



SECTION 48 INSPECTION REPORT

Canonical Inspection under Canon 806 on behalf of the
Archbishop of Southwark and inspection of
Denominational Education under Section 48
Of the Education Act 2005
URN 138960

Sacred Heart Catholic School
Trafalgar Street
Camberwell
SE17 2TP

Inspection dates: 21 - 22 March 2013

Chair of Governors:	Mr Michael Gould
Headteacher:	Mr Serge Cefai
Inspectors:	Mr Michael Sheridan Mr John Casey

EDUCATION COMMISSION

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SECTION 48

Introduction

Description of the school

The school converted to academy status in November 2012. It is situated in the Cathedral Deanery of the Archdiocese of Southwark and, prior to November 2012, was maintained by Southwark LA. The principal parishes which the school serves are Sacred Heart, St James the Great, English Martyrs, Our Lady of the Rosary and Our Lady of Sorrows. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholics is 98.7% in Years 7 to 11 and 79.3% in the Sixth Form, giving an overall proportion of 96.5%. The average weekly proportion of curriculum time given to Religious Education is 10% in Key Stage 3, 6.7% in Key Stage 4, 20% for A level studies and 3.3% for General RE in the Sixth Form.

The school takes pupils from 11 to 19 years. The number of pupils currently on roll is 751, including 82 in the Sixth Form. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals (around 21%) is well above average (15.9%). Around 20% of the pupils receive extra support in class, which is well above average (approximately 10%). The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds (around 95%) is well above average (approximately 26%). The proportion of pupils from homes where English is an additional language (around 56%) is well above average (approximately 12%).

The Sixth Form was reintroduced to the school in September 2011, following a break of almost three decades. The school moved to a temporary site, owned by the local authority, in September 2012 and will remain 'in situ' until September 2014, when a new building will be completed on the original site. When the school returns it will revert to its original location in the Camberwell Deanery of the Archdiocese of Southwark.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding	Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 2	Good	Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness as a Catholic school

GRADE

1

The leadership of the school is strongly focussed on the school's Catholic mission, on promoting the well-being of staff and pupils and on raising standards. The outstanding leadership of the Headteacher unites staff in the common purpose of providing the very best all-round education for the pupils. Governors support and challenge the school very effectively and constantly monitor its Catholic distinctiveness. The quality of prayer and collective worship is outstanding and the Chaplaincy Team is developing into a strength of the school. There are very strong links with local clergy, who visit the school regularly and celebrate Mass and sacramental liturgies. The quality of assemblies is outstanding and the form tutor prayer time is very good. They provide pupils with many opportunities for prayer and reflection. The school very successfully promotes community cohesion internally, in the locality, nationally and abroad. Standards in Religious Education are very good at Key Stage 3 and outstanding both at Key Stage 4 and in the Sixth Form. Religious Education provision in the school promotes pupil awareness of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life and of the interdependent nature of communities worldwide. Pupils are friendly, confident and collaborate well together. Their behaviour is exemplary. They benefit from consistently high standards of teaching of Religious Education and make excellent progress to achieve levels which exceed national expectations overall. Leadership and management of Religious Education are outstanding. The Head of Department is an effective and skilful leader who empowers his departmental colleagues to develop and hone their teaching skills through support and challenge. The one key issue listed in the last report, surrounding Religious Education curriculum time, has been partially met. The high quality of the school's planning processes, together with the accurate judgements and impact indicators in the comprehensive self-evaluation, indicates that the school has an excellent capacity to improve.

What steps need to be taken to improve further?

Governors, headteacher and staff should:

- Carry out their plans to re-instate the programme of retreats
- Continue to develop even greater consistency in marking in Religious Education
- Ensure the Religious Education curriculum time meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference and the Diocese at Key Stage 4 (10%) and in the Sixth Form (5%).

