



ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

INSPECTION REPORT

DE LA SALLE SCHOOL

ST. HELENS

Inspection Date Wednesday 9 October 2013

Inspectors Deacon P. Mannings Mrs. B. Melia

Unique Reference Number 104834

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 11-16

Number on roll 1,210

Chair of Governors Mr. P. Case

Headteacher Mr. W. Daunt

School address Mill Brow,
Eccleston,
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Date of last inspection Tuesday 2 December 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

- De La Salle School is a Catholic, 11-16, voluntary aided, mixed comprehensive.
- The school is under the trusteeship of the Brothers of the Christian Schools (De La Salle Brothers).
- There are 1,210 pupils on roll of whom 96% are baptised Catholic, with 3% from other Christian denominations and 1% from other faith or religious traditions.
- The majority of pupils are drawn from associated Catholic primary schools in two pastoral areas.
- There are 80 teachers of whom 43% are Catholic.
- The Religious Education department has seven members: five full-time one part time and one who teaches another subject also. All are qualified in Religious Education.

Key for inspection grades

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

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Overall effectiveness:

De La Salle School 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 outstanding.
- Pupils are confident to lead and take responsibility for developing the religious character of the school. This is evident in widespread pupil commitment to the chaplaincy team. Pupils' social networking and fundraising projects are inspired by Gospel values they can clearly articulate and link to the school's vision. They are clear in their mission to serve the common good.
- Pupils understanding and practice of Catholic Life enables them to embrace belief and values of other faiths, religions and world views.
- In Religious Education pupils are confident to express their beliefs. They respect the beliefs and viewpoints of others. Their knowledge and understanding influences actions beyond the classroom and the school.
- Pupils identify strong links between school and neighbouring parish communities. A number are Special Ministers of the Eucharist.
- Pupils are proud of their school. They understand their duty to assist in serving to enrich its spiritual and moral dimension. They know that right and wrong moral actions have consequences. To this end they support the school's mission for justice, truth and personal integrity.

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education

- Pupils show good levels of achievement and attainment in Religious Education.
- In Key Stage 3 performance in the last three years has shown an increase in pupils achieving at least Level 5. This has risen from 81% in 2011 to 97% in 2013. In the same period pupils either working within or achieving Level 6 has risen from 30% to 60%. The latter represents outstanding progress.
- Achievement for GCSE in Year 11 during the last three years has been good. Pupil performance has remained within the 70% - 75% range for grades A*-C. Most notable is the continued increase in the amount of pupils achieving A*-A. The department has maintained a continued rate of good progress when set against pupils' individual performance data. In addition, Religious Education has the second largest entry cohort in the school.
- Attainment and achievement is supported by a system for pupil tracking. Through the use of data mark books, progress is shared with pupils to enable them to plan and track their own improvement.
- Rising standards in progress are also assisted by the focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning.
- Consequently most groups of pupils are making at least good progress. Some are making outstanding progress.
- Pupils enjoy Religious Education. In class, they are keen to do well and for the most part apply themselves conscientiously in lessons.

- Pupils' behaviour is good overall. For a significant number it is outstanding. This too supports rising standards in achievement and attainment.

How well pupils respond to and participate in Collective Worship

- Pupils' response to and participation in Collective Worship is good.
- They speak of the content supplying them with plenty to think about. There are topics and themes to which they can relate.
- Collective Worship supports Catholic Life by encouraging their participation in prayer and worship directly linked to the Liturgical Year.
- Pupils refer to thematic links between Collective Worship and their La Sallian ethos. They cite the chaplaincy group as an effective means of encouraging them to be part of prayer and worship though contributing their own skills.
- Pupils appreciate the scope for their personal reflection and quiet times. This is reinforced by their retreat experiences.
- They are equally appreciative of the opportunities for their sharing in community prayers. They particularly enjoy occasions when they can publicly and confidently express their religious beliefs or viewpoints.
- Many pupils are encouraged to help organise and to lead Collective Worship.
- A number of pupils would like more form groups to encourage their participation.

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

- The quality of teaching and purposeful learning in Religious Education is good.
- There are examples of outstanding practice. Planning is thorough. Prior learning informs current and future pupil progress. There is robust pace, progress and challenge. The statement, 'How to improve and progress' drives the focus. Differentiation is implicit. Learning support assistance is efficient, self-starting and well deployed.
- The overall standard of good aspires to this best practice. In the large majority of lessons pupils are motivated from the start. The content is thorough and matched to wide ranging and creative teaching and learning strategies.
- Inadequate practice is rare. It relates specifically to a low rate of pupil challenge because learning activities are not matched to their needs. This is being addressed.
- Good end of task assessment enables teachers to plan well and meet the needs of all pupils.
- Formative marking and annotation enable pupils to take responsibility for their learning. They are given targets and supportive commentary. For some pupils these targets need further expansion. This will enable their understanding of how to improve their work and so maintain the drive towards overall outstanding teaching, learning and achievement.
- Achievement and effort are celebrated. This serves to create a purposeful working environment for most pupils. They are confident to progress individually and in group activities. Their enjoyment of Religious Education is reinforced.

