



DIOCESE OF **Arundel and Brighton**

DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION REPORT

St George's Junior School

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School Unique Reference Number: 125443

Headteacher: Mr A Hudson

Chair of Governors: Mr M Davie

Lead Inspector: P Ward

Associate Inspector: A Oddy

Inspection date: 16 May 2018

Overall Effectiveness

This inspection: 1

Catholic Life: 1

Collective Worship: 1

Religious Education: 1

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

St George's Junior School is an Outstanding Catholic school because:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It is a broad, balanced and rounded school family providing a high standard of Catholic education. The strong Georgian family ethos ensures that all are included in the Catholic life of the school irrespective of personal faith and belief. ▪ The mission statement is at the heart of school life and is manifest in the caring and considerate relationships that exist between all members of the school community. ▪ Inspiring leadership animated by the headmaster promotes a clear vision of Catholic education and ensures that it enriches the whole of the school life. ▪ Pupils are proud of their school and enjoy welcoming new visitors. Their behaviour is outstanding, both in the classroom and around the school. They feel safe and happy and they enjoy participating in a wide variety of opportunities for learning and service provided by the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Collective worship is central to the life of the school. The varied pattern of tutor group and school worship, including weekly Mass, is a major strength of the school. ▪ Celebrations of prayer and worship reflect the liturgical year and engages pupils in the rich rhythm of Church life. ▪ Pupils respond positively and enthusiastically to opportunities to compose and say their own prayers in a variety of school settings. Displays of pupil prayers are a feature of school classrooms. ▪ The experience of living and working in a praying community has a profound and visible effect on pupils' personal development, irrespective of ability or faith background.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The school has a rich and substantial Catholic life which supports pupils academically, socially and spiritually. It enables pupils to celebrate and deepen their relationship with God. ▪ There are excellent relationships between staff, parents and pupils. This enables all members of the school community to grow in faith together. ▪ Pastoral care is outstanding, enabling pupils to grow and to flourish. ▪ Displays and Christian artefacts around the school reflect and support the school's Catholic identity and prompt pupils to engage in prayer and reflection. ▪ Strong links with the local Catholic and Josephite communities both support the Catholic life of the school and enable the school community to contribute the life of the Church. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pupils enjoy their religious education lessons and can relate their learning to their daily lives both at school and at home. ▪ Pupils make good academic progress in religious education and have a high standard of age-appropriate religious literacy. ▪ Teaching is generally excellent and successfully engages pupils to learn and reflect upon the topics considered in lessons. ▪ All involved in leading and teaching religious education are committed to the highest standards in order to support the academic progress and personal development of pupils.

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St George's Junior School is a four-form entry independent junior school for 3 – 11 year old pupils with 647 pupils on roll, the vast majority of whom live within a five mile radius of the school. The school itself is located a quarter of a mile from the local Catholic parish church of Christ the Prince of Peace, Weybridge, where many of the practising Catholics in the school worship, others attending nearby parishes in the Weybridge Deanery. 35% of the families at the Junior School are baptised Catholic and the proportion of pupils from other Christian denominations is 53%. The majority of pupils are White British (72%), with a lower than average number from ethnic minority groups, as is the number of pupils (107) speaking English as an Additional Language or having a mixed language background (currently 17% compared to a national average of 20%). There is one child with a statement (type I diabetes) and 60 pupils are receiving learning support either on a 1:1 basis or in a small group. 35 of these pupils are in the Lower Years (Reception to Year 2) and 26 are in the Upper Years (Years 3-6). Support is given mainly to develop literacy skills, though a number of pupils receive support for numeracy. The majority of pupils transfer to St George's College, Weybridge at the end of Year 6.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER

- Secure an increase in curriculum time for religious education in order to meet fully the requirements of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales to reflect the fact that it is a core subject in a Catholic school.
- Review the quality of the provision for collective worship and the prayer life of the school in order to identify how it might be improved and act on the review to benefit the whole school community.

