportunities for staff to attend reflections in the prayer room and to be part of whole school worship.

To ensure the effective co-ordination the head of Religious Education is working towards stability in departmental staffing and the appointment of a further member of staff.

The school continues to develop its distinctive Catholic nature with the Mission Statement as the focus of school life. It is reviewed regularly and belongs to the whole community. Governors and senior staff ensure that the Mission Statement informs all policies.

There are daily act of worship for all pupils and staff.

There is a policy for spiritual, moral and cultural with additional reference to its content within the Religious Education and the Citizenship policy documents.

STANDARDS IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The standard achieved in Religious Education is satisfactory. There is also evidence that a significant number of students are making good progress.

QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

The overall quality of teaching and learning in Religious Education is satisfactory. There were also significant examples of good teaching and learning.

STUDENTS' RESPONSE

Where there is teaching by permanent staff, pupils are being motivated to make good progress in Religious Education. This is evident from most of the class observations and standards of work produced. The group of students interviewed rated Religious Education as both stimulating and productive.

PROVISION FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The school ensures curriculum Religious Education entitlement for each student through *ICONS* in Key Stage 3. At Key Stage 4 all students have access to either a GCSE full course or to Entry Level certification.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

There is committed and developing leadership and management in Religious Education. The head of department, supported by the governors, headteacher and staff, ensures the status of Religious Education continues to be developed throughout the school.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission Statement provides a very good expression of the school's vision of Catholic education.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

The quality and provision of daily year group and form group acts of worship is very good.

SPIRITUAL AND MORAL DEVELOPMENT

Opportunities provided for students' spiritual and moral development are very good.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

How high are standards in Religious Education? How well do students achieve?

1. The overall standard achieved in Religious Education is satisfactory. There is also evidence that a significant number of students are making good progress.
2. Throughout Key Stages 3 and 4 students are in sets according to ability that consequently caters for differentiation ranging from students with special educational needs to those who are *Gifted and Talented*.
3. Differentiation is also practised in all the sets so that students are encouraged to achieve through specific tasks that focus on the individual needs of that group. There was evidence of individual education plans being followed. During one observation a learning support assistant was well deployed to enable individual students to achieve.
4. There are no significant differences in standards achieved by students of different gender background.
5. Class and homework book observations indicate that students' work is well presented.
6. The department should now ensure that there is consistent use of the marking policy throughout the department, monitoring of corrections and the completion of unfinished work. The majority of teachers are providing helpful comments along with marks and grades. This should now be developed throughout the whole department.
7. The department is currently developing the marking scheme to link grades to the levels of the Religious Education Attainment Targets. These levels are being explained to students who are gradually becoming involved in setting their own targets.
8. An area for development the department may wish to consider in Key Stage 3 is the concentration of written work within one exercise book rather than each student's completion of a display book. This would enhance detailed work within one book and any work for display exhibited within the classrooms of adjoining corridors once each term.
9. In several of the lessons observed students were able to communicate their knowledge, understanding and evaluation in a variety of appropriate forms using their own styles, thus demonstrating their awareness of key concepts and skills.
10. Students are being encouraged to ask questions about their faith and relate the teachings of the Church to their own experiences.

How effective are teaching and learning in Religious Education?

11. The overall quality of teaching in Religious Education is satisfactory. There were also significant examples of good teaching and learning. This is an area for development already identified by the department and clearly progress is being made.

12. The examples of good teaching included an overall range of tasks that challenged all students and ranked high in terms of pace and progress.

13. Satisfactory lessons demonstrated organised activities and effective teaching which will benefit further from experience and an acquired knowledge of content.

14. The department is committed to the further development and sharing of teaching strategies. Consequently, planning and classroom teaching indicates that overall, teachers have a satisfactory and in some cases good knowledge and understanding of Religious Education. They are setting at least satisfactory standards that are gradually developing in quality. Consequently expectations are rising as students are being challenged to deepen their knowledge, skills and understanding.

15. In Key Stage 3 schemes of work are being developed and focused directly to *ICONS*. The schemes indicate learning outcomes linked to attainment targets, resources and tasks, links to information communication technology and literacy skills, and details of homework.

