



ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

INSPECTION REPORT

ST JOHN BOSCO ARTS COLLEGE

LIVERPOOL

Inspection Date: Wednesday 10 January 2018

Inspectors: Deacon Paul Mannings Mrs Elizabeth Dolan

Unique Reference Number: 104715

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

Type of School: Catholic, voluntary aided, girls' comprehensive with mixed Sixth Form

Age range of pupils: 11-18

Number on roll: 880

Chair of Governors: Mr. John Gibbons

Headteacher: Mr. Darren Gidman

School address: Storrington Avenue
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Date of last inspection: Tuesday 4 June 2013

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

- St John Bosco is a Catholic 11-18, voluntary aided girls' comprehensive with mixed Sixth Form.
- The school is under the trusteeship of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians (Salesian Sisters) and situated within the Liverpool Authority.
- The headteacher and subject leader have both been appointed since the last inspection.
- The school has relocated to its new campus since the last inspection.
- There are 880 pupils on roll of whom 515 (58%) are baptised Catholics, with 306 (35%) from other Christian denominations and 17 (2%) from other world faith or religious traditions. There are 42 pupils (5%) who express no religious affiliation.
- The school serves the associated parishes in the pastoral area, with admissions from Archdiocesan and state primary schools in the wider area.
- The school has 68 teaching staff, 64% of whom are Catholic.
- The Religious Education Department has five qualified members one of whom is part time.

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

St John Bosco is outstanding in its provision of Catholic Education.

CATHOLIC LIFE

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

- The extent to which the pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.
- In their own words, "The Mission Statement is everywhere." Pupils explain how they go beyond the confines of its display to live the school Mission by, "Serving the Lord with Gladness," in all areas including, home, school, church and playground.
- There are the highest levels of mutual respect and behaviour amongst pupils.
- They readily take on numerous projects to serve the needs of others. Pupils know how this enriches their living in a Catholic community because of their developing understanding of Salesian Spirituality from Year 7. School Council, Schools Parliament, World Youth Day and participation in service filled gap years all reinforce their regular support for chosen charitable projects. They confidently define the meaning of working towards a just society and state how this applies to school life.
- They have a high regard for school chaplaincy because everyone can become involved. Chaplaincy reinforces through service their sense of belonging to home, school and parish.
- Pupils feel safe and secure at school because of the effective pastoral system rooted in re-assuring their confidence to flourish. The adult community is a recognised source of role modelling. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development exists holistically within school as an expression of Catholic Life.
- Pupils are clear in their understanding of Relationships and Sex Education, which is underpinned by their understanding of Church Teaching about love and how this is based on mutual respect.
- The rising number of pupils who join the school from the wider community rapidly unite with those from associated parish schools in their understanding of and participation in wider ranging school, parish and Archdiocesan life.

The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school

- The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.
- The Mission Statement is reviewed as appropriate and outcomes provide a concise and practical foundation for living the Salesian charism.
- The staff serve as a committed partnership in implementing the Mission. There is meaningful continued professional development which is inclusive of all faiths, religions and views. They respond to the invitation to be part of community, to lead and join in Catholic action and to join with prayer time.
- The whole environment of this relatively new campus embodies a Christ centred community both by design and in creative symbolism.
- Staff demonstrate a professional sense of business combined with the highest standards of pastoral example and care.

- The whole school curriculum is also distinctive in its commitment to the holistic development of pupils both in fulfilling personal potential and by expressing a care for and responsibility to society.
- This lived curriculum fully supports spiritual and moral development through reflection, focus on right behaviour and making known to pupils the purpose of their lives and work.
- Chaplaincy is the backbone of Catholic life because of its facilitation, timetabled availability and a commitment to school and community interaction.
- Policies and structures for pastoral care are founded upon the wellbeing of staff and pupils and setting the secure context for personal development.
- Relationships and Sex Education is firmly in place and delivered through a cross curricular process. The current implementation of the policy is consistent, qualitative and totally in accordance with Church Teaching. Much of the provision continues to undergo revision according to the most recent requirements.

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school

- Leaders and governors are outstanding in promoting, monitoring and evaluating the provision for the Catholic Life of the school.
- Senior leadership demonstrates commitment through confident articulation of the core characteristics of this Salesian school by making Christ known through their promotion of the Mission.
- This is expressed practically in everyday school life and monitored through targeted areas for celebration and for development identified in the Section 48 Self Evaluation Document.
- Regular continued professional development supported by periodic mission weeks ensure that staff are fully appraised of how their contributions to the Catholic common good are highly relevant and appreciated. Consequently, staff share a sense of purpose which is exemplified in many ways and typically by the works of the Laura Vicuna Centre in supporting specific needs of some pupils.
- Salesian Sisters resident in the community maintain a presence in school and assist in maintaining the long-standing links with the neighbourhood. This is further enriched by chaplaincy and local clergy. This ensures high levels of parental support for and pride in the school, not least because many are themselves former pupils.
- The governing body is to be commended for its overall steering of Catholic Life. This is because membership is rooted in the expression of practical faith. They carefully and regularly monitor its quality and personally contribute with generosity of experience, skills, time and presence.
- The school remains at the forefront of best practice in its commitment to Archdiocesan policies, networks and projects.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education

- The extent to which pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education is outstanding.
- This judgment is focused on pupils' progress relative to their capabilities and starting points. From Year 7 their study pathways are entirely diagnostic across all ability ranges.
- Differentiation for all levels of ability is abundant, practical and conducive to pupil achievement.

