



DIOCESE OF **Arundel and Brighton**

DENOMINATIONAL (S48) INSPECTION REPORT

St Wilfrid's Catholic School

Address: St Wilfrid's Way, Old Horsham Road, Crawley, West Sussex RH11 8PG

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School Unique Reference Number: 126095

Headteacher:	Mr M Ferry
Chair of Governors:	Mrs Z Taylor
Lead Inspector:	Dr J Lydon
Associate Inspector:	Mr P Ward
Inspection date:	12 - 13 October 2017

	Previous Inspection: 1
Overall Effectiveness	This inspection:
Catholic Life:	1
Collective Worship:	1
Religious Education:	1

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND STUDENTS

St Wilfrid's is an outstanding Catholic school because:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It is an inclusive Catholic community in which every member of the school community is valued and is treated with dignity and respect. ▪ The headteacher and his leadership team constitute an empowering and an inspirational presence, particularly in the context of the animation of the Catholic life of the school. ▪ The mission of the school “to provide an inspiring and personalised education for each student, enabling them to realise their full potential within a dynamic environment which follows the teachings of Christ and His Church” encapsulates the holistic approach to excellence which permeates the life of the school. ▪ Collective worship features prominently in the daily life of the school and is supported enthusiastically by both staff and students. It is led enthusiastically by a highly motivated chaplaincy team. ▪ Religious Education is regarded as central to the life of the school, is well resourced and the newly reconfigured curriculum has been welcomed wholeheartedly by students. ▪ Governors make a significant contribution to the Catholic Life of the school. They are passionate about the school’s mission, are actively involved in its evaluation and are ready to challenge as well as support where necessary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Collective worship is central to the life of the school and forms the heart of every school celebration. Praying together is part of the daily experience for all students and staff . ▪ The Deanery clergy constitutes a significant presence within the school, particularly in terms of the weekly celebration of the Eucharist. ▪ Students experience a wide range of liturgical opportunities, reflecting the commitment of governors and the leadership team to the distinctive character of this Catholic school. ▪ Students are positively engaged and appreciate the way in which collective worship is invitational in nature. ▪ Students are engaged in the planning and preparation of liturgical celebrations supported by a vibrant chaplaincy team. ▪ The leadership team, staff and students are committed totally to an inclusive approach to every member of the school community, regardless of religious belief. This was highlighted as a significant strength by parents and students. ▪ The school invests significantly in chaplaincy provision, reflecting its commitment to the spiritual and moral development of students.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Catholic Life of the school is outstanding. ▪ In every interview with inspectors the word ‘community’ was signposted as one of the defining characteristics of St Wilfrid’s. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Achievement in religious education is outstanding because students in general make outstanding progress.

- Governors and school leaders are committed passionately to realising the mission of the school, especially in terms of executing a personalised education for students.
- The commitment of the whole school community to charitable activities is outstanding.
- Pastoral care constitutes a significant strength of the school, especially in terms of the care of young people whose circumstances have made them hard to reach.
- The pastoral support for all students ensures that a sense of belonging constitutes a significant hallmark of the school.
- The behaviour of almost all students is exemplary at all times. They are alert to the needs of others and seek justice for all within and beyond the school community.

- Students genuinely enjoy religious education lessons and appreciate the exploration of Christianity and other world religions. They were unanimously appreciative of religious education lessons.
- Teaching is generally good with some examples of outstanding practice. Lessons are well-structured with detailed lesson plans provided to inspectors. Teachers model a commitment to religious education and are keen to develop their knowledge and skills.
- Differentiation of teaching should be developed to consistently engage students of all abilities to strive to achieve of their best.
- Students display good, and in many cases outstanding, age-related standards of religious literacy.
- The headteacher, supported by his leadership team, is passionately committed to the growth and development of the religious education department and chaplaincy provision.

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St. Wilfrid’s Catholic School is a five form entry voluntary aided school which serves the Deanery of Crawley in West Sussex. It is maintained by West Sussex LA. The main Catholic Primary feeder schools are St Francis and Our Lady Queen of Heaven in Crawley, St John’s and St Robert Southwell in Horsham and St Peter’s in East Grinstead. In addition students join the school from over 30 other primary schools. The overall proportion of students who are baptised Catholic is 68%, the proportion in Year 7 increasing in the last two years to 75% and 78% respectively. The proportion of baptised Catholic students in the sixth form is 60%.

