

## **Biennial School Audit 2010 Audit Report**

### **Introduction**

Lumen Christi College carries out a biennial audit of the opinions of parents, students, teaching staff and support staff in order to enhance the quality of the educational provision offered by the school. Research is done by means of a questionnaire delivered to a sample of pupils (chosen randomly) and their parents as well as to all staff. The audit seeks to take account of views on all aspects of the school including the ethos of the school, relationships, pastoral care, teaching and learning, management and leadership, discipline and environment. The results are considered by the Leadership Team and the Board of governors and inform the development of school policy and the School Development Plan for the coming three years.

All questionnaires provide the opportunity to elaborate on any responses or to make suggestions to the Board of Governors. A copy of the audit report and outline of results of the questionnaire are posted on the college's website:

[www.lumenchristcollege.co.uk](http://www.lumenchristcollege.co.uk).

280 pupils and their parents were selected at random by the Board of Governors for inclusion in the school audit in which all members of staff were also included. There was a return of

269 pupil questionnaires,

178 parent questionnaires,

55 teacher questionnaires and

31 support staff questionnaires.

The sample group in each year for pupils in Years 8-14 was 40 pupils; a separate audit with questions more appropriate to Sixth Form was administered to students in Years 13-14. All responses were analysed according to the sex, year group and key stage of the students where appropriate.

Every effort has been made to include the concerns or supporting comments by individual parents, pupils and staff and all questionnaires are considered by both Governors and Leadership Team in directing the School Development Plan for the next three years. Where individuals have drawn attention to issues not referred to in the report, they are encouraged to contact the college to discuss the action -or lack of it – taken as a result of their comment.

The format of the report reflects the areas directly relevant to the educational provision offered by the college, the ethos of the school, relationships, pastoral care, teaching and learning, management and leadership, discipline and environment.

A summary of concerns expressed by parents and students is included at the end of these sections.

Where possible, suggested actions to meet such concerns have been identified.

## **Relationships and School Ethos**

The audit clearly indicates that school ethos and relationships are excellent:

- 88% of pupils indicated that they enjoy being at school
- 88% of all pupils felt they were treated fairly by their teachers
- 90% said that teachers listened to what they had to say.

*“There is a happy atmosphere throughout the school. Teachers encourage you to work hard and they do their best for every pupil.”*

*“I like the fact that the school is quite small and is like a small community.”*

Parents strongly agreed with these sentiments:

- 99% stated that the school cares for their child, while
- 98% found the staff approachable and caring.
- 98% reported that their child respected his/her teachers.
- 98% felt that their child is treated well by the teachers.
- 98% of parents said the school helps new pupils settle in quickly, whilst
- 99% felt their child had developed friendship groups in the school.

The following comments from parents support the statistics:

*“I have nothing but praise for all members of the staff at LCC (teaching and non-teaching) for the warm caring atmosphere which they create in the school. I would particularly like to comment on the respect that the staff show towards the pupils and the fact that they value the pupils’ views and opinions on most aspects of school life. The staff know all the pupils by name and are therefore held in high esteem and respected by the students in return.”*

*“The teachers really get to know your children and are really approachable and professional in their roles. The children are well-behaved and friendly towards each other.”*

*“The children all seem to have wide friendship groups. Teachers know their pupils. The school is about more than their exam results. All parents want their children to do well but we also want school to be a positive happy place. Lumen Christi achieves this.”*

*“I am very happy with my child’s ability to get to know many people at Lumen Christi, not just her classmates. There appears to be a happy and caring environment at the school which hasn’t come across elsewhere. The pupils seem to take a lot of pride in their school and feel a bond with other pupils.”*

Responses from teachers were equally positive:

- 100% of teachers felt that most pupils show respect for their teachers
- 100% of teachers said that the pupils are well behaved in class and around the school.
- 96% of teachers feel supported by parents
- 100% of teachers also felt they get on well with and receive help from their colleagues.
- All staff agreed that they had a pastoral responsibility for all the pupils and all understood the school's Child Protection Policy and procedures.

