



DIOCESE OF **Arundel and Brighton**

DENOMINATIONAL (S48) INSPECTION REPORT

St John the Baptist School

Elmbridge Lane

Kingfield

Woking GU12 9AL

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School Unique Reference Number: 143369

Headteacher:	Mr James Granville Hamshar
Chair of Governors:	Mrs Ruth Egan
Lead Inspector:	Mr Damian G Fox
Associate Inspector:	Mr Peter Ward
Inspection date:	28 - 29 March 2019

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

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

St John the Baptist School is an Outstanding Catholic school because:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The school is distinctly Catholic. The teachings and values of the Gospel are fundamental to the life and work of the school.▪ It provides a highly effective spiritual, moral and academic education for its students.▪ It is a happy, Christ-centred learning environment in which all students thrive. Everybody is welcomed and empowered to contribute.▪ Leaders have a clear understanding of the Church's vision for Catholic education to develop young people of faith. Staff and pupils understand this and live out a mission of service to others.▪ The Headteacher and his leadership team serve as powerful role models of Christian living and Catholic leadership.▪ The Catholic life of the school is outstanding. The high level of inclusion ensures that no pupil is left out. Students are encouraged, praised and supported in lessons and assemblies.▪ Pastoral care is significantly effective in providing a secure, spiritual learning environment.▪ Outcomes in Religious Education (RE) are outstanding and reflect the important role RE plays as a core subject.▪ Collective Worship is recognised as fundamental to deepening the spiritual life of the school. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Standards of attainment in Religious Education are consistently outstanding and in line with whole school performance.▪ Students of all abilities make at least good progress.▪ Teaching is generally outstanding. There is a consistent department approach to teaching and learning.▪ Students genuinely enjoy RE lessons. They acknowledge the range of styles teachers use which result in a high level of interest and engagement in learning.▪ Students in general display outstanding, age-related standards of religious literacy.▪ Teaching assistants play a major part in supporting pupils with particular challenges. They work effectively in partnership with the teachers.▪ The Headteacher, supported by his leadership team, is wholeheartedly committed to the highest standards of Religious Education. This is evidenced by outcomes in RE and the standards of religious literacy.▪ The subject leader is experienced and highly effective. As a result, standards of teaching and learning are excellent and reflect the important role RE plays as a core subject. |
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- Prayer and worship are central to the daily life of the school. Students have many opportunities to pray together and individually.
- Daily prayer, the celebration of the Mass and weekly assemblies reflect the commitment of leaders and managers to deepening the spiritual ethos of the school.
- The deanery clergy are supportive of collective worship in the school. They celebrate Masses and the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
- The effectiveness of Chaplaincy is evident in the range of liturgical opportunities and the rich variety of resources for prayer.
- The chapel, with the permanent presence of the Blessed Sacrament, is a significant feature of the school. It is placed at the heart of the school and is open for students and teachers throughout the day.
- Students are positively engaged and respectful in acts of worship. This reflects the inclusive nature of liturgical celebrations.

- The Catholic life of the school is outstanding and has a profound impact on the lives of all students. The word 'family' was used by students and teachers to describe the school's ethos.
- Pastoral care for all students and staff is outstanding. It is a significant strength of this Catholic school.
- The behaviour of all students is exemplary at all times. Students and staff are genuinely supportive of each other.
- The spirit of togetherness is evident in the relationships and calmness throughout the school.
- Parents overwhelmingly praise the school for what they do for their children.
- Parents expressed their appreciation for the openness and support of the Headteacher and his staff. They highlighted the caring nature of all staff.
- The school's response to the wider community reflects the commitment of governors and school leaders to foster the vocation of service in teachers and pupils.