The number of pupils currently on roll is 951 of which there are 187 in the sixth form. Sixth form numbers have increased in the last two years, reflecting a growing reputation for exam success. The attainment of pupils on entering the school is significantly below the national average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is 6.1% and pupil premium is 18.6% in Years 7-11. There are 40 first languages other than English spoken by students, who make up 33% of all students. The number of students with Statements and/or Education & Health Care Plans is 17. The student body is socially, culturally and economically diverse.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER

- Continue to develop strategies for the recruitment and retention of Catholic teachers of Religious Education
- Develop teaching strategies and related resources to increase student engagement in order to promote a culture of profound learning

CATHOLIC LIFE

THE QUALITY OF THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

- The extent to which students contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.
- The quality of provision of the Catholic Life of the school.
- How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school.

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The extent to which students contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school

- Almost all students have a deep experience of belonging and enthusiastically embrace the demands that membership of the school community entails. As a result they take a leading role in those activities which promote the school's ethos within school and in the wider community.
- The behaviour of almost all students is exemplary at all times. They are alert to the needs of others and seek justice for all within and beyond the school community. In an age-appropriate manner they show an ability to listen, to give thanks, to forgive and be forgiven.

- Almost all students take full advantage of the opportunities the school provides for their personal support and development and as a result they are happy, confident and secure in their own spiritual journey. Students were particularly complimentary about the way in which *all* felt included, regardless of the stage they had reached on their faith journey.
- The development of talents is evident particularly in the very impressive range of opportunities for student leadership and participation in the sixth form, as exemplified for example by the mentoring of students in Key Stages 3 and 4, peer ministry in the sixth form, the organisation of school events and the leadership of liturgies.
- Students respond positively to opportunities to prepare and lead prayers in assemblies and in formal liturgies, supported by resources produced by the committed chaplaincy team and to which they contribute.
- Students also support deanery and diocesan celebrations such as Taizé evenings, the Big Church Day Out and CAFOD events. There is an embedded culture of support for the diocesan pilgrimage to Lourdes with 17 “Red Shirts” in 2017, a significant number in the context of the challenging financial circumstances experienced by many parents.
- Students respond generously to a range of opportunities to serve others modelled on the example of Christ. This is particularly evident in the sixth form animated by a vibrant student leadership team. Student support of the school and wider community is exemplary and embraced enthusiastically. The school was awarded a “Celebrating Young People Award” for the work of the school’s homeless campaign group. Student fundraising for a wide range of local and national charities is outstanding, particularly in the context of a school which ranks highly in the index of social deprivation.
- Students behave in a respectful and courteous manner in their encounters with each other and with staff, reflecting the commitment of school leaders to promote high standards of personal behaviour.

The quality of provision of the Catholic Life of the school

- St Wilfrid’s Catholic School empowers to realise in their lives the central theme of its mission, a holistic education, by offering a wide range of extra-curricular activities which are responded to enthusiastically by the majority of students.
- The school mission statement is a clear and inspiring expression of the educational mission of the Church. “Within a dynamic environment which follows the teachings of Christ and His church” captures the culture of this outstanding Catholic school, particularly in terms of the way in which the ministry of Christ is modelled by all staff.

- The Catholic life of the school forms a regular feature of the professional development of all staff. Catholic distinctiveness also features prominently in staff induction programmes. The way in which the Headteacher and his leadership team model “Catholic life” constitutes a significant formative instrument.
- The way in which students relate to each other and offer mutual support reflects the collaborative ministry modelled by all staff.
- The lay chaplain and the assistant to the chaplain represent a substantial presence within and beyond the school, supported by a chaplaincy team which includes both teaching and support staff and students. There is a strong sense of teamwork which, with local priests from the Deanery, enables a wide range of liturgical opportunities to be offered including Mass, opportunities for private and community prayer and also retreats. Several students spoke of the chaplaincy space as a “safe haven” at crucial times during their life at the school.
- A robust mentoring structure for students in Key Stages 3 and 4 and the peer ministry within the sixth form encompasses academic and social aspects of school life.
- Pastoral care is a significant strength of the school, evidenced in interviews with students and parents. Several parents cited specific examples of the Pastoral team “going the extra mile” in supporting parents whose children experienced a range of physical and social and emotional challenges. Students unanimously voiced their affirmation of the inspiring, encouraging and caring nature of pastoral support. A secure Relationships and Sex Education programme is evident.
- Pastoral care of staff plays an important role within the strategic purview of pastoral care within the school, with individual instances of support afforded to staff. One member of staff described this as a “reflection of the care of the good shepherd.” governors also confirmed their commitment to the pastoral support of staff.
- The highest standards of moral and ethical behaviour are promoted through the clear and consistent communication of the school’s expectations. Students stated that they witnessed the excellent working relationships between staff and spoke of no instances of bullying. The steep decline in the number of exclusions has resulted in the school being signposted as a model of best practice by the Local Authority.