These are just a few of the comments from teachers:

*"Pupils are very well behaved and easily motivated. A nice atmosphere exists in the school between staff, and between staff and pupils."*

*"The level of dedication demonstrated by teachers in this school is outstanding and this is supported by a very good system of support by us all of each other, and we are lucky to enjoy this."*

*"Staff relationships are very good and there is excellent support from Senior Management when needed. I feel that I have been given an excellent opportunity to develop as a teacher in Lumen Christi."*

Our support staff in the college which comprises reception and administration staff, caretakers, canteen staff, cleaners, classroom assistants and technicians also share these views.

- 94% of support staff found our students to be well behaved and courteous.
- 100% stated that they got on well with their colleagues and that their teaching colleagues were cooperative and helpful.
- All support staff felt that they have a pleasant working environment with one going as far as to comment, *"I love working in Lumen Christi College!"*

### **Pastoral Care**

The excellent relationships which exist at all levels in the school together with the clear sense of community are also evident in the quality of Pastoral Care provision in the school.

This is supported by positive responses from all parties across each key stage. Of the **pupils** asked:

- 88% find their form teacher approachable whilst
- 76% feel they could talk to a teacher about a problem.
- 80% say the topics covered in the Pastoral Programme are relevant to their lives
- 96% of pupils said their teachers encourage good behaviour in class and insist that the uniform is worn correctly.

- 95% of students stated that they have not suffered from bullying.

*“Teachers are caring and trustworthy and make it clear that they will listen and support you – especially your form teacher”*

*“My form teacher cares about our lives outside of school.”*

### **In Sixth Form**

- 78% of the students felt that the school cares about their personal and social development. And
- 75% feel that that the school has prepared them well for life beyond school.
- 82% agree that there is a strong sense of community in the school.

*“My Form Teacher is extremely supportive, fun and caring.”*

The **parents’** responses indicate strong support for Pastoral Care:

- 98% felt that their child was well settled in school.
- 98% said the school helps new pupils settle in quickly. (as stated above)
- 99% said that the school cares for their child.
- 88% felt they had sufficient contact with the form tutor whilst
- 96% find the student planner helpful
- 99% are fully supportive of school’s policy on standard of uniform

Here are some more of the individual comments from parents:

*“I feel the pastoral care offered within the school is exceptional. It prepares the young men and woman of tomorrow to go into the world feeling confident and ready to face any challenges. This is testament to the tremendous amount of time and effort put in by those who devote their time to the students’ pastoral care.”*

*“The school has an excellent balance of caring and discipline which allows all children to grow in confidence in all aspects of their lives. There appears to be very good relationships between pupils and teachers in general.”*

*“The class counsellor system is an excellent way to help new students adjust to school in Year 8. The charity work undertaken by the school has helped my child’s understanding of how to help others.”*

*“Overall we have the impression that there is a very positive atmosphere in the school. Students have every opportunity to learn and develop other skills in an encouraging environment. Support from Form teacher and other teachers has been excellent.”*

While 97% of parents felt that the school encourages parents to be involved in their child’s education, only 78% of parents felt they had an opportunity to comment on and influence the Pastoral programme. However full details of the Pastoral

Programmes are posted on the college's website and each Head of Key Stage is always happy to discuss any aspect of the programme with parents. It should be noted however, that much of the content regarding Personal Development at Key Stage 3 & 4 is now prescribed from CCEA as part of the Revised Curriculum.

### **Discipline**

General discipline both in classrooms and around the school continues to be extremely favourable. As the figures above highlight, 100% of teachers and 95% of support staff felt that most pupils are well behaved. However some students felt their learning may sometimes be affected by the behaviour of others in class and this is being addressed by teachers.

70% of the sixth form feel that school rules were appropriate or fair. Last year the Student Council was consulted directly on the revised school's 'Behaviour and Discipline' policy and made some important recommendations.

91% of teachers felt they were supported if they had difficulties with a student.

*"There is extremely good discipline within the school and a very good support network to deal with any problems regarding behaviour."*

### **A Listening College**

The listening ethos of the college was reaffirmed when 90% of all students in the college believed that teachers listened to what they had to say. 83% of parents felt that their child's views were sought on school issues although a number of Year 8 parents questioned why students so young should really have an input on most issues at such an age.

