



THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF  
**ARUNDEL & BRIGHTON**  
EDUCATION SERVICE

## Denominational Catholic School Inspection Report

St Hugh of Lincoln Catholic Primary School

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School Unique Reference Number: 143370

Headteacher:	Mrs Deb Harper
Chair of Governors:	Mr Mike O'Donovan
Lead Inspector:	Mrs Angela O'Hara
Associate Inspector:	Mrs Gill Askham
Inspection date:	21 <sup>st</sup> March 2022
	Previous Inspection: 1
Overall Effectiveness	This Inspection: 1
Catholic Life:	1
Religious Education:	1
Collective Worship:	1

## Summary of key findings for parents/carers and pupils/students

St High of Lincoln Catholic Primary School is an Outstanding Catholic school because:

- The prayer life of the school is threaded through all aspects of school life and pupils emphatically engage in this and take personal responsibility. They are ably led by the highly regarded 'RE Followers'.
- Pupils know the prayers of the church, can describe the various forms of prayer and are confident to offer their own prayer intentions. They pray for the needs of the wider world and older pupils are conscious of world events and those people in difficult and dangerous circumstances.
- They are aware of their responsibility to pray and care for the environment.

- Pupils are involved in supporting and developing the Catholic life of the school. Pupils have a voice in the school and know that their views are considered.
- This is also true of all staff members. All recognise that their commitment to the Catholic character of the school is vital and that they play a crucial role. They are proud that they are part of the parish of St Hugh of Lincoln and there is an excellent relationship between the school and parish.

- Pupils' behaviour around the school and in class is exemplary. They are kind to each other, and they take on a wide range of responsibilities in earnest. They know that the school helps them prepare for the next stage of their education.
- They are keen to talk about the various projects that they are involved in to improve the school grounds and environment, in order to promote the school's Catholic character.
- The school environment is of a high quality. Displays clearly reflect and celebrate its commitment to excellence and the school's unique Catholic character.

# FULL REPORT

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Hugh of Lincoln Catholic Primary School is a one-form entry Catholic primary school in Woking, which is part of the Arundel and Brighton Diocese and a member of the Xavier Catholic Education Trust. It is part of the Woking Deanery and is in the parish of Knaphill. There are 211 pupils.

On entry to Reception class, the majority of pupils come from a wide range of local nursery schools. When pupils leave St Hugh of Lincoln School seven years later, the vast majority transition to St John the Baptist Catholic Secondary School in Woking. The school has a lower-than-average number of children qualifying for Pupil Premium (4% school, 22% national) and the percentage of pupils with Special Education Needs and/or Disabilities (SEN/D) is roughly in line with national average (13% school, 13% national). Just over 20% of families speak languages other than English at home, with Polish, Italian, Japanese, Cantonese, French and Spanish being amongst the most common.

The vast majority of pupils at the school are baptised Catholics. The birth rate is declining significantly in the local area (27% over the last 2 years) resulting in a surplus of Reception class places, so local schools are competing for an ever-smaller pool of children. This has had an impact on the faith composition of the school, with approximately 30% of pupils in the current Reception class coming from families with faith backgrounds other than Catholic. The school is currently full, with 30 pupils in each class, apart from Year 6, which has 31 pupils.

## WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- Continue to develop teaching across the school so that more teaching is judged as outstanding, so that lessons provide further challenge.
- Continue to enable pupils to develop their skills in planning and leading liturgy and enable them to look for ways to create an atmosphere conducive for prayer which includes the continuous use of music as well as moments of silence.

## CATHOLIC LIFE

### THE QUALITY OF THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

1

- The extent to which pupils 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 governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life of the school.

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The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school is: **Outstanding**

- Pupils appreciate, value and actively participate in shaping the Catholic life and mission of the school. Their voice is actively sought by school leaders through informal conversations and questionnaires. Pupils are proud of their Patron Saint and enthusiastically explain how he lived his life and how the school logo with St Hugh's emblem of the swan reflects this.
- The 'RE Followers' have chosen six key gospel values to focus on in the school year. Respect, Friendship, Thankfulness, Forgiveness, Love and Hope. Pupils were able to explain how these values drive the actions of the school each half term. A beautiful display linked to the current chosen value is set out in a prominent place in the school hall and pupils explained that this is a regular feature throughout the year. The Headteacher and staff make frequent references to this and remind pupils how this should be lived out in their daily lives.
- Pupils show a deep respect for themselves and others as made in the image and likeness of God. The behaviour of pupils is exemplary in and around school. Pupils listen to each other with respect both in class and in more informal interactions around the school. One pupil said, "Religious education lessons help us to be a happy family".
- Older pupils speak about being proud of their school and one pupil remarked, "My journey here has been brilliant, I've learned a lot and also about how to keep myself safe".
- Pupils enthusiastically embrace and respond to the high expectations set by the school for learning and behaviour. They remark that the school encourages them to be independent and take on responsibility. They take a leading role in those activities which promote the school's Catholic life, such as the Eco Council. Pupils are aware of their responsibility towards those in need and support a high number of charities

through fundraising events such as the Walk Against Hunger Lenten project (CAFOD) and Mission Together, as well as more local charities such as the Woking Food Bank and local hospices. They are also involved in the Bee-lieve Children's mental wellbeing programme. Year 6 pupils have recently embarked upon the Faith in Action Initiative.

