



ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

INSPECTION REPORT

NOTRE DAME CATHOLIC COLLEGE

LIVERPOOL

Inspection Date	Wednesday 16 November 2016
Inspectors	Deacon Paul Mannings and Mrs Barbara Melia
Unique Reference Number	104706

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	935
Chair of Governors	Mr. Thomas Alfred Westwell
Executive Headteacher	Mrs Frances Harrison
Acting Headteacher	Mr. Andrew Rannard
School address	Great Homer Street Liverpool L5 5AF
Telephone number	0151 235 1600
E-mail address	ao@notredame.liverpool.sch.uk
Date of last inspection	25 January 2012

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

- Notre Dame is a voluntary-aided, 11-18, mixed comprehensive.
- The school is under the trusteeship of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur and situated within the Archdiocese of Liverpool.
- The school has relocated to the present new campus since the last inspection.
- The school is within the Liverpool Authority.
- There are 935 pupils on roll of whom 75.29% are baptised Catholics, with 12.02% from other Christian denominations and 12.04% from other world faith or religious traditions.
- Pupils drawn from associated Catholic primary schools in the pastoral area account for 68% of the role, with a significant number from the wider areas of the city.
- The school has 77 teaching staff, 58.4% of whom are Catholic.
- The Religious Education department has six members. Of these, three are full-time. One member is part-time. Two are members of senior leadership. All are qualified in Religious Education.
- Both the head of department and second in department have been appointed since the last inspection.

Key for inspection grades

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

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Overall effectiveness:

Notre Dame Catholic College provides outstanding Catholic Education.

Inspection Judgements

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

- The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.
- In the spirit of St Julie Billiart they demonstrate their willingness to respond to the mission challenge to, "Do small things with great love."
- In their own words, "It is by contributing to many small everyday things" that helps bring about their thorough living of the overall Catholic life.
- They were included in the creation of the school's Mission and Vision, together with the supporting aims.
- They know how the school community stretches beyond the bounds of the campus to embrace the involvement of the wider communities of parish and church.
- There is a thriving Youth Chaplaincy Team, which together with the 1804 Society (so named in commemoration of the first religious vows taken by the founder Sisters) assists in coordinating the expression of Gospel values through wider ranging fundraising for and assistance of those in need.
- Pupils readily linked this work with the expression of the Mission. They cite Religious Education as challenging them to respond practically toward the wellbeing of others.
- They are proud of the school campus because it tangibly expresses Christian life. They have a thorough sense of belonging and well being.
- Pupils know this is a place for hard work so as to develop their own talents.
- They regard the staff community as role models.
- They show an impressive awareness of what is going on in the local parishes. This is brought about growing consistent interaction between school, clergy and parish personnel.

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education

- Pupils show outstanding levels of achievement and attainment in Religious Education.
- This judgement is underpinned by the raised standards over time in teaching and learning, which has increased pupil attainment. In Key Stage 3 this is evident through the combined rates of expected progress together with the numbers who have exceeded expectations.
- In Key Stage 4 whilst GCSE performance is marginally below national average, it reflects much progress made by whole cohort entry which includes widely varying levels of ability.
- In Key Stages 3 and 4 Pupil Premium performance is particularly strong.
- In Key Stage 5 results for A Level indicate a total pass rate with a significantly high percentage meeting at least their target grades.
- Attainment and achievement in class is based on high teacher expectations. Pupils are placed in sets according to ability.

- Their behaviour on the day of inspection was exemplary and so too were their levels of motivation. They rate Religious Education because of how well it is planned, its sense of purpose and relevance.
- Pupils are included in the process of assessment and planning for progress. Their work is marked and annotated according to the school's literacy and marking policy. They are set challenging targets. Corrections are followed up.
- Pupils show realistic understanding of their rates of progress. They speak about their strengths. They are provided with clear direction for improvement.
- There is a departmental focus upon efficient use of data and effective intervention to secure overall attainment and progress.

How well pupils respond to and participate in Collective Worship

- Pupils response to and participation in Collective Worship is good.
- They speak of prayer and worship positively. It enables them to feel included either as members of a group or on occasions when they are encouraged to reflect quietly. Pupils regard all of the themes as relevant to their lives. The content challenges them to make a difference in society.
- Notices and news given prior to Collective Worship would enable pupils to focus more fully on the message and its impact; so too would more economy with conversational leadership (as meaningful and relevant as it is) and more pupil interaction.
- Pupils show impressive understanding of how different styles of Collective Worship enhance their prayer development. They cite such examples as the developing retreat experiences and the celebration of community liturgy.
- Pupils regard Collective Worship as occasions to reflect seriously on problematic world and local events. They also value Collective Worship as an occasion to celebrate success.
- They speak of the content as encouraging a feeling of self worth, contributing in turn to their sense of belonging and security.
- They value the use of the Chapel. They speak positively about the other areas of school where they can gather as year groups and more locally within forms, so providing occasions for different prayer experiences.
- Collective Worship enables pupils to use religious vocabulary that shows their understanding and application of the Liturgical Year.

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

- On the day of inspection the quality of teaching and purposeful learning in Religious Education was outstanding.
- Other elements were at least good.
- This judgement underpins the outstanding progress made in pupils' achievement and attainment. It also supports the school's commitment to processes that are significantly developing departmental development in teaching and learning.
- Teaching shows differentiation at every stage which challenges all pupils to make progress. The content is well planned and creative. Time is used effectively without being in any sense prescriptive. Effective use is made of open questioning. There is skilful monitoring which in turn assures pupils that guidance is at hand. Teachers are skilled in their rounding off of stages of work to establish the rate of progress and set continued direction. Teachers are enthusiastic in their delivery.
- Consequently pupils' respond through learning that demonstrates a strong rapport within the learning community. During the inspection they were proud to show good work and knew where it was leading.