16. Within Key Stage 3 the allocation of 10% of curriculum time for Religious Education would ensure the opportunity for all members of the department to further develop more creatively their own input on particular topics and ensure adequate time for topic development in all of the sets.

17. Teachers are planning their lessons using their own briefing sheets that indicate characteristics of the class, a brief outline of the lesson and the context of the lesson. These briefing sheets are now being developed to include learning outcomes, details of homework and references to *ICONS* in Key Stage 3, and specific GCSE and Entry Level components in Key Stage 4.

18. Teachers are developing imaginative strategies for teaching and learning that match the learning objectives and needs of the students. All lessons demonstrate clear starter, main part and plenary activities.

19. Overall, teachers manage the students well and standards of behaviour are generally good. There were two examples of students' disruptive behaviour. In both cases the teachers managed the class very well, insisting on standards and ensuring that progress was made to reach the set targets of the lesson.

20. Time management is good in relation to the pace and progress of the lessons. Again, the allocation of 10% at Key Stage 3 would ensure that specific areas of the course could be further developed.

21. A range of resources are being used effectively, inclusive of artefacts as well as texts and worksheets. Practical work is also undertaken. Within lessons there are opportunities for prayer and reflection. Lessons would also benefit from the development of access to information communication technology.

22. Homework is a regular activity for all year groups and this is effectively set to include follow on tasks, new activities and preparation exercises for the next lesson. Different styles are used for the completion of homework including reading, research, discussion and practical tasks.

23. Throughout their lessons students are acquiring new knowledge and skills as well as developing and increasing their understanding of Religious Education.
24. There is evidence from the lessons observed, and the scrutiny of the schemes of work, of prior learning being used and applied in new contexts throughout both key stages.
25. Most students are demonstrating satisfactory creativity in their work in terms of discussion, written responses and display.
26. The majority of students show interest in their work and sustain concentration throughout the lessons.
27. Students are developing skills that enable them to work well independently and collaboratively. Within all lessons there was a balance between time for individual progress and whole class and/or group work.
28. The policy for assessment, reporting and recording is currently being developed for consistent use across the department.
29. Assessment tasks have been effectively devised and the department is beginning to match these directly to the two attainment targets as well as to the strands and levels. These tasks should now be used throughout the department and the content further developed.
30. Students are taught how to evaluate their own work by effective use of plenary sessions. Within lessons there were also opportunities to pause and to reflect on progress being made. They are also involved in the process of target setting and self-evaluation.

How well do students respond to Religious Education?

31. Where there is teaching by permanent staff, students are being motivated to make good progress in Religious Education. This is evident from most of the class observations and standards of work produced.
32. Where the students' response is satisfactory this is an area for development that will benefit from the school's commitment to providing additional full-time staff in the department and the in-service support of those staff from other subject specialisms.
33. The group of students interviewed spoke very positively about Religious Education particularly the variety of activities used in learning strategies that include opportunities for discussion, video excerpts, drama and occasional field work. They find the staff friendly and interested in the progress of their students.
34. Throughout most of the lessons observed students were able to form constructive relationships with others and respect their views.
35. In several of the lessons students showed initiative, took responsibility for selected tasks, gave feedback and provided a constructive point of view.

36. Throughout the inspection the majority of the students showed through their actions that they know what constitutes appropriate behaviour.

How good is the provision for the curriculum in Religious Education?

37. Overall, there is good provision for the curriculum in Religious Education.

38. The requirements of the Curriculum Directory for Religious Education are met by the school's use of *ICONS* throughout Key Stage 3. This development is being enhanced by the gradual budgetary allocation for the provision of sufficient *ICONS* texts for each year group.

39. In Key Stage 4 the school is committed to all pupils gaining an externally accredited qualification in Religious Education. They follow either a two-year full course in GCSE or an Entry Level course. This development of good practice is being further enhanced by the provision of a new GCSE course and accompanying materials.

40. The time allocated to Religious Education is 6.6% in Key Stage 3 and 9.9% in Key Stage 4. This is a key area for development. The school should now make provision for 10% at Key Stage 3 so as to fulfil the time allocation for Religious Education required by the Bishops of England and Wales.

41. GCSE results for grades A*-C are well below the national average, despite the efforts of the staff. This has been identified by the school as an area for development and a new course is due to begin in the next academic year. Progress will include a revision of teaching strategies by Religious Education staff, with support from the Archdiocese.