- Older pupils explained their responsibility for looking after their 'common home' and during the inspection were keen to explain *Laudato Si'*. The elected Eco Council meet regularly and have discussed ways that they can improve and protect the natural world. They also help to organise fundraising for environmental charities such as World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF). Pupils are currently planning and developing a creation garden.

### **The quality of provision of the Catholic life of the school is: Outstanding**

- The school mission statement: *faith and love, we learn and grow*, was developed in 2020. It is clear and succinct and effectively captures the essence of a distinctly Catholic vision for education. It was constructed by all members of the school community and because of this is owned and understood by all.
- The quality of relationships that exist between colleagues, support staff and pupils is a strength of the school. Staff spoke of the love and togetherness felt for all and by all in the school. A number of wellbeing measures for staff, pupils and families have been put in place, in particular during and after lockdown.
- Weekly newsletters, which are rich in content and include many lovely photographs of pupils' activities, enable parents/carers to gather a comprehensive picture of all that goes on during the week.
- The learning environment is of a high quality and is celebratory. It clearly reflects the school's mission and identity. Signs and symbols, displays and prayer areas in classrooms and communal areas clearly express the school's Catholic character. The quality of displays around the school is outstanding and all religious education displays show the key vocabulary associated with the topic, with many also posing challenging questions. The emphasis on developing key subject specific vocabulary is a notable feature of the school's approach to teaching and learning.
- Clear policies and structures are in place, which provide the highest levels of pastoral care for pupils. This includes the Rainbows programme to support those suffering loss or bereavement and the support through the Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSA) programme. A special space in school is available to support pupils who require additional quiet and care.

- Pastoral programmes, Personal Social Health Education (PSHE) and Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) are delivered in line with diocesan directives. Pupils spoke of how they are supported in their personal development and wellbeing. Pupils are aware of the importance of keeping safe online, which teachers have particular responsibility for safeguarding, and which staff members have specific roles to provide a listening ear.
- Through the website, parents/carers are kept well informed of the planned lessons based on the Journey in Love programme, which is delivered to all pupils to support social, emotional and spiritual development.
- Pupils in Key Stage 2 have recently been engaged in training led by a charity to support wellbeing. Peer mentoring is also becoming established in the school and playground buddies from Year 6 support children in the younger classes at break times.
- As well as supporting the liturgical life of the school through whole school and class Masses, the parish priest fulfils an important chaplaincy role. He is fully supportive of all members of the school community and makes himself readily available for support and guidance. He is proud of the school.
- Pupils are able to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation during Lent and Advent and guided by the parish priest, older pupils are given the responsibility of administering the Ashes at the Ash Wednesday liturgy in school.
- All staff promote high standards of behaviour and are exemplary role models of mutual respect. Relationships in classrooms are wholly positive and the climate created is one of support. Pupils remark that the school makes them feel safe. One pupil reported that, "the school helps you learn and supports you", and another said, "All the teachers are there to listen to you".

**How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life of the school is: Outstanding**

- The school's leadership is committed to the Church's mission in education. They recognise that it is their responsibility and privilege to model and create an authentic Catholic ethos. They are instrumental in setting expectations of displays and visible signs that explicitly reflect the school's Catholic character. Because of this, the school environment is of a high quality and has a coherence and consistency.
- Leaders of the school and its pupils keenly and regularly review school developments in the light of its Catholic character. The governors are regular visitors to the school and the new governor with responsibility for religious education has established a sound monitoring programme with the religious education subject leader. The school's action plan accurately identifies the next steps of development for the school.

- The school engages with parents/carers and the leadership team are keen to hear their views. The vast majority of parents/carers show wholehearted support for the school and everything it aims to achieve. One parent remarked that the school teaches good morals and another that “the school provides an outstanding distinctly Catholic education. Catholicism is embedded in every aspect of school life”.
- The increased use of technology through the lockdown periods has been a rapid development that the school has harnessed. This has enabled increased communication with home. Some parents/carers commented on the fact that they appreciated the opportunity to gain a deeper insight into the religious education lessons during lockdown and that this is less now that normal school routines have resumed.
- Information on the school’s religious education programme, content and underpinning themes is set out clearly on the school’s website.

# RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

## THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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- How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education.
- The quality of teaching and assessment in religious education.
- How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for religious education.