- They are encouraged to make use of prior learning which in their words, “Show how far they have come.” They are confident to work independently and in groups and enjoy supporting each other.
- Particularly noteworthy is their engagement for prolonged periods. They value extensions tasks because moving on shows that personal targets are being met; with achievement and effort being celebrated.
- There is a business- like approach to teaching and learning that provides pupils with a sense of purpose and value.

The extent to which the Religious Education Curriculum promotes pupils learning

- The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum promotes pupils learning is outstanding.
- In Key Stage 3 *People of God - Called to Serve* is used in accordance with diocesan requirements. The content is being steadily phased-in across the year groups and supported by existing departmental resources.
- In Key Stage 4 the school has responded efficiently in its foundation of the new 2016 GCSE specification for first examination in 2018. There remains intent focus upon the current specification to enable the continued increase in the rate of pupil performance and the seamless transition toward GCSE reform.
- There is almost full cohort entry for GCSE with a small group entered for an alternative accredited route.
- In Key Stage 5 there is a well established A Level pathway. All of the students undertake the required programme in general Religious Education, which has diocesan validation.
- In Key Stage 3, time allocation is at least 8% with several classes now receiving the required 10%, which is the norm in Key Stage 4. In Key Stage 5 there is 20% for A Level, with the required 5% for the general course.
- The content has been enriched to include clear and accurate Church Teaching together with Catholic Social Teaching. There is full and comprehensive inclusion of other world faiths and religions.
- Assessments are in accordance with Religious Education Levels of Attainment, GCSE and A Level grading.
- Consequently provision supports the requirements of the Religious Education Curriculum Directory for Schools and Colleges- 2012.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school

- The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is outstanding.
- The coordination team provides structured leadership and management. Resources are well deployed. Learning walks determine consistency and practice. Outcomes inform the rate and content of in-service training.
- Collective Worship takes place in every sphere of school life. There are many prayer experiences shared with the national and global community of Notre Dame.
- The staff community shares in reflection time in the Chapel. Morning briefing begins with prayer. Pupils have weekly form and year group gatherings. The celebration of the Liturgical year ensures regular interaction with local clergy.
- Staff and pupil retreats provide essential time away to reflect, to plan and simply to be together.
- Prayer experiences are innovative. The weekly themes, supported by prayer are structured to encourage staff and pupil interpretation. There is particular emphasis upon resources being used as a basis rather than solely as a prescriptive expression.

- Student Voice in particular provides essential feedback in reviewing provision. In fact pupils know their views are listened to and this in turn makes them positive about provision in terms of purpose.
- Locally there is interaction with other Christian denominations.
- Collective Worship is inclusive of other faiths and religions. There is avoidance of the comparative approach, thus ensuring a focussed knowledge, understanding and where appropriate a celebration of different beliefs and practice in their own right.
- Provision encourages a spontaneous approach to prayer not least by the availability of the Chapel for personal space and reflection.

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 the same degree of understanding of and commitment to the Mission of the Church.
- This is firmly rooted in the charism of the Institute of Notre Dame de Namur that has guided the school's generations since 1869.
- The family network of Notre Dame schools is taken seriously in terms of constant interaction and celebration.
- Commitment to vision and mission is actively shared. Here too the Sisters of Notre Dame form an active presence. This whole concept of *sharing* includes the regeneration of links with local pastoral areas, parishes and their neighbourhoods. The place of the school in the community cannot be over emphasised in terms of mutual engagement and contribution.
- Governors and leadership are committed to this school beyond the highest levels of generosity. Together they use the College Development Plan to strategically audit the effects of Catholic Life. They are well qualified to do so in terms of experience and through qualification in Catholic Leadership.
- Evidence is drawn from annual reports provided by each department. Strategies for improvement are identified and monitored.
- Governors and leaders ensure pupils are integral to the process by their active inclusion in chaplaincy, mission and vision.
- At the heart of provision is commitment to the whole school's living of the Gospel though example and commitment to each other. Faith informed values provide the school's expression of British Values in a way that all can identify, understand and live.

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

- Leaders, governors and managers provide outstanding monitoring and evaluation of Religious Education. Together they plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils.
- The head and second in department have a shared, professional vision for revitalising Religious Education and have been responsible for steering it to the present level of strength.
- They are strategically guided by qualified governors and senior leadership (several of whom are numbered as members of the department) who are committed to Religious Education being at the core of Catholic Life.

- This has resulted in vibrant continued professional development for the department in raising achievement through access to informative data that in turn guides meaningful pupil intervention.
- Improvements in teaching and learning have greatly benefitted from a collegial approach in sharing of good and best practice.
- Areas for action have been identified and supported by clear guidelines for improvement.
- There is clear understanding amongst the staff that all share in the task of leadership of pupils in their care. Everyone counts and individual contributions are valued.
- The fact that Religious Education now ranks as a lead department is the result of skilled leadership and team effort.
- There has been an emphasis upon greater communication between the sharing of outcomes with parents. These include areas to celebrate and those to be addressed. Most parents are now aware of the extent to which they are respected as the first teachers of their children and their invitation to be part of Religious Education Mission of Notre Dame College.

What the school needs to do to improve further:

- Continue the outstanding rate of development by :
 - Continued growth in the rate of pupil leadership and active participation in Collective Worship;
 - Further shaping of the departmental aspects of the Section 48 Self-Evaluation Document by providing concise and clear expression of strengths and areas for development.

INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

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

How good outcomes are for individuals and groups of pupils	
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school	1
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education	1
How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship	2

PROVISION

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

LEADERS AND MANAGERS

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

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