The extent to which the Religious Education Curriculum promotes pupils learning

- The extent to which the content of the Religious Education curriculum promotes pupils learning is outstanding.
- The department is innovative in continually enriching the programmes in both Key Stages. This results in exciting and well planned content.

- In Key Stage 4 all pupils have access to the full GCSE course. This both maintains the status of Religious Education and provides pupils with a sense of purpose and academic rigour.
- Scrutiny of pupils work shows that content is well matched to the programmes. They contain a wide range of differentiated scaffolding and support materials underpinned by Levels of Attainment. This ensures the needs of all pupils are met.
- The curriculum provides impetus for the highest standards of pupils' spiritual, moral and vocational guidance.
- The content is thorough in its exposition of Catholic belief and practice. It is well enriched by the inclusion of other world faiths and religions. It also focuses on varying world views and opinions.
- Consequently the requirements of the Curriculum Directory for Catholic Schools and Colleges in England and Wales (2012) are well met.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school

- The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is good.
- Outstanding features include the breadth and range of prayer opportunities for staff and pupils. One key feature is the comprehensive provision for retreats.
- Collective Worship in house and form settings provides opportunities for maximum pupil-involvement. The degree to which these opportunities are grasped can vary from outstanding to the need for the much greater inclusion of pupils.
- The co-ordination of Collective Worship is a shared task between chaplaincy and several members of staff. Surveys have been undertaken to determine effective development. This has resulted in the revision of existing materials. The resources are available for all staff. Many new features are creative and exciting. They express Catholic belief and practice. Other world faiths and religions are included and celebrated.
- The content provides scope for high impact on pupils' spiritual and moral development.
- There is an effective process for monitoring provision. This enables the sharing of good practice and the identification of in-service needs.

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 outstanding understanding of and commitment to the Mission of the Church.
- This is founded on the charism of St John Baptist de la Salle whose vision and mission for Education is expressly lived.
- The planning and inspiration behind the new campus has resulted in the re-energising of the commitment of belonging to this Catholic school. The fabric contains both Scriptural and La Sallian quotations and statements that keeps the Christian vision alive.
- Catholic Life is strategically monitored by the headteacher and the governors committee with responsibility for Pastoral and Religious Life. Four documented reports are produced each year. Outcomes inform both the Section 48 Self Evaluation and the School Improvement Plan.
- Governors are clear in their knowledge and understanding of Catholic Life. They readily identify its strengths and how to maintain its effectiveness.

- Chaplaincy continues to provide an incisive and interactive contribution. There are strong links between the school, parish and diocesan communities. The chaplaincy group is an expression of shared ministry between the chaplain, pupils and staff. Their high profile service ensures that Catholic Life is a shared, on-going mission.
- Dedication to mission is shared by the La Sallian North West Cluster Co-ordinator. The role facilitates networking with other schools in the cluster. It is essentially about sharing with chaplaincy to provide opportunities for staff and pupils to live the mission locally and internationally.

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.
- This is evident in the Section 48 Self Evaluation. Strengths are identified and realistically appraised. There is clear direction for improvement. Outcomes for development are identified in the department's development plan. This is shared task between the governors, headteacher and head of department.
- The head of Religious Education provides outstanding leadership. Clear vision for improvement is expressed within the documentation. The priority has been to empower staff to continue working as a committed team.
- Teachers in the department are highly committed to their task as religious educators. They are encouraged to share responsibility and to add personal dimensions to further enhance departmental improvement.
- This has resulted in significant improvements in pupils' achievement. This is being enriched further by effective appraisal of teaching and learning. The process has identified strengths that can be shared and weaknesses that can be remedied.
- Consequently Religious Education has continued to improve since the last inspection.

What the school needs to do to improve further:

- Continue to improve Collective Worship by:
 - Ensuring more opportunities for pupil-involvement and leadership in form groups.
- Further improvement of pupils achievement and learning by:
 - Progressing from good to outstanding in Teaching and Learning.

INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

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|---|---|
| How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education | 2 |
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OUTCOMES FOR PUPILS

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|---|---|
| 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 | 2 |
| How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship | 2 |

PROVISION

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| 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 | 1 |
| The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school | 2 |

LEADERS AND MANAGERS

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|--|---|
| 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 |

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