



ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

INSPECTION REPORT

ST. BEDE'S HIGH SCHOOL

ORMSKIRK

Wednesday 10 June 2009

Inspectors Rev. Paul Mannings Mr. Andrew Traynor

URN 119792

Inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

Type of School	Catholic voluntary-aided, mixed comprehensive
Age range of pupils	11-16
Number on roll	699
Chair of governors'	Mr Michael Kelly
School address	St. Anne's Road, Ormskirk, Lancashire, L39 4TA.
Telephone number	01695 570335
E-mail address	admin@stbedes-ormskirk.lancs.sch.uk
Date of last inspection	6-7 June 2006
Headteacher	Mr R.M. Varey

Introduction

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

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

The inspectors are members of the Christian Education Department and their associates approved by the Archbishop of Liverpool for this purpose.

Description of the school

St. Bede's is a Catholic, voluntary-aided, mixed comprehensive in the Lancashire Authority. The headteacher has been in post since September 2007. The school has Specialist Performing and Visual Arts Status. There are 699 learners on roll of whom 93% are baptised Catholics, with 5.6% from other Christian denominations and none from other World Faith traditions. Four associated parishes in two pastoral areas account for 66% of the role, together with a significant number from Catholic schools in the wider area. Twenty-six learners have statements of special educational needs, with a further 12 supported by School Action and 16 by School Action Plus. There are 44 teachers of whom 45.5% are Catholic. The Religious Education department has three full and one part-time member.

Key for inspection grades

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

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Overall effectiveness of the school

St Bede's is a good Catholic school with outstanding capacity for continued improvement provided by the incisive leadership of the headteacher. In Religious Education, leadership, achievement and standards, teaching and learning, together with the curriculum are already outstanding. The department has made good improvement since the last inspection. The Catholic life of the school is good with outstanding capacity for improvement. So too is the promotion of community cohesion. Collective Worship, whilst satisfactory with a number of good features has already been identified for development. Pupils, parents and carers show increased confidence in the school and fully appreciate opportunities for their involvement. St Bede's is actively living its mission to provide 'a Catholic, caring community, striving to develop the talents and abilities of all.'

Grade: 2

Improvement since the last inspection

There has been good improvement with outstanding features. Curriculum time for Religious Education has been increased. This was the key area for development. Religious Education overall has continued to improve significantly in the last two years. The review of the Mission Statement has been partially undertaken. Collective worship requires further development.

Grade: 2

Capacity to improve

Capacity for continued improvement is outstanding. This is evident in the whole school development plan and the Religious Education departmental development plan. The Section 48 Self-Evaluation is concise and practical. In a minority of areas grading has been moved from outstanding to good. However, the identified strategies for improvement are rigorous. This is well supported by the departmental standing agenda item for sharing of teaching and learning techniques. There is a whole school five year plan for development of Catholic life.

Grade: 1

What the school should do to improve further

- Provision of a coordinator to provide further training in the organisation, planning, delivery and monitoring of Collective Worship, with particular focus on form group provision.

Achievement and Standards

Achievement and standards in Religious Education are outstanding. Achievement by the end of Key Stage 3 is at least level 5 with the majority reaching Level 6 and beyond. This is the result of continued rising of standards in class, which begins with the use of baseline data from year 7. Continued development in styles and variety of teaching has enhanced progress in relation to learners' capabilities and starting points. Effective tracking of progress matched to confident use of levels of attainment has contributed to standards and achievement overall. In two consecutive years results for GCSE have exceeded the national average, reaching 77% A*-C, which is a substantive rise from the below average performance of some previous years. Learners' outstanding behaviour in class and their enjoyment of Religious education makes a significant contribution to achievement and standards. The content enhances their committed contribution to the school community.

Grade: 1

Quality of Provision for Religious Education

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. This was evident in all classes observed on the day and matches the overall judgement of performance indicated by the school. Teaching and learning is well planned with clear lesson objectives. There is an abundance of styles and strategies. These are focussed on raised expectations that clearly engage learners and ensure a highly effective level of pace and progress. One key example is the use of the Community of Enquiry, which encourages learners to provide their own questions, effective debate and informed responses. This will be recommended amongst colleagues within the diocese. There is sustained use of learners' prior learning as a contributor to independent learning and peer assessment. Differentiation is good and continues to develop through teaching and learning strategies. It will also benefit from the continued improvement in formative assessment. Scrutiny of learners' written work shows consistent application of marking and assessment procedures, which includes reporting on levels and the setting of targets. The department should ensure that this overall high standard of diagnostic marking is consistent in all classes and indicative of next steps in learning. End of task assessments are highly effective and efficiently used to track progress. Parents and carers are confident in the growth of opportunities for involvement in the education of their children. The development of the parental consultation group has contributed to this success.