42. Religious Education is taught by five staff, one having a professional qualification in the subject. The head of Religious Education teaches most of the timetable throughout both key stages. The remainder of the staff are currently on temporary supply cover. This causes problems in terms of planning and professional development. The school is currently seeking to address this by securing another qualified, full-time member of the department.

43. The school has two rooms specifically for the teaching of Religious Education, one of which contains the departmental resource and records base. Both rooms are well organised in terms of efficient storage and access to materials. Other staff within the department teach in different room bases.

44. The quality of display within the Religious Education teaching rooms is very good, consisting of staff and student generated work. The same quality of display is evident within the corridors near to this room. This is a clear indication that students' work is valued and celebrated and an indicator of the depth of studies undertaken. The concise departmental policy for display clearly indicates both the philosophy and organisational features involved.

45. The financial allocation for Religious Education during the past two years has been the lowest amongst the core subjects but funding from other sources is available for the provision of major departmental requirements.

46. The department is socially inclusive by providing equality of access and opportunity for all pupils to make progress. This is undertaken by differentiation of tasks, staff support and the development in monitoring of teaching strategies.

47. The school respects the faith backgrounds of students who are not baptised Catholics. This is evident from all students being included in lessons, Collective Worship and in the spiritual and moral ethos of the school.

How effective and efficient are the leadership and management in Religious Education?

48. There is a new head of Religious Education, on two management points, whose personal commitment and departmental development indicates that leadership and management skills will develop with experience.

49. There is a clear vision for the subject within the mission of the school with a focus on the promotion of rising standards.

50. There is a well developed departmental handbook containing the Mission Statement, aims and objectives of Religious Education, policies for teaching and learning, assessment, recording and reporting, target setting, homework, discipline, equal opportunities, differentiation, display, chaplaincy provision, spiritual development, relationship with parishes, relationship with parents, and special educational needs. Also contained in the handbook are individual education plans, timetables, resources, GCSE administration and the departmental development plan. It would be helpful if individual education plans could be filed separately for ease of access and to enable the handbook to be specific to overall departmental policy.

51. The co-ordination of Religious Education amidst the difficulties imposed by short term staffing requires the head of department undertaking a high level of practical support and frequent meetings on an informal basis. Once the staff is stabilised this arrangement will be made more formal with prepared planning, agendas and minutes.

52. The department, despite its temporary nature in terms of staff, is developing a bond of team spirit and commitment to the subject's aims and values. This is inspired and motivated by the head of department and supported by the headteacher and management team.

53. The governing body view Religious Education as the core focus of the school and values the input of the departmental staff both in class and in their contributions to the spiritual and moral ethos of the whole school.

54. Priorities for the development of the subject are clearly identified, targets are set and appropriate resources are allocated. These are to be found in the Religious Education development plan, the self-review document, raising attainment plan and the whole school development plan.

55. The head of department has attended in-service training provided by the Archdiocese, Local Education Authority and other agencies to support planning, delivery and evaluation of Religious Education. During the last year this has included support from and meetings with the Archdiocesan Christian Education Department

and from an Advanced Skills Teacher in Religious Education. This is an ongoing process.

WHOLE SCHOOL ASPECTS

How effective is the Mission Statement in the life and work of the school?

56. The Mission Statement is a very good expression of the philosophy of education in this Catholic school and promotes its ethos. The whole school community is committed to being '*A Catholic School learning and living together.*'

57. The statement is concise and also contains a vision statement that can be extracted and used as a summary for display on notices or letterheads alongside the school logo. A separate set of aims clearly indicates how the Mission Statement is lived throughout the school community.

58. The Mission Statement is reviewed annually in a process involving governors, staff, students and parents. It is displayed in the school prospectus, staff handbook and within the students' diaries. It is the focal point from which all school policies are formulated and is either included at the start of each policy or referred to. It is also evident within the whole school development strategies and departmental development plans.

59. The Mission Statement is also exhibited in the reception area of the school and within each classroom.

60. The Mission Statement is used regularly during Collective Worship and recited in class each day as part of group prayers.

61. A group of students were interviewed and through conversation it was clear that the majority were aware of the Mission Statement and how it makes them feel part of the community. Some of the students would, however, benefit from having its content further explained.