CATHOLIC LIFE

THE QUALITY OF THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

- 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 managers 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 know that the school mission statement is at the heart of their school. They appreciate its importance to school life and to themselves. It is displayed throughout the school, in each religious education exercise book and referenced in lessons so that pupils are encouraged to reflect on it and how it relates to the school community. Senior pupils developed a pupil-appropriate version of the mission statement and explained it at a school assembly: “Learning to live and love like Jesus”.
- Pupils are kind and considerate to each other. During this inspection, pupil behaviour was excellent at all times, both in lessons and around the school. Pupils appreciate the need for forgiveness and can relate this to the teachings of Jesus. The school’s kindness code is a practical manifestation of Christian teaching. This was observed in action on a number of occasions throughout the day. Pupils are ready to support each other and are alert to the needs of others.
- Relationships amongst staff, parents and pupils are very strong. Parents welcome and respond to invitations to many school events; there is a flourishing Parents’ Association. Parents told inspectors that staff were always willing to meet them in order to support their children.
- Pupils welcome the many opportunities to take responsibility and exercise roles that supports the Georgian family life of the school. They are happy to serve their school, for example as ‘buddies’ to younger members of the school and as members of RE and Spiritual Committee (RESPeCt), thereby contributing to the Georgian school family while growing in their understanding of service.
- They also respond enthusiastically in the opportunities for service to the wider community. Besides engaging in a range of fund-raising activities for house and school charities such as the Cardinal Hume Centre, last year pupils donated over 500 pairs of shoes for children overseas who previously went without shoes while a group of Y4 and Y6 pupils make weekly visits to a local home for the elderly as part of the work of the Society of St Vincent de Paul.
- Pupils value and respect the Catholic traditions of the school and its links with the parish priest. He is a frequent visitor and takes an active role in answering the questions of pupils and staff as well as celebrating Mass. In turn a number of pupils are active members of their own parish, some exercising the ministry of serving.

The quality of provision of the Catholic Life of the school is Outstanding

- The school mission statement simply yet eloquently reflects the educational mission of the Church. It inspires the school community to celebrate their love for God and for each other as they play, learn and pray together. School leaders and staff are fully committed to its implementation across all areas of school life.
- The school is a happy community that lives out the twin pillars of the Josephite ethos, Politesse - respect - and douceur – firm gentleness, care and compassion. Relationships between and among its various constituencies are supportive and empowering. Parents told inspectors that they are welcome in school, receiving

invitations to a range of events, and that any concerns they may have are always listened to and addressed.

- The attractive learning environment of the school reflects its Catholic identity. At its heart is the school chapel where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved. Distinctive displays relating to aspects of Catholic life, including prayers written by pupils, are a feature of the school together with appropriate religious artefacts. The 'forest school' in the school grounds is a valuable asset and is the setting for some imaginative religious education.
- The school's pastoral care provision for pupils and staff is a particular strength of the school. From the time a pupil joins the school, the headmaster and senior leaders along with the class teacher work to establish close links with parents/carers and are readily accessible in order to support the welfare of each pupil.
- The school behaviour policy is rooted in Gospel values and reflects the distinctive Georgian ethos with its distinct emphasis on being members of 'One Family' and hence cultivating common sense, good habits and building character with a Christian understanding of those terms. A system of rewards is valued by pupils for being administered wisely and fairly by staff.
- Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is now well established in the school. The school follows the 'Journey in Love' programme, which is in line with the teachings of the Catholic Church. Parents are very supportive of the programme and receive a briefing each term outlining the coming curriculum.
- Parents are very appreciative of the school and the Catholic education it offers. The large number of parental questionnaires returned as part of this inspection were overwhelmingly positive regarding the Catholic life of the school although there was more of a range of opinions expressed in the written comments.

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

- Leaders and managers at all levels are deeply committed to the Church's mission in education and to the Catholic ethos of the school.
- The Catholic ethos of the school is clearly proclaimed on the school website, which gives not only the mission statement, but also the values arising from this and their importance in school life.
- Governors, senior leaders and staff are closely involved in monitoring and evaluating the Catholic life of the school. Results are discussed at staff meetings and governing body meetings and inform school development planning.
- The views of parents and pupils are sought and contribute to school development. Surveys indicate that parents recognise and value the school's Catholic life and feel part of the school community.
- Governors are conscientious in their role. They regularly attend events in the school's Catholic life as part of their monitoring role. Attendance at deanery and diocesan training courses ensures that they are well informed and have up to date knowledge to assist them in their drive towards constant school improvement. They effectively challenge and support where necessary and are passionate about the school's mission.

