



# **DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION REPORT**

incorporating Section 48 and Canonical Inspection under Canon 806 on  
behalf of the Archbishop of Southwark

**URN 138960**

**Sacred Heart Catholic School**

**Cambwell New Road**

**Camberwell**

**London, SE5 0RP**

**Inspection date: 27-28 June 2018**

**Chair of Governors: Ms Christine Donovan**

**Headteacher: Mr Serge Cefai**

**Inspectors: Mr Tom Cahill**

**Dr. Janet Croggon**

## **EDUCATION COMMISSION**

St Edward's House, St Paul's Wood Hill, Orpington, Kent BR5 2SR

Tel 01689 829331

**Director of Education: Dr Simon Hughes**



### Key for inspection grades

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

## FULL REPORT

### INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Sacred Heart School is a heavily oversubscribed academy situated in the Cathedral Deanery of the Archdiocese of Southwark and is located within Southwark Local Authority. The principal parishes which the school serves are Sacred Heart; English Martyrs; Our Lady of Sorrows; St George's and St. James the Great. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholics is 94% in Years 7 to 11 and 70% in the Sixth Form, giving an overall proportion of 89%. The average weekly proportion of curriculum time given to Religious Education is 8.5% in Key Stage 3, 8. % in Key Stage 4, 20% for A level studies and 3.3% for General Religious Education in the Sixth Form.

The school, which is mixed, takes students from age 11 to 19 years. The number of students currently on roll is 815, including 159 in the Sixth Form. The proportion of students eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) is well above average. The percentage of students who receive extra support in class is below average at 9%. The proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds is well above average at 85%. The proportion of students from homes where English is an Additional Language (EAL) is also well above average at 60%.



## **SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS**

Sacred Heart is an outstanding Catholic school because:

- Students make exceptional progress in Religious Education as a result of outstanding teaching and their own excellent attitudes to learning. Their behaviour is exemplary in class and around the school.
- The school provides outstanding pastoral care that allows every student to thrive in a safe, secure and harmonious Catholic community.
- The Head teacher provides outstanding Catholic leadership and all staff are excellent role models for the students.
- The strong belief that nothing but the best is good enough for the students ensures they flourish in the school where the Catholic Ethos permeates every aspect of school life and where collective worship is of outstanding quality.

## **WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER**

- Continue to keep the curriculum time allocation for Religious Education under review taking into account the requirements of the Bishops' Conference.
- Provide more opportunities for students to be involved in the planning and evaluation of collective worship.



## Overall Effectiveness

How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education.

**1**

### **Catholic Life**

**1**

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**

**1**

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.

**2**

### **Collective Worship**

**1**

How well pupils respond to and participate in the schools' Collective Worship.

**1**

The quality of provision for Collective Worship.

**1**

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

**1**



## CATHOLIC LIFE

1

**The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.**

- Sacred Heart school provides an outstanding Catholic education in which students thrive in a highly aspirational, safe and inclusive Catholic community in which only the best is good enough. As a result, student progress during their time at the school is exceptional.
- As reflected in the school's mission statement, this is an exceptional Catholic community in which the Christian principles of care and respect are clearly valued and lived on a daily basis.
- Students are outstanding ambassadors for their school of which they are rightly proud and very much appreciate the dedication of staff who work tirelessly to ensure they have every opportunity to excel in their learning. They also gain significantly from the wide range of extra curricular activities and leadership opportunities provided by the school. One student wrote in a poem about the school "We are all a family from the day we start. You can tell this place has a Sacred Heart". Many students said they felt part of a family by being a member of the school community.
- Students respond very positively to the very high expectations of the staff and their behaviour and appearance in lessons and around the school is exemplary. As a result, their attitudes to their learning are impressive, as are their highly positive relationships with their teachers.
- Students are actively encouraged to support those less fortunate than themselves with fund raising and support for a wide range of charities. These include local as well as national and international charities such as CAFOD and the Catholic Children's Society. Students are also actively involved in the local Burgess Park Project that supports ex service men and women who are struggling to return to civilian life. Students have provided food, clothing and funding as well as their time by visiting the centre together with staff from the school.
- The school has developed a very strong link with The Father Ray Foundation in Pattaya, Thailand. The charity looks after over 850 vulnerable young people. The school has raised significant amounts of money through a variety of fundraisers including sponsored walks across the bridges of London. Students and staff visit Thailand every two years to work with the charity and they ensure resources are targeted to those most in need.
- The inspector met with a group of students who had travelled to Thailand and who were keen to express the huge impact the trip had on their own lives and beliefs. The students talked of living the beatitudes as well living their faith and highlighted that "Blessed are the poor, they will be happy in heaven". One student said "When you see love, you see the Trinity", while another said "Faith is not enough, it must be acted out". It was clear that the experience had left a life long mark in the memory of the students.



