

DIOCESE OF MIDDLESBROUGH

Inspection of Religious Education
Collective Worship
and
The Catholic Life of the School



School: Sacred Heart Secondary Catholic Voluntary Academy

Address: Mersey Road
Redcar
TS10 1PJ

URN: 111763

Head of School: Mrs Paula Strudwick

Chair: Mr Martin Campbell

Date: 18-19 May 2017

Inspectors: Meg Baines
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Date & Grade of Last Inspection: 24-25 Nov 2011 Grade: 1

Overall Grade for this Inspection: 1

A Report from:
The Diocese of Middlesbrough Schools' Service
Section 48 Inspection Team
50a The Avenue
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INTRODUCTION

This inspection was carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005.

The report of the inspection is produced for the Bishop of Middlesbrough (Code of Canon Law 804 and 806) and for the governors of the school. The inspection reviews, evaluates and plans further improvements in the school's witness to the Catholic faith and Curriculum Religious Education. This process begins with the school's own self-evaluation. The Inspection schedule follows criteria set by the National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers.

What Inspection Grades mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding Catholic school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a Catholic school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Requires Improvement	These features, though of adequate quality, require improvement to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate Catholic school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils.

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Sacred Heart is a voluntary aided academy and part of the Nicholas Postgate Academy Trust. It is situated in the borough of Redcar and Cleveland. The school moved into their new build ten years ago and enjoy the purpose-built surroundings with green space yet remain in the heart of the community. The school recently appointed a chaplaincy co-ordinator and is currently reviewing its mission statement. The current mission statement states that "the school exists to provide a community that values Catholic traditions and beliefs." Priorities are: "to care for the community; to encourage individual growth; and to work towards academic success."

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION

Pupil Catchment:

Number of pupils on roll: 730

Planned Admission Number of Pupils: 150

Percentage of pupils baptised RC: 59.5%

Percentage of pupils from other Christian Denominations: 30%

Percentage of pupils from other World Faiths: 1%

Percentage of pupils with no religious affiliation: 9.5%

Percentage of pupils with special needs: 19.5%

Teaching Staff:

Full-time Teachers: 44

Part-time Teachers: 9

Percentage of Catholic Teachers: 60.4%

Support Staff:

Full-time Classroom Support Staff: 6

Part-time Classroom Support Staff: 0

Percentage of Catholic Classroom Support Staff: 83.3%

Percentage of teachers with CCRS: 7.5%

Percentage of learning time given to R.E: 10.2%

Parishes served by the School:

Blessed Nicholas Postgate, Redcar. Our Lady of Lourdes, Saltburn.

Our Lady Star of the Sea, Staithes. St Joseph and St Cuthbert's, Loftus.

St Anthony of Padua, Brotton. St Paulinus', Guisborough. St Bede's, Marske.

1. OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

1

MAIN FINDINGS

Sacred Heart Academy is an outstanding Catholic school. Excellent relationships exist between staff and pupils. These relationships are evident throughout the school community. They facilitate the spiritual growth of the individual and of the whole academy. Behaviour of pupils is outstanding across the key stages. Pupils appreciate that staff work hard for them and they feel safe and trust to their guidance on their educational and spiritual journey. The school's ethos and Catholic traditions underpin the life and work of the school. 'Faith in action' can be observed in all areas of school life and is driven by the school's Catholic Ethos Action Plan. Sacred Heart Academy is a place where parishes and school come together to work to promote the gospel values and develop a deep sense of community.

The head and senior leaders work extremely well together as a team. They are committed to the Catholic ethos ensuring that Christ and Gospel values really are at the heart of life at Sacred Heart. Senior leaders are aware of and are justifiably proud of the school's recent academic success in Religious Education (RE). Strategies to raise achievement and ensure greater progress for boys and disadvantaged pupils are in place and will continue to be a focus for the school. The appointment of a senior staff member with responsibility for teaching and learning development addresses this issue, along with further developing strategies for improving outcomes for 'higher attainers'. Evidence of good resources and differentiated planning was found in pupils' work books during book scrutiny and also in lesson plans and observations as was effective marking. Pupils confirmed that their work is marked and that feedback about targets and progress is given.