89% of teachers and 100% of support staff noted that their views were listened to and taken seriously by the principal or line manager. However, once again, only 52% of pupils felt they actually had a say in school issues and the recently revamped Student Council has undertaken to address this perception with the student body. A student voice is vital if we are to be a genuinely "listening college".

### **Teaching and Learning**

There was considerable satisfaction with the work being done in the classroom.

69% of **students** admitted that they find school work 'interesting' whilst 96% felt they were learning and making progress and that they are encouraged to work hard by their teachers.

96% also stated that they could get help from a teacher if they were having difficulty with a subject which is extremely encouraging.

The following comments were common from students and a most heartening acknowledgement of the dedication of our teaching staff and the pupils' awareness of this.

*"If I am having trouble with a subject, I can ask the teacher for extra help."*

*"The teachers notice when you need help with a topic."*

*“Teachers really go out of their way to provide the very best for us students.”*

The **parents’** responses were equally positive:

96% agreed that their child finds school work interesting.

99% felt their child was making good progress in school and that the work is generally matched to their ability.

*“Overall as parents we are very happy with the content and quality of the education at the school together with the holistic nature of support services. Lumen Christi is an excellent example of best practice in education.”*

*“I must compliment the wonderful support system within the school. The school is highly organised and there is a great respect instilled into the children. The academic work stretches, inspires and encourages my children – teachers have HUGE dedication - don’t know how you do it!”*

All teachers believed that pupils were eager to succeed at their work and all but two felt that the pupils were working to their ability.

98% of teachers agreed that pupils get help when they experience learning difficulties.

96% felt that their teaching has been enhanced by the new interactive whiteboard technology, now installed in virtually every classroom and study in the school.

In a period of considerable curriculum change across all key stages, 76% felt that they were **receiving sufficient support** to meet the demands.

One area currently under focus in the School Development Plan is the area of independent study. It is therefore pleasing to note that 86% of our Sixth Form students felt they were confident in organising their work independently, and 73% felt that they used their time in the Sixth Form Study effectively. This latter figure is down from previous surveys and may, perhaps, be attributed to the timing of the audit this year which took place in the first term to accommodate the expected ETI inspection. One would expect students to make much more industrious use of their time as their final exams approach in May. Nevertheless, our student use of independent study periods will form the focus of a more detailed review in the months ahead.

Praise for the Study facilities was common among the senior students’ comments and they appreciated the potential impact upon their performance. The vast majority of sixth form students also acknowledged that their teachers took time to explain the requirements of homework and independent study.

### **Homework**

The audit always provides valuable feedback from pupils and parents regarding homework.

93% of pupils (KS3 & 4) reported that their homework was relevant to the work done in class. 71% of all students (60% of Year 11 boys) said their teachers took time to explain exactly what the desired outcomes of homework were. This statistic has been passed on to teaching staff who will endeavour to remedy this valid concern of some.

We asked parents to indicate the average time their child spent on homework per night. The findings are set out in the table below.

Time spent on HW (Hrs)		½	1	1 ½	2	2 ½	3	3 ½	4	4 ½
Year 8	% of yr 8 pupils	3	19	31	25	16	6			
Year 9	% of yr 9 pupils	4	23	38	15	15		8		
Year 10	% of yr 10 pupils	11	22	19	26	4	4	7	4	4
Year 11	% of yr 11 pupils		10	35	25	15	10	5		
Year 12	% of yr 12 pupils		12	0	8	28	36	8	4	4
Year 13	% of yr 13 pupils		5	19	43	14	10	0	5	
Year 14	% of yr 14 pupils		24	0	47	18	0	6	6	

This chart shows, for example, that whilst some Year 8 pupils spend just half an hour doing homework, others can spend up to 3 hours whilst most students are averaging 1½ (31%) to 2 hours (25%) on homework each night.

Once again these findings may well reflect the time of year when the survey was conducted, when Year 12 students, for example, were at the peak of their coursework demands. The Year 11 students, on the other hand should expect an increase in their workload in April and May when much of their coursework and preparation for modules is at a peak.