- The school's Catholic life is an integral part of the school improvement plan. Progress is regularly monitored and evaluated.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP / PRAYER AND PRAYER LIFE

- 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 managers 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

- The spirituality of the pupils as manifested in their prayers is a particular strength of the school. They enjoy writing them in the class prayer book and then sharing some at occasions of collective worship and in some years displaying them in their classroom.
- Pupils show reverent engagement on occasions of prayer and worship in the classroom and school chapel. They sing joyfully, reflect in silence and join in community prayers appropriately and with confidence.
- The worship opportunities that pupils create are imaginative, varied and well-planned. When planning a liturgy the needs and sensitivities of those of other faiths are respected and accommodated. They display confidence in their use of a variety of approaches to prayer such as prayer which uses scripture, religious artefacts, liturgical music and other forms of prayer, both traditional and contemporary.
- Most other pupils are engaged by the worship opportunities planned by their peers. Most pupils have a good understanding of religious seasons and feasts and the different demands this makes on the planning of appropriate worship opportunities. Pupils are at ease in sharing prayer experiences with those of different faiths.
- Pupils who are members of the Religious Education and Spirituality Committee (RESPeCt) regularly review the prayer stations in each class and offer advice and support when appropriate, demonstrating a good understanding and sensitivity of what makes for a suitable prayer focus.
- Inspectors judged from observation and meetings with pupils that the experience of living and working in a praying community has a profound and visible effect on their personal development, irrespective of ability or faith background. The parish priest and some parents noted that pupils were actively engaged in liturgies in their home parishes.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship and Prayer Life is Good

- Prayer and worship are at the centre of school life. The school celebrates the principal feasts of the liturgical year and school events with Mass in the school chapel. Mass is also celebrated each week, complementing the daily pattern of morning, lunch and end of day prayer.
- A wide range of liturgical opportunities are offered to engage pupils and develop their spirituality. A 'thought for the week' based on the previous Sunday's gospel provides the focus for weekly collective worship.
- Class teachers, school leaders and the chaplain are skilled in helping pupils to plan and lead prayer and worship and show a good understanding of how it contributes to pupils' personal development.
- All classrooms have prayer focus areas. These are attractive, well resourced and feature contributions from pupils and regularly monitored by pupil members of RESPeCt.
- Parents and carers attend the principal liturgical celebrations and increasingly support the weekly school Mass when their own children are present.
- The school community benefits from regular visits from the Josephite college chaplain and the local parish priests who complement the work of the school's own chaplain by providing further spiritual and pastoral support and by strengthening links with St George's College and the local parish.

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

- The headmaster and senior leaders are very aware of the liturgical year and of Catholic traditions and are committed to celebrating and sharing them in ways age-appropriate to the pupils.
- Leaders and managers know how to plan and deliver appropriately engaging prayer and worship and do so very effectively.
- The committed school chaplain is striving to further develop the spiritual life of the school, not least by offering pupils a range of opportunities for personal engagement and growth.
- The chaplain and subject leader for religious education collaborate significantly in order to explore and develop opportunities to support prayer and worship throughout the life of the school.
- Leaders use INSET days and other opportunities to provide opportunities to promote staff understanding of spiritual and liturgical aspects of Catholic education.
- Leaders and managers actively monitor prayer and worship, including the views of pupils, staff and parents/carers, as part of their self-evaluation process in order to further develop.

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 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 is Outstanding

- Standards achieved in religious education are high, with the great majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs and disabilities, reaching or exceeding age-related expectations by the end of Key Stage 2. This has been sustained over the past three years.
- Pupils are interested and enthusiastic in their religious education lessons and keen to do their best. Behaviour for learning was excellent in all the lessons observed as part of this inspection. In consequence, pupils make very good progress and enjoy their learning. In this context one parent wrote to the Inspectors: "My child really enjoys RE and has sometimes amazed me with the thoughts and decisions they would make because of the religious teachings."
- Lesson observations and book scrutiny demonstrate that the pupils learn well. They demonstrate a wide range of skills including independence, originality and imagination. They possess the ability to pose deeper questions, make links with prior learning and the ability to reflect and evaluate and to engage with religious ideas. As a result they acquire knowledge rapidly and are able to apply this understanding effectively, showing how it is relevant and applicable to their lives of today.
- Pupils show high standards of religious literacy. For example in a Year 5 lesson on the parable of the prodigal son, pupils carefully considered the feeling and attitude of the father and the unforgiving son as well as the prodigal son.
- Written work is of a very high standard and shows understanding of the themes and topics studied. Presentation is excellent and reflects the pride pupils take in their work.
- Activities involving art, music, drama, ICT and literacy enhance pupils' experience and enjoyment of religious education and contribute to pupils' enjoyment, engagement and progress in religious education.