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St John the Baptist School is a Catholic Academy and a member of the Xavier Education Trust. It is an 11-18 mixed comprehensive school in the Surrey Education Authority. It serves the Woking Deanery of the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton. The principal parishes which the school serves are St. Dunstan's, Woking, Our Lady Help of Christians, West Byfleet, and St. Hugh of Lincoln, Knaphill. The roll is 1312. This includes 270 in the sixth form. The academic profile of the school reflects the full ability range. The attainment of students on entry is broadly average. The overall proportion of students who are baptised Catholic is 91.3%. A further 3.4% of students are from other Christian traditions. 9% of students are on the SEND register covering all categories of need. Of these, 24 have an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP), which is in line with the national average. The proportion of students eligible for support from pupil premium funding is below the national average at 2%. The majority of students identify themselves as white British.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER

- Increase the allocation of curriculum time for Religious Education in Key Stage 3 in line with the requirements of the Bishops' Conference.
- Establish a secure process of monitoring and evaluating the new Key Stage 3 curriculum and its assessment in accordance with the Religious Education Curriculum Directory, in order to provide students with a firm foundation for GCSE Religious Studies and adult life.

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.

- Students of all ages make an outstanding contribution to the Catholic life of the school and derive huge benefit from attending St John the Baptist School. They are excellent ambassadors for Catholic education evidenced by their willingness to assume responsibilities that promote and sustain the school's mission to serve and inspire.
- Students are actively encouraged to contribute their unique gifts and personalities to the Catholic life of the school. They become individuals with a sense of duty to serve others. One pupil described it as being able to celebrate 'my own identity in a range of cultures'.
- Behaviour is exemplary at all times. Through their attitudes and actions, students demonstrate a genuine commitment to building the Kingdom of God through their relationships with each other. A spirit of friendship and mutual respect permeates throughout the school.
- Students in all year groups demonstrate pride in belonging to a community that is welcoming and reassuring. They were erudite in describing the high level of mutual care and respect across the community that reflects the impact of outstanding pastoral care.
- Students' spiritual, moral and social development is evidenced in their behaviour towards one another and staff. Students are genuinely supportive of each other. This is evident in their willingness to embrace the range of opportunities to take on roles and responsibilities that support all members of the school community.
- Year 7 students spoke warmly of the support and encouragement they received during the induction process from staff and sixth form students. They are made welcome and quickly become settled and integrated into the school community. Students affirmed that nobody is left to be lonely or troubled.
- Sixth form students set an example of leadership and maturity to which pupils can aspire. They are outstanding role models for younger students and speak proudly of their support for younger students through peer mentoring and working with forms to raise awareness and encourage them to participate in fundraising activities.

- Sixth form students respond generously to a range of opportunities to serve others, for example by volunteering to help in primary schools and the local retirement home. Every year a considerable number participate as 'red shirts' in the diocesan pilgrimage to Lourdes.
- Students' understanding of Catholic social teaching is evident in the awareness they have of the needs of the school and wider community. The STARS are a cross year group of students who coordinate the wide range of activities across the school. They understand not only the importance of giving, but also the reason why they should be doing so in a Catholic school. A wide range of activities give the students a practical focus to their Christian mission of service. A governor said that students just 'want to' help as seen in the activities provided to support those participating in the Lourdes pilgrimage.

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

- The school is distinctly Catholic. The mission of service and commitment to staff and students, is encapsulated in the school's mission statement, 'Have faith believe you can'. It is a clear and inspiring expression of the faith the school has in each member of the community. Students and staff overwhelmingly respond in creating an authentic Catholic school through integrating prayer and service to others alongside academic study.
- The impact of the mission statement is evident in the joyful and harmonious relationships throughout the school. All staff are fully committed to its implementation, as confirmed by students who spoke warmly of the support, praise and encouragement they receive.
- The school environment reflects the Catholic mission and identity through tangible and effective signs of the school's character. It is visibly and spiritually Catholic. The chapel is at the physical and spiritual heart of the school; the presence of the Blessed Sacrament serves as a reminder of the enduring love God has for each member of the school community.
- Gospel values of respect, compassion and forgiveness, govern the pastoral life of the school. The impact of pastoral provision enables all students to participate in school life in ways that reflect their needs and interests. Students said that teachers throw themselves into everything. Visiting seminarians had noticed that RE teachers care equally about the spiritual and academic growth of the students
- The way in which students relate to each other and offer mutual support mirrors the strong care staff have for each other. Powerful testimony from one teacher emphasised the caring nature of the Headteacher and all staff.
- New staff and students spoke of the impact of their induction into the Catholic life of the school. The warm welcome and support they received inspired their immediate commitment to each other and to the 'family' feel. A returning teacher described it as 'coming home'.