How good is the quality of Collective Worship?

62. The quality of Collective Worship is very good overall and takes place at the start of each day. There is a detailed policy containing guidelines to support the aims, philosophy, planning, delivery, resourcing and evaluation of Collective Worship wherever and whenever it takes place.

63. There is a Collective Worship co-ordination and planning group recently established with representatives from the governors, staff and chaplaincy team. This helps to establish the philosophy that the whole school community owns Collective Worship. This team could be further developed by the inclusion of a student representative.

64. Collective Worship takes place once each week for whole year groups and daily within class groups during each morning session of Citizenship, Personal,

Health and Social Education, also within class groups during the first lesson after lunch and at the end of the school day.

65. During the inspection observations of Year 8 and Year 9 year group Collective Worship included key themes, drama, projector images, prayers of intercession led by students and staff, whole group prayers and participation in hymns. There was a real sense of purpose by all involved. During the Year 8 Collective Worship the hymn was at the end whilst in Year 9 the hymn was incorporated within the theme so giving opportunity for reflection on its meaning. In both year groups there were opportunities for quiet prayer and reflection on their own needs and the needs of the wider community. The standard of students' behaviour and participation was very good. Particularly noteworthy were the inclusion of staff and the separation of notices and taking of registers from the actual worship.

66. The Year 10 form group Collective Worship was linked to the theme of Human Rights and included a teacher led input which was both positive and supportive of the theme and developed into prayer for the needs of others. The group was motivated by the theme and responded well to the prayers.

67. During the observation of form group Collective Worship with Year 11 the theme was related to *Alcoholics Anonymous* and included opportunities for reflection, focus on the needs of others, prayers led by the teacher and a link introduction to the guest speaker for the session. This was an experience of prayer and meditation directly relevant to the topic under study.

68. Form group Collective Worship would benefit from the continued development of pupil involvement.

69. The morning sessions, where practical, are ended with a prayer before lunch and the afternoon session is begun and concluded with a short prayer.

70. Other opportunities for Collective Worship include form Masses, Eucharistic celebrations of the major feast of the Church's year, services of Reconciliation, a welcome Mass for Year 7 and their families, and a leavers' Mass.

71. The prayer room is available for quiet reflection during teaching time and during breaks and lunch times where supervision is available.

72. Themes linked to the Church's year are included in the staff handbook and students' diaries. Resources for Collective Worship are catalogued and available for all staff. There is a very good form prayer book, information from aid agencies and lists of students willing to participate in worship.

73. During interviews the students felt that Collective Worship is meaningful at their school. It helps them become aware of the problems of other people. Collective Worship for them provides opportunities for whole school issues to be considered and for quiet, reflective times. The students are aware they can make their own contributions to Collective Worship and use their own skills. Some students would like to have more input in form group Collective Worship.

How effective is the school's provision for the spiritual and moral development of its pupils and how well do they respond to it?

74. The provision for spiritual and moral education is very good, the whole school community striving to put Christian values into practice.

75. There is a spirituality group involving the senior management team, chaplain and local priests. The team provides support for staff to link Church teachings to the faith development of the school community.

76. The recently reviewed policy for Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development focuses on assisting each member of the school community to maximise their innate potential to live with shared values and to practise these values as the basis for personal and social behaviour. The policy indicates the curriculum areas that contribute to the overall spiritual and moral ethos of the school. It should be further developed by a brief supporting statement from each department in the school.

77. There is a full-time lay chaplain whose appointment is a new initiative. This role is still in the process of development, linked with the effective ongoing work of the priest chaplain, under the line management of the headteacher.

78. Currently the lay chaplain is available for the whole school day assisting in youth activities before and during school time. The role includes opportunities for prayer and reflection in the prayer room, assistance with Collective Worship, fundraising, retreats and links with the local community. A developing chaplaincy handbook indicates the extent of the work undertaken. The students appreciate the open-door policy of the lay chaplain and feel confident of support from this ministry during their school lives.

