



ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

INSPECTION REPORT

ST. EDWARD'S COLLEGE

LIVERPOOL

Wednesday 20 May 2009

Inspectors Rev. Paul Mannings Mr. Andrew Traynor

URN 131320

Inspection carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

Type of School	Catholic voluntary-aided, mixed comprehensive
Age range of pupils	11-18
Number on roll	1,176
Chair of governors'	Mr Terence Sweeney
School address	North Drive, Sandfield Park, Liverpool, L12 1LF.
Telephone number	0151 282 1999
E-mail address	postbox@st-edwards.liverpool.sch.uk
Date of last inspection	15-16 November 2005
Principal	Mr. John E. Waszek

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. Edward's is a Catholic, voluntary-aided, mixed comprehensive in the Liverpool Authority, under the trusteeship of the Congregation of Christian Brothers. St. Edward's is the Choir School for Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral. The college has Specialist Language and Performing Arts Status. It is heavily oversubscribed. There are 1,176 learners on roll of whom 93% are baptised Catholics, with 5.45% from other Christian denominations and 1.6% from other World Faith traditions. They are drawn from several education authorities within the Archdiocese. Over 105 live in neighbourhoods ranked in the top 5% nationally for social deprivation. Sixteen learners have statements of special educational needs, with a further 41 supported by School Action and 8 by School Action Plus. The college has 79 teaching staff of whom 61% are Catholic. The Religious Education department has four core and two part-time staff.

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. Edward's is an outstanding Catholic college committed to its Mission, 'to trust in God and be of good courage.' Strategic support by College leadership has enabled Religious Education to develop significantly since the last inspection. The capacity for continued improvement is outstanding. Achievement and standards are outstanding. Teaching and learning is good with outstanding features. The curriculum content is outstanding. Leadership and management of Religious Education are outstanding. Catholic life is outstanding. Collective Worship is outstanding. Promotion of community cohesion is outstanding. Parents, carers and learners show outstanding support for the college.

Grade: 1

Improvement since the last inspection

Improvement has been good with a significant number of outstanding features in areas identified for development and through continued overall improvement initiated by the department. Programmes of study in Year 11 have been thoroughly revised. Effective monitoring and sharing of good practice in teaching continues to raise standards even further. The quality of Collective Worship has been greatly enhanced by practical guidelines and resources for staff. Curriculum time has been increased to 10% in Year 9. The general course in Religious Education is now established in the Sixth Form. The remaining area for strategic development is an increase in curriculum time provision for Year 11.

Grade: 2

Capacity to improve

Capacity for continued improvement is outstanding. The departmental self-evaluation is concise, realistic and supported by effective strategies for monitored development. In parts the grade awarded by the department falls short of actual progress made.

Grade: 1

What the school should do to improve further

- Increased curriculum time provision for the revised post GCSE course in Year 11.

Achievement and Standards

Achievement and standards in Religious Education are outstanding. This is evident in Key Stages 3 and 4 and in the Sixth Form. Effective tracking of learners' progress identifies any instances of under achievement and insufficient rigour. This process is linked constructively to learners' individual progress in Religious Education Levels of Attainment, which by the end of Key Stage 3 indicates achievement of Level 5 and beyond. In Key Stage 4 achievement in GCSE consistently exceeds the national average. In 2008 87.7% achieved grades A*-C, with 52% of these awarded grades A*-A. The same rate of achievement is evident in the Sixth Form, with those entered for A2 gaining 100% grades A-E, 65% of these awarded grades A-B. Learners enjoyment of Religious Education and high standards of behaviour in class make a significant contribution to standards overall. This is expressed through their outstanding contribution to the school community.

Grade: 1

Quality of Provision for Religious Education

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good with a significant number of outstanding features. Learning itself is outstanding. Teaching is well organised, informed and creative. Lessons are well paced and conducive to progress. Learners make effective use of prior knowledge in undertaking research. They work well independently and collaboratively. Teachers should continue to develop the existing good practice in peer and self-assessment. Differentiation is highly effective both in mixed ability and set groups. This is evident through teacher led activities and in the range of individual tasks set in each class. Assessment for and learning is embedded in the formative process and evident through high standards of marking and annotation. The content of written work matches the programmes of study. It is focussed on key vocabulary and concepts. The many examples of thorough diagnostic marking should now be extended across the whole department and its frequency should be increased. Many of the learners' books show outstanding attention to presentation. End of task assessment is rigorous in each Key Stage. Parents and carers are encouraged to be actively involved in their children's education through regular reporting and review meetings, which show attendance in excess of 90%.