- Year 7 pupils drawn from wider ranging primary schools outside of the Catholic sector are rapidly introduced to Religious Education that is made relevant to their own lives. Knowledge and understanding in lessons is accompanied by time to reflect spiritually, evaluate and apply the content. Pupils comment that Religious Education is valuable because they are encouraged to take part without any sense of religion being imposed. For these reasons, they want to be part of Religious Education. Some speak of their *love* for the subject.
- This ensures pupils active involvement in lessons. They are included in their learning and know precisely how to make progress.
- Pupils show impressive levels of concentration and self- starting. Their study pathways are well directed and flagged by indicators on how to reach the next level of learning.
- Consequently, in class pupils are highly motivated, focused and stimulated. Their behaviour is first rate.
- In terms of national data, achievement at the end of Key Stage 4 is good and over the last three years has closely reached or fallen short of national averages. However, the same performance is good or better taking into consideration pupils attainment in relation to their starting points and performance over time. High ability pupils are stretched and this is reflected in achievement for GCSE grades *A and A. In the same three-year period the small cohorts entered for A level have achieved highly. Sixth form students achieve particularly well in General Religious Education, having attained continued levels of progress over the two-year programme
- All pupils' work is closely monitored and well annotated. Peer assessment is very much in evidence and used to good effect. There is interactive progress dialogue between pupils and teachers. Pupils books show that the *Purple Pen* process enables them to know exactly where they are in their learning journey and precisely how to move forward.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education is outstanding.
- Planning is highly effective with pupils prior learning used as a solid foundation for their progress. This ensures teachers thorough planning for lessons. They are fully conversant with the needs of their pupils. This results in teaching that is highly relevant and conducive to making every minute of learning count.
- Teaching strategies are wide and varied, with effectively timed "chunks" that ensure pupils' motivation. These include individual and collaborative activities that are paused as appropriate to enable pupils to share progress.
- In class teachers constantly monitor progress which gives pupils security, confidence and affirmation. Learning assistance is well deployed and essentially part of the whole learning process.
- Teachers are specifically skilled in their use of open and searching questioning that affirms pupils yet enables them to think more deeply and enrich their understanding.
- There is an abundance of high quality and differentiated pupils work plans and resources. Classrooms are well appointed with quality displays of pupils and teachers work. A number of pupils commented upon how the classroom environment provides a sense of belonging and personal encouragement.
- Teachers demonstrate high expectations. Their commitment to *Stretch and Challenge* and to ensuring outcomes that **are at least good** but **might be even better if**, are by-phrases of departmental teaching styles.
- The same level of rigour is applied to formative and summative assessment which emphasises to pupils the central importance of continuous feedback and assessment for learning. Pupils are keen to read their teachers commentaries which are both celebratory and directional.

- **How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education**

- Leaders and governors are outstanding in promoting, monitoring and evaluating the provision for Religious Education.
- Their commitment to the living and understanding of Catholic Life ensures that Religious Education is securely at the core of the curriculum and completely meets the requirements of the Bishops Curriculum Directory.
- Curriculum time allocation fully meets and in parts exceeds national requirements.
- Religious Education staffing is strong in terms of numbers, qualification and expertise. Departmental funding is appropriate and accommodation is first rate. Teachers have full access to Archdiocesan continued professional development. The school is particularly generous in its support of the Key Stage 3 curriculum working group.
- Archdiocesan requirements have been met by the full implementation of *People of God* in Key Stage 3 and the required GCSE specification in Key Stage 4, which is followed by all pupils. In the Sixth Form, there is A Level provision. General Religious Education is validated, efficient and undertaken by all students. All programmes are enriched by the celebration of other world faiths and religions. Throughout the curriculum British Values are clearly expressed through Gospel Values.
- The Section 48 Self Evaluation Document for the most part readily informs departmental development. The clearly formulated assessment policy ensures highly effective pupil tracking and intervention which leads to strong outcomes for all pupils so ensuring robust progression according to their own abilities. This is well underpinned by the Triangulation Process based upon data informed flagging of progress and the promotion of diagnostic pupil impact for improvement. The department is well served by the expertise of teachers who are GCSE examination examiners.
- The curriculum leader has a clear vision for maintaining excellence and securing continued pursuit of best standards. There is a highly supportive and committed team approach to learning walks, books scrutiny and standardisation. This results in departmental confidence and readiness to share skills in teaching and learning.
- Leaders and governors ensure efficient line management that keeps them fully informed of departmental outcomes and equipped in supporting targeted areas for development. They receive quarterly reports that are substantive and accurate.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

