



ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

INSPECTION REPORT

ST EDMUND ARROWSMITH CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

ASHTON IN MAKERFIELD

Inspection Date	Wednesday 1 March 2017
Inspectors	Deacon Paul Mannings and Mrs Elizabeth Dolan
Unique Reference Number	106540

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	1,207
Chair of Governors	Mr. Stephen Westhead
Headteacher	Mr. Mark Dumican
School address	Rookery Avenue Ashton in Makerfield WN4 9PF
Telephone number	01942 728651
E-mail address	office@arrowsmith.wigan.sch.uk
Date of last inspection	Wednesday 1 February 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

- St. Edmund Arrowsmith Catholic High School is a voluntary-aided, 11-16, mixed comprehensive, under the trusteeship of the Archdiocese of Liverpool and situated within the Wigan Authority.
- The Chair of Governors and Religious Education Link Governor, Headteacher, Lay Chaplain, Head of Department and Second in Department have all been appointed since the last inspection.
- There are 1, 207 pupils on roll of whom 96.6% are baptised Catholics, with 2.73% from other Christian denominations and 0.56% from other world faith or religious traditions.
- Pupils are drawn from associated Catholic primary schools in the pastoral area.
- The school has 88 teaching staff, 65.9% of whom are Catholic.
- The Religious Education department has seven members, five of these appointed since the last inspection. Six are full-time. All are qualified in Religious Education.

Key for inspection grades

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

© 2017 copyright – Archdiocese of Liverpool. This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school.

Overall effectiveness:

St Edmund Arrowsmith 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.
- Pupils who were interviewed spoke of their “love” for the school because they are challenged to succeed and to contribute to community life. Pupils show an over-arching knowledge and understanding and living of Gospel values. They cite the effects of the school’s Impact Group, together with the diocesan *Faith in Action Award* in harnessing their school and parish commitments toward service in the name of the Gospel, through the Mission Statement in, “Preparing the way of the Lord.”
- They readily link close interaction between parish and school facilitated by the work of priest and lay chaplaincy, whom they hold in the highest regard. This is because they are included and listened to. Pupils are able to join the chaplaincy group and to get involved.
- Each year group selects and generously supports its own charity. This is a wide - ranging mix that demonstrates their awareness of and commitment to care and social wellbeing.
- The overall ethos of the school is warm, supportive and professional. Pupils readily link how a safe and happy environment encourages their growth spiritually, morally and academically.
- Pupils are secure in their praise and support for each other. Success is celebrated. There is a positivity expressed through pupils’ keen awareness of what the school is doing well and what it could be doing better. In the case of the latter they demonstrate responsibility through willingness to share all efforts towards continued development.

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education

- Pupils show outstanding levels of achievement and attainment in Religious Education.
- This is underpinned by high quality teaching and learning in most lessons, whereby pupils are provided with direction from prior attainment to realistic and aspirational personal progression. Pupils personal targets are clearly structured which in turn secures direction to success. They are keen to practise skills already acquired and undertake extension tasks.
- There is a sharp and incisive process to encourage pupils to seek assistance where required.
- Quality monitoring, in the main, identifies areas of need and highlights good practice that can be shared.
- Departmental proficiency in, and commitment to, data ensures effective and timely intervention where appropriate.
- Pupils are motivated to succeed because of an overall sense of purpose. The majority enjoy their lessons. Dialogue with the teacher ensures that pupils are confident their needs are being met. This is well-amplified by meticulous marking and annotation, which provides speedy and efficient feedback.
- Shared learning outcomes enables a high rate of self-starting and progress.

- Effort and achievement is celebrated informally in class and through reporting and awards.
- In Key Stage 3, 97.1% of pupils make three levels of progress, with 73.6 percent making four and 13.4% making five.
- Performance at GCSE remains high above the national average. The three respective cohorts in the period 2014-16 have achieved 84%, 80% and 83% respectively for grades A*-C. The same cohorts have reached similarly high performance levels for A*-A.
- Differentiation is strategic because of teaching sets determined by ability. Herein work is further matched to personal needs. Learning support assistance is efficient, meaningful and well-deployed.