Grade: 2

Curriculum

There is good curriculum provision overall. The content is outstanding. Since the last inspection the time allocation has been increased to 10% in Year 9, to match the provision already existing in Year 10.

The required 5% has also been allocated for the general course in the Sixth Form. Those undertaking AS/A2 continue to receive 20%. The college should increase the provision from 3.3% (one lesson) for the post GCSE course in Year 11. The Bishops of England and Wales require 10% up to the end of Key Stage 4. In Key Stage 3 Icons has been thoroughly developed. The process is conscientiously followed within the GCSE course begun in Year 9. All learners are entered for the full examination at the end of year 10. The Year 11 course, restructured twice in three years is highly relevant and well focused on the aims of Religious Education. The AS/A2 course in Religious Studies, Philosophy and Ethics is well marketed and increasing in popularity. Sixth Form general Religious Education is a new and meticulously developed course internally accredited with Archdiocesan approval. Consequently the curriculum makes a good response to diocesan and national requirements. The content makes an outstanding contribution to learners' spiritual and moral development.

Grade: 2

Leadership and Management

Religious Education

Leadership and management of Religious Education are outstanding. The department has continued to improve significantly since the last inspection in terms of organisation and implementation of development. This is the result of strategic direction by senior leadership and the continued works of the head of department. The second in department, as acting subject leader since December 2008, has made an outstanding contribution to this success. After a period of staffing constraints, the department is working as a committed team. Three of the four core members have a Religious Education qualification. Increased provision for continued professional development has benefitted staff. This should now include regular participation in Archdiocesan in-service. The outstanding promotion of equal opportunities is evident in achievement and standards, levels of differentiation and the availability of accredited courses for all learners. Learning resources are good and so too is their deployment. The governors provide a good discharge of their responsibilities overall. In some areas this is outstanding especially in support of development since the last inspection, and by the recent provision of the subject link governor who is headteacher of a local Catholic primary school and well established in the life of the college. The immediate focus of this role should be to consider increased curriculum provision in Year 11.

Grade: 1

Catholic Life of the School

Leadership and management of Catholic life of the college are outstanding. The Mission Statement is supported by clear aim and objectives. It is owned, understood and lived out in every aspect of

college life. Learners are clearly informed by its content and cite the high standards of pastoral care as an indicator of its value. The lay chaplain makes a significant impact through availability for the community. Governors provide outstanding monitoring of Catholic life through admissions procedures, annual faculty reports and active involvement. The role of the new link governor is to ensure the place of Religious Education at the core of Catholic life.

Grade: 1

Collective Worship

The provision for and quality of Collective Worship is outstanding. Prayer and worship is coordinated by the lay chaplain. Carefully planned themes and the development of resources have raised the standard of form group worship, which on the day of inspection was outstanding. The observed year group worship was also outstanding. Both included public and private prayer with the opportunity for participation by staff and learners. Learners particularly appreciate all of the opportunities for their active involvement. Prayer and worship takes place daily in form groups and twice weekly for year groups. There are celebrations of Eucharist and services throughout the Liturgical Year. Service of the Word with Communion is celebrated voluntarily twice each week. There are abundant opportunities for Collective Worship experiences in the wider community, which includes regular participation of learners and staff in Cathedral liturgies and celebrations. Provision is effectively monitored and the coordinator is developing this further, particularly in form groups. Collective Worship makes an outstanding contribution to learners' spiritual and moral development.

Grade: 1

Community Cohesion

Promotion of community cohesion is outstanding. The inclusion of all is central to the vision of the college to serve the common good. Collective Worship celebrates, reflects and respects diversity of belief. The Religious Education curriculum promotes personal integrity, mutual understanding and respect for all faiths. Learners feel safe, secure and well supported. They are given time to reflect on prejudice, discrimination and stereotyping. Service to the community is tangibly expressed through the wide range of global and local charities, which include Christian Brothers in Africa, CRY, Nugent Care, CAFOD, HCPT and LEPR. The college has strong relationships with the Royal Liverpool Children's Hospital and local businesses. There are many sporting links with local clubs. The Choir School and wider musical tradition of the college is acclaimed at local, national and international levels.

Grade: 1

