



DIOCESE OF **Arundel and Brighton**

DENOMINATIONAL CATHOLIC SCHOOL INSPECTION REPORT

School: St Teresa's Senior School

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School Unique Reference Number: 125402

Headmistress:	Claire McShane
Chairs of Governors:	Annette Turner Mike Henderson
Lead Inspector:	John Lydon
Associate Inspector:	Angela O'Hara
Inspection date:	5-6 February 2020

Overall Effectiveness

This Inspection: 2

Catholic Life: 2

Religious Education: 2

Collective Worship: 2

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND STUDENTS

St Teresa's Effingham is a Good Catholic school because:

- The pastoral care afforded to all students and indeed staff, evidenced in interviews with Governors, parents, staff and students is exceptional.
- The majority of students in all year groups demonstrate a genuine sense of belonging to the Catholic community of St Teresa's. This is reflected in the way in which students display an authentic commitment to the activities and initiatives that reflect its distinctive Catholic ethos within and beyond the school community. Students are actively encouraged to develop their gifts and talents to the full.

St Teresa's Effingham is not yet Outstanding because:

- Curriculum time afforded to religious education does not currently meet the requirements of the Bishops Conference of England and Wales.
- Student and staff participation in the planning and preparation of liturgical celebration is underdeveloped.

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Teresa's is an all girls' Catholic Independent School, founded in 1928 by the Religious Order of Christian Instruction. All schools belonging to the order were founded with a well-defined mission: 'The Education of Girls committed to Gospel values'. The ownership was transferred to St Teresa's School Effingham Trust in 2002, and a partnership was formed in September 2019 with Cranmore to become part of the Effingham Schools Trust, comprising 1003 students across both sites. Also in September 2019, St Teresa's Senior School (ages 11-18) and St Teresa's Prep School (ages 4-11) merged into the formation of one school under one DfE number. 639 girls are educated within the Prep (180) and Senior Schools (459), and the combined total makes it the largest Independent Catholic girls' school in the country. The school is administered by a Board of Governors, of whom the majority must be foundation governors (Catholic). The school is welcoming of those from all faiths and none.

St Teresa's is committed to delivering a high-quality education that focuses firmly on the individual, and which provides an all-round emphasis. All activities, including service, are valued as an important part of education and the understanding of life. St Teresa's prepares girls for the future by giving them a distinctly Catholic basis and Teresian culture to live and learn in; this permeates all aspects of life and is exemplified in five core values of Faith, Character, Community, Compassion and Intellect.

St Teresa's is situated in 55 acres of beautiful countryside and is located within the parish of Effingham and Fetcham, within the diocese of Arundel and Brighton. St Teresa's draws its students from a wide area encompassing Guildford, Weybridge, Woking, Hinchley Wood, Wimbledon, East and West Horsley, West Byfleet and Bookham. The Senior School is four form entry, with students entering principally at Year 7, with other entry points at Year 9 and Sixth Form. 50% of the Year 7 cohort is made up of girls from the Prep School (of whom typically 100% transfer to the Senior school), and a further 50% is drawn from external applicants from both the independent and maintained sectors. The school has a proud record of adding outstanding value to its broad ability intake.

The overall proportion of students who are baptised Catholic is 27%. 16% are on the Special Educational Needs (SEN) register; 1 has an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP). St Teresa's has 72 boarders of 14 different nationalities, of whom 48 are non-British with families living overseas. The school is committed to providing for as economically and socially diverse a student body as possible, through generous scholarship and bursary provision.

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.
- Further embed structures to support staff and student planning, preparation and leadership of liturgical celebrations.