The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education is Outstanding

- Four lessons, across three key stages, were observed as part of this inspection. Teaching and learning observed was at least good and in the majority of lessons outstanding.

knowledge and range of teaching styles very effectively to engage all pupils in furthering their religious education.

- Teachers manifest an enthusiasm for sharing their love and knowledge of the subject and communicate high expectations.
- Lessons are well planned and executed with a variety of activities involving individual, pair and group tasks using a range of print and digital resources. When appropriate teachers provide differentiated task and resource sheets to enable all pupils to be able to access and make progress with a topic. Questioning is well judged to provoke thought and reflection as well as providing opportunities for assessment of pupil progress and understanding.
- Pupils enjoy exploring topics in a variety of ways including using art and drama as well as in their writing books. Work is regularly marked and assessed with helpful comments to enable pupils to raise the standard of their work. Pupil self-assessment is being introduced at the appropriate age and stage. Pupils in Key Stage 2 told inspectors that they knew what was required in order to make progress from their personal targets and the written and oral comments that they receive. The school participates in diocesan deanery moderation of pupils' work to ensure consistent rigorous standards.
- In addition to regular oral and written feedback, pupil achievement is celebrated in a range of ways including the issuing of regular stamps and house points to termly religious education certificates awarded at key stage assemblies.

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

- The governors, headmaster and school leaders are committed to religious education being at the heart of the core curriculum, providing a significant academic discipline and supporting pupils as they begin to develop their individual personal values. The subject has a very high profile in the life of the school.
- Rigorous monitoring and self-evaluation by leaders and managers informed by current best practice support targeted planning and strategic action to promote developments that will lead to the sustained development of religious education.
- In addition, for the past year a team of staff from a wide range of teaching and support roles have been reviewing how best to further promote religious education, its conclusions contributing to the regular programme of self-evaluation.
- Weekly meetings of the religious education/chaplaincy team, comprising the subject leader for religious education, the school chaplain and the headmaster are occasionally attended by the Governor with responsibility for Chaplaincy. This ensures good subject accountability to the school leadership and governors and also fulsome support for initiatives that will benefit pupils.
- The subject leader for religious education is passionately committed to ensuring that pupils receive the best religious education that provides both a secure academic grounding in the subject and the means of pupils' developing their own spiritual and moral compass. She has good professional links with colleagues in deanery schools and with independent schools more widely as well as with the diocesan adviser and

shares the knowledge and experience gained very effectively with religious education and other teachers at St George's Junior School for the good of pupils.

- The curriculum developed by the school is based on 'The Way, the Truth and the Life' programme, supplemented by distinct Josephite elements and adapted to meet the needs of the pupils from their wide variety of backgrounds. It is reviewed and adapted annually. The innovative way in which curriculum time has begun to be increased whereby other subject specialist teachers contribute to curriculum development and teaching is a notable feature.
- The teaching of other world religions is a particular feature of the curriculum. In recent years one religion has been the focus for the whole school for the entire year: this year it is Sikhism. However, as part of the regular review of the curriculum it has been decided that from next year that Judaism will be taught in four years, Islam in two and Hinduism and Sikhism each in one year group.
- The subject is well supported by the school with its good commitment to professional development and to increased resources continuing to enhance the learning opportunities of pupils. The comprehensive department handbook further assists all who teach religious education with clear guidance and direction.
- As part of the school's commitment to promoting Catholic religious education and devoting the time needed to cover the Curriculum Directory, curriculum time has begun to be increased.

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 pupils 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 pupils 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

1

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education

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The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education

1

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

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