79. The lay chaplain and part-time priest chaplain, a Missionary of the Sacred Heart, who serves two of the local feeder parishes, strive to link the school with the neighbouring community. Together they co-ordinate the youth club activities and organise many parish services and celebrations. They assist, with the Religious Education department, in preparing pupils for Confirmation so ensuring a good working relationship between the school and its parish. They facilitate students visiting to help in local schools, including a specialist school for autistic children. There are ecumenical links with the local Church of England parish to enhance the students' awareness of other Christian traditions. The chaplaincy help in the co-ordination of fundraising for CAFOD and Zoe's Place, a local baby support unit.

80. The chaplaincy and wider school community support a group of students who form part of the annual Liverpool Youth Pilgrimage to Lourdes. The students raise their own funds in addition to funding offered by local parishes. While in Lourdes, their work with the sick is a life experience they want to feed back to local parishes and so enrich the parish and school links.

81. The spiritual ethos of the school includes efficient communications. The Religious Education department issues its own newsletter once each term giving details of study initiatives as well as departmental events. *The Link* is a staff and parent newsletter also published each term with information about departmental and whole school issues. Also included in this newsletter is an opportunity for prayer and reflection on the mission of the school.

82. In both Religious Education and Collective Worship students are given opportunities to reflect on the role and teachings of the Church and its relevance to their lives. This was evident during observations through the style of questioning, discussion and research taking place in lessons and in the quality of Collective Worship, which focused on the needs of others.

83. Students are encouraged to reflect on their own attitudes and values in the light of the gospels and the teachings of the Church. This was apparent in Religious Education and in Collective Worship where the relevance of gospel values were clearly linked to the contemporary experiences of the students both in school and in the wider community.

84. Students are developing the range, depth and quality of their prayer life with opportunities to be part of Collective Worship and to be part of liturgical celebrations including the Eucharist and services of Reconciliation. This is evident from the students' own responses and by their willingness to participate.

85. A programme of retreats and away days is being develop and so too is a funding allocation. The current provision includes residential experiences at Brettagh Holt, Thornleigh College and Savio House.

86. There is an annual school mission that takes place for a full week. This is an opportunity for the whole community to reflect on its own mission and to further develop its spiritual and moral ethos.

87. Due to their Religious Education and the examples provided by the whole staff community, the students are growing in knowledge and understanding of the life, words and actions of Jesus, the saints and significant contemporary Christians.

88. The accessible school prayer room is a focal point of the spiritual ethos of the school. It is designed principally to be the one area of the school available for quiet personal time, outside of curriculum time and also within the timetable for staff led activities.

89. The very good quality of display inclusive of students work, the cleanliness of the school and the developing care of the external grounds is enhancing the calm and orderliness of the whole school environment.

90. Throughout the school there is a developing sense of purpose, care, friendship and generosity that contributes tangibly to its ethos.

91. The school provides a secure community that promotes principles and behaviour that help students define what is appropriate behaviour. Within Religious Education and Collective Worship opportunities are provided for pupils to explore questions of motive, attitudes and intentions in relation to action and show an ability to think through the consequences of their actions.

92. In terms of the general behaviour of students, there is a confidence to act consistently in accordance with school rules.

93. The provision of the Breakfast Club and Youth Club demonstrates the school's concern for the educational needs of the whole person beyond the confines of the daily curriculum.

94. Within the curriculum there are opportunities for all students to develop their talents to the full through experiences such as sport, visits abroad, Young Enterprise and competitions such as *On the Beat*.

95. The educational provision for those with special educational needs and for those who are *Gifted and Talented* aims to match the curriculum across the whole spectrum of ability.

96. There is also wider evidence available from consultation with the students themselves, that they appreciate the contributions made by staff to establish a safe and caring community. The pupils have stated that any incidents of bullying or racism are rare and dealt with effectively by the staff. Pupils know whom to consult for help. The evidence is further demonstrated from the school Behaviour Policy and strategies for Child Protection.

97. There is a pastoral care system which aims to create and maintain the school environment as a community based on mutual respect that enables each member to reach his/her full potential. The whole ethos of the school encourages students to distinguish between right and wrong behaviour and so make judgements on how to behave. An effective behaviour strategy makes clear the expectations of the school and the need to respect each member of the community. This is further reinforced by the work of the Student Council, activities in Citizenship and in Personal, Health and Social Education.

98. Evidence gathered from the small sample of parents' and pupils' questionnaires, from interview with a group of students, as well as the wider experience of the inspection process, reinforces the fact that this school strives to provide its whole community with a sense of worth and value based on mutual respect. Consequently the school continues to develop its role as a Christian community.