Governors, staff and parents report that the RE department is a strength of the school. The leadership of the head teacher is outstanding. The governors support and monitor the Catholic Life of the school and the outcomes for pupils. Both the 'Postgate Centre' and the 'Shuttle' provide pastoral space for counselling and reflection. The 'Shuttle' is a multipurpose facility offering a base for Education Mental Health (EMH) Staff and Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) to meet with pupils. There are 3 volunteer counsellors who give 1-1 sessions along with school staff. It is a place for Student Achievement Leaders (SAL)) and pastoral support staff to convene and carry out interventions. The role of the chaplaincy co-ordinator is seen by all as vital and the newly appointed chaplaincy co-ordinator is poised to continue to support the school in delivering its new mission statement. The chaplaincy co-ordinator works closely with all staff and pupils so that opportunity for involvement at different levels is given to all. A number of pupils went to Lourdes last year. There is a plan to implement the Faith in Action Awards this year as well as to appoint a Pupil Chaplaincy Team. The Retreat Programme is well established and broad. The school is outstanding at promoting and achieving community cohesion and the quality of provision for collective and personal worship is good. Standards in RE are outstanding, as is the quality of teaching and learning.

The school meets all statutory obligations in its provision of RE for all pupils

The strategic direction of the school has been extremely well articulated and shared by the head teacher. The school has an excellent capacity to improve even further.

What the school needs to do to improve further:

Improve outcomes for pupils in Key Stage 4 by:

- Continuing to develop robust intervention strategies for tackling under achievement in Key Stage 4; ensuring such strategies continue to be monitored by SLT and governors and their impact evaluated
- Continuing to develop and monitor the impact of existing strategies for improving progress of disadvantaged pupils and underachieving boys.

Clarify the role of the newly appointed chaplaincy co-ordinator and continue with her formation in order to:

- Facilitate greater pupil participation in planning and leading Collective Worship
- Enable governors to monitor more closely the quality of Collective Worship and the Catholic Life of the school, using the Diocesan Handbook descriptors and the Monitoring Policy for governors as a template.

2. PUPILS

How good outcomes are for pupils, taking into account variations between groups.

The extent to which the pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school is outstanding. Pupils demonstrate a strong sense of pride in and commitment to their school community and have a highly developed sense of self-worth and dignity. Pupils are strongly aware of the Catholic character of their school. They express their own views and beliefs with confidence, recognise the teachings of Jesus and demonstrate Gospel values.

The links with the parishes and the wider community are a major strength. Sessions are led by volunteers alongside Parish Priests who are committed to supporting the school. The sessions offer the opportunity to debate aspects of Catholic Life. Conversations with pupils confirmed that they are keen to promote and uphold the Catholic values of justice, fairness and respect. Pupils are extremely well behaved, treat each other with respect and have a high regard for their teachers and all adults in school. The school has an active anti-bullying group. The Anti Bullying Ambassadors spoke of its effectiveness. Retreats are planned so that opportunity is given for reflection. This summer 13 pupils will attend the annual diocesan pilgrimage to Lourdes, accompanied by staff and the chaplaincy co-ordinator.

Examples of pupils' contribution to Catholic Life and the ways in which pupils benefit from it were found across the school for example in class assemblies, in which the strength of feeling for social justice was strong. Another example was found in an activity for Lent; '40 items for 40 days' was organised by the chaplaincy co-ordinator. During Lent all pupils brought in an item they no longer want or need and they were collected and given to charity at the end of Lent. With a number of other charitable events throughout the year Sacred Heart Academy reflects a generosity of spirit supporting those in need in the community. Other examples include: hampers at Christmas, pensioners' party, support for the local food bank. Pupils also have links with a Ghanaian school and a number of staff and pupils have visited the school in Ghana. These varied activities ensure the school community is always aware of the needs of others and have channels through which to express Christian solidarity and support.

Pupils show a genuine enjoyment in RE and many regard it as one of their most important subjects. This is demonstrated through excellent behaviour for learning and a mutual respect for their teachers and peers. Pupils work well in lessons and have an understanding of how well they have done, what level they are working at and what they need to do to improve.