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

- Pupils' response to and participation in the school's Collective Worship is outstanding.
- They are readily engaged by the focus of prayer stimuli which is evident from their ability to listen, to provide comments and to spend time reflectively considering their responses, which are then shared. They speak of reflective time as occasions when they can gather their thoughts or maybe simply have some personal space.
- Pupils are clear that they can volunteer to be involved and/or lead. They readily co-operate in planning and know they can offer their own skills. On the many occasions when Collective Worship is led by staff they are always encouraged to participate in a variety of ways including prayer, discussion points and the challenge to support prayer by action. They appreciate the school's musical tradition which enables lively community singing as appropriate and always during whole school events such as Prize Giving.
- Pupils were confident in explaining how the Liturgical Year enables different styles of celebrations. They provided examples matched to Advent, Lent and Easter.

- Their liturgical formation is also enhanced by community celebration such as Salesians Make Some Noise, CYMFED, Embrace, Flame and the annual re-enactment of the Passion.
- They agree that Collective Worship takes place daily which in their view is a highly worthwhile part of the curriculum because prayer in action is part of the life of a Catholic school.
- Most important is the fact that pupils feel Collective Worship gives them a sense of belonging and relevance whether or not they have faith. They know there is a lot the community can respond to together through Collective Worship. They appreciate the frequent occasions when they can celebrate the events and traditions of other world faiths and religions. Pupils are keen to share their faith or beliefs, secure in the knowledge they will be respected.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school

- The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is outstanding.
- Provision is firmly placed as a daily expression of Catholic Life amongst staff, within form time and during gatherings of whole year groups.
- The themes are carefully linked to the Liturgical Year and supported by resources and suggestions for prayer.
- The whole package of Collective Worship planning, resourcing and evaluation is shared with staff who in turn provided their own creativity and advice for development. This provides a shared ownership and confidence to contribute.
- This ensures the maintenance of styles of Collective Worship that will enhance the Liturgical Year.
- Staff are encouraged to use their own skills to enable pupils to be part of the whole process.
- Much thought and planning direct the celebration of Collective Worship in ways that keeps the community aware of the variety of prayer forms. To this end the continued planning and development of retreat experiences for pupils and staff seeks to ensure a spirit of cooperation and team building. These occasions provide a sense of belonging, a realisation that everyone matters and has something to contribute.
- Provision has a continued focus on maximum participation that includes the wider community. There is frequent Salesian input. The local parish community is regularly invited to participate. The school maintains well established links with and participation in Archdiocesan Collective Worship. This whole sphere of provision offers frequent invitations for parents and whole families to share in the prayer life of the school.

How well leaders, governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship

- Leaders and governors are outstanding in promoting, monitoring and evaluating the provision for Collective Worship.
- This is the result of effective co-ordination that ensures they are conversant with policies and daily practice. In return, they co-operate through maximum participation and their securing of Collective Worship as an essential strand in Catholic Life.
- Leadership, governance and coordination share a clear understanding of how to unfold and develop the Liturgical Year in a way that is enriched by Church Teaching and entirely relevant to community life.
- The contemporary context of school community life is the essential element of the Salesian Way and this is what underpins the ways in which prayer is made accessible and meaningful.
- Leaders of Collective Worship includes all phases of the staff and pupil community with a range of visiting providers. There is a right insistence on best standards without show.

- They are keen to include pupils in every way available by encouraging and harnessing their skills and efforts.
- Continued professional development is part of the induction package for newly qualified teachers and others new to the school. Here to annual training in the Salesian Way of Life does on occasion provide a focus on Collective Worship. At other times staff and pupils and staff are drawn together to plan and where appropriate to rehearse singing and public prayer.
- There is an effective system for monitoring undertaken by senior and year leadership. Outcomes inform the Self Evaluation focus for development as well as the formative sharing of best practice to strengthen any areas of need.

What the school needs to do to improve further

- Further enrich Catholic Life, Religious Education and Collective Worship by:
 - Ensuring each section of the Section 48 Self-Evaluation Document is focused entirely upon content relevant to its requirements, so avoiding any repetition or overlap;
 - Subsequent use of this document in its entirety as the singular departmental development plan.
- Reinforce the existing rates of success of Religious Education by:
 - Using GCSE grade boundaries, once they are defined, to further complement the assessment process;
 - Continue to market the uptake of Advanced Level studies.
- Maintain high standards of progress already made in the quality of Collective Worship by:
 - More regular training for small groups of staff to ensure their maximum usage of the high quality weekly resources and sharing of best practice;
 - Keeping up the momentum for pupil leadership and involvement.

INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education	1
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CATHOLIC LIFE

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school	1
The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school	1
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school	1

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education	1
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education	1
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education	1

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship	1
The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school	1
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship	1

Key to judgements: Grade 1 is Outstanding, Grade 2 Good, Grade 3 Requires Improvement and Grade 4 Inadequate