What should the school do to improve further?

Specific matters which the governors and staff should include in its post-inspection action plan, listed in order of their importance:

- the provision of 10% of curriculum time for Religious Education in Key Stage 3 to fulfil the requirements of the Bishops of England and Wales;
- the department should ensure that there is consistent use of the marking policy and assessment tasks throughout the department, monitoring of corrections and the completion of unfinished work. The majority of teachers are providing helpful comments along with marks and grades. This should now be developed throughout the whole department;
- further progress in areas of development already identified by the department namely the appointment of another full-time member of the department, in-service support for teachers from other subject specialisms, progress in the quality of teaching and learning, the departmental sharing of teaching strategies, more detailed lesson planning throughout the key stages and the improvement of GCSE results through the successful implementation of a new course.

Areas for development identified in the report which are not included in matters for action but which should be considered by the school:

- * the department may wish to consider in Key Stage 3 is the concentration of written work within one exercise book rather than each student's completion of a display book. This would enhance detailed work within one book and any work for display exhibited within the classrooms or adjoining corridors once each term; (8)
- * Religious Education lessons would benefit from the development of access to information communication technology; (21)
- * it would be helpful if individual education plans could be filed separately from the departmental handbook for ease of access and so enable the handbook to be specific to overall departmental policy; (50)
- * some of the students would benefit from having the content of the Mission Statement further explained; (61)
- * the Collective Worship planning group could be further developed by the inclusion of a student representative; (63)
- * form group Collective Worship would benefit from the continued development of pupil involvement; (68)
- * the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development policy should be further developed by a brief supporting statement from each department in the school. (76)

DATA AND INDICATORS

PUPILS

Number of pupils in each year group:

Year 7	139
Year 8	140
Year 9	147
Year 10	139
Year 11	<u>140</u>
Total	705

Percentage of Catholic pupils: 84%

Percentage of pupils from each parish:

St. Dominic's	23%
St. Albert's	13%
St. Brigid's	6%
St. Columba's	5%

Percentage of pupils from other Christian denominations: 16%

Percentage of pupils from other faith traditions: 0%

Number of pupils having a statement of special educational needs: 23

Admission limit of pupils: 150

TEACHERS AND CLASSES

Total number of teachers: Full-time: 38 Part-time: 2

Number of teachers teaching Religious Education: 5

Percentage of Catholic teachers in the school: 57.5%

Organisation of the school into classes:

Key Stage 3: In sets 1-6

Key Stage 4: Classes are in sets 1-4 according to GCSE groups and Entry Level courses

Average class size in key stages:

Key Stage 3: 23.3

Key Stage 4: 23.3

TEACHING TIME

Total teaching time per week:

Key Stage 3 24.5

Key Stage 4 24.5

Total Religious Education teaching time per week:

Year 7 1 Hour 36 Minutes

Year 8 1 Hour 36 Minutes

Year 9 1 Hour 36 Minutes

Year 10 2 Hours 40 Minutes

Year 11 2 Hours 40 Minutes

Percentage of total teaching time per week spent on Religious Education:

Key Stage 3: 6.6%

Key Stage 4: 9.9%

The Bishops of England and Wales requires the allocation of 10% of curriculum time for Religious Education in Key Stage 3 and 4.

THE RESULTS OF PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS

GCSE RELIGIOUS STUDIES (Year 11)

Total Entries 2002: 167

Total Entries 2003: 158

2002	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
Entries: 65	0	1	4	3	9	12	22	4	10

A*-C = 12%

2003	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
Entries: 75	0	0	2	7	9	9	8	13	27

(5 absentees)

A* - C = 11%

FINANCIAL DATA

	Current Financial Year	Last Financial Year
	£	£
Religious Education	1,787	2,656
English	2,811	2,727
Mathematics	2,665	3,702
Science	4,364	4,952

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What parents like about the school

- The values and attitudes the school teaches.
- The encouragement parents are given to play an active part in the life of the school.
- The welcome they receive in school.
- The understanding parents are given of what is taught in Religious Education.
- The good standards of work achieved in Religious Education.
- The information available on children's progress in Religious Education.
- The happiness of their children in school.