Grade: 1

Curriculum

The curriculum is outstanding. Since the last inspection the time allocation was increased to 10% in both key stages. In Year 11 this was temporarily decreased to 6.6% with diocesan approval, due to school circumstances. From September the full 10% will be restored. In Key Stage 3 Icons is well established and supported by an enriched programme of study. In Key Stage 4 all learners are entered for GCSE with a small group also undertaking Entry Level. The GCSE specification continues to develop and has proved to be highly successful in the raising of learners achievement. Consequently the curriculum is highly responsive to national and diocesan requirements. It provides an outstanding response to learners' spiritual and moral development.

Grade: 1

Leadership and Management

Religious Education

Leadership and management of Religious Education are outstanding. The headteacher and senior leadership have ensured the continued raising of achievement and standards, together with a high level of support for the department. This in turn has enabled the subject leader to develop and so provide outstanding management and support for staff. There is rigorous and effective performance management that enables staff to share good practice and so maintain their high standards of teaching and learning. Equality of opportunity for learners is well promoted through good levels of differentiation, which include strategies for continued improvement. Teaching and learning in both Key Stages, together with access to accredited course in Key Stage 4 ensures equality in learners' progression routes. Departmental staff are committed to pursuing high standards in class and through their own continued professional development. Resources are outstanding and so too is their effective deployment. Governors are well informed by the headteacher and subject leader. This enables their high level of support in maintaining Religious Education at the core of the curriculum

Grade: 1

Catholic Life of the School

Leadership and management of Catholic life of the school are good with outstanding capacity for development. The Mission Statement, supported by clear aims and objectives, guides the ethos of the school. A review process was begun in 2007. The governors and headteacher have scheduled a further review for completion in the next academic year. This will include consultation with all stakeholders and culminate in a Mission Week. In September 2009 the school will seek to restore chaplaincy provision by the provision of a part-time post. A five year plan has also been developed for the

monitoring of Catholic life. Consequently the governors have outstanding capacity to focus upon and prepare for its comprehensive monitoring.

Grade: 2

Collective Worship

The provision for and quality of Collective Worship is satisfactory with a number of good features. The school recognises this is an area for development and has made provision within its self-review document stating Collective Worship should be 'systematically planned for and monitored by a named member of staff'. On the day of inspection it was only possible to observe form group prayer and worship. Evidence from documentation indicates themes and resources for the provision of weekly year group gatherings. Learners appreciate the opportunities for participation at these times and in the range of services throughout the Liturgical Year. However their own comments together with a review undertaken in January 2009, indicates inconsistencies in provision. The school should now designate a co-ordinator and review the policy document. There should be further in-service and introduction of the planned process for monitoring. The later should focus specifically on form groups. Current provision makes a satisfactory contribution to learners' spiritual and moral development.

Grade: 3

Community Cohesion

Promotion of community cohesion is good. There are a number of outstanding features. Inclusion of all is at the heart of the shared vision of the school. Difference is respected, diversity is valued and equal opportunities are ensured. This is particularly evident through Student Voice whereby they feel views are valued and acted upon. Particular note should be made of the One World Group in its vigorous support of international projects. Learners overall have raised significant funds for many charities including Nugent Care, Jospice, NSPCC and CAFOD. The school continues to increase its links with parents and the local community. It also hosts a range of diocesan training events and courses. The Religious Education curriculum promotes personal integrity, mutual understanding and respect for all faiths. The continued development of Collective Worship will ensure consistent inclusion of themes and activities that fully embrace local, national and global issues. The school's joint specialist status in Performing and Visual Arts is already on course to fully developing its links with good practice in local education notably through the current Year 11 Peer Education Project. Continued promotion of the common good is at the heart of school life.

Grade: 2