CATHOLIC LIFE

THE QUALITY OF THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

2

- 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 governors 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 is Good

- The majority of students in all year groups demonstrate a genuine sense of belonging to the Catholic community of St Teresa's School. This is reflected in the way in which students display a commitment to the activities and initiatives that reflect its distinctive Catholic ethos within school and in the wider community.
- There is a strong commitment on the part of both staff and students to a wide range of service of others, and to the support of a range of local, national and international charities.
- Students feel valued as unique individuals created in the image and likeness of God. They were particularly complimentary about the way in which all students in this Catholic community were encouraged to develop their talents to the full. One student described the level of pastoral support afforded to students as "insane".
- The development of talents is evident particularly in the very impressive range of opportunities for student leadership and participation in the sixth form exemplified, for example, by the mentoring of students in Key Stages 3 and 4 and, in particular, by the commitment of the Head Girl Team to Values Week, an event which has a significant impact on spiritual development across the school.
- Students respond generously to a range of opportunities to serve others modelled on the example of Christ. There is support across the school community for a broad range of local, national and international charitable activities. For example, 3,000 items were collected for the Dorking Foodbank in Africa while activities around Fairtrade feature prominently within the school. In a particularly innovative project animated by the Chaplain, a significant number of hats were knitted for people in Africa.
- Students behave in a respectful and courteous manner in their encounters with each other and with staff, reflecting 'community', one of the five values around which the spiritual life of the school is structured. The inclusive and welcoming nature of the school community was signposted by students, parents and staff. The school environment constitutes a hospitable space for learning, animated by the distinctly positive relationship between all staff.

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

- Excellent relationships exist between colleagues, support staff and students. Morale is high and the quality of relationships between all staff is reflected in the way in which students respect their teachers and each other.
- Clear policies and structures are in place, which provide the highest levels of pastoral care to all students, and there is an explicit and concrete commitment to the most vulnerable and needy in both policy and practice.
- Pastoral support of staff is particularly strong. Awareness of staff mental wellbeing represents a key concern for the leadership of school, evidenced in interviews with groups of staff. Examples were cited of the pastoral care demonstrated by leadership when issues arose for individuals. Staff also feel particularly well supported during times of need.
- Pastoral programmes, including Personal Social and Health Education and Relationships and Sex Education, are informed by Catholic values and principles and where required are supported by the school Chaplain.
- The behaviour of all students is exemplary at all times. Students are genuinely supportive of each other in tangible ways, for example peer mentoring. Justice is a perennial theme among the student body and is realised within and beyond the community. Students highlighted the supportive nature of relationships between staff and students and between students across year groups. These positive relationships impact on the academic, spiritual, social and cultural development of students who commented on the extent to which interaction between the year groups contributed to their pastoral wellbeing.
- The creation of a mission statement based around the school's values remains a work in progress which must be addressed. A mission statement constitutes a key characteristic of all Catholic schools and represents the basis on which the Catholic life of the school can be evaluated.
- The range of visible symbols of the school's Catholic identity throughout the school site represents an ongoing process which must be addressed by the leadership team in collaboration with the Chaplain and the Spiritual Life Committee. The impact of such symbols on the culture of the school cannot be overstated.

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

- Leaders and governors demonstrate a public commitment to the mission of the Church. They are well regarded by staff as models of Catholic leadership by both staff and students. The introduction of the Spiritual Life Committee represents a particular strength in this context. Staff regard the Headmistress as a significant presence who is committed to maintaining and developing the ethos and the heritage of the school.
- The governors are committed deeply to maintaining the Catholic and Teresian identity of the school. One of the Co-Chairs of Governors, when interviewed, discussed how she models this commitment by her visibility at liturgical services. This was commented on positively by staff. She challenges and supports leadership consistently in this context. There is a genuine commitment on the part of governors to maintain the momentum built going forward.
- The school has a very good range of strategies for engaging with parents encompassing pastoral and academic issues, evidenced by interviews with parents who articulated unanimously the extent to which the school is highly supportive of all parents, particularly those who find themselves in challenging circumstances. Parents regard the Headmistress as a strong role model for the students.
- The leadership team supports fully the Spiritual Life Committee within which one of the Deputy Heads plays a leading role. The group includes staff, both teaching and support, from a wide range of faith backgrounds. Formed one year ago, the group review current provision for the spiritual life of the school, evaluate events and plan future events. Organising a competition to design a cross for each building represents one innovative example of the group's endeavour to enhance the spiritual life of school.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