- Pastoral care represents a significant strength of the school, evidenced in conversations with teachers and students. It is outstanding and serves the needs, concerns and strengths of each child and teacher. Policies and practices are in place that have established a spirit of care and compassion for all. As a result, students are able to grow in confidence and faith.
- Behaviour is exemplary as a result of policies that are clearly communicated to students at their induction and consistently applied. Students confirmed that good behaviour is the norm because everybody respects and wants the best for each other.
- The efficacy of chaplaincy provision is profound. It is instrumental in providing a range of opportunities for pupils to develop the practice of their faith. There is a high degree of spiritual maturity evidenced in the warm, harmonious relationships.

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 demonstrate their commitment to the Church's mission in education. They demonstrate a clear understanding of their responsibility to provide a school that responds to the needs and strengths of staff and students.
- The self-evaluation reflects leaders' well-informed understanding of the strengths of the provision for the Catholic life of the school and areas for development.
- The priority they give to the Catholic life of the school is reflected in the way staff and students work and pray together to sustain and deepen the spiritual nature of the school. The mission statement is a living reality. The school is a model of Catholic education in faith and practice.
- Governors monitor and evaluate the quality of the Catholic life by their presence around the school and attendance at liturgical celebrations. The link governor reports to formal meetings. Testimony from pupils and parents indicates that the school effectively maintains the distinctive Catholic ethos.
- A formal written report is submitted termly. The Spiritual and Prayer Life Committee meet half termly. The line manager is an Assistant head who is line managed by the Headteacher.
- Contribution to the development of the school's Catholic ethos forms a constituent part of induction for new teachers at the start of the year. Teachers spoke of how the uniqueness of the school's welcome inspired them to become enthusiastic partners in students' all-round education. They have a two day induction programme. They also have a residential weekend with staff to learn how to live within and contribute to the spiritual ethos of the school.
- The professional expertise and personal faith of the Headteacher impacts greatly on the efficacy of the Catholic faith in the life of the school. He is knowledgeable and fully understands the strengths and areas for development in all areas of the Catholic life of the school.

- The Headteacher is supported by staff who demonstrate their own deep commitment to students and each other.
- Constant communication between the school and parents was affirmed in parental interviews. They are proud of the school. They expressed their warm appreciation for the way the school complements and supports their work as parents. High expectations are established from day one. As a result, staff and students' understanding of the school's mission is outstanding. Parents particularly welcomed the open meeting regarding drug awareness which was attended by 500 parents and students.

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.

- Acts of Collective Worship engage all students' interests and inspire them in deep thought and heartfelt response. Students are at the heart of the community life of prayer. They affirmed their level of participation and their readiness to prepare and participate as singers, servers and readers.
- The Spiritual and Prayer Life Group includes students and staff. They meet half termly to evaluate the quality of collective worship and plan for the programme ahead. They expressed pride in their contribution to the chaplaincy provision for collective worship.
- During the inspection, assemblies and daily form prayers were marked by an atmosphere of respect. Students' appreciation of worship was evident in the prayerful silence and reverence. A local parish priest confirmed that students pray and worship with sincerity and integrity.
- Student leadership of collective worship is evident across the school. Every form class has a liturgical representative elected by peers. Sixth form students volunteer as senior prefects and support the students in Years 7 to 9 in coordinating the preparation of collective worship.

- There is strong support from the music department with choirs leading communal singing in liturgical celebrations. Staff and students referred to the Service of Remembrance as the highlight of the year. The community came together to thank God for the service of many who had died. Empty chairs were a visually powerful image of people who made the ultimate sacrifice for us during the war.
- Students recognise that prayer is part of the daily rhythm of school life. They acknowledge that the experience of living in a praying community has had a profound effect on the development of all, irrespective of ability or faith background. The inclusiveness of collective worship inspires respect for prayer and the faith journey of others.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship and Prayer Life is Outstanding.