How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school

- The school’s leadership is deeply committed to the church’s mission in education. Leaders are energised by the task and are a source of inspiration for the whole community. The development and sustenance of an authentic Catholic ethos is viewed as a core leadership responsibility and features prominently in the School Improvement Plan.

- The provision for the Catholic life of the school is given the highest possible priority by leaders. The school has invested significant resources in building up a highly effective chaplaincy team which has made a significant impact on the spiritual and moral development of students, confirmed by both students and parents, and on the community of the school as a whole.
- The school has highly successful strategies for engaging with almost all parents and carers to the very obvious benefit of pupils, including those who might traditionally find working with the school difficult. There was unanimous support from parents for the alacrity with which the school responded to communications and for the way in which the school does not give up on students. Several students and parents confirmed the way in which students were inspired to grow as persons and encouraged to make a contribution to the common good. The response to the parental survey was overwhelmingly positive.
- The governors are fully committed to promoting the Catholic life of the school. The newly re-constituted governing body meets regularly with the headteacher and provide appropriate support and challenge. Governors are fully aware of key challenges facing the school, for example the recruitment and retention of teachers of religious education, and are fully supportive of the headteacher’s positive approach to chaplaincy provision.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP / PRAYER AND PRAYER LIFE

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- How well students respond to and participate in the school’s Collective Worship and Prayer Life
- The quality of provision for Collective Worship and Prayer Life
- How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship and Prayer Life

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How well students respond to and participate in the school’s Collective Worship and Prayer Life

- Prayer and worship engage all students’ interest and inspire in them deep thought and heartfelt response. There is an impressively high level of participation with students taking on responsibility for whole school liturgies from the planning stage to completion. The chapel choir is one of the most successful ventures in chaplaincy and plays a key role in animating the weekly Friday Mass.
- During the inspection assemblies and tutor group liturgies were marked by an atmosphere of reverence, respect and active engagement on the part of students. The attendance of 130 staff, students and parishioners at the voluntary Friday Mass represents compelling evidence of the centrality of collective worship and prayer in the life of this school. Throughout the year there is an average attendance of 100 at this Mass, the majority being members of the student body.

- Students participate very enthusiastically in a wide-range of liturgies from celebrations of the eucharist to evenings of Taizé prayer. A large number of students respond to the invitation to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation during Advent, Lent and in the Summer term. The response of students to the invitation from the chaplaincy team to lead collective worship is particularly positive, described by the chaplain as “knocking on an open door”.
- The themes and the style of liturgical celebrations are inclusive with preparation focused around where students are on their faith journey. Students on different stages of that journey feel respected. Muslim students, for example, regard the chapel as a safe space while student testimony evidenced the inclusive nature of collective worship.
- The experience of living and working in a praying community has had a profound and visible effect on the development of all pupils, irrespective of ability or faith background. There are several examples of former students engaged actively in the life of the Church including several involved in various ministries within the school.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship and Prayer Life

- The quality of provision for collective worship and prayer is outstanding. Collective worship is given the highest possible priority in terms of planning and resourcing. This ensures that students experience a broad range of liturgical celebrations including whole school, year group and form Masses and opportunities to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The contribution of Deanery clergy in this context cannot be overstated. In addition to leading liturgical celebrations, clergy constitute a visible and supportive presence much appreciated by the school.
- The provision of materials provided by the chaplaincy team to enable form tutors to lead collective worship effectively is outstanding. The Catholic church’s liturgical cycle represents an anchor upon which the structure of all liturgical celebrations is built. The support provided by the chaplain to colleagues in respect of leading acts of collective worship is exemplary including a prayer booklet, weekly themed powerpoints, Encounter Cards and guidance for praying with music. These are uploaded to the school website each Thursday for the following week and, in addition, appear on plasma screens around the school.
- The extensive retreat programme constitutes an outstanding degree of provision throughout the various key stages. Each year group is engaged in a Community Day which takes the form of “immersion days” during which students have time to pray, reflect and enhance the sense of community already embedded. Each year group has a specific theme. The Year 10 day, for example, is built around the theme of discipleship and includes engagement with deanery clergy, religious orders and CAFOD.
- The well-appointed school chapel is situated in the centre of the school and is always open for prayer and reflection. There is also a chaplaincy office which is very accessible to both students and staff. The extent to which the student leadership team support the work of the chaplain led the Deanery priest interviewed describing them as “mini-chaplains”.

