

# The Sacred Heart Language College

186, High Street, Wealdstone, Harrow, HA3 7AY

Date of inspection by Westminster Diocese: 7 & 8 March 2019



## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### A. Classroom religious education is outstanding

- The schemes of work are highly creative and ensure all pupils fully engage, irrespective of their starting points. The content of classroom religious education is mapped to the Religious Education Curriculum Directory.
- Marking and constructive feedback are frequent and of a consistently high standard, which enables all pupils to understand how they can improve their work and make exceptional progress.
- Pupils excel through high teacher expectation and engagement in their own learning. They show an obvious pride in their work and in their school.
- Attainment at all levels is outstanding, with GCSE results in the top 5% nationally.
- Teachers plan lessons that are creative, inspiring, challenging and actively engage pupils in their learning. There is individually tailored provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disability and low prior attainers, resulting in rapid and accelerated progress from their starting points.
- The quality of leadership of religious education at all levels is outstanding.
- There is a strong culture of self-evaluation across the department, including the highly impressive and innovative pupils' self-evaluation document. The pupil leadership team could clearly articulate the school vision and mission and link it to their faith in action.
- Pupils are genuinely encouraged to aim high in order to achieve the best outcomes possible. There are many positive images of female role models to inspire and empower them, around the public areas of the school.

### B. The Catholic life of the school is outstanding

- It is evident to all staff, parents and pupils that religious education is at the heart of the school life. The curriculum time fully meets the 10% requirement laid down by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.
- There are many whole school prayer and worship opportunities, including celebrating key liturgical events and special Masses such as for their annual 'Sacred Heart Day'.
- The excellent pastoral curriculum is delivered daily and based on the Caritas 'Love in Action' programmes. All pupils are empowered to apply their understanding of their faith to their daily lives.
- There is a dynamic and creative understanding of human flourishing, which is articulated by the pupils at every opportunity.
- Pupils demonstrate their deep understanding of Catholic Social Teaching through their extensive and sustained contribution to the Common Good.
- Partnerships within and across the diocesan family are very strong. This includes key speakers to lead professional development for all staff.
- There are excellent systems in place to support the induction of new staff, so they can actively participate and contribute to the Catholic life of the school.
- The governors, headteacher and the leadership team are totally committed to the living out of the school's mission statement, 'confident in God's love for us, we commit ourselves to His service'. They provide outstanding leadership for the whole community.

## A. Classroom Religious Education

### What has improved since the last inspection?

The school has embedded developmental changes to Key Stage 3 and 4 schemes of work to include the implementation of the new GCSE AQA specification B. In Years 7-9 the revised curriculum has provided pupils with a broad religious education (RE) in line with the Religious Education Curriculum Directory (RECD) and has included aspects of the diocesan assessment pilot. The impact of these developments is reflected in the improved and sustained attainment and achievement over time. Peer assessment is key to the self-evaluation processes, with teacher feedback empowering pupils to advance their learning, knowledge and understanding.

### The content of classroom religious education is outstanding

The curriculum is well balanced and succinctly linked to the RECD. The mapped content provides rigour and an in-depth study of each topic. Thus, pupils are making connections between learning and its application within the lived tradition. Pupils are encouraged to articulate what it means to be a Catholic and part of a faith community. As they progress pupils are able to demonstrate how these beliefs may differ from other religions and non-religious communities. The schemes of work have differentiation built into them, which support pupils of all abilities. There is a strong partnership between the RE and the special educational needs and/or disability departments, enhancing the support which staff, including learning support assistants, can give in delivering tailored programmes and guidance to identified pupils. Educational visits to places of worship include the local mosque and synagogue and other Catholic parishes. There is a wide programme of visiting speakers, including Jewish visitors to discuss the atrocities of the Holocaust, representatives of the founding congregation and from Cafod. The exploration of other faiths is built into the schemes of work termly.