- Collective worship is central to the life of the school. Students confirmed the extensive and varied religious experiences that form the heart of school celebrations, are a significant part of the daily routine of learning. Praying together is a daily experience for staff and students.
- Collective worship has a clear purpose, message and direction. Themes chosen for worship reflect a deep understanding of the liturgical season. The extensive range of weekly Masses, assemblies and prayer experiences serve to offer outstanding provision for all key stages. There is a Mass before school on Friday. Which is supported by both students and staff.
- The provision of prayer resources based on the theme for the week are provided each week by the chaplaincy team. Staff are integral to the provision of collective worship. They begin the week with prayer and are inspired by a reflection on the Sunday reading. The assembly and form prayer demonstrated the impact of high-quality resources on the engagement of staff and students in prayer.
- Led by the chaplaincy team, staff are highly skilled in leading quality worship. They display a thorough understanding of the purpose of collective worship as witnessed in a year assembly led by a pastoral leader. The chaplaincy team are passionate about supporting the growth of faith in each person. They provide extensive resources to staff that deepen their understanding of the purpose of collective worship. Teachers are highly skilled in helping students plan and deliver collective worship.
- The chapel is a feature of the school and is open to the community for prayer and reflection. It is visually inspiring and enhances the strong prayerful spirit in the school. Students affirmed that the main school chapel is open each day and is regularly used by staff and students for individual prayer and reflection. It serves as a prayerful oasis in the midst of a busy school life.
- The extensive retreat and reflection day programme for students provides further opportunities for students to examine their faith and develop an understanding of their responsibilities to themselves and to others. All students experience a reflection day. The evidence from students showed they agreed that these days were meaningful and had an impact on how they lived as one community based on Gospel values.

- Sixth form students receive training from the chaplaincy team so that they can lead further opportunities for each class to have a rich variety of prayer styles.
- It was clear from meeting the Alpha group that the opportunity to pray, discuss and participate in Lectio Divina has a significant impact on their understanding of prayer and their desire to pray. It guides them to a genuine encounter with God.
- Opportunities to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation are promoted for students throughout Advent and Lent; thanks to the good service and support of local priests. Many students take advantage of these opportunities.

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

- Leaders and managers, including senior leaders and the chaplaincy team, demonstrate a deep understanding of their responsibility to ensure the centrality of spiritual and liturgical experiences for staff and students. As a result, prayer and collective worship are integral to the growth of this distinctly Catholic school. Staff affirmed that school leaders are models of outstanding practice.
- The Headteacher is passionately committed to building an authentic Catholic community. His personal faith and vision for the school are understood and shared by all teachers. It is evident in the detailed programme and quality of spiritual and liturgical experiences for staff and students.
- Governors monitor and evaluate provision through their attendance at Mass and seasonal liturgies. The Spiritual and Prayer Life Group meets half termly and reports to the Headteacher and governors. The Headteacher regularly meets with the chaplaincy team to evaluate the quality of collective worship. Formal reports are provided for the governing body.
- Governors, staff and students affirmed that chaplaincy constitutes a key strength of the school. It is evident in the range of opportunities for students to come together in prayer. Visiting clergy affirmed the strength of the school as a distinctively Catholic school.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 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.

- RE is held in high regard by students. They demonstrate genuine enthusiasm for learning. Students spoke to inspectors about their high level of motivation to learn as a result of the praise and encouragement they receive for their work and attitude. The presentation of written work was of a high standard and showed students' pride in their work.
- Behaviour for learning is outstanding. Students showed a high level of engagement in observations during the inspection. They demonstrated an ability to work collaboratively and independently to great effect.
- Almost all students make progress in RE above the national average and in line with other Diocesan schools. Groups of students, including those with special educational needs and disabilities, make at least their expected level of progress, whilst some make outstanding progress.
- There is a strong culture of success within the RE Department and among all students, that has led to consistently outstanding attainment at GCSE over the last three years. It is significantly above the national average. Attainment at A level, particularly at grades A*/A is consistently above the national average.
- This achievement reflects the ambitions teachers have for each student. High expectations show the determination of staff to help students achieve at least expected outcomes in RE. Challenging targets are set. Students respond positively to the challenge and grow in self-confidence because of the encouragement and praise they receive from teachers.
- During the inspection, students displayed good, and in most cases, outstanding, age-appropriate standards of religious literacy.