2

- How well students 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 students achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education is Good

- Achievement of students at GCSE and GCE A level religious studies is good because they achieve positive value-added scores comparable to other core subjects within the school. At Key Stage 3 students engage in an end of each unit test/project while a formal examination takes place during Exams Week in line with all other subjects.
- Students display good and, in some cases, outstanding age-appropriate standards of religious literacy. Students in the Sixth Form showed an excellent ability to discuss their understanding of the significance of a range of issues, underpinned by a deep theological understanding on the part of the teacher which was appreciated and valued by students.
- Students generally enjoy religious education lessons and told inspectors that they appreciate the opportunity to consider a breadth of religious belief as they develop their own personal convictions. They confirmed that they were stretched and challenged.
- Students emphasised that they enjoyed in particular the extent to which they were empowered to debate a variety of issues. Respect for all faiths was embedded across the department. This was particularly evident with the introduction of RE and Ethics as part of a new Sixth Form General RE programme.
- Students display a real determination and commitment to their learning in religious education. Almost all are highly focused and attentive to their learning tasks, including those requiring extended individual work. Thus, behaviour for learning is outstanding.

The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education is Good

- Lesson observation and reviews of student work during the inspection confirms the school judgement that teaching is generally good with examples of outstanding lessons. When it is outstanding, teachers use excellent subject knowledge and pedagogy to present a complex topic in ways accessible to all students.
- As observed during this inspection, when teaching is outstanding, teachers communicate high expectations, enthusiasm and passion for religious education to their students, along with a desire for each student to make great progress and achieve beyond their potential. These lessons were actively and creatively delivered and were well-paced which inspired active engagement on the part of students.
- Teachers have excellent subject knowledge and pedagogical skill that enables them to present topics in engaging and accessible ways for each pupil in their class. Lessons are well structured with tasks appropriate for all students to make progress.
- In most cases teachers consistently use time effectively and undertake astutely judged interventions as appropriate to maximise learning opportunities. The questioning of students to provoke understanding and further reflection is very effective and supports assessment for learning during most lessons.
- In most cases teachers regularly listen astutely to, carefully observe and skilfully question groups of students and individuals during lessons in order to re-shape tasks and explanations to maximise learning for every student.
- Marking and constructive feedback remains a work in progress. While there is some evidence of formative feedback at Year 7, this is not progressed in the remainder of the Key Stage. There is, however, evidence of formative feedback at Key Stages 4 and 5.

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education is Good

- The governors, Headmistress and school leaders recognise religious education as a core subject within the school curriculum, providing a rigorous academic discipline while reflecting the Teresian ethos of the school and supporting students as they develop their individual personal values.
- Leaders and managers conduct a range of systematic monitoring activities relating to provision and outcomes in religious education. Their analysis provides a firm basis for appropriate diagnosis of the department's strengths and areas for development.

- Leadership of religious education is informed by a high level of expertise and vision which focuses on improving teaching and learning in religious education, resulting in teaching that is likely to be outstanding and at least consistently good.
- The leadership of religious education inspires a sense of commitment from students and colleagues. Subject staff meet regularly and co-operate collegially to promote the highest standards of teaching and learning. Good relations with the Chaplain ensure that religious education contributes to the spiritual life of the school.
- Curriculum time devoted to religious education constitutes a significant issue. The time allocated at Key Stage 3 represents 5.6% overall while the time afforded at Key Stage 4 represents 7%, comprising 6% of curriculum time across Key Stages 3 and 4. While there has been an increase in allocation across Key Stage 3 since 2018-19, the lack of alignment with the requirements of the Catholic Bishops Conference of England and Wales remains a significant issue going forward. In this context the recent introduction of Sixth Form General RE constitutes a positive feature in raising the profile of religious education.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP AND PRAYER LIFE

THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP AND PRAYER LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

2

- 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 governors 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 is Good

- Students act with reverence and are keen to participate in liturgical celebrations. They sing joyfully, join in community prayers appropriately and with confidence.
- In the planning of liturgy the needs and sensitivities of those of other faiths are respected and accommodated. Students are at ease in sharing prayer experiences with those of different faiths.