### Pupil achievement in religious education is outstanding

Pupil achievement in RE across Key Stages 3 and 4 is outstanding. Prior attainment is used effectively to set aspirational targets for all pupils. There is regular monitoring of the department and tracking of pupils against a five-year trajectory, which feed into pupil progress meetings; all of this ensures that pupils' needs are well supported to make highly effective and rapid progress over time. The school results in RE have regularly been in the top 5% nationally at GCSE. The outstanding results in 2018, where 91% of pupils achieved grades 4 – 9, 68% achieved grades 7 - 9 and 23% achieved grade 9 clearly indicate that 'no pupil is left behind' in RE, as described by both staff and senior pupils during discussions with the inspectors. Progress figures are equally impressive and Key Stage 3 data indicates that pupils achieve their aspirational targets. The impact of these excellent results stems from the rigour of the schemes of work, the embedding of skills and assessment opportunities and was evidenced in the scrutiny of the work in the books, which is of a very high standard indeed. Books are well presented and consistent across the year groups. Pupils engage well in their learning, as observed in lesson observations during the inspection. Pupils are articulate and confident in sharing their ideas, knowledge and understanding of the concepts being explored. The commitment and dedication of the staff in the RE department to excellence for all pupils, regardless of their starting points, is worthy of note. Marking and teacher feedback is a real strength of the school, especially in the way pupils are supported to move their learning on.

### The quality of teaching is outstanding

The quality of teaching in RE and its impact on learning, across the key stages are outstanding. A variety of scaffolded and challenging questioning is used in teaching to impact on the learning of the pupils, across the key stages. A great focus on discussion work stretches the pupils to gain deeper

levels of knowledge and understanding of the significance of religious beliefs and practices. Teachers encouraged pupils to retrieve prior learning and build upon it in the lesson. An example of this is where pupils in Key Stage 4 were working collaboratively in groups, confidently explaining to other members of their group the workings of Cafod, the Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child and the St Vincent de Paul Society and linking these charities to relevant and appropriate scriptural parables. Observations included, as part of an 'Eastern Religions Research Project', Year 7 pupils exploring Hinduism and other world religions. The challenge built into the lesson required pupils to explain how the three concepts of Karma, Moksha and Samsahara are connected. Marking and feedback informs pupils as to how they can progress further. The effective use of 'what went well' and 'even better if' supports pupils to use their teacher feedback to make rapid and sustained progress. Pupils are encouraged to listen respectfully to each other's views. This became apparent in discussion with the pupils, where they describe how, '...we are taught to respect each other's opinions and faiths...even if we may not agree with what they say.' During observations, teachers were seen to systematically check the pupils' understanding throughout the lessons, ensuring that they understood, clarified and deepened their learning. Pupils' independent learning is highly encouraged, through research as is outlined in the home learning policy. This empowers pupils to consolidate their learning and prepare for new learning. The schemes of work are well supported by a range of effective resources. This includes the well-planned support for pupils identified with special educational needs and disabilities and challenge for more able pupils. Teachers share their models of good practice and through their peer book looks, regular learning walks and departmental discussions, provide regular feedback on how pupils are learning and which strategies need to be developed. The school plans for the AS level in RE to be re-introduced to able pupils in the current Year 10. The pupil self-evaluation form celebrates how much pupils appreciate what staff do for them, for example one pupil on results day wrote, 'thank you for helping me to achieve the grades I have. You gave me a stronger faith.'

**The effectiveness of leadership and management in promoting religious education is outstanding**

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of RE is outstanding. The staff have a well-balanced skills set, a deep subject knowledge and, as previous leaders of RE, bring expertise to the department. Their clear sense of purpose and direction provides models of excellence, especially for non-teaching staff allocated to supporting designated pupils. The subject leader sets clear parameters for her colleagues to follow. She ensures her monitoring schedule includes all aspects of how pupils are learning and the progress being made across the key stages. The very comprehensive handbook, annually updated, supports new staff and offers easy reference for all other staff. Her high expectations and modelled excellence empowers all staff to adhere to the high quality demands within the department. The monitoring calendar is robust and rigorous; the quality of teaching and its impact on learning is shared with the senior leadership team. All members of the department are empowered to have ownership of the agreed priority areas. This ensures that 'no wasted years occur', as reported in a discussion with a member of the department team. This demonstrates that there is challenge and rigour and opportunities for creativity through very high quality teaching and learning for all pupils. All members of the department ensure that there is consistency built into the use of resources, which are shared and evaluated together, within their half-termly reviews. Continuing professional development, peer mentoring and sharing and modelling excellence, keeps all members of the department fully engaged in the delivery of such excellent provision for all.

**What should the school do to develop further in classroom religious education?**

- Continue to work on differentiation to support the needs of all students.
- Continue to prepare for the new AS specification to be delivered to high achievers in Year 10 from Summer 2019.

