



ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

INSPECTION REPORT

HOLY FAMILY CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

THORNTON

Inspection Date Wednesday 31 October 2012

Inspectors Deacon Paul Mannings Mrs Elizabeth Dolan

Unique Reference Number 104962

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

Type of School Catholic voluntary-aided, mixed comprehensive

Age range of pupils 11-18

Number on roll 793

Chair of Governor Mr. G. Van Cauweleart

Acting Headteacher Mr. M. Symes

School address Virgins Lane
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Date of last inspection Wednesday 16 January 2008

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

- Holy Family is a voluntary-aided mixed comprehensive in the Sefton Authority.
- A minority of pupils are drawn from associated Catholic primary schools in the pastoral area. A significant number are drawn from the wider community.
- There are 793 pupils on roll of whom 73.5% are baptised Catholic, with 22% from other Christian denominations, and 1.5% from other faith or religious traditions. Three percent of pupils have declared no faith or religious affiliation.
- There are 55 teaching staff of whom 69% are Catholic.
- The Religious Education department has three core and one part time member.
- The subject leader was appointed since the last inspection.
- The acting headteacher has been in post since September 2012.
- The chair of governors has been in post since September 2012.

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:

Holy Family provides good 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 good.
- Pupils show good knowledge and understanding of the school's Mission Statement. They actively fulfil its aims through their contribution in class and beyond, to wide ranging projects and initiatives that serve the common good. Such initiatives are growing in number to specifically embrace global projects.
- Pupils are both proud and confident to articulate their involvement. They are proud of their school.
- Pupils are included in the process for evaluating the Catholic Life of the school. This will be a useful dimension in the next review of the Mission Statement.
- Pupils are encouraged to reflect and inquire in Religious Education and apply its content to contemporary life.
- Pupils show respect for the religious life of others. This is evident in their ability to listen to differing viewpoints and to show respect for other beliefs. Equally they are confident and feel safe in sharing their own faith or world views.
- Pupils in and out of class are outstanding in behaviour and in their consideration of others.

How well pupils' achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education

- Pupils show good levels of achievement and attainment in Religious Education. This is due to an increased and consistent focus since the last inspection on improving the quality of learning.
- At the end of Key Stage 3 the majority of pupils are working within Level 5. A significant number are reaching Level 6. This is the result of accurate baseline assessment in Year 7, supported by a developing system of tracking in subsequent years.
- In Key Stage 4 performance at GCSE has improved by the end of Year 11. In 2007-2008 59% of pupils achieved A*-C. By 2010 this began to show improvement with pupils achieving 65% A*-C. In 2011 there was a downturn to 54%. This led to a strategic departmental raising attainment plan, which resulted in a 2012 performance rate of 84% A*-C. This particular cohort included the majority but not all of the pupils. However, the performance of those entered has been compared with targets set and indicates significant personal improvement.
- In Key Stage 4 pupils following the alternative curriculum make progression from Entry to Level 1.
- In the Sixth Form, performance in the general course indicates 100% achievement by those entered for Level 2. The school is now restoring provision in Year 13 to enable progression to Level 3.
- Pupils' learning overall is at least good, which indicates the majority are making levels of progress from Year 7 that are matched clearly to their age and ability. In some areas pupils make outstanding progress.

- Effective learning strategies enable pupils to apply themselves conscientiously to tasks whether independently or collaboratively.
- Pupils are keen to achieve. This is a result of the continued raising of the profile of Religious Education through learning strategies that enthuse and motivate.

How well pupils' respond to and participate in Collective Worship

- Pupils' response to and participation in Collective Worship requires improvement.
- Pupils experience regular acts of Collective Worship.
- They act with reverence, listening attentively and responding when invited.
- Pupils value opportunities for prayer and reflection.
- They are open to the Word expressed and presented effectively within meaningful resources.
- There is limited scope for their active participation in planning and leading of Collective Worship in form and year groups.
- In other Liturgical celebrations including Eucharist and seasonal services there is more scope for their involvement.