Such findings would generally be in line with the expectations of teachers for students at each level, though those students in Year 14 doing a mere hour of work at home is particularly worrying and likely to result in lower grades in public examinations. Students at this level should be aiming to reach the top of the range in hours worked.

### Reporting/Communication

In terms of reporting and communication procedures:

- 98% of parents believed that the **school reports** provided clear information about their children’s progress and found the Student Planner helpful in this respect.
- 94% felt that the online monthly newsletter keeps them adequately informed about issues.

- 96% find both the 'CallParents' text service and the school website helpful and informative.

The lines of communication must be working with parents since 98% of them were aware of the school's 'Specialist Science' status which is more than the number of students (only 72% of them!) who seemed to know about it. We feel that perhaps our use of the phrase 'Specialist School Status' may have been a bit challenging for our younger students.

83% of parents are finding the new on-line payment facility 'ParentPay' a convenient way of making payments

### **Extra-Curricular Programme**

There was overwhelming approval too for the college's extra curricular programme:

87% of pupils at Key Stage 3 said they enjoy the extra-curricular activities provided by the school. The lower figure of just 58% at Key stage 4 might reflect the fact that at this level many students are availing of the extensive extra help and revision classes available after school and the word 'enjoy' might not be appropriate. However we have noted this statistic and will endeavour to broaden the opportunities available to students of this age.

97% of parents asked agreed that the school provided a wide range of extra-curricular activities.

The timing of the audit was again a factor in the responses from sixth form students regarding Careers advice. 63% felt they had been provided with appropriate careers guidance. A closer analysis of the results revealed that 47% of Year 13 felt this in November whilst a healthy 77% of Year 14 students felt they had received appropriate guidance. These students are clearly in a better position to reflect on the whole package of careers guidance and advice given over both years and throughout the UCAS application process which takes place during the first term of Year 14.

### **Curriculum**

The vast majority of parents (97%) expressed approval of the curriculum on offer in the college.

81% of students in Years 8 – 12 felt the school offered a good range of subjects 70% of Sixth Form students said that the school offers a sufficient range of subjects post-16. This represents a significant increase on the previous figure and perhaps is a direct result of the impact of increased choice through the Foyle Learning Community and the fact that the college introduced A level Psychology last year.

85% of teachers are now aware of the main initiatives of the Foyle Learning community.

### **Science Specialism**

Now in its 4<sup>th</sup> year the number of both parents and students who are aware of the school's 'specialist science' status has increased, as stated above.

The number of teachers who felt that their departments had benefited from the school's status as a Specialist College has increased significantly from 75% in 2008 to

87% this time round. The science specialism enabled all departments to avail of new interactive whiteboards and 96% of teachers feel that this has directly enhanced their teaching.

### **Catholic Ethos:**

99% of parents asked agreed that the Catholic ethos is evident in the work of the school while 89% were aware of the great charity work their child gets involved in each year. 82% of sixth formers praised the strong sense of community in the school and 98% of teaching staff and 90% of support staff felt they had a good understanding of the vision and aims of the school.

### **Facilities and Environment**

The general cleanliness and upkeep of the building brought much praise and positive comment from many parents and pupils alike:

98% of parents said that the facilities and accommodation are good and 99% felt that the buildings are kept clean and in good order.

93% of students across all Key Stages felt their school is kept clean and tidy, a view shared by 96% of teachers and all support staff.

77% of students felt that most pupils show respect for school property but an important aspect of pupils' education is to increase their understanding of their role in this process since only 74% of pupils felt they had a part to play in caring for the school environment.

89% of teachers and 90% of support staff stated that they get the resources to do their job, whilst the number of support staff who feel they have a pleasant working environment has now shot up to 100%.

Parental appreciation of the helpfulness and friendliness of the reception staff was also extremely high this year at 99% satisfaction.

At the time of the audit. A number of sixth form students expressed concerns about their lunch facilities in the sixth form centre. However much work has already taken place this year to enhance the menu choice and the facilities and accommodation are being improved within the constraints of space in that part of the school.