How well pupils respond to and participate in Collective Worship

- Pupils' response to and participation in Collective Worship is outstanding.
- They are encouraged to lead and to participate.
- Pupils regard Collective Worship as occasions when, "They are set-up for the day". They are given a sense of purpose and motivation. Some spoke of the challenge it provides to live their Gospel values.
- They benefit from periods of reflection. Pupils use these to gather their own thoughts and to appreciate the silence.
- They are reverent. Participants are listened too. Interaction is meaningful and reflective.
- Pupils appreciate the availability of the Chapel for private and public prayer. They see the relevance of beginning Religious Education with prayer.
- They affirm that other world faiths and religions are included and celebrated.
- Pupils know that Collective Worship is open and welcoming to the gathered community regardless of faith or world view.
- They understand and enjoy how contributions can vary to include discussion, creativity and drama.
- From their responses during Collective Worship, it is clear they are willing to think and to deliberate.
- Public readings and presentations are for the most part well-rehearsed.
- They understand how Collective Worship unfolds the Liturgical Year in a variety of styles.
- Pupils also understand the differences between assemblies and acts of worship. They appreciate how the two may be merged, citing the example of an awards presentation linked to meaningful prayers of thanksgiving.
- They are aware of the community aspect of Collective Worship and how this reinforces a sense of belonging to form, year group and to school.

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

- On the day of the inspection the quality of teaching and purposeful learning in the large majority of lessons observed was outstanding.
- In outstanding lessons teachers' subject knowledge is of the highest standard.
- Lessons are well structured and effectively paced.
- There is excellent teacher and pupil relationships and responses.
- Teachers are calm, clear, confident and inspiring.
- Every aspect of the lesson counts toward progress.
- The atmosphere in class promotes co-operation and dialogue.
- Pupils are given extremely high quality learning experiences. Pupils efforts are recognised and celebrated.

- Pupils are practised in responding to challenges.
- Monitoring of learning is a strength. There were several lessons in which all the pupils remained totally on task. In other learning activities where attention drifted they were efficiently re-focussed.
- Pupils work well together in sharing their findings and encouraging their peers.
- There is effective structuring of independent learning.
- Pupils are confident to ask questions and to share findings. Teachers responses are both encouraging and directional.
- Teaching and learning is always directed towards the next step in progress.
- Whilst high productivity counts, pupils are given time to re-appraise their work.
- Pupils are courteous and extremely well behaved. They are clear and confident in explaining the meaning and purpose of their learning.
- The enthusiasm of teachers is motivational. Their questioning of pupils, open and searching.
- The overall structure of lessons ensures an even share of teaching and learning. There is always ample scope for the content to set the direction of the next lesson.
- Pupils depart from lessons on a positive note.

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

- The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum promotes pupils' learning is outstanding.
- Curriculum time stands at 9.3% in Key Stage 3 and 10% in Key Stage 4.
- *People of God – Called to Serve* has been implemented in Years 7-9. The 2018 GCSE specification is underway.
- The content includes other world faith and religious namely Hinduism and Islam and Judaism in Key Stage 3, with Judaism as the second religion for GCSE.
- Consequently, national and diocesan requirements are being met through the school's compliance with the Religious Education Curriculum Directory.
- There is informed use of Scripture within lessons. Gospel values are at the foundation of British Values. Pupils are taught clearly about how Catholic Faith informed values are lived within contemporary society.
- The sacraments are taught as currency for proper living of Catholic Life.
- Reflection is a consistent aspect of lesson time. This is constructively managed. Pupils are provided with landmark points for consideration. They are encouraged to evaluate their work within the context of Catholic Christian living and to share their thoughts and consideration during discussion. This process contributes to the department's focus on pupils' confidence in oracy.
- There is creative and imaginative use of visiting speakers and theatre groups.
- The department has wide ranging quality resources that are updated as required. Each member contributes according to personal expertise.
- Classroom resources are readily available for pupils. These include extension tasks and materials for personal research.
- End of unit assessment tasks are properly structured and include progress benchmarks matched to Levels of Attainment and GCSE.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school

- The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is outstanding.
- Provision is facilitated by the Lay Chaplain.