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How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education is:  
Outstanding

- Evidence in books shows that pupils make very good progress in each key stage, including SEN/D pupils, where support is notably effective.
- Pupils are confident in talking about their learning and show that they are religiously literate, using subject specific vocabulary to express their ideas and knowledge.
- Pupils are able to make appropriate and accurate references to scripture and build upon their prior learning. Even the very youngest pupils in the school spoke with confidence about how the Bible was made up of different parts. Pupils use their knowledge, understanding and skills effectively, to reflect deeply and theologically.
- Year 6 pupils relished the opportunity to set out reasoned arguments in the light of specific accounts in the scripture passages that they were studying.
- Pupils are fully aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life. They talk about what it means to live out their faith. One pupil said, "We live our life like Jesus - he wants us to love one another."
- All pupils are engaged in lessons and are committed to improving their knowledge, understanding and skills. One Key Stage 2 pupil remarked, "Religious Education lessons are special because they help us to be like Jesus and follow in his path." Whilst another pupil said, "I love my religious education lessons because they help me make my decisions in life".
- Almost all pupils concentrate exceptionally well, have a clear understanding of how well they are doing and of what they need to do to improve. They are able to self-evaluate against the success criteria and can identify their own new targets.



- Pupils' attitudes towards their religious education lessons are overwhelmingly positive. They approach lessons with interest and commitment to their learning. Behaviour in lessons is outstanding because almost all pupils enjoy religious education, and they are rarely off task.
- The quality of pupils' current work, both in oral and in written work is of a high standard. In most books, work is presented with care, and it is evident that pupils take pride in their achievements. The religious education books are marked out as special books in the way that they are designed and cared for.

### **The quality of teaching and assessment in religious education is: Good**

- Teachers are confident in their subject expertise and have a good understanding of the Come and See religious education scheme. They know how pupils learn and because of this, are able to plan a rich variety of activities that engage pupils and enable them to make progress. Good use is made of religious art at the start of lessons to stimulate reflection and engage all pupils. In one lesson, pupils were able to make links between the art shown in the lesson and that seen at a recent visit to the National Gallery.
- Teachers consistently plan good lessons linked to pupils' current assessment so that pupils learn well. Carefully crafted three step tasks to meet the learning objective, encourage pupils to extend their thinking and select ways to represent their learning. As a result of this, teaching is structured and progressive, enabling pupils to build on prior learning. Teaching is consistently good with some teaching having elements of outstanding. In lessons that were outstanding, pupils were given opportunities to talk and share ideas and engage in a range of creative tasks to develop their knowledge and understanding. In these lessons there was an excitement about their learning.
- An emphasis on deeper learning and questioning ensures that pupils are challenged in their thinking. Pupils respond well to this, though more time should be made available in lessons to ensure that pupils are able to access the deeper challenges that are posed to them.
- Teachers employ a range of appropriate strategies, including individual and collaborative work. Pupils work well in pairs and as a larger group and they use learning partners effectively to develop understanding. Pupils are motivated and focused on lessons.
- Teachers ensure most pupils are involved in evaluating how well they are achieving using explicit success criteria. The school has successfully built-in self-assessment opportunities. This is illustrated by pupil annotations to the lesson starter activities which show the new knowledge gained in the lesson. This contributes to good progress and increases their confidence in making further improvements.

- In the best lessons observed, teachers manage time well to maintain a good pace which contributes to effective learning. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their learning and share their ideas and thoughts.
- Pupils are provided with high quality resources and a significant amount of funding has been allocated to the subject including funding the provision of prayer spaces and artefacts.
- Additional adults in the classroom are well briefed so that they are able to support pupils.
- Teachers communicate high expectations about religious education, and this is evidenced in pupils' books and displays around the school which are of a high quality.

**How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education is: Outstanding**

- Leaders and governors ensure that the religious education curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference in every respect and in each key stage.
- Governors are proud to be playing an active role in the life and mission of St Hugh's Catholic Primary School. Led by a very experienced Chair of Governors, they are very knowledgeable about the distinctive characteristics of a Catholic school and the place of religious education as a core subject.
- Leaders' and governors' self-evaluation of religious education is systematic and good use is made of moderation opportunities with other Catholic schools in the Catholic Education Trust (CET). This results in well targeted planning and strategic action taken by the school.
- Supported by the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team, the religious education subject leader has established an effective tracking system allowing an analysis of pupils' progress and attainment.
- The subject leader for religious education, working closely with the Headteacher, has ensured consistency in teaching and learning in religious education. This has come about through sharing good practice within and across the school, through effective shared working with the CET and through regular monitoring. Teaching is always at least good and with some outstanding.

## COLLECTIVE WORSHIP / PRAYER AND PRAYER LIFE

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- How well pupils 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 governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for collective worship and prayer life.

