



Diocese of Arundel and Brighton

St Wilfrid's Catholic School
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West Sussex RH11 8PG

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Unique Reference Number: 126095

Headteacher: Mr J Morris
Chair of Governors: Awaiting Appointment October 2009

Canonical Inspection under Canon 806 on behalf of the Bishop of Arundel & Brighton
and inspection of Denominational Education under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

Date of inspection: 30th September-1st October 2009
Date of previous inspection: 8th & 11th December 2006
Lead Inspector: Mr J Lydon
Associate Inspector: Mr D Fetteroll

Description of School

St Wilfrid's Catholic School is a voluntary aided 11-18 mixed all-ability school maintained by West Sussex Education Authority. The number of pupils on free school meals is lower than average. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. The percentage of pupils from minority groups is above average as is the number of pupils for whom English is not their first language. The school has specialist school status for Business and Enterprise with Ethics and was granted full extended school status.

The current roll is 920 including 169 in the Sixth Form. The school is situated in the Crawley Deanery and the principal parishes which the school serves are Crawley, Horsham, Horley and East Grinstead. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholics is 65%. The proportion from other denominations and faiths is 35%. The average weekly amount of curriculum time given to religious education is 8% in Key Stage 3, 10% in Key Stage 4 and 4% in the Sixth Form, (General RE)

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of this Catholic school

As a Catholic educating community St Wilfrid's school is good. Leadership and management are good with several outstanding features. The commitment of the leadership team to maintaining the distinctive character of the school is outstanding, evidenced in particular by the nature of the pastoral support of both staff and students. Governors very effectively fulfil their role as critical friend. Pastoral care is outstanding and chaplaincy is a real strength of the school community. The opportunities for private and public worship are outstanding as is the quality of acts of worship. The school is outstanding at promoting and achieving community cohesion. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Pupils feel secure and valued and expressed pride in their school. Religious education results are satisfactory at all key stages. Pupils make satisfactory progress. In terms of outcomes the quality of teaching in religious education ranged from satisfactory to outstanding. From September 2009 the school appointed an Assistant Headteacher to lead and manage the Religious Education department and plans are in place which aim to improve standards further. Religious education makes a significant contribution to the spiritual and moral development of the pupils.

Grade 2

Improvement since the last inspection

The school has successfully addressed several of the issues raised in the last inspection report. The quality of worship is now, overall, outstanding. In the context of the daily act of worship an effective system of monitoring by senior leadership is now in place. The chaplaincy is now a more integral part of the school's system of pastoral care of its students, evidenced by the collaboration between Heads of Year and the chaplain who is a trained counsellor. The Religious Education department is now fully suited in state of the art classrooms with a fully-equipped department office. Timetabling issues have, in relation to staffing, been resolved and the appointment of an Assistant Headteacher to lead the department is a positive attempt to address the school's stated aim to improve attainment and progress.

Grade 2

The capacity of the school community to improve and develop

Given the enthusiasm of the Head, the support of the governors and the commitment of the staff, the inspectors believe the school has a very good capacity to become outstanding in all areas. This judgement is supported by the fact that the school has recently appointed an Assistant Headteacher to lead the Religious Education department and has provided additional staffing within the department.

Grade 2

What the school should do to improve further

In order to improve even further the governors and the leadership team should:-

- Ensure that attainment in Religious Education continues to improve in line with other core subject areas and with national standards.
- Ensure that assessment for learning strategies become fully embedded in religious education.
- Develop in-service training opportunities for the department, particularly in the context of the new Key Stage 3 scheme.
- Ensure that the practice of teachers making diagnostic comments when marking pupils' written work is consistent throughout the department.