- Students who are vulnerable or have problems at school are very well supported by the school's inclusion unit called Footsteps. Staff in the unit work tirelessly to ensure students receive the support they need so they can remain in mainstream education.
- Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. They very much value the exceptional pastoral care offered to their sons and daughters, which ensures their happiness and safety, not just within school but also beyond the school gates. This includes their homes through the outreach work of school staff. As one parent wrote "Sacred Heart school continues to be a moral compass not just for the children attending but for the whole family. They support us as parents to get the very best outcomes for our children and reminds us all that without God in our lives we have nothing. "
- Parents are very well informed by a comprehensive weekly newsletter that keeps them updated about events at the school as well as liturgical celebrations to which they are invited. It is also an excellent resource for parents to use in supporting their family on their faith journey by providing information on major feast days, the lives of saints as well as points for discussion on the gospel stories. The school website and twitter feed is also a valuable source of information for parents and students. The newsletter also highlights names of students on a regular basis who have been praised for their honesty and to celebrate their actions such as handing in money found in school.

**The quality of provision of the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.**

- The beautiful church of the Sacred Heart is adjacent to the school and the Parish Priest is highly supportive of the school as well as ensuring daily access for staff and students. As a result, the Catholic life of the school is significantly enhanced by this very strong school and parish link.
- The school has many beautiful religious artefacts, which contribute to the school's distinctive Catholic ethos. Many of the artefacts have been created by the students including mosaics of the House Saints as well as the Stations of the Cross in the main hall.
- Students are provided with many high quality opportunities to develop their leadership skills and to raise their aspirations. Many students have roles as prefects or members of the school council. Others are school ambassadors, anti bullying ambassadors or members of the Green Team who encourage recycling and the use of renewable resources at the school. The school also hosts the local police cadets group.
- The school has developed its retreat programme since the last inspection and many take place at Aylesford Priory supported by the Diocesan Youth Service. The school has further plans to develop its retreat provision to ensure they remain of high quality and meets the needs of all the students and the aspirations of the leadership team.

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

- Outstanding leadership from the highly experienced and respected Head



- teacher has led to a shared vision of excellence which permeates every aspect of school life and where only the very best provision is good enough for the students and that the socio economic background or gender can never be an excuse for underachievement. He is well supported by his skilled leadership team as well as teaching staff and support staff. As a result, staff morale is very high.
- Leaders and governors have a very accurate understanding of the many strengths and few weaknesses of the school. There is an active, experienced and highly committed governing body that provide a powerful blend of challenge and support to the school. Governors are regular visitors to the school and regularly attend assemblies and Mass at the school.
- The school has recently appointed a senior member of staff to have oversight of the Catholic Life of the school that touches all aspects of school life.
- Leaders ensure that all new staff are inducted into the ways of the school and the strong Catholic ethos that influences every aspect of school life.
- The school shares the vision of the 'Common Good' and has supported other local Catholic schools that have struggled. The Head teacher also leads two other schools as their Executive Head teacher. Despite this great challenge, standards and the outcomes of students at the school as well as the other two schools have been further enhanced.



## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

1

### How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education is outstanding

- Students make exceptional progress taking into account their starting points when they join the school. As a result, their achievement is very high and results in Religious Education are well above the national average and in line with other core subjects at the school, which are in the top 10% of the country.
- In 2017, almost half of all pupils entered for GCSE Religious Education achieved A/A\* grades. Taking into account students at the school take their GCSE Religious Education examination at the end of Year 10, as well as their prior attainment, this is clearly exceptional progress.
- Students expressed to inspectors that they felt they were taught very well and their teachers were highly supportive and always there to help. As a result students very much enjoy their Religious Education lessons.
- Student's behaviour seen by inspectors in lessons was exemplary. They were highly respectful of their teachers as well as peers, which allowed for very positive relationships to be established in the classroom. The impressive attitudes to learning shown by the students makes a very significant contribution to the progress they make and grades they achieve.
- By the time students leave the school, they have developed an excellent understanding of their own faith as well as other faiths.

### The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education is outstanding

- Overall, the quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education is outstanding. During the inspection all lessons seen were at least consistently good lessons, some of which were outstanding or had outstanding features.
- In an outstanding A level lesson seen during the inspection, students were studying the concept of Process Theology and the Nature of God. The teacher skilfully checked the prior understanding of the students and provided challenging activities in which the students were fully engaged and forced to think in a deep and challenging way.
- The school has been fortunate to attract and retain well-qualified and highly effective teachers of Religious Education. These teachers are specialists in the subject and all have excellent subject knowledge.
- Students were very vocal in their praise for all their Religious Education teachers who they said worked tirelessly to ensure they experienced well-planned and interesting lessons, which ensured they could make excellent progress in the subject. They highlighted that teachers gave up their lunchtimes and gave time after school to



support students who may need additional support as well as providing additional time for revision and exam preparation. This enabled the students to confidently take their exams in their stride and achieve the exceptional grades they do in Religious Education.