Only 34% of sixth formers asked found the sixth form centre facilities good but again this has been noted and plans for improvements are already being implemented.

Much work on improving the school cafeteria has been undertaken since the last audit:

93% of parents felt that school catering facilities meet the needs of their child.

80% of students (KS3 & 4) believe the cafeteria provided a good service.

## Overall Approval Rating

Parents and pupils alike indicate a high approval rating for the college.  
 98% of parents surveyed said they would recommend the school to other parents and 91% of pupils in the junior and middle school would recommend Lumen Christi to their friends.  
 95% of our students in Sixth Form are proud to have been students in the college.

## APPENDIX

### PARENTS' CONCERNS

The vast majority of parents expressed wholehearted approval of the work of the college in all areas. Where some parents identified concerns, these have been considered by the school's Leadership Team. The concerns outlined below, therefore, are anxieties felt by individual parents and will be taken on board by the school. Where it is possible, we have provided an initial response but will continue to review these concerns in the coming year.

Individual Concern	Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•<i>Advance warning of financial outlay e.g. Music fees and Gaeltacht money in same month (before Christmas)</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The college will endeavour to provide parents with as much information at the start of each year.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•<i>I feel children should be allowed to wear an extra top in winter to keep warm</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ External coats or jackets can be worn to and from school. In school we recommend the school jumper and extra thermals if needed!</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•<i>School bus to depot should leave after school clubs have finished – not before.</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ This service has been provided in the past but students rarely used it.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•<i>Queues at parent-teacher meetings are frustrating.</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ With parents understanding and support, teachers will endeavour to keep the queues moving.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•<i>The pupils have to carry a lot of books</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Lockers are provided and pupils are encouraged to carry only those books required each day.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•<i>6th form have less choice than main canteen.</i></li> <li>•<i>Seating arrangements upstairs at lunchtime are inadequate.</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Much work has been done this year and further development is planned for next year.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•<i>My son achieved 5A*s, 4As and 2 Bs in his GCSEs and was not included in Prize giving. I consider his achievement to be worthy of recognition.</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The college is immensely proud of the fantastic achievements of each one of our students. Unfortunately our Sports Hall can</li> </ul>

<p>•<i>There is an uneven distribution of homework depending on the teacher. If you have certain combination of teachers, it can be very stressful for the child.</i></p> <p>•<i>I feel that just one parent-teacher meeting is not enough.</i></p> <p>•<i>You should provide free piano lessons</i></p> <p>•<i>I would like to see cricket and pool introduced after school.</i></p>	<p>only accommodate a certain number of pupils and parents. However the Leadership Team has reviewed arrangements for Prize giving this year which means we are able to celebrate the achievements of more of our talented students.</p> <p>➤ Parents should let Form Teachers know if they have concerns about workload in any given week.</p> <p>➤ Subject teachers and form teachers are always available to discuss any issues you may have.</p> <p>➤ Sorry, this is not viable given the number of our pupils who currently receive piano tuition.</p> <p>➤ Cricket is often offered in the Summer Term but we don't have a pool table at the moment.</p>
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**STUDENTS' CONCERNS**

Student responses were generally extremely positive and encouraging and most pupils took the opportunity afforded to emphasise the good relationships between teachers and pupils as the most attractive aspect of the school. The issues below emerged as matters of concern among the pupils.

Concern	Response
<p>•I know who the student council reps are (41%)</p> <p>•Pupils have some say in school issues (52%)</p> <p>•I enjoy the extra-curricular activities (58% at KS4)</p> <p>•The catering facilities for 6<sup>th</sup> Form are good (52%)</p>	<p>➤ The profile of the student council has risen sharply since the audit was conducted and continues to be an important area for development next year.</p> <p>➤ A great number of students at Key Stage 4 attend extra classes and revision sessions after school and wouldn't be expected to find them particularly enjoyable. However we have asked the students for more info.</p> <p>➤ This area is currently the focus of development and improvement.</p>

•6 <sup>th</sup> form centre facilities are good (34%)	
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