



St Wilfrid's Catholic Secondary School

URN: 126095

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Arundel & Brighton

02–03 October 2024

Summary of key findings

Overall effectiveness

The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school

1

Catholic life and mission (p.3)

How faithfully the school responds to the call to live as a Catholic community at the service of the Church's educational mission

1

Religious education (p.5)

The quality of curriculum religious education

1

Collective worship (p.7)

The quality and range of liturgy and prayer provided by the school

1

The school is fully compliant with the general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishops' Conference

Yes

The school is fully compliant with any additional requirements of the diocesan bishop

Yes

The school has responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection

Fully

Compliance statement

- Religious education is allocated at least 10% curriculum time in Key Stages 3 and 4 with the equivalent of one double lesson per week in Years 12 and 13.
- The school teaches from the *Religious Education Directory*. Both the GCSE specification and the provision for relationships and sex education are compliant with the expectations of the diocesan bishop.
- The school has broadened the range of learning activities since the last inspection. Recruitment and retention of teachers is not inspected under the current framework.

What the school does well

- Leaders and governors give the highest priority to the Catholic character of the school. They are dedicated witnesses to the Catholic vision of educating the whole person.
- The care, compassion and respect demonstrated within the community by students and staff are outstanding features of the school's Catholic character and culture.
- Outcomes for students in religious education are excellent. The progress made by students whose circumstances have made them vulnerable is particularly noteworthy.
- Students are keen to embrace the leadership opportunities on offer to enhance the Catholic life and mission of the school.
- Chaplaincy provision is exemplary. Year 7 induction provides an innovative introduction to the prayer life of the school. Many students from all year groups are inspired to attend Friday morning Mass.

What the school needs to improve

- Share existing outstanding practice in the religious education department, so that all lessons provide lively pace and challenge.
- Widen the scope of existing best practice in student-led prayer from the current small group of student leaders, so that all students are invited to have the opportunity to lead and to learn liturgical skills.

Catholic life and mission

How faithfully the school responds to the call to live as a Catholic community at the service of the Church's educational mission.

Catholic life and mission key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

1

Provision

The quality of provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school

1

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school

1

1

Students describe St Wilfrid's as a welcoming, close-knit community where all are known and they describe how it nurtures the whole person. They greatly value the Catholic life and mission of the school, knowing that the school is centred on Christ. Students are keen to contribute to the Catholic character of the school and there is a real culture of respect for themselves and for each other. Students explained that the school feels like a family where people care for each other. The young people entrusted to the school flourish as they seek opportunities to grow in virtue. They have a good understanding of Catholic social teaching and how their fundraising is inspired by those principles. Through the variety of activities to support local and international charities, students support the common good and help those in need. Students are actively involved in initiatives such as Faith in Action and Cafod young leaders programmes. Students expressed how much they value the chaplaincy provision at the school and the opportunities available. The culture of participation and of service to others has resulted in significant numbers of students joining the diocesan pilgrimage to Lourdes each year. One parent told us, 'I am honest when I say that my family are so lucky to have this as our local Catholic school. We are blessed.'

The mission statement of the school underpins and focusses all aspects of school life. The variety of religious artefacts and engaging displays ensure that the site is a physical celebration of being in a Catholic school. Staff are fully committed to the Catholic life and mission of the school. One member of staff identified that, 'teachers, support staff and pupils work together as one body.' As a result, staff are excellent role models. A culture of welcome, respect and compassion are evident. The pastoral team live out the school's mission and values to ensure that the school is focused on responding to students' needs. Staff go the extra mile to respond to those who need

it most. As one member of staff said, 'I have never seen the mission of the Church lived out with such integrity, compassion and joy.' The chaplaincy provision is well planned to help the community to thrive. The community days and the status given to chaplaincy both help to build the caring culture at the school. Relationships and sex education is based securely on the development of the whole person and meets the statutory and diocesan requirements.

The head teacher, senior leaders and governors are ambassadors for Catholic education. They are fully committed to ensuring Catholic life and mission is their core responsibility. Their inspiring vision ensures that Christ is at the heart of school life. Staff believe that the 'head teacher is an authentic servant leader.' Governors are committed to sustaining and further developing the Catholic character of the school. Leaders have a clear understanding that parents are the first teachers of their children and parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school. Leaders treat pastoral care of staff as an important responsibility, beginning with the induction process, guiding new staff about working within the school community and making all staff feel valued. Leaders and governors have an excellent relationship with the diocese, creating time and space to support diocesan initiatives. The ways they model service to others include staff engagement in the Lourdes pilgrimage and making the school site available for diocesan events, such as training activities. This ensures that St Wilfrid's serves the Catholic community in the diocese and in wider society.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

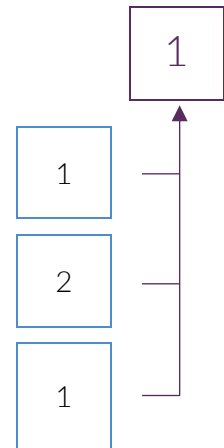
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

Provision

The quality of teaching, learning, and assessment in religious education

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for religious education



The enjoyment of religious education at St Wilfrid's is clear both from students' responses and from their behaviour in lessons; religious education is valued and appreciated here. Some parents report that their children are sufficiently enthused and confident to start religious conversations over Sunday lunch. Students respond to religious education lessons with interest and enthusiasm, for example in a Key Stage 5 lesson, students engaged in complex and impassioned debate. Religious and theological language is used confidently by the A-level students and increasingly so in Key Stage 3, where the *Religious Education Directory* is implemented. Across all year groups, students' books are well organised and cared for and there are clearly embedded processes for marking and feedback. Students are confident to ask questions in lessons and teachers respond with interest, respect and expert knowledge. Students make excellent links within their learning but say they would like to have more structured opportunities to reflect on how to apply their learning to everyday life. The outcomes at GCSE confirm that pupils make excellent progress over time. Some of the more disadvantaged students make significantly more progress than their peers nationally. Students know what they are doing well and how to improve. For example, Year 11 students know their target grades and the grade they are currently working at. Attainment in religious education is particularly impressive at the higher GCSE grades. A-level students consistently meet their target grades.