- Assessment is a growing strength of the department and students receive regular feedback on how to improve as well as monitoring the progress of all students. Where a student is not progressing, clear action is taken, and a range of measures put in place to support the student including home school contact

### **How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education is good.**

- The subject leader is a highly experienced teacher and he provides strong and clear leadership for his team of teachers. As a result, morale amongst the teachers is high. He has ensured that rigorous and high quality schemes of work are in place that challenges all students and allows them to make exceptional progress.
- Leaders and governors know the many strengths and few weaknesses in provision for Religious Education. They have very effective systems in place to monitor the quality of provision and outcomes and take appropriate action to remedy any deficiencies identified.
- Key Stage 3 (Years 7 and 8) follow a course based on 'The Way, the Truth and the Life.' The course content has been reviewed to provide a better foundation for the new and more challenging AQA Syllabus B GCSE course at Key Stage 4 ( Years 9 and 10). Students studying A' level follow the course offered by AQA. In addition, all students in the Sixth form follow a general Religious Education course based on the NOCN course content but this is not assessed or certificated. As a result, the content of the Religious Education curriculum delivered by the school meets the requirements of the Curriculum Directory
- The school currently does not meet the requirements of the Bishop's which requires 10% of curriculum time to be allocated for the teaching of Religious Education. This time does not include time allocated for assemblies or collective worship. As this was a recommendation in the two previous Section 48 reports, further action is still required by leaders and governors before the next inspection due in 2023.
- The issue of time allocated for teaching Religious Education is compounded by the fact that there is no formalised and documented programme for students in Year 11 as they have taken their GCSE at the end of Year 10. Although some teaching in Religious Education is offered to Year 11 students, it is ad hoc and lacks structure and assessment. The school is aware of this and has plans to address this issue. Ensuring Religious Education remains high profile In Year 11, even though the students have completed their GCSE, might also help boost numbers taking the subject at A level.
- The fact the students take their Religious Education GCSE at the end of Year 10 does not appear to have any affect on the achievement or progress of the students in the



subject. This is mainly due to the very hard work of the Religious Education teachers who really go beyond the call of duty to ensure all the students succeed in the subject.

- The school is very well supported by the advisory team from the Diocesan Education Commission. Leaders also ensure that the school works closely with other local Catholic schools to share good practice.



## COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

1

**How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship and Prayer Life is outstanding.**

- The students' response to collective worship is outstanding. They are always highly respectful, and their overall behaviour is of the highest standard. They always fully participate through prayer, singing and quiet reflection.
- In an outstanding assembly held in the parish church to celebrate the end of year for Year 12 students, students showed a high level of engagement and highly mature and respectful behaviour. Incense was used to highlight how their prayers are like the incense rising up to God and all students were invited to sprinkle incense on the burner in front of the altar. The Parable of the Sower was then used to reflect on the seeds that had been planted in their minds during the academic year. An inspirational talk by the Head of Year at the end of the liturgy encouraged the students to recognise they have a voice and should speak up for others who cannot speak up for themselves attracted a spontaneous round of applause.
- Students are keen to be readers and to act as servers at Mass but the opportunities to plan collective worship and provide feedback to the Chaplaincy team is limited. The students and the school would benefit from students being part of the Chaplaincy team to further enhance student participation as well as providing students with further leadership opportunities in this key aspect of school life.

**The quality of provision for Collective Worship and Prayer Life is outstanding**

- Provision for collective worship is carefully planned by the subject leader for Religious Education and the Chaplaincy team and reflects the liturgical year. This team ensure that students have many opportunities for high quality collective worship and they provide teachers with high quality resources.
- The school is very fortunate to have the Sacred Heart church next door and the Parish Priest encourages the use of the church on a daily basis. A regular school Mass takes place every Friday for each Year group and it is used by the school for special assemblies and collective worship. The regular use of the church and its easy access for the students makes a very significant contribution to the Catholic Ethos of the school.
- In addition to the church, the school has an area known as the chapel under the stairs and a Rosary Garden. Both areas are always available to students and staff to use for individual prayer and quiet reflection as well as group collective worship.
- Music is a key feature of whole school celebrations and students are keen to sing enthusiastically supported by the impressive school choir.



**How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship and Prayer Life is outstanding.**

- The Headteacher meets regularly with the subject leader who coordinates the chaplaincy team. Together they ensure students benefit from a wide range of opportunities to participate in high quality collective worship and ensures it is central to the life of the school.
- High quality resources are provided to teachers for use in daily collective worship by the subject leader for Religious Education and other members of the chaplaincy team.
- The school ensures there is a strong sense of the traditions of the Church and the main celebrations of the liturgical year.
- Governors are regular visitors to the school and often attend acts of collective worship and Mass. They provide regular feedback to other governors.