The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education is Outstanding.

- Lesson observations and reviews of students' work during the inspection confirm the school's judgement that teaching is generally outstanding and never less than good.
- Students make progress above the national average because well-structured lessons are delivered in ways that are engaging and well-paced. This reflects consistently effective planning and delivery of high-quality lessons linked to students' current assessment. Students continue to consolidate and extend their learning. Priorities for improving teaching come from a detailed review of lesson observations.
- Teachers have excellent subject knowledge and a range of inspiring methods that motivate students to think for themselves. This was particularly evident in GCSE lessons. Students were effectively guided to develop their understanding of key exam skills as a result of clear explanations and regular reinforcing of how to achieve top marks.
- A rigorous and effective assessment process at Key Stages 3 and 4 is undertaken in line with the school's policy. It is used to measure progress against each student's school target and identifies their strengths and areas that need further support.
- Moderation within the department and with other Diocesan schools, results in consistent and accurate assessment of students' attainment and progress. Students in Year 11 said they knew their current grades and how to achieve their target grades.
- Individual and whole class feedback is a significant strength of the school. Students have a detailed understanding of how to improve. They are given opportunities to respond to guidance in a systematic and planned way.
- There is a consistency of high expectations and planning across the department. As a result, teachers are confident in using a wide range of resources and strategies that inspire students' engagement and learning. Lessons are planned in line with schemes of work and take account of students' prior learning. Students confirmed that they receive support and extra challenge as appropriate to their needs. The effective and well-judged support given to students with specific learning needs was observed during the inspection.
- A study of other faiths is covered throughout the curriculum. Year 7 have an introductory course into other faiths. Year 8 study Islam. Year 9 and GCSE students study Judaism.
- The AQA B Specification is studied for GCSE. The second religion is Judaism. This meets the requirements of the Diocesan Bishop.

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

- The self-evaluation of RE by leaders and managers is a coherent reflection of rigorous monitoring and self-challenge that demonstrates their understanding of the strengths of RE and areas for development.
- Leaders and managers are ambitious for sustaining high standards of teaching and learning in RE. Governors are effective in supporting school leaders. They are proud of the school's achievements and are determined to lead the school in continually improving standards.
- Outcomes in RE reflect the ambition and rigorous monitoring from leaders and managers. The provision for RE is monitored through learning walks, professional conversations within the department and the support of precision coaches. Senior leaders visit lessons daily. Their feedback is overwhelmingly positive. They regularly monitor teaching and learning through learning walks and joint observations with the Head of Department. This results in consistent feedback and accurate judgement.
- The Headteacher is committed to promoting the central role RE has in this outstanding school. He works effectively with his senior team who demonstrate strong and inspirational leadership. They are empowering and inspirational leaders. They build on the ethos of modelling faith.
- The precision coaching that each teacher receives is an impressive and highly effective strategy that delivers consistently high quality teaching. They are supported by an outstanding subject leader whose passion for the success of each student is tangible. Leadership of RE inspires whole-hearted commitment from staff and students. As a consequence, standards of teaching and learning are outstanding. His primary goal is to 'foster an experience with God' within RE lessons.
- The curriculum across all key stages meets the requirements of the Religious Education Curriculum Directory. The allocation of curriculum time at Key Stages 4 and 5 meet the requirements of the Bishops' Conference but falls slightly below at Key Stage 3. Discussions with governors indicate their intent to meet the required timetable allocation at Key Stage 3 in line with the requirements of the Bishops' Conference.

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

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How well pupils 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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