



DIOCESE OF **Arundel and Brighton**

DENOMINATIONAL CATHOLIC SCHOOL INSPECTION
REPORT

School: Rydes Hill Preparatory School and Nursery

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School Unique Reference Number: 125344

Headteacher:	Sarah Norville
Chair of Governors:	Katie Cardona
Lead Inspector:	Damian G Fox
Associate Inspector:	Hilary Blake
Inspection date:	January 30 2020

Overall Effectiveness

This inspection: 1

Catholic Life:	1
Religious Education:	1
Collective Worship:	1

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

Rydes Hill is an Outstanding Catholic school because:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It explicitly espouses Catholic Christian values through faith and practice. Each member of the community is respected and given dignity as a child of God. ▪ The mission statement is at the heart of school life. It is evidenced in the warm relationships throughout the community. It is a caring, harmonious and prayerful community. ▪ The Headteacher is an inspirational presence. Her leadership is outstanding. She articulates a clear vision for sustaining improvements in the Catholic life of the school and religious education. ▪ Plans are in place to ensure governors develop the skills to challenge and support school leaders. As a result, the governing body is increasingly effective in setting out a strategic vision for establishing strategies to challenge and support to help school leaders. ▪ Pastoral care for pupils and staff is significantly effective in providing a secure and spiritual learning environment. ▪ Parents are overwhelmingly appreciative of the all-round education the school provides. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Standards of progress in religious education are outstanding. School assessment data indicates that all pupils are achieving age-related expectations, with a significant number exceeding. ▪ Teaching is consistently outstanding. ▪ Pupils demonstrate a genuine enjoyment of religious education as seen in lessons and during pupil interviews. ▪ Pupils' written work is exemplary. It reflects the pride they take in their learning. ▪ There is a high level of religious literacy, often reflecting higher than age related-expectations. ▪ The Headteacher is ambitious for high levels of achievement in religious education. This is reflected in the quality of teaching and learning as evidenced in observations during the inspection. ▪ Teachers' understanding of the new framework for assessment is developing through internal, Diocesan and deanery moderation.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Collective worship is an integral part of the community and is visible throughout the whole school. ▪ A rigorous and detailed timetable for collective worship is in place. As a result, there is a wide range of liturgical experiences for the school community to deepen their relationship with God and each other. ▪ Collective worship is inclusive of everybody, irrespective of faith and ability. Pupils understand the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Catholic life of the school has a significant impact on relationships between all members of the community. ▪ In every pupil and staff interview with inspectors, the sense of togetherness and being a family evidenced the impact of the school's Christian and caring ethos. ▪ This is reflected in the profound way pupils benefit from and contribute to the Catholic life of the school. ▪ Pastoral care is outstanding. As a result, pupils' understanding is reflected

importance of prayer within a Catholic school.	<p>through their actions and their response to those in need.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The calm and well-ordered environment reflects the mindset of pupils and staff. There is a genuine commitment to live by Gospel values for the benefit of everybody. ▪ The Headteacher, working effectively with staff, exemplifies everything that is this school.
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FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Rydes Hill Preparatory School and Nursery is an Independent Primary and Nursery school for girls aged between three and eleven years, with boys up to the age of seven. The school is in the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton. It is situated in the town of Guildford and is managed by the Governing Body. The roll is 152. The school serves the parish of St Mary's, Guildford. The attainment of students on entry is above average. The overall proportion of students who are baptised Catholic is 30%. A further 41% of pupils are from other Christian traditions. There are 6.5% from another faith background. 22 pupils are on the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) register covering all categories of need. 68% of pupils identify themselves as white British background, while 32% are from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds within the school. The proportion of homes where English is an additional language is 17%.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- Evaluate the impact of the governing body on monitoring standards in teaching and learning across the school to challenge school leaders and support sustained improvements.
- Embed further the new assessment framework so teachers use assessment confidently to support teaching and learning.
- Ensure the planned review of RSE is rigorous to ensure the school is in line with Diocesan and statutory guidance for 2020-2021.

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 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 derive great benefit from and make a significant contribution to the Catholic life of the school. They value and respect the Catholic tradition of the school. Pupils across the key stages demonstrate pride in belonging to a community that acknowledges the unique qualities and personalities of each person. Pupils were erudite in describing the high level of mutual care and respect they have across all ages.

Pupil engagement in the Catholic life of the school is a significant strength. Consequently, behaviour is exemplary throughout the school. Several pupils were able to talk about Laudato Si' intelligently and articulate an understanding of their responsibilities to the common home.

The dignity of each person is at the heart of everything the school does. It provides extensive opportunities for the moral and spiritual development of all pupils and staff. As a result, pupils' understanding of the needs of others is profound and is evident in their pronounced sense of right and wrong. In every interview with inspectors, the sense of family and togetherness were defining characteristics of Rydes Hill school.

Pupil leaders serve as excellent role models with their behaviour and concern for others. They are alert to the needs of their peers, for example, with older pupils acting as buddies for younger pupils and as playground mentors for nursery pupils.

Awareness of the needs of others in