- Both content and time allocation takes account of the religious and educational needs of the whole school community so ensuring a truly collective dimension that includes those who form part of the worshipping community through home school and parish; others for whom school may be their only experiences of Church; those from other Christian traditions and those from other world faiths and religions.
- Participation has many dimensions and includes active presentation through public reading, drama and music, together with occasions for stillness and for personal reflection.
- Collective Worship is celebrated daily in form time and once weekly within year groups. There is community morning prayer each day in the Chapel or main foyer. Religious Education and a number of other subjects include prayer at the start of each lesson. There are masses and services at appropriate occasions throughout the year.
- The retreat programme established in Year 7, together with the school's traditional support of the Lourdes Pilgrimage enables pupils to appreciate the breadth and variety of worship.
- The Chapel, situated in the midst of the campus, is a well-used space for public and private prayer and reflection.
- There are themed resources that are shared amongst form groups for co-operative use by pupils and staff. The content can be adapted to the individual needs of form groups.
- There is a process for monitoring provision.
- Identified areas of best practice or areas requiring support are included within annual training.

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 evident in the Section 48 Self Evaluation Document and in daily practice.
- The Mission Statement explicitly directs Catholic Life both through its vision and supporting straplines which express its aims in enriching education, discipleship, mission, understanding, nurture and dignity.
- Catholic Life is reviewed each term through departmental reports to governors that indicate how mission is being lived and shared.
- There is an annual spirituality day for all staff.
- Inspired headship empowers staff and the community to belong and to flourish. There is the desire for Catholic life to be explicit in how faith is lived and implicit through the daily living of Gospel values. This ensures a safe and stable environment where people want to belong and to succeed.
- Full time lay chaplaincy has continued to develop. The role is clearly defined. There is a realistic timeframe that ensures availability. Facilitation of Collective Worship, the chaplaincy group and wider ranging school initiatives ensures fusion of ministry toward the whole community. This is undertaken with vision and energy.
- There is regular support offered by a priest chaplain who is also a governor. He is clear about how the school participates in local parish life, with plenty of scope for progress. His presence reinforces the whole aspect of shared chaplaincy and the part played by the school within the diocesan family.
- Governors and senior leadership ensure that Catholic Life is a shared and accountable responsibility. Consequently, the community responds.

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 line managers provide outstanding monitoring and evaluation of Religious Education. Together they plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils. The subject is firmly secured in its core position.
- There is outstanding leadership and management of the Religious Education department, which enables members to work as a cohesive and committed team of highly motivated professionals.
- Regular senior and departmental meetings ensures the Section 48 Self Evaluation Document informs both departmental and school improvement.
- The department is to be commended for its implementation of the recommendation of the last inspection, namely the focus on monitoring and assessment. There is now a meticulous whole school marking policy based on sound academic research. The five strands of this policy have been developed by the department into a concise process of practice. Assessment of pupil progress is key and demonstrates to the pupils that their work is valued. It ensures meaningful dialogue between teacher and pupil, which enables identification of areas for improvement. Scrutiny of pupils' books provides evidence of consistent and vigorous implementation of the policy across both key stages. This impacts upon maintaining the highest standards of teaching and learning, pupil progress and attainment.
- The team approach of members ensures the sharing of good practice. There is strategic support for areas of need as and when they arise.
- Continued professional development includes attendance at diocesan events. The school continues its generous support for the diocesan Key Stage 3 Writing Group.
- Actions support the department's commitment to relationships with pupils and the revelation of God through faith-informed values.

What the school needs to do to improve further:

- Maintain the raised standards in provision for Collective Worship by:
 - increasing the personnel involved in monitoring form group practice so securing closer identification of consistency and quality.

INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education	1
---	---

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	1

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