Teachers demonstrate confident subject knowledge; this is evident in their response to students' questions. Their skilful questioning helps students to learn and teachers were seen to use a variety of activities to deepen knowledge and understanding. However, the lively pace and challenge observed in the best lessons is not replicated consistently in all lessons, so there are opportunities for development through shared practice. However, student numbers at A-level are very strong, encouraged by the teachers' evident enthusiasm and passion for religious

education. Assessment activities are used to identify further learning needs so that teachers can give specific guidance to individual students. Department-wide assessment processes are embedded at key stages 3 and 4 which help students to address misconceptions and gaps in their learning. Students report that teachers plan lessons carefully in response to prior learning and to clarify misconceptions. This enables students to develop deeper understanding over time, making good progress in knowing and remembering more.

Leaders and governors know their school well and monitor provision regularly. They are fully committed to providing a curriculum that is faithful to the *Religious Education Directory*. Religious education is treated as the core of the core curriculum and receives appropriate parity with other core subjects. The religious education team are given the time, resources and accommodation expected of a core subject. Leaders and governors ensure the allocation of 10% curriculum time and dedicated time for sixth form religious education. The dedicated subject leader has implemented a clear vision for providing high quality teaching and learning of religious education. Improvements to the variety and range of teaching strategies since the last inspection are clearly bearing fruit. School leaders have put additional time, energy and focus into recruiting specialist teachers for the religious education department in response to the national recruitment challenges. Once recruited, there is a commitment to fully support the professional development of those staff, both internally and with access to diocesan training.

Collective worship

The quality and range of liturgy and prayer provided by the school

Collective worship key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

2

Provision

The quality of collective worship provided by the school

1

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for collective worship

1

1



Students recognise the importance of prayer on the life of their community and the wider Catholic church. This is most obviously demonstrated by the large number of students who participate in weekly Friday morning Mass. A parent said, 'It is wonderful to see how enthusiastically students join in and participate in the Mass.' Students told us how much they value the varied prayer elements in the community day activities. Pupil behaviour in form groups and assemblies is respectful and highly appropriate, with some good examples of participation and leadership by students. It was an honour to attend the student-led rosary group in the chapel. It was planned very carefully by the student prayer leaders (PALS) who introduced the time of prayer, welcomed those who joined it and were skilful in leading it. Although initiatives like this are beginning to have an impact on students' liturgical skills and participation, it does not give responsibility to enough students. Student-led prayer needs extending so that more students can plan and lead prayer and liturgy. The chapel is open all day and students are pleased to be able to go to the chapel in their own time.

Provision for prayer and liturgy is outstanding. Highlights are Friday morning Mass, the transition programme for Year 7 and the opportunities within the sixth form spiritual development programme. Prayer and liturgy are central to the life of the school. The weekly themes are centred on the Church's liturgical year. Scripture forms the basis of the prayer life of the school with weekly themes based on the Sunday readings. Leaders at the school are role models for prayer. That is evident when student prayer leaders and staff use some of the techniques used by the chaplain and other leaders. Students are encouraged to use their skills in service of prayer and liturgy. These include musicians, singers and dancers. There is excellent provision of space for prayer and liturgy. The chapel is a dedicated space for prayer that is accessible throughout the day. When required this opens out into a larger space for Mass and celebrations of the Word.

The chaplain is also skilled in modifying the hall or communal spaces into appropriate space for prayer and reflection.

Leaders and governors place the highest priority on the prayer and liturgical life of the school. Leaders and governors are informed about this work through termly updates by the chaplain, who is highly valued by all at the school. The programme of continuous professional development includes opportunities for the liturgical formation for staff. The school's chaplaincy handbook provides an excellent policy foundation for the prayer life at St Wilfrid's. It is the source for explanation and guidance about prayer and liturgy. It is given out to staff and is available on the school's website, ensuring all have clear guidance on the school's norms and expectations. There is additional practical guidance in the school's prayer booklet and hymn resource booklet. Staff value this support and guidance to help them better understand the prayer and liturgical life at the school. The chaplain has a clear vision for developing prayer and liturgy at the school and the skills which bring this to fruition. The Year 7 transition programme has been designed by the chaplain so that students experience different ways of praying. Through the planned community days, all students are exposed to a rich variety of prayers. There is an annual plan of provision for large group celebrations of the Word and for Mass; this includes marking Holy Days of Obligation that occur during the school year. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is available during Advent and Lent.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Wilfrid's Catholic Secondary School
School unique reference number (URN)	126095
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	9384602
Full postal address of the school	St Wilfrid's Catholic Secondary School, St Wilfrid's Way, Crawley, RH11 8PG
School phone number	001293421421
Headteacher	Michael Ferry
Chair of Governors	Michael Newman
School Website	http://stwilfrids.com
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	N/A
Phase	Secondary
Type of school	Voluntary Aided School
Admissions policy	Non-selective
Age-range of pupils	11-18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	12-13 th October 2017
Previous denominational inspection grade	1

The inspection team

Patrick Harrison	Lead
Sadie Whyte	Team
James Kilmartin	Team

Key to grade judgements

Grade	England	Wales
1	Outstanding	Excellent
2	Good	Good
3	Requires improvement	Adequate and requires improvement
4	Inadequate	Unsatisfactory and in need of urgent improvement