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How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's collective worship and prayer life is: Outstanding

- Pupils take the initiative in leading the community life of prayer. 'RE Followers' are well established in the school and drawn from both Key Stages 1 and 2. Their role is highly prized in the school. They are creative and resourceful in their planning of liturgy, and they want it to be the best it can be.
- Pupils are knowledgeable about what constitutes liturgy and how important it is that scripture is at the heart of it. They confidently describe the various elements of liturgy.
- Pupils, led by 'RE Followers', display confidence in their use of a variety of approaches to prayer such as using scripture, religious artefacts and prayer. They confidently explained how candles are used in class liturgies and then transferred to whole school collective worship, since this is a symbol of Jesus, the light of the world, being taken into the prayer space. They are proud of their role and recognise that this brings additional responsibility. The 'RE Followers' are commissioned at a special service at the beginning of the school year.
- Pupils know the main prayers of the Church and are also able to create spontaneous and personal prayer. In some lessons and all liturgies observed, pupils spoke with deep reverence about who they would like the class to pray for. This included praying for the needs of the wider world and peace. All pupils know and recite the school prayer which is simple and accessible, and which guides their daily actions. The school's mission statement also features in prayers. All classes have their own class prayers written through collaboration at the start of the school year. Each class has a special devotion to a specific saint.
- All classes have beautiful prayer tables which are set out using the appropriate liturgical colour of the year and which includes a candle, Bible, cross and other religious artefacts. Some prayer tables have notes and prayer boxes or small objects such as stones to help focus on individual intentions. A young pupil explained that "in lessons we have prayer

stones and we put them close to our heads and hearts". In one class of very young children, the 'RE Followers' set out a beautiful prayer focus and then handed their classmates prayer stones. Pupils were encouraged to say a prayer holding these. All pupils' prayers concluded with 'Jesus loves me very much'.

- Pupils have an excellent understanding of the Church's liturgical year, its seasons and feasts. The 'RE Followers' regularly monitor the classroom environments to check that prayer tables reflect the liturgical year and are well maintained. The beautiful chapel offers pupils a special place to pray and the 'RE Followers' also use this space along with the prayer garden to plan their liturgies.
- Pupils show a respect for different faiths in the school community. They recognise that all members of the school community have a contribution to make to the prayer life of the school.
- Pupils recognise that praying for the needs of others is important and the interactive prayer intention boxes in classrooms reflect this. Led by the 'RE Followers', pupils are confident in offering their own prayer intentions and spontaneous prayer. They are also supported to develop and create prayer spaces in the classroom. Pupils' confidence and commitment to praying for their own personal needs and the needs of others was a notable feature.

#### **The quality of provision for collective worship and prayer life is: Outstanding**

- 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 pupils and staff.
- Staff prayer is equally an integral part of all school activity, is creatively planned and is an inspiration to the whole community. Every staff meeting starts with a prayer.
- Staff work together to prepare liturgy and prayer for the start of every staff meeting. Collective worship is given the highest possible priority in terms of planning and resourcing and the school promotes pupil led collective worship which has a clear purpose message and direction. Parents/carers are welcome to attend Mass in school and parishioners also attend on occasion.
- Pupils are skilled at selecting scripture and readings from a range of sources to inspire. Inclusive prayer opportunities are planned with care by both staff and pupils. Music is also used to enhance prayer and to create a reflective learning climate in lessons.
- Relevant staff have an excellent understanding of the Church's liturgical heritage, its rites and seasons and are passionate about ensuring that pupils have high quality experiences of the Church's liturgical life. Class Mass is celebrated weekly throughout the year.

## How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for collective worship and prayer life is: Outstanding

- Leaders and governors have a thorough understanding of the Church's liturgical year, and an appreciation of the religious traditions and practices of the Church. A number of governors are active members of the parish and the relationship between the school and the parish is a strength of the school.
- Liturgical and spiritual development is seen as a priority in the professional development of school leaders and quality time is devoted to it.
- Governors monitor collective worship through regular attendance.
- The Headteacher models outstanding practice in leading whole school collective worship. This is based on the Sunday scripture and the Headteacher uses music and images to reinforce the key messages. Pupils respond with reverence and devotion.
- School leaders recognise the importance of nurturing the spiritual wellbeing of the staff and a significant commitment is made to ensure that staff development and training is provided for this. Support and guidance from the Diocese are accessed and acted upon along with training and support from the CET. School leaders are aware that every member of staff plays a crucial part in the building of the school's Catholic character and therefore time and resources are prioritised for this.

## Summary of Inspection Judgements

### Catholic Life

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

1

The quality of provision for the Catholic life of the school.

1

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

1

### Religious Education

1

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education.

1

The quality of teaching and assessment in religious education.

2

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

1

### Collective Worship and Prayer Life

1

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

1

The quality of provision for collective worship and prayer life.

1

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

1