



## ARCHDIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL

### INSPECTION REPORT

# ST. VINCENT'S SCHOOL: A SPECIALIST SCHOOL FOR SENSORY IMPAIRMENT AND OTHER NEEDS

## LIVERPOOL

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Inspection Date Tuesday 20 November 2012

Inspectors Rev. Dcn. Paul Mannings

Unique Reference Number 104734

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

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Type of School	Catholic non-maintained, mixed, specialist school
Age range of pupils	4-19
Number on roll	39
Chair of Governors	Mrs Elizabeth Jones
Principal	Mr. Stephen Roberts
School address	Yew Tree Lane Liverpool L12 9HN
Telephone number	0151 228 9968
E-mail address	office@stvin.com
Date of last inspection	16 June 2009



# 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. Vincent's is a 4-19 Catholic non-maintained, mixed, specialist school for sensory impairment and other needs.
- The school is administered by the Catholic Blind Institute.
- Pupils are drawn according to specialist need from some eighteen education authorities, which span several dioceses in England and Wales.
- There are 39 pupils on roll of whom 17.9% are baptised Catholic, with 48.7% from other Christian denominations and 5.1% from other faith or religious traditions.
- There are 9.5 teaching staff of whom 73% are Catholic.
- There are three part-time teachers of Religious Education, including the co-ordinator, who also teach other subjects. Two are qualified in Religious Education.
- Overall there are five teachers with a Religious Education qualification.

### Key for inspection grades

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

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## **Overall effectiveness:**

St. Vincent's 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 demonstrate ownership of the Mission Statement through their knowledge of its aims and practical application. This is evident from conversation with pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 and an interview with members of School Council in Key Stages 3-4 and post 16. Pupils cite Student Council as a means of expressing their own views with confidence. This in turn encourages their skills in listening to and considering the religious or world views of others.
- Whilst baptised Catholics account for the minority of the roll, many pupils can articulate why and how gospel values are inclusive of other faiths, religions and world views.
- Pupils undertake a wide range of fundraising and community projects at local, national and global level. They show knowledge and understanding of how such projects are linked to the gospel values promoted in Religious Education and by the wider Catholic life of the school.
- Religious Education enables pupils to refer to the teachings of Jesus and other religious figures. They are taught and encouraged to apply such teachings to their own lives.
- Pupils are confident and secure in their willingness to congratulate others and celebrate their achievements.
- Their outstanding behaviour is testimony to the opportunities for moral development provided by the staff. They are role models of mutual respect and service to the common good.

### **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 the result of scrutiny of national benchmark data applied to the school's system for incisive monitoring and tracking of the specialist needs of each pupil.
- Regular and thorough assessment guides individual attainment and achievement. Consequently the rate of individual progress matched to their personal needs is better than good and in many cases exemplary.
- In Key Stages 1 and 2 concept maps provide clear direction for pupils. Up to the end of Key Stage 3 indicators of personal progress are exemplified through Religious Education levels of attainment and to a limited degree by performance levels. These levels are the approved route for measuring progress in our Catholic schools. In Key Stage 4 accredited study routes signpost continued progress.
- Pupils are enabled to self-assess and so contribute to their own development.
- Their knowledge and understanding motivates achievement and attainment. Wide-ranging learning strategies both practise and reinforce existing attainment.

- Pupils are equipped to progress and achieve further through high levels of individual learning support. This reinforces their confidence to learn in an environment that offers personal learning pathways and monitoring.
- Achievement and attainment is enhanced by pupils' enjoyment in lessons. This in turn encourages their maximum participation in learning.

### **How well pupils' respond to and participate in Collective Worship**

- Pupils' response to and participation in Collective Worship is outstanding.
- Prayer and worship is meaningful to pupils. They can relate enthusiastically to the content.
- They have the confidence to join in and to lead as appropriate. This is encouraged from early years.
- The intimacy of small group gathering means pupils are confident to express their own viewpoints.
- Pupils appreciate opportunities for private prayer and reflection. They are aware of the importance of times for stillness.
- They are at ease when praying with others. They share their beliefs and views as appropriate.
- Pupils understand that Collective Worship is essentially about prayer. They can relate the content to their own lives and to the needs of others. They recognise its contribution to the Catholic life of the school.

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

- The quality of teaching and purposeful learning in Religious Education is outstanding.
- This is exemplified by the provision of child-centred and personalised learning and teaching that matches the needs of each pupil. This level of differentiation is an internationally recognised strength of the school.
- Teaching is well planned and delivered. Learning outcomes are explicit and shared. The main content encourages progression through a range of strategic activities. Plenaries are imaginative and well used to celebrate progress.
- Teachers' knowledge and understanding of Religious Education is at least good and outstanding overall.
- Learning support assistants are well deployed to maximise pupils' personal learning.
- Full use is made of pupils' prior knowledge which is enriched and built upon.
- Pupils have ample scope for individual work and group studies.
- High quality technology is available in all teaching bases.
- Pupils' personal work is outstanding. The content is matched to the programmes of study. Braille is of good to high standard. Varying degrees of large print is matched to their needs. Pictorial, photographic and symbolic presentations are meaningful and stimulating.
- Marking and annotation is developmental and well monitored. This ensures direct attention to corrections and thorough practise in areas for improvement.
- High quality learning and teaching contributes significantly to pupils' motivation, enjoyment and consequent achievement and attainment.