## B. The Catholic life of the school

### What has improved since the last inspection?

The school has introduced a 'Pastoral Curriculum Framework' to develop and apply the pupils' knowledge and understanding of their faith, within their daily lives. It is based on the Caritas, 'Love in Action' programme and is delivered every morning, across the school. This has built upon the real sense of community, developing harmonious relationships with and between pupils and staff. The centrality of Christ is encapsulated through their prayer, and the daily references to the school mission of 'Confident in God's love for us, we commit ourselves to His service'.

### The place of religious education as the core of the curriculum

**is outstanding**

RE is at the heart of the school. It is highly valued and integral as the core of the core curriculum. The Bishops' Conference requirement of 10% of curriculum time is covered through discrete lessons, and is supported through the pastoral curriculum delivered daily. Governors ensure that the budgetary allocation for RE and the Catholic life of the school is well matched to that for other core subjects. There is high quality accommodation for the department and the school chapel is located at the 'heart of the school'. The 'Student Services Area,' is also placed in the 'heart of the school', alongside the senior leader offices, meaning that pupils have ready access to guidance and support. The headteacher is rightly proud of the inclusivity of the school, viewing all pupils as equal in the eyes of Christ.

### The experience of Catholic worship – prayer and liturgy – for the whole school community

**is outstanding**

Prayer and liturgy are central to the life of this Catholic school. Assemblies provide regular opportunities for pupils to reflect on all aspects of their faith formation, placing worship at the core of the daily life of the school. The location of the chapel at the 'heart of the school' provides an invitation for pupils and staff to stop and reflect in the presence of the Lord. Class Masses are held here, to which parents are invited. Staff prayer is held weekly and led by members of the staff on a rota basis. The liturgical cycle is reflected through prayers, such as the Rosary in October and May. Eucharistic adoration during pastoral time is encouraged. A voluntary Mass is held weekly for classes, following a rota. A whole school Mass is held termly, and also on feast days and Holy Days of Obligation. The priest from the nearby parish is most supportive in celebrating the Masses. The school chaplain keeps abreast of diocesan developments, attending relevant training across the deanery and diocese. Pupils plan assemblies to include liturgical links, for example related to their chosen house saints. Retreats are provided for pupils at least three times during their time at the school, with an emphasis on developing community spirit. The school 'Mission Day' held in October 2018, led by a member of the founding order, included visits from other missionary groups, inviting pupils to respond to their 'call to service.' One of the senior pupils portrayed this as how, 'we use our God given gifts and talents to spread God's unconditional love'.

### The contribution to the Common Good – service and social justice –

**is outstanding**

All members of the Sacred Heart Language College community respond to their call to do some definite service and fully embrace the Common Good and social justice. The Gospel values are woven through the school and its policies and practice, with a strong sense of respect, fairness and justice lived out in their daily lives. The 'Sacred Heart Day' in June, celebrates the achievements of the pupils with activities to showcase the gifts and talents of all pupils. This is a key focus for the

school as a living faith community. The call to active service, rather than the fund-raising, is the prime motivator for pupils to support those less well off than themselves. An example of these responses is the work pupils carry out for Cafod, Mary's Meals, and the Catholic Children's Society. Their work for Aid for the Church in Need's 'Red Wednesday' appeal resulted in the school being invited to the House of Lords in November 2018. This work will continue as the school trains 'Pupil Ambassadors' for the charity. The commitment of the pupils to re-cycling, reflecting the call to Christian stewardship, is recognised through the Silver Level Eco-school award. This was a pupil-led initiative. One Year 9 group focused on the charity, 'Ignite', which works to dispel gang cultures and knife crime. The opportunity for all pupils across the phases to undertake an independent research project epitomises the high aspirations and expectations. Pupils demonstrate a very high level of engagement and a willingness to listen to and respect each other's opinions. Pupils are confident, friendly, polite, welcoming and excellent ambassadors for their school.

**The partnership with parents, school and parish, and collaboration as an integral part of the diocese through its relationship with the diocesan Bishop and those acting on his behalf**

**is outstanding**

The partnership with parents, school and parish, including the wider diocesan family, is outstanding. Partnerships within and throughout the deanery, local primary schools, sixth form colleges and local parishes are very strong. The school is currently undergoing its next stage in development as it moves to become part of the 'Blessed Holy Family Academy Trust' from May 2019. The 'Parent Voice Forum,' has informed the development of the assessment and reporting procedures, including the introduction of the 'Show my Homework,' an on-line resource. The excellent response from the parental questionnaire shows that they overwhelmingly support the school. The relationship with the founding order, The Sisters of the Our Lady of the Missions, is actively developing and sustaining the charism of the order, empowering young women to grow in confidence as young Catholics. A pupil said 'our strength is our tenacious and robust sense of community that encompasses all students and teachers alike, regardless of age, ethnicity and academic ability'. This was echoed in the discussion held with a range of teaching and non-teaching staff, by members of the inspection team.