What some parents are not happy about

- Three parents feel the school does not enable their children to achieve a good standard of work in Religious Education.
- Three parents do not feel they are kept well informed about their children's progress in Religious Education.
- Two parents feel they are not encouraged to play an active part in the life of the school.
- Two feel they are not given a clear understanding of what is taught in Religious Education.
- One parent does not feel their child is happy in school.

Seventeen parents returned the questionnaire, thirteen containing only positive comments.

What pupils like most about their school

- A friendly school environment.
- The majority of staff willing to listen to pupils.
- Good teaching.
- School trips.
- Extra curricular activities during lunch times and after school.
- Youth Club and Breakfast Club.
- Library.
- Sports Hall.
- Religious Education activities.
- Any instances of bullying are dealt with effectively.

What pupils would like to change about their school

- More permanent staff.
- All staff to be good listeners.
- More rewards for good behaviour and progress to match the rewards in place for improving behaviour.
- Review the timings of the school day.
- Boys' toilet facilities to continue to improve.
- Provision of year group bases.
- Further development of whole school re-decoration.
- Too many security cameras.
- Review of uniform.
- Tuck Shop for break and lunch time.
- Toast at break times.
- Drinks machine.
- Availability of lockers for pupils.

There were fifty-four student questionnaires returned; eighteen from Year 9, twenty-six from Year 11 and a further ten from a mixture of the two key stages. There were a lot of positive comments about the friendly atmosphere of the school, the quality of staff and the fact that the school environment is safe because any incidents of bullying are dealt with effectively. Students were particularly appreciative of the range of extra curricular activities that take place, not least those operating at lunch times.

SUMMARY OF THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION INSPECTION REPORT

ST. EDMUND OF CANTERBURY CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

Huyton

Headteacher: Mrs. Marie B. Quayle

Date of Inspection: 11 - 12 May 2004

Inspectors: Mr. Paul Mannings Miss Barbara Hunt

Previous Inspection: 13 - 14 October 1998

This is a summary of the Inspectors' full report, which can be obtained from the school.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Number of full-time pupils:	705
Percentage of Catholic pupils:	84%
Percentage of pupils from other Christian denominations:	16%
Percentage of pupils from other faiths:	0%

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school in regard to Religious Education.

MAIN STRENGTHS OF THE SCHOOL

- The school has made very good progress on the three key issues since the previous inspection.
- The school has completed a very good self-review document.
- Quality of display in the Religious Education room and adjoining corridor is very good.
- The Mission Statement is a very good expression of the philosophy of education in this Catholic school.
- The quality of Collective Worship is very good.
- The provision for spiritual and moral development is very good.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- The provision of 10% of curriculum time for Religious Education in Key Stage 3 to fulfil the requirements of the Bishops of England and Wales.
- The department should ensure that there is consistent use of the marking policy and assessment tasks throughout the department, the monitoring of corrections and the completion of unfinished work. The majority of teachers are providing helpful comments along with marks and grades. This should also be developed throughout the whole department.
- Further progress in areas of development already identified by the department namely the appointment of another full-time member of the department, in-service support for teachers from other subject specialisms, progress in the quality of teaching and learning, the departmental sharing of teaching strategies, more detailed lesson planning throughout the key stages and the improvement of GCSE results through the successful implementation of a new course.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made very good progress on the three key issues identified in the last inspection.

The first key issue was to undertake a whole school review of the Mission Statement. All areas of the school community have been consulted. The Mission Statement inclusive of vision and school motto has been consistently reviewed. It is understood and owned by all.

The second key issue was to develop the governors' Collective Worship policy. The policy is in place and all staff have copies. Details of school Collective Worship are published in students' diaries and in the staff handbook. There is also a rota for leading Collective Worship and this indicates whole school involvement.

The third issue was to continue to develop the Religious Education Curriculum. There is a detailed staff handbook in place. Learning objectives are shared with the students who are also included in the target setting. There has been a development of departmental resources that have increased markedly.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Seventeen parents returned the questionnaire and thirteen of these contained only positive comments. From the small amount of questionnaires returned the parents approve of the values and attitudes the school teaches. They appreciate the encouragement parents are given to play an active part in the school and the welcome they receive. They have a clear understanding of what is taught in Religious Education, the good standards achieved and the information available on their children's progress. Their children are happy in school.