- Students act with reverence and are keen to participate in acts of collective worship. During the inspection students joined in joyfully in singing during an Assembly to celebrate Candlemas. Assemblies observed were marked by respect and engagement.
- The themes and the style of liturgical celebrations is inclusive. This is welcomed particularly by students and reflects the religious demography of the school.
- A good number of students attend a range of voluntary opportunities to support prayer, worship and engagement with the spiritual life of the school including an “I Pray 24 (hours) Event”, a range of musical contributions and especially in relation to events around Values Week and the celebration of St Teresa’s Feast Day. Most recently a whole-school event supported by staff across all aspects of the school involved the planting of 5,000 bulbs to mark the Feast of St Teresa.
- The music department make an important contribution to the spiritual life of the school. A Scola Cantorum Group has been created, leading a termly Choral Evensong and a Christmas Carol Concert which raised £1,300 for CAFOD and the Cardinal Hume Centre.
- The school, however, should continue to develop its prayer life, particularly in the context of students taking ownership of their prayer life and engaging in the planning of liturgy.

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

- Leaders and governors, including senior leaders and the Chaplain, know how to plan and deliver quality experiences of collective worship.
- The provision of materials provided by the Chaplain to enable Form Tutors to lead collective worship effectively is outstanding and has made a significant contribution to the school’s progress in regard to leading a daily act of collective worship.
- The Chaplain is an excellent role model for staff and students and an undoubted asset to the school. The Chaplain represents a substantial presence within and beyond the school, supported by other colleagues including both teaching and support staff, especially the members of the Spiritual Life Committee. This enables a broad range of liturgical opportunities to be offered including Mass, opportunities for private and community prayer and also retreats. Several students spoke of the centrality of the chapel as an important symbol of the Catholic life of the school.
- The introduction of Retreat Days for Years 7 to 9 represents a significantly positive feature in the context of the spiritual life of the school. Students responded positively in interviews regarding the impact of Retreat Days.

- The prayer life of the school remains a work in progress e.g. leadership of liturgy should be extended beyond chaplaincy to include a wider range of staff and students.
- Opportunities for the Sacrament of Reconciliation at Advent and Lent should be established. The Parish Priest should be invited to liaise with the School Chaplain in facilitating opportunities for this most significant sacrament.

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

- The Headmistress is committed to the building of an authentic Catholic community. She, together with the leadership team, embody models of good practice in leading collective worship and prayer.
- The priority afforded to the spiritual life of the school is evidenced by the weekly meetings between the Headmistress and the Chaplain during which a range of issues are discussed in relation to the spiritual life of the school. Planning quality liturgies constitutes a key focus of this meeting. The Chaplain also contributes to the School Development Plan.
- The Spiritual Life Committee make a significant contribution to the promotion of collective worship and the prayer life of the school. Solidarity around the Catholic mission of the school is palpable within this group which has made some progress in advancing new liturgical developments. A planned programme for collective worship is now in place.
- One of the Chairs of Governors articulated how she is genuinely committed to the further development of the spiritual life of the school. She is present at all major liturgical celebrations and attends the weekly staff prayer group led by the Chaplain.
- While monitoring of progress in respect of the spiritual and liturgical life of the school is being developed, it should be embedded further across the school, particularly in regard to leading collective worship in form groups.
- The school should endeavour to promote its Catholic character and heritage more prominently. Several students during interviews expressed a pride in the identity of the school as a Catholic community.
- From a Diocesan perspective, the momentum acknowledged in this report should continue to be progressed.

Summary of Inspection Judgements

How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education.

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Catholic Life

2

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

2

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

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Religious Education

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

2

The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education

2

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

2

Collective Worship and Prayer Life

2

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

2

The quality of provision for Collective Worship and Prayer Life.

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

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