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

- The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum promotes pupils' learning is outstanding. The current intake begins toward the end of Key Stage 1. In each key

stage pupils are vertically streamed to enable class sizes to be effective learning and teaching communities.

- In Key Stages 1 and 2 *Come and See* has been established since September. The delivery of the process is thorough and stimulating.
- In Key Stage 3 *Icons* is equally well delivered.
- In Key Stage 4 all pupils have access to accredited study pathways, the main route being Entry Level. Currently one pupil is undertaking GCSE.
- The Post 16 programme of study is approved and certificated by the diocese.
- In Key Stages 1- 4 the curriculum time is one hour and fifty minutes a week, the equivalent of two lessons out of twenty-five (6.8%). This shortfall to the 10% requirement has been authorised by the diocese due to the school's specialist nature and the resultant need to timetable pupils living skills and practises. It is imperative that this provision is not reduced. Post 16 provision of one lesson per week meets the 5% requirement.
- The content of the curriculum is tailored to the needs of each and every pupil.
- World faiths, religions and traditions are well embedded into the curriculum.
- Citizenship is amplified at all levels and founded on gospel values and traditions.
- The content of the curriculum is faithful to the Religious Education Curriculum Directory for Catholic Schools in England and Wales (2012). It provides outstanding promotion of spiritual and moral development.

### **The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school**

- The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is outstanding.
- Collective Worship is celebrated in class in Key Stages 1 and 2 and in the independent study support groups from Key Stage 3 onwards. Twice a week the school gathers together for prayer and worship prepared by groups of pupils and staff.
- Prayer and worship resources are well planned by the co-ordinator. They are wholly supportive of the Liturgical Year. They are inclusive of other world faiths, religions and traditions. Pupils of other religions are supported in their own prayer lives and rituals.
- Delivery by staff is conscientious, appropriate, creative and inclusive.
- There is a strong ethos of team work in Collective Worship. The Pastoral Group, which includes the coordinator, plans regular whole school services. There are frequent opportunities for parents and visitors to attend. There is appropriate inclusion of clergy and ministers from the local pastoral area and wider community. Staff and pupils are enabled to voluntarily attend Eucharist at the associated Christopher Grange.
- Monitoring of provision is thorough and supportive. Further in-service training is available as necessary.
- Pupils are provided with training in leadership and delivery.
- Collective Worship contributes significantly to developing the life skills of the pupils through opportunities for oral communication and role play.
- Collective Worship makes an outstanding contribution to spiritual and moral development. It contributes significantly to the school's Catholic Life.

### **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. They show an outstanding level of understanding of and



commitment to the Mission of the Church. They are to be commended for their dedication to maintaining the Vincentian charism of service.

- The Mission Statement is reviewed annually. The realisation of its aims is expressed through the generous resourcing for the specialist nature of the school.
- The Mission Statement aims underpin the Section 48 Self-Evaluation. This is a shared document. It is concise and accurate in its expression of Catholic Life and Collective Worship. Areas for development are identified and linked with challenging targets, together with realistic timescales for completion.
- Leaders, governors and managers actively promote all initiatives that uphold the Catholic Life. The Pastoral Group is a key example. Members are dedicated to co-ordinating wider ranging service to the community. The group maintains the chapel as a focal expression of Catholic Life.
- Consequently the mission of the school is promoted to the extent that staff and pupils actively share in its purpose.

**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. Leadership and management provided by the Religious Education co-ordinator is outstanding.
- Together they plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils.
- They ensure Religious Education remains at the core of the curriculum. This is the requirement of the Bishops of England and Wales.
- The Section 48 Self-Evaluation clearly identifies progress. In 2009 Religious Education was judged to be outstanding. The same judgement applies despite the raised expectations of the Section 48 process. This is the result of searching analysis, challenge and development. The raising of the standard of learning and teaching from good to outstanding is a key example.
- Outstanding assessment provides direction for learning and teaching strategies delivered by proficient teachers.

**What the school needs to do to improve further:**

- Maintain provision of outstanding Catholic Education by:
  - continued strategic use of the Section 48 Self Evaluation, clearly guided by the Mission Statement to uphold Catholic Life, Collective Worship and Religious Education;
  - ensuring the future provision of Religious Education so that it continues to meet the requirements of the Religious Education Curriculum Directory for Catholic Schools and Colleges (2012).

# INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

## **OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS**

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

<b>How good outcomes are for individuals and groups of pupils</b>	
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**

<b>How effective the provision is for Catholic Education</b>	
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**

<b>How effective leaders, governors and managers are in developing the Catholic Life of the School</b>	
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**