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

- The quality of teaching and purposeful learning in Religious Education is good.
- Teaching is well planned, organised and creative. Consequently pupils are motivated to learn and enjoy their work.
- Teachers show good subject knowledge. They are committed to maximising opportunities in all stages of learning.
- Pupils are encouraged to make full use of prior learning and participate in target setting.
- Good differentiation supports individual progress. Differentiation is evident in teaching that includes high levels of pupil participation in all activities. They are well encouraged by a learning environment that is accessible and purposeful.
- Good teaching is enabling continued improvement in learning within each Key Stage.
- Good assessment is also supporting pupils' progress. There is a clear policy on assessment with specific sections on assessment for learning, oral and written feedback.
- Scrutiny of pupils' written work reveals diagnostic and formative commentary. There is target setting, levelling and peer assessment.
- Many pupils take pride in the presentation of their work. This should serve as a quality benchmark for the whole department.
- Written work is sufficiently challenging.
- There is limited evidence of unmarked work.
- Pupils have opportunities for reflection. They are encouraged to question, discuss and provide feedback. This contributes significantly to their growing personal confidence and awareness of the school's Catholic Life.
- Teachers are particularly skilled at celebrating achievement and moving progress.

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

- The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum promotes pupils' learning is good.
- The Religious Education curriculum continues to develop through planned content, that is faithful to Church teaching and so fully in line with the requirements of the Religious Education Curriculum Directory (2012)

- The curriculum provides good opportunities for pupils' spiritual and moral development.
- Religious Education Levels of Attainment continue to be well embedded.
- Pupils in Key Stages 3 and 4 have access to curriculum content and subsequent accredited courses from Year 10 that are personalised to their individual needs.
- In Key Stages 3 and 4 increased time allocation since the last inspection continues to support improvement.
- The school has moved to address previously inadequate time provision for the Sixth Form general programme in the last academic year. This remains a work in progress currently being addressed through a series of focus days in the current academic year. The school is to ensure the days are dedicated to distinctive Religious Education. The school is also working toward access to weekly provision in the 2013-14 academic year. Progress in this area will be monitored by school and departmental leadership working with diocesan support.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school.

- The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school requires improvement.
- Collective Worship follows a structure with limited scope for pupils' involvement.
- There are quality themes and resources that focus on the Liturgical Year. These are not always used to maximum effect.
- Staff take a part in leading prayer and worship. Some provide scope for pupil involvement.
- There has been limited training for staff.
- A system for monitoring the consistency and quality of provision is in the early stages of development.

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 good in promoting and developing the Catholic life of the school and show a good understanding of and commitment to the Mission of the Church.
- The recently appointed acting headteacher has a clear vision for developing Catholic Life of the school through the Mission Statement. This vision is shared by the recently appointed chair of governors. Together they are effective facilitators.
- The Section 48 Self Evaluation Document is now to become pivotal for senior leadership as a tool for auditing Catholic Life. In due course this could include a review of the Mission Statement.
- Senior leadership monitors existing contributions to Catholic Life through departmental reports.
- They support and participate in a range of community activities that both raise the Catholic profile of the school and in turn supports pupils own involvement in and articulation of the Mission.

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 good monitoring and evaluation of Religious Education. Together they plan and implement improvement to outcomes

for pupils. With reference to Religious Education the Section 48 Self Evaluation clearly identifies the areas for improvement and plans to implement progress.

- Since the last inspection senior leaders and governors have ensured a raise in the profile of Religious Education. They have established effective and informed line management.
- The subject leader, appointed since the last inspection, has made a strong impact on development. This is specifically evident in progress made in several of the areas identified for improvement in the last inspection. A particular strength has been the ability, confidence and enthusiasm to work with senior leadership and governors. Curriculum time has increased. The general course is re-established in the Sixth Form. The marking policy is in place and adhered to in the main. Some extraneous work has been undertaken to improve outcomes and provision in Collective Worship.
- Departmental staff now has directed leadership and management which enables them to share in the Mission of Religious Education. Their skills are valued and reinforced by consistent and structured continued professional development.

What the school needs to do to improve further:

- Improve outcomes and provision in Collective Worship by:
 - planning for pupils active participation and leadership of year and form group acts of worship;
 - ensuring the existing quality themes and resources prepared by the Religious Education subject leader are well directed by participating staff;
 - conducting a programme of in-service training for staff with a focus on both pupil participation and use of resources;
 - further development of the existing process for monitoring by progress leaders;
 - considering the creation of a co-ordinating team.

INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education	2
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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	2
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education	2
How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship	3

PROVISION

How effective the provision is for Catholic Education	
The quality of teaching and how purposeful learning is in Religious Education	2
The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum promotes pupils' learning	2
The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school	3

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	2
How well leaders, governors and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils	2

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