The Catholic life of the school

GRADE 1

Leadership and management

The leadership and management of the Catholic life of the school is outstanding. The Governors and Headteacher ensure that the school provides a secure environment where the religious formation of the pupils is given a clear direction according to the mission and teaching of the Catholic Church. The Headteacher is an outstanding practitioner whose vision and drive for excellence is embraced by an equally outstanding senior leadership team. He keeps abreast of developments in Catholic Education by attending Diocesan conferences and meetings for headteachers. The Governing Body act as critical friends to provide outstanding strategic direction for the Catholic life of the school. The outstanding quality assurance systems empower senior and middle leaders to access high quality interventions for all groups of pupils in the school, such as those with additional educational needs including the more able. As a result, pupils' achievements are outstanding and mark the school as a centre of excellence, not only within the local authority but also nationally and abroad. For example, school leaders from the Diocese, from Bristol and Blackpool and approximately thirty leaders from Nigeria have visited the school as part of their professional development in school improvement. Despite the school decanting into temporary accommodation in Walworth, standards remain high owing to a thoroughly well-planned, managed move and is a credit to the school's leadership.

Religious artefacts and displays mark the school as distinctively Catholic. For example, there are crucifixes in all classrooms, the Stations of the Cross on a main stairway of the listed building and a photograph of Pope Francis in each of the classrooms observed. The Mission Statement, 'Our school strives to be a Catholic community in which Christian principles of care and respect are valued, with emphasis on the development of the individual through academic achievement and personal development', is clearly evident in the outstanding academic achievement of pupils at all levels, the extremely positive relationships seen amongst pupils and between pupils and staff, and the outstanding pastoral care. As such, the school is the top performing provider at GCSE in the local authority and the contextual value added places it in the top 10% of schools in the country. Also, the school ministers to the needs of pupils through the expert application of the pastoral system using, for example, advanced systems of communicating with parents of vulnerable pupils, the mentoring of pupils at risk of underachieving and the excellent 'Footsteps' inclusion unit. The Special Educational Needs (SEN) department liaises very effectively with the pastoral team which is expertly led by the pastoral Deputy Headteacher. Succession planning is very evident in the opportunities the school gives to middle managers, such as a Head of Department joining senior leaders on the Teaching and Learning Committee. Pupil voice is heard through student bodies such as the School Parliament, School Prefects and the School Council which meet with senior leaders on a fortnightly basis. For example, as a result of the pupils' requests and following some consideration by the senior leadership team, table tennis tables and table-top football equipment have been installed in the playground. An excellent weekly newsletter regularly informs parents of developments in the Catholic life of the school and of Religious Education.

Quality of provision for personal and collective worship

GRADE 1

The quality of provision for prayer and collective worship is outstanding. There is a coherent and well-planned programme of Masses, liturgies and assemblies which is coordinated by a strong Chaplaincy team comprised of three members of staff and chaired by the Head of Religious Education. Along with the Heads of Year and Head of Sixth Form, they ensure that the pupils are actively involved in the liturgical life of the school. The pupils are enlisted as readers, singers, altar servers and prayer leaders. The