There were four questionnaires containing negative comments. Three parents feel the school does not enable their children to achieve a good standard of work in Religious Education. Three parents do not feel they are kept well informed about their children's progress in Religious Education. Two parents feel they are not encouraged to play an active part in the life of the school. Two feel they are not given a clear understanding of what is taught in Religious Education. One parent does not feel their child is happy in school.

There were fifty-four student questionnaires returned; eighteen from Year 9, twenty-six from Year 11 and a further ten from a mixture of the two key stages. There were a lot of positive

comments about the friendly atmosphere of the school, the quality of staff and the fact that the school environment is safe because any incidents of bullying are dealt with effectively. Students were particularly appreciative of the range of extra curricular activities that take place especially those operating at lunch times.

SCHOOL'S SELF-REVIEW

The school has completed a very good self-review document.

Concerning the opportunities offered to students in Religious Education, *ICONS* is the framework of study offered at Key Stage 3, thus meeting diocesan and national guidelines. At Key Stage 4 a new GCSE course is available. These courses are supported by the ongoing development of schemes of work.

The school monitors, evaluates and develops the quality of Religious Education teaching through the head of department's monitoring of staff in line with school policy.

Assessment, reporting and recording within the department is supported by whole school policy. All Religious Education reports are on disc and the students are involved in self-assessment each term.

The school provides for the additional educational needs of students through the provision of individual education plans and additional support from teaching assistants. There is also the development of provision for *Gifted and Talented* students.

The school resources the teaching of Religious Education through clear aims and objectives with explicit vision. Resources within the department have increased markedly and continue to develop. Currently there is also a programme of support provided by the Archdiocese. The effectiveness of leadership and management has been measured against the criteria of progress in completing the key issues from the last inspection. All key issues have been addressed and a development plan is in place to support ongoing progress.

There are opportunities provided for senior staff to consider Church teaching and implications for developments in Catholic Education. This occurs when the headteacher attends the Archdiocesan annual conference for headteachers and provides a report for the senior management team.

Opportunities for the spiritual and personal development of the staff are provided through in-service training days. There are opportunities for staff to attend reflections in the prayer room and to be part of whole school worship.

To ensure the effective co-ordination the head of Religious Education is working towards stability in departmental staffing and the appointment of a further member of staff.

The school continues to develop its distinctive Catholic nature with the Mission Statement as the focus of school life. It is reviewed regularly and belongs to the whole community. Governors and senior staff ensure that the Mission Statement informs all policies.

There are daily act of worship for all pupils and staff.

There is a policy for spiritual, moral and cultural with additional reference to its content within the Religious Education and the Citizenship policy documents.

STANDARDS IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The standard achieved in Religious Education is satisfactory. There is also evidence that a significant number of students are making good progress.

QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

The overall quality of teaching and learning in Religious Education is satisfactory. There were also significant examples of good teaching and learning.

STUDENTS' RESPONSE

Where there is teaching by permanent staff, pupils are being motivated to make good progress in Religious Education. This is evident from most of the class observations and standards of work produced. The group of students interviewed rated Religious Education as both stimulating and productive.

PROVISION FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The school ensures curriculum Religious Education entitlement for each student through *ICONS* in Key Stage 3. At Key Stage 4 all students have access to either a GCSE full course or to Entry Level certification.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

There is committed and developing leadership and management in Religious Education. The head of department, supported by the governors, headteacher and staff, ensures the status of Religious Education continues to be developed throughout the school.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission Statement provides a very good expression of the school's vision of Catholic education.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

The quality and provision of daily year group and form group acts of worship is very good.

SPIRITUAL AND MORAL DEVELOPMENT

Opportunities provided for students' spiritual and moral development are very good.

THE PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What parents like about the school
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The values and attitudes the school teaches.• The encouragement parents are given to play an active part in the life of the school.• The welcome they receive in school.• The understanding parents are given of what is taught in Religious Education.• The good standards of work achieved in Religious Education.• The information available on children's progress in Religious Education.• The happiness of their children in school.

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The Governing Body is responsible for drawing up an ACTION PLAN within 40 working days of receiving the report, showing what the school is going to do about the issues. This action plan will be circulated to all parents of pupils at the school.