Standards pupils achieve in Religious Education (RE) are high and that trend has continued for the last three years; of the 2016 GCSE cohort 31% achieved A* - A and 84% A* -C. At Key Stage 3, pupil progress is also very good, with the exception of disadvantaged pupils who underperformed compared to their peers.

These results show that progress and success in RE compare favourably to that of other core subjects. Our analysis of the appropriate data suggests that very good outcomes will be maintained in the future as teachers are aware of their pupils' capabilities, their prior learning and understanding and therefore plan thoroughly to build on them. High standards have been reached through skilled differentiated teaching, tracking of pupil progress and intervention. The vast majority of pupils concentrate well in class and are rarely off task. They are keen and enthusiastic learners who have a commitment to succeed and take opportunities to extend their learning. Pupils enjoy their learning and achievement in RE and a Year 8 pupil said, "I enjoy RE because the teacher makes it fun."

There are regular assemblies and Acts of Collective Worship. Pupils are respectful and show maturity. The assembly observed had a strong moral theme. The pupils were encouraged to reflect and to contemplate. All showed reverence throughout. Collective Worship is good. In form time the assemblies observed were of high quality, thought provoking and perfectly pitched to challenge those present. Pupils commented on how much they enjoy preparing for Mass and assemblies and some would like a greater role and more opportunities to sing.

Governors attend liturgies and services and Mass is said most weeks. The entrance of the school boasts a bright, inviting foyer with religious icons and statuary. It is welcoming and displays the outward signs of the school's faith and heritage. Pupils have a good understanding of religious events and were seen referencing biblical texts. The school choir takes part in key religious events throughout the school year. Pupils are encouraged to think of others during collective worship and a full liturgical programme is available. Pupils spoken to showed a firm understanding of the Church's liturgical year, feasts and seasons and many are ready to have a fuller role in the preparation and leadership of worship. Prayers are said in every classroom at the start of every day.

• 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 do pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship	2

3. PROVISION

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How effective the provision is for Catholic education

The teaching of RE is consistently effective in enthusing pupils and ensuring that they learn well. There are three full time specialist RE teachers who are supported by a number of well experienced colleagues. Through lesson observations it was evident that they had extensive subject knowledge that was applied in challenging pupils and encouraging them to make excellent progress. Teachers produce and use high quality resources to enhance teaching and learning. Pupils are highly motivated, sustain concentration and enjoy learning. Marking and dialogue between pupils and staff are of consistently high quality which promote excellence in learning and progress. Achievement and effort are celebrated, rewarding academic progress and Christian acts of kindness through the 'Faith in Action' scheme.

There is evidence of quality assessment for learning. For all ages and abilities, the learning objectives are clearly differentiated and examples of very effective differentiation techniques were seen. Teaching in Key Stage 4 classes is clearly focused on supporting the pupils to achieve well in forthcoming examinations. In lessons, pupils are keen to learn, their behaviour is very good and they work hard. A variety of resources are used effectively in lessons. The quality of marking is good with clear targets for improvement being offered and evidence that pupils are responding to these. Good peer assessment was also seen.

The curriculum is carefully planned and in line with guidelines set out by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. At Key Stage 3, pupils follow an innovative programme based on the Curriculum Directory and ICONS with effective schemes of work and good shared resources. At Key Stage 4, Year 11 pupils study Edexcel Unit 3- religion and Life based upon Catholic Christianity and Unit 8 – Religion and Society based on a Study of Christianity and one other religion. In Year 10 pupils are following the Eduqas GCSE Scheme.

The Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is comprehensive and very well planned and taught mainly by RE staff on Personal, Social Health, Careers, Citizenship and Economic (PSHCCE) education days (when the timetable is suspended). This clearly supports the Catholic ethos of the school and meets the needs of pupils. This is constantly evolving and developing through reflection and monitoring by the RSE Lead Teacher. The RE department has its own suite of rooms, and the rooms are in good condition. Pupils' work and other colourful displays are evident.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is good. Resources are of good quality and available for pupils and adults to use to aid prayer and reflection. Prayer is a part of everyday life at Sacred Heart Academy. All Staff briefings begin with a prayer which is taken by individual staff on a rotation.