Chaplaincy Team ensure that daily acts of worship are monitored on a regular basis by senior leaders, heads of year and the Head of Religious Education. Tutor groups are supported by the Chaplaincy Team through providing a theme for each week and an online resource of prayers formulated by the De La Salle Order of Christian Brothers. The school is further enhancing provision through the innovative approach of developing Sixth Form Liturgy Prefects to work with the Chaplaincy Team and the pupil body. Inspectors witnessed pupils leading prayers in assemblies, tutor time and in Religious Education lessons using a variety of styles. These included using prayer from the electronic prayer book resources, composing their own prayers or spontaneous prayers. During Sacramental and liturgical events, pupils are given time to reflect on issues relating to their faith and its enactment. Pupils particularly valued the Lenten liturgy which included opportunities for pupils to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Pupils spoke of the way in which assemblies helped them to put their faith into action. For example, Year 11 pupils shared how they lived out Gospel values in works of charity, the theme for the week during the inspection. They enthused greatly about how they raised money for a number of good causes through various activities during Charity Week, including the 'Bridges Walk' where almost two-thirds of the pupil population gave up their time the previous weekend to complete a route spanning eight bridges across the Thames. The proceeds of the sponsored walk are to go to the Pattaya Orphanage in Thailand. Daily focuses for Charity week were based on "The Parable of the Sheep and the Goats" and featured 'The Works of Mercy' which Jesus highlights in this scripture passage. The week was recalled in outstanding Year 10 and Year 11 assemblies, which focused on 'Charity Week – Do You Have a Sacred Heart?' These were linked to Pope Francis' inaugural homily focusing on the fundamental option for the poor, to the CAFOD 'What If' campaign and to the Thailand appeal. These assemblies were skilfully led by the Head of Religious Education using high level questioning techniques to encourage discussion, engaging pupils through an impressive PowerPoint presentation, giving pupils an opportunity for discussion and reflection, allowing them to feedback their abiding memories of the week and involving pupils in leading prayer. Owing to the restructuring of chaplaincy in the school in the previous term, the last opportunity for pupils to experience a sustained time of recollection was in the previous academic year, when Year 11 pupils went to St Cassian's Centre in Kintbury for a residential retreat. The school has already planned to reinstate its programme of retreats for Years 7 to 11 and the Sixth Form. The programme commences with three days of recollection scheduled for the lower school in the Summer term and residential retreats for the remainder of the school in the two ensuing terms. Although the school moved into new parish boundaries in September, the link with this parish is very strong, given the short time they have had in which to develop relationships. The parish priest is a regular visitor to the school and celebrates a weekly class Mass on Wednesdays organised by each class as part of a unit of work related to the Religious Education curriculum. As a result of the parish priest's commitment and his catechesis, many pupils have remarked that they now understand better why they go to Mass. He, together with the parish priest from the former host parish, celebrates Mass in the local church for each year group on a weekly basis. Given the opportunities afforded to pupils in the school, collective worship makes an excellent contribution to the spiritual and moral development of pupils in the school.

Community cohesion

GRADE 1

The promotion and achieving of community cohesion is outstanding. This is an inclusive school which empowers pupils of all abilities to thrive and celebrates the cultural diversity of the school population. Older pupils help younger pupils in the school, with Year 10 pupils acting as 'Reading Buddies', Year 11 prefects, who are allocated to a Year 7 tutor group, helping individuals in the form who find it difficult to adapt to school life and Sixth Form mentors who assist pupils in the lower school to manage their work more effectively.

Pupils are given opportunities to learn about world religions through the Religious Education programme and about other cultures through, for example, Cultural Week. One Year 9 pupil, reflecting on the week, remarked, "We get to learn a different language. We dress up and dance a traditional dance from our countries. I learned a lot from it." All pursue their roles with great enthusiasm. Relationships are exceptionally strong and pupils are friendly and welcoming. Carefully focussed behaviour and anti-bullying policies promote behaviour which supports community cohesion. Pupils' behaviour and personal development are outstanding and make a significant contribution to the progress they make in all aspects of school life. The school works collaboratively with the Deanery primary schools. For example, a group of Year 9 pupils are running a science event at the local Catholic primary school towards the end of this term. A large number of neighbouring primary schools have been invited to attend. The school demonstrates its Gospel values by working together with the neighbouring Catholic secondary school in a 'soft' federation of schools, overseen by the Headteacher in the role of Executive Headteacher. As mentioned in the 'Leadership and Management' section above, the school shares their outstanding practice with educational institutions locally, nationally and abroad. Local community outreach includes the Tea Dance where pupils across the age spectrum entertain senior citizens from the local parish and neighbouring care home, providing Christmas Hampers for the aged, collecting clothes for a special school and staffing the 'Soup Kitchen' run by the Missionaries of Charity. Relating to the latter, one pupil commented, "It made me think about things in my life that I take for granted like shelter, food, drink and warmth." National projects include supporting the professional development of school leaders from Bristol and Blackpool. They also include pupils volunteering to help national charities such as Age Concern and fundraising for the 'Make a Wish Foundation' which caters for children who are terminally ill. Internationally, pupils raise funds for CAFOD and for an orphanage in Thailand. Every two years some pupils and staff travel to Pattaya to lend their support to the orphans. As a result of the above, pupils feel they make a very positive contribution to communities, both at home and abroad, by putting their faith into action.