**The effectiveness of the leadership and management in promoting the Catholic life of the school**

**is outstanding**

The governing body, in partnership with the headteacher and her senior leaders, have a clear vision and direction for the school. They are fully committed and dedicated to promoting its Catholic ethos and believe their role as educators of Catholic girls in an increasingly secular society is vital as they enable and empower their pupils to flourish both academically and spiritually. Sacred Heart is a community where Gospel values and the dignity of each member are at the heart of all that they do; it is central to their mission and values and underpinned by faith. Staff appreciate the strong Catholic life of the school. When they arrive, they have a focused induction on the Catholic ethos and they benefit from opportunities for professional development. They described the mutual respect amongst the community, celebrating every child's gifts and talents, summed up by the reflection that, 'this is a special place, when you walk through the door there is a tangible difference.' All staff appreciate that the mission statement is central to daily life of the school.

**What should the school do to develop further the Catholic life of the school?**

- Provide further opportunities for students across the year groups to gain more ownership of planning, preparation and delivery of liturgical worship.
- Further develop the role of the 'Chaplain Prefects', to enhance their liturgical formation and opportunities for liturgical ministries.

## Information about this school

- The school is a six form entry Catholic girls, (11-16) school in the locality of Harrow Wealdstone.
- The school serves 25 parishes, including St. Joseph's, Wealdstone and St Teresa's, Hatch End.
- The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholic is 90%.
- The proportion of pupils who are from other Christian denominations is 7% and from other faiths is 3%.
- The percentage of Catholic teachers in the school is 60%.
- The number of teachers with a Catholic qualification is 3.
- There are 9% of pupils in the school with special educational needs or disabilities of whom 4 have statements of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)/ Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP).
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well above average.
- The number of pupils speaking English as an Additional Language is well above average.
- There is a well below average rate of families claiming free school meals.
- 131 pupils receive the Pupil Premium (17%).

<b>Department for Education Number</b>	310/4700
<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	102243
<b>Local Authority</b>	Harrow

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary Aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11-16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Female
<b>Number of pupils on roll</b>	783
<b>The appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr James Coyle
<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss Geraldine Higgins
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8863 9922
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.tshlc.harrow.sch.uk">www.tshlc.harrow.sch.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:enquiries@tshlc.harrow.sch.uk">enquiries@tshlc.harrow.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	26 November 2013
<b>Grades from previous inspection:</b>	
<b>Classroom religious education</b>	Outstanding
<b>The Catholic life of the school</b>	Outstanding

## Information about this inspection

This inspection was carried out (i) under the requirements of the Canon 806 and (ii) in accordance with the Framework for Diocesan Inspections 2015 approved by the Archbishop of Westminster and (iii) under section 48 of the Education Act 2005.

- The inspectors would like to thank the governors, headteacher, staff, pupils and parents for their co-operation over the conduct of the inspection.
- During the inspection 24 lessons or part lessons were observed.
- The inspectors attended one assembly and two of acts of worship.
- Meetings were held with school staff, pupils and governors.
- Other evidence was gathered from contacts with parents through a questionnaire, scrutiny of a sample of pupils' work, observation of pupils in and out of lessons and examination of school documents.

## Inspection Team

The inspectors are appointed by the Archbishop.

Mrs Tina Cleugh	Lead Inspector
Miss Susan Grace	Associate Inspector
Mrs Noreta Reece	Associate Inspector
Miss Catherine Bryan	Associate Inspector
Mr Chris Cleugh	Associate Inspector

## Information about inspection

The purpose of Diocesan inspection is to report to and advise the Archbishop on the quality of classroom religious education and the Catholic life of the school. The inspection report is also used to inform parents and carers, and the wider Catholic community. Inspection provides an opportunity to support, challenge, evaluate and promote the work of Catholic schools. It also assists schools in the work of self-evaluation and improvement, and enables the Diocese to celebrate with schools their sense of identity and their strengths as Catholic schools.

### Inspection Grades

- Outstanding
- Good
- Requires improvement
- Causing concern

This report is published by the Diocese of Westminster and is available at:  
<http://rcdow.org.uk/education/schools>

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