Opportunities for prayer are planned by the chaplaincy co-ordinator. Weekly Mass and other celebrations are open to the whole school community as well as the wider community. A range of assemblies observed were well planned, thoughtful, reflective and had strong religious themes. While diversity isn't a characteristic of the makeup of the school (1% are of faiths other than Christian), pupils spoken to have a good understanding of other faiths. Diversity is effectively taught as part of the curriculum.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality of teaching and how purposeful learning is in Religious Education 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum promotes pupils' learning 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school 	2

4. LEADERS, MANAGERS AND GOVERNORS

How effective leaders, managers and governors are in developing the Catholic life of the school

Leadership and management at Sacred Heart Academy are outstanding. The headteacher and Senior Leadership Team (SLT) set strong examples reflecting the school's ethos. Leadership is deeply committed to the Church's mission for education. The head is well respected and supported by staff and liked by pupils. There are firm links with the local parishes and the SLT and governors actively support this outreach. This helps to form the school's distinctive Catholic identity. Governors are highly experienced and totally committed to their roles. They play a key strategic part on the 'Local Management Board' which is part of the wider Nicholas Postgate Academy Trust. The headteacher, deputy head teacher and SLT monitor effectiveness of assemblies and liturgies. Governors attend liturgies and services throughout the school year. Oversight of pastoral care of the pupils is excellent. Pupils spoken to, referred to the systems available to them, understand their use and are glad their school has a strong pastoral element. Parents recognise the effectiveness of the strong pastoral system in school. They spoke in praise of its efficacy. Catholic ethos is central to the induction provided for all staff and new staff are carefully nurtured in this ethos. All staff are committed to the school's mission and spiritual and moral development of its pupils. The school recently held a Catholic schools Continuous Professional Development (CPD) day which was a great success. The school liaises with its Catholic feeder primaries as part of an ongoing process of formation and shares a site with one of them.

The RE department is subject to the same rigorous monitoring as all other subjects and RE is seen by all as a core subject within the curriculum. The head teacher is the line manager for RE. Progress is an important element in subject reviews and key questions are asked about progress for all groups of learners in relation to their target grade and the interventions that have been put in place to ensure maximum progress for all pupils. The head of department was able to demonstrate the impact current interventions are having on targeted groups in school. RE has 10% curriculum time in Key Stage Three and Four and the school meets all canonical and statutory responsibilities. Leadership within the RE department is outstanding and this has ensured that standards have been consistently high across all stages for a number of years. Senior teachers complete learning walks as part of their monitoring of the quality of learning and teaching and developing good practice.

The headteacher, S.L.T, and the head of RE are all excellent role models. They foster good relations within their own teams and are all committed to providing a first class education for all in their care.

The school's Self Evaluation Form (SEF), produced by staff and governors working together, is an accurate assessment of where Sacred Heart is today. Robust systems are in place to monitor and track pupil progress and attitudes to learning. These are in turn monitored by the SLT and governors.

Records of pupils' progress are carefully monitored and areas for concern are identified early and interventions are implemented. In light of an anticipated dip in Progress 8 score the school has implemented strategies to address the issue. One example of this is seen in the RE Department's use of targeted questioning. This methodology and other support strategies are being rolled out across the school as part of their aim to raise standards with targeted groups. Following regular data harvests heads of department meet with the headteacher and SLT to determine appropriate interventions. Groups targeted for intervention make use of the 'Shuttle' where expert staff and volunteers are able to give intensive support. 'Disadvantaged pupils' and 'boys' are the key targets for intervention. Pupil Premium funding has been spent on extra staff and revision guides. While these interventions are taking place, they are viewed positively by pupils and welcomed by staff and parents.

The strong Catholic ethos is evident amongst leaders and governors and is given high priority. Leaders, managers and governors effectively promote and evaluate the Catholic Life of the school putting spiritual formation at the heart of school life. The spirit of strong leadership in the school, inspired by the head's calm and spiritual example is a real strength of the school.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How well leaders, managers and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life of the school, including collective worship, and plan improvement to outcomes for pupils 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How well leaders, managers and governors monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan for improvement to outcomes for pupils 	1