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Religious Education

GRADE 1

Achievement and standards in Religious Education

The attainment of pupils on entering the school is broadly below average. By the end of Key Stage 4, attainment is well above average with little variation between groups of pupils within the school. Indeed, when referring to the 2012 National School Performance tables, the school was highly commended by the Minister of State for Schools for being amongst the top hundred schools in the country in terms of the progress pupils made between Key Stage 2 results and their GCSE outcomes. In Religious Education, pupil attainment and progress is outstanding. At Key Stage 3, a significant proportion (around 81%) of Year 9 pupils obtained attainment level 5 or above in Religious Education, whilst around 49% gained attainment level 6 or above. Given pupils' starting points, this demonstrates very good progress. Given that pupils sit GCSE examinations in the subject in Year 10 and that their results significantly exceed the outstanding outcomes of Year 11 pupils in English, attainment in Religious Education at Key Stage 4 is likewise outstanding. The recent Ofsted inspection concluded that the 'Sixth Form is outstanding and prepares students very well in order to compete equally for places in the best universities and workplaces'. During the Religious Education Inspection the Diocesan inspectors, in agreement with Ofsted's findings, concluded that Sixth Form students' examination results are extremely promising after such a short time, and that their progress within lessons is frequently outstanding. Recruitment to AS Religious Education has increased significantly in the second year. At all key stages, the quality of work in pupils' books is at least good and the overwhelming majority of pupils' self-assessments evidenced in their books accurately reflect the progress they make in the subject. Pupils questioned during the inspection spoke effusively about the subject, which they enjoy very much. Pupils give Religious Education an above-the-mean satisfaction rating as seen in the January 2013 Kirkland Rowell survey. One Year 8 pupil said "I like RE a lot because it helps me to get close to Jesus," whilst another added, "I like RE a lot because the way my teacher teaches me helps me to understand."

Teaching and learning in Religious Education

GRADE 1

Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Clear learning objectives are shared with pupils, who are able to judge how they have been achieved at the end of the lesson. Teachers take account of the wide range of interests and learning styles in the class and differentiate the lessons so that pupils of all abilities can take part and rise to the challenges set before them. Teachers employ skilful questioning techniques to stimulate pupils and to extend their thinking. They ensure time for reflection and create an atmosphere in which pupils feel able to take risks in the knowledge that their answers will be valued. Teaching assistants are highly regarded, well-informed and well-deployed. They contribute significantly to pupils' learning. Where lessons are outstanding the pace is brisk, activities are challenging and pupils progress very well. In an outstanding Year 8 lesson on 'Jesus Trial Before Pilate', the pace was brisk, the questions were challenging and pupils progressed extremely well. The teacher used very good scaffolding to advance pupils' understanding through incisive questioning, outstanding materials and high quality materials. Excellent use was made of information and communications technology (ICT) to evoke high quality answers from pupils who were involved in pair work. The teacher invited a representative from each pair to give their solution to reasons for and against putting Jesus to death from the point of view of key individuals and groups in his trial. One representative said, "Pilate should have stood up for what he believed in." Teachers mark pupils' books frequently and provide formative comments which enable pupils to understand what they need to do to improve. Pupils know the level at which they are working and know how to move on from this. Assessment for Learning (AfL) techniques, such as peer mentoring and peer assessment, help pupils to acquire skills which allow them to understand what is required to produce work of a high quality. Self-assessment is

tailor-made to individual pupils' needs, facilitated by the Assessing Pupils' Progress (APP) sheets which are attached to their work books or folders. These sheets are scheduled for updating each half term. Formative marking prompts, such as 'what worked well' (www), 'even better if' (ebi) and 'spelling and grammar' (spaG), ensure that pupils are aware of the route to producing the level of work which meets the challenge set by their teachers. Although the vast majority of APP sheets seen during the inspection were updated on time, the school is aware that this is an area which needs to be applied consistently across the department. This has been identified as a focus for improvement.