- Prayer is also an integral feature of the life of all school staff. Meetings begin with prayer and staff engage enthusiastically in leading tutor group prayers based on the wide-ranging support of the chaplaincy team. Teaching and support staff offer a considerable degree of support to the chaplain, particularly in the context of music and drama.

How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship and Prayer Life is

- The headteacher is passionately committed to the building of an authentic Catholic community. He line manages the religious education department and the chaplaincy team and was described by several staff as highly supportive of both and committed totally to providing outstanding Catholic education. Parents were particularly vocal in affirming his open style of leadership and that he constitutes an abiding presence around the school. Parents also affirmed the support of the headteacher and the leadership team in supporting collective worship and the prayer life of the school.
- The headteacher and his leadership team ensure that all staff in the school receive formation in the development of spiritual and liturgical understanding as a staff development priority. There is also an excellent degree of collaboration between the subject leader of religious education and the chaplain, resulting in a vibrant Catholic worshipping community.
- Collective worship is monitored effectively by the leadership team and year leaders, in particular at the start of the day. In addition leaders and managers, including senior leaders and the chaplaincy team, are highly visible as leaders of collective worship within school, and as such are models of outstanding practice for staff and pupils.
- The chaplaincy team is a strength of the school, meeting regularly to evaluate the provision for collective worship and prayer and reporting to the senior leadership team and the governing body. The chaplain also meets with representatives of the Deanery clergy and reports regularly to the Deanery priests. The chaplain also reports each term to the Governors' Spiritual and Community Committee which is responsible for the oversight of chaplaincy on behalf of the governing body. The Spiritual Life Group, encompassing staff and students, meets regularly to promote and evaluate provision for collective worship. This group mirrors that of the governing body. Provision is also evaluated via staff and student surveys.
- The chaplain also meets with representatives of the deanery clergy and reports regularly to the deanery meeting. The chaplain also reports each term to the Governors Spiritual and Community Committee which is responsible for the oversight of chaplaincy on behalf of the governing body. The Spiritual Life Group, encompassing staff and students, meets regularly to promote and evaluate provision for collective worship. This group mirrors that of the governing body. Provision is also evaluated via staff and student surveys.
- Formation for leadership of collective worship for both staff and students features prominently in the school's improvement plan.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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- How well students achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.
- The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education.
- How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.

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How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education

- Achievement of pupils at GCSE and GCE A level religious studies is outstanding because they make above national average progress when compared to similar Catholic schools nationally.
- Attainment at GCSE over the last three years has remained broadly similar while there has been a steady increase in the proportion of students entered to 96% in 2017 and a decline in average prior attainment.
- Attainment at GCE AS and A Level is broadly average with all schools nationally but there is no diocesan or national Catholic school data to provide a comparison.
- Students join the school from five Catholic and over 30 community schools so pupils display a wide range of understanding of Catholic Christianity on entry. This was observed by an Inspector in a Year 7 lesson. School data shows that students make excellent progress in Key Stage 3.
- Students display good and in some cases exceptional age-appropriate standards of religious literacy. During the inspection, pupils in a Year 10 GCSE religious studies lesson displayed very perceptive and nuanced responses to examples of religious art, critically exploring both aesthetic and theological features,
- Students generally enjoy religious education lessons and told inspectors that they appreciate the opportunity to explore Christianity and other religious beliefs as they develop their own personal convictions.
- Behaviour for learning is good. In the lessons observed, pupils in general were attentive, engaged and collaborated very well in their learning.