The Catholic Life of the School

Leadership and Management

The leadership and management of this Catholic school are outstanding. The leadership of the school is strongly focused on the school's Catholic mission and on promoting the personal development of learners. The headteacher, who has a positive presence around the school, and the leadership team have a clear vision for the development of the school as a Catholic learning community created and supported by pupils, parents, staff and governors. The governors fully involve themselves, where appropriate, in all aspects of school life and, in particular, the religious and spiritual life of the school. All Foundation Governors are committed practising Catholics who are well-known and respected in their local community. Members of the governing body sit on the Governors Spiritual and Community Committee and meet every term to review the impact of leadership on the Catholic life of the school. Policies are underpinned by the school's mission statement. The school's self-evaluation process is rigorous and has correctly identified its strengths and areas for development. The pastoral care provision is outstanding and chaplaincy is a real strength of the school where the lay chaplain supports the liturgies and acts as a genuine presence to staff and pupils. This is evidenced by his visibility around the school and the appreciation expressed by staff and students of his support in critical crisis situations. Links with the local parish are outstanding. One parish priest is, currently, Acting Chair of Governors while another is a member of the governing body. The outstanding nature of the support of the parishes for the school is reflected in their financial contributions to the building of the excellent school chapel, located at its entrance placing "Christ as the foundation of the whole educational enterprise". Deanery priests celebrate Mass on Feast Days and for form and year groups as well as on special occasions. Opportunities for students to

celebrate the sacrament of reconciliation are offered during Advent and Lent. Many of St Wilfrid's pupils are actively engaged in a variety of ministries in their local parishes and at Deanery level. Pupils are proud of their school and they feel valued and respected. Behaviour around the school is very good.

Grade 1

The Prayer Life of the School

A weekly mass is celebrated at 9am every Friday throughout term time which involves students, staff and local parishioners. This is seen as part of the parish programme and is advertised in the parish bulletins. Mass is also celebrated on Holy Days of Obligation when they fall on school days. The Chaplaincy committee is an informal group chaired by the Deputy Head. It includes 15 colleagues across a range of departments which discusses current initiatives and priorities. Students are involved in preparing liturgy and are keen to volunteer for a variety of ministries. Recently eight students have been commissioned as Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist following a structured training programme facilitated by a member of the Deanery clergy and the chaplain. Local priests assist in providing very good opportunities for pupils to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation during Advent and Lent. Every pupil has two assemblies per week, a Year and a Key Stage assembly. An excellent themed booklet is produced by the chaplain to support the form tutors and this is well used. The chaplain also provides on-line resources via the school intranet together with a series of power-point presentations in support of the weekly theme. There is an extensive retreat programme for each year group with use made of local facilities such as The Friary Hall in Crawley. In addition opportunities for residential retreats are offered to students in Years 10, 11, 12 and 13 and the take-up is excellent.

Grade 1

How effectively does the school promote community cohesion?

St Wilfrid's School is outstanding at both promoting and achieving community cohesion. Inclusion of all is central to the ethos of this school. Within the school there is concern and respect for others. The school seeks to include all staff and pupils in its corporate life and worship. Pupils' friendship bonds cross cultural, faith, social and economic boundaries. This was emphasised particularly during pupil interviews when there was a unanimous recognition that "no pupils are by themselves in this school". There are several strategies involving the pupils to ensure that this situation is sustained including peer mediators from Year 11 and "study buddies" from the Sixth Form students, both being in support of students from Years 7 to 9. The pupils also made reference to teachers going the extra mile in support of less able and more challenging students and to the wide range of extra-curricular activities which contributes significantly to the cohesive nature of St Wilfrid's Catholic school community.

In the context of community cohesion beyond the school is involved in a range of activities in support of groups in the local community including a Sixth Form Sleep-out to raise money for the homeless in Crawley and the surrounding areas and an Easter Team Appeal, in conjunction with the local Baptist minister who coordinates the project encouraging students to bring in food and other necessities for the homeless at Christmas and Easter. On a wider international dimension, the school is now a *Fairtrade* recognised school and maintains strong support for the Diocesan Lourdes Pilgrimage for which students are particularly enthusiastic.

Grade 1

Religious Education

Achievement and Standards in Religious Education

Achievement and standards in religious education are satisfactory. At key stage 3, where 65% reach level 5 or above, standards are satisfactory and are relatively comparable with other core subjects. At key stage 4 results are satisfactory with 63% gaining A*-C grades, an increase of 7% on the previous year, 18% of these achieving A*/A grades constituting the highest number of A* grades achieved in any subject. These results are just below all schools nationally and above Catholic schools nationally. At GCSE just under 29% of the pupils achieved or exceeded their target grades, with boys performing better than girls, which is contrary to the national trend. Sixth Form results, based on the ALPS (Advanced Level Performance System) analysis, are very good. Based on a pupil survey and interviews with the inspectors, most pupils have a very positive attitude to religious education. Behaviour in lessons is, overall, very good. Pupils are making satisfactory progress across all key stages.

Grade 3

Teaching and learning in Religious Education

Based on the lessons observed, the quality of teaching was good overall. Where lessons are good or better they are well planned and structured with lesson objectives shared with and understood by the pupils. Pupils are encouraged and affirmed and classroom management is good. Relationships between staff, including learning support assistants, and students are a significantly positive feature. Students generally are on task and most like the subject. The findings of the student survey in the Spring Term 2009 that "92% of all those surveyed overwhelmingly confirmed that they do indeed enjoy most of their RE lessons" was confirmed during student interviews.

Students currently make satisfactory progress within lessons and between the Key Stages. The use of ICT in lessons is very good. Written work is mostly of a high standard and most students take care with it. Most lessons have solid pace but sometimes the students are not sufficiently challenged to extend their thinking. A strategic approach to awarding levels has recently been introduced and the department recognises that this must become embedded if attainment across the board is to be improved.

Grade 2

Quality of the Curriculum

In following the National Project's "ICONS" programme at key stage 3 the religious education curriculum fully meets the requirements of the Religious Education Curriculum Directory and the needs of the students. The GCSE course also fully addresses the four areas of study identified in the Bishops' Conference Directory and provides the students with opportunities to deepen their knowledge and understanding of scripture and social and moral issues. The school has a successful Philosophy & Ethics AS and A2 programme in Religious Studies, which is well planned and delivered. 50% of the AS Ethics course is concerned with exploring religious attitudes towards social issues, including current topical issues like hybrid embryos, while the A level course includes opportunities for students to focus on formation of conscience and relationships. Both these courses include an examination of the Catholic perspective of these issues. The General RE provision in the Sixth Form has been accredited by NOCN as a level 2 programme. Making use of the Head of Department's strong links with the SVP, the programme

ensures that effective connections are made between faith and life. The programme is tailored to meet the needs of the learners. The curriculum time allocated to the subject is 8% at Key Stage 3, which is slightly below that recommended by the Bishops of England and Wales (10%), and 10% at key stage 4. At Key Stage 5 there is parity between the time afforded to AS/A2 Level and other subjects while General RE in the Sixth Form has 4% of curriculum time. There is a developing programme of external visits to places of religious interest or significance to enhance the students' religious experiences. For example there are visits to the local mosque and Gurdwara and students in the Sixth Form are encouraged to attend study days alongside the extensive programme of retreats facilitated by the Chaplaincy team.

Grade 2

Leadership and management of Religious Education

The leadership and management of the religious education department are good. The leadership of the subject is strongly focused on the school's Catholic mission, on raising standards and promoting the faith development of students. The school has recently appointed an Assistant Headteacher to lead the Department, one of whose targets is to further improve standards of attainment, particularly at Key Stages 3 and 4. The SEF 48 recognises that further development of teaching and learning particularly in the area of Assessment for and of Learning is a priority. There is evidence already that he will prove to be an effective role model for teachers within the department. He has developed a new scheme of work at Key Stage 3 and developed significantly the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). A system of tracking progress of students at Key Stages 3 and 4 has now been put in place. A programme of lesson observation is already in place and the internal mentoring of and support for staff is developing. There is, however, a need to develop in-service training opportunities for the department, particularly in the context of the new Key Stage 3 scheme. The inspectors also believe that there is a need of Diocesan support both for the newly appointed Assistant Headteacher and for members of the department.

Grade 2