The Religious Education curriculum

GRADE 1

Since the last inspection, pupils now receive their full entitlement to Religious Education curriculum time of 10% in Key Stage 3, as prescribed by the Bishops' Conference and the Diocese. However, the issue surrounding pupil entitlement, where Year 11 pupils receive no Religious Education curriculum time, still remains. Notwithstanding, curriculum time has increased significantly from 10% to 13.3% in Year 10 and this more than meets the 10% requirement for this cohort. In the Sixth Form, all students follow the National Open College Network (NOCN) General Religious Education course over 30 guided learning hours in each year. However, outcomes for pupils are exceptional, even though curriculum time in Key Stage 4 at 6.7% and in Sixth Form General Religious Education at 3.3% falls short of the Bishops' Conference and Diocesan requirements of 10% and 5% respectively. Those who have been enrolled on the A Level Religious Education course are allocated 20% of curriculum time, in line with all other subjects. The school is investigating the introduction of the NOCN course in Year 11, working its way through to Year 13. The school's leadership now needs to convert their existing deliberations surrounding Religious Education curriculum time in Year 11 and in the Sixth Form into firm plans of action with the greatest of urgency. The inspectors strongly advise that special attention should be given to provision in Year 13 for those students the school proposes to start the course in Year 11 at level 2. Once these plans are implemented, the school should ensure that the Bishops' Conference and Diocesan curriculum time requirements of 10% at Key Stage 4 and 5% for their post-16 General Religious Education students are met.

The content of the curriculum meets the requirements of the revised Curriculum Directory for Religious Education. It is well planned for progression of knowledge, skills and understanding. At Key Stage 3, schemes of work are based on the 'Way, the Truth and the Life' Religious Education programme and are tailored to challenge pupils of all abilities. All pupils commence their GCSE course at the beginning of Year 9. At Key Stage 4, pupils in Year 10 complete their GCSE course with an examination underwritten by the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA) and focusing on St Mark's Gospel and Christian ethics. At Key Stage 5, students take the AQA Philosophy of Religion and Christian and Ethics A2 examination papers in Year 12 and follow the course through to A2 in Year 13. The study of world religions is enhanced by visits to a local mosque. The school recognises the need to extend these opportunities further and to enable pupils to increase their understanding through visits from guest speakers.

Leadership and management of Religious Education

GRADE 1

The Curriculum Deputy Head line manages the Head of Religious Education. Together, they provide outstanding support for the well-qualified members of the department. Teaching and learning are both supported by good professional development, which is structured to make a direct impact on classroom practice. Strong liaison with the Deanery group and with the Diocese further supports development. The Head of Department is an effective and skilful leader in encouraging staff to broaden their knowledge of the 'The Way, the Truth and the Life' Religious Education programme at Key Stage 3 and the GCSE

and A level courses at Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 respectively. He monitors teaching and learning systematically and measures the impact of teaching on pupils' learning so that good practice can be shared and areas for improvement clearly defined. The departmental handbook is comprehensive and fit for purpose. Amongst other things, it contains high quality schemes of work which are mapped to Citizenship, to the Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) Policy and to Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL). The SRE policy is reviewed bi-annually and parents are consulted by the school. The systems for monitoring and tracking pupil progress are outstanding and give teachers a clear and accurate indication of where interventions are required to advance pupils' acquisition of skills and understanding to enable them to unlock their potential to think spiritually, ethically and theologically, and to become aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life. A great strength of the school is the refined tracking system, overseen by the Dean of Studies. This enhances data from other sources such as Fisher Family Trust and incorporates not only the levels at which pupils are operating in the subject but also provides ranking variables which motivate pupils to progress in their learning. This has been one of the features recognised as an area of excellence by Ofsted and which has prompted senior leaders, from schools both across the country and abroad, to visit the school in order to advance their own professional development. Governors support the Religious Education department and the Chaplaincy team as critical friends by visiting lessons, by attending school Masses and liturgies. A parent governor provides contacts from charitable organisations to help the department to deliver the Religious Education curriculum and to enable pupils to experience faith in action. Religious Education is viewed as a core subject in the school. As such it has three dedicated classrooms each with electronic whiteboards and ICT equipment. The department is well equipped with textbooks, age appropriate Bibles and software. The Headteacher makes available additional funds to enhance the Religious Education curriculum. As a result, the department has purchased, for example, revision booklets and SRE resources. In the recent Kirkland Rowell survey, parents ranked Religious Education in first place and gave it a well-above-the-mean satisfaction rating.

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