The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education

- Lesson observation and reviews of student work during the inspection confirms the school judgement that teaching is generally good.
- When it is outstanding teachers use excellent subject knowledge and inspiring pedagogy to present a complex topic in ways both engaging and accessible to all pupils.
- When it is less than good a lack of appropriate strategies and activities or a lack of precise specialist knowledge of the topic prevent all students from making appropriate progress.
- Pupils are making greater than national average progress because teachers are committed to the carefully devised scheme of work which is well resourced and regularly reviewed by all who teach it.
- Teachers recognise the importance of religious education and model enthusiasm and commitment in their teaching.
- Lessons are planned and taught in accordance with the scheme of work, taking account of pupils' prior learning and achievement.
- A range of teaching and learning activities are employed to enable pupils to make progress in every lesson. Active learning is a feature of some lessons with pupils researching evidence in a number of ways. Appropriate video clips are used to enhance learning, a CAFOD animation of *Laudato Si* being shown to introduce the topic of stewardship in a Year 9 lesson observed.
- Appropriate homework is set regularly and posted on 'show my homework' on the school website so it is accurately accessible to all students and their parents. Lesson time is used by the teacher to explain the homework and not for students to record it.
- Assessment is undertaken in line with school policy with level criteria focused on skill development which will promote the skills needed for GCSE Religious Studies. Assessments are regularly moderated, Key Stage 3 before work is returned to students and Key Stage 4 at department meetings, to promote consistency and support staff development.
- Each unit of work is completed with an assessment, using school criteria in Years 7 and 8 and GCSE criteria in Years 9-11, enabling students to appreciate the standard of their work and what was required to make further progress.
- Individual assessment standards are recorded in each pupils' exercise book. Students explained that they did not know their current standard because they had not completed their first assessment of the year.

- A new exercise book marking policy which highlights the comments of the teacher and the student's subsequent new set task was observed by the inspectors to be effective in advancing students' learning.

How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education

- The commitment of leaders and managers, including school governors, to ensuring high standards in religious education is evidenced by their imaginative response to the national shortage of specialist teachers and by their close attention to achievement and attainment data in order to diagnose strengths and areas for development.
- The headteacher line manages religious education and is very accurately informed by reason of regular meetings with the head of department together with lesson observations and scrutiny of relevant data. This ensures rigorous support and challenge.
- The department is led by a well-qualified and experienced teacher in post since September 2016 who has a positive working relationship with the chaplaincy team and is raising the profile of the subject and contributing significantly to the Catholic life of the school.
- The realistic departmental development plan clearly reflects the stated focus of the department which is "to bring students to know and understand Christ, where Christ is at the centre of all we do."
- The curriculum in Years 7-9 has been effectively re-ordered and mapped against the Curriculum Directory, a new GCSE religious studies specification introduced in Years 9-11 and a new general Religious Education programme introduced in Years 12-13 in addition to GCE AL. The GCSE religious studies specification including the teaching of Islam as the second religion meets the directive of the Ordinary.
- The Key Stage 3 curriculum in Years 7 and 8 also includes an introduction to two Abrahamic and two Dharmic religions so that pupils can be well informed about religions followed in British society and the wider world.
- A new sixth form general religious education programme entitled spiritual development introduced in September 2017 combines provision for each student to explore their faith and spirituality with opportunities for putting faith into action through working with the local St Vincent de Paul society in the local community.
- Curriculum time devoted to religious education fulfils the requirement of the Bishops' Conference for 10% in Years 7-11 and 5% in Years 12-13. Years 8-11 have 3 lessons per week. In Year 7 two specialist days - entitled Community Day and Immersion Day - complement 5 lessons per fortnight. There is one period per week in Years 12-13 for general religious education while GCE AL RS is an option subject.

- The well-appointed centrally located department base situated adjacent to three specialist classrooms, together with the school ICT network, facilitates co-operation and collaboration in developing and exploiting teaching strategies and resources by the six Catholic members of the department.
- The department is funded in accordance with the formula funding mechanism applied across all subjects. Governors and the leadership team have responded to requests for additional funding for Religious Education and chaplaincy projects.

Summary of Inspection Judgements

How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education.

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Catholic Life

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The extent to which students contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.

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The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school

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How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school.

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Collective Worship and Prayer Life

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How well students respond to and participate in the schools' Collective Worship and Prayer Life.

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The quality of provision for Collective Worship and Prayer Life.

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How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship and Prayer Life.

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Religious Education

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How well students achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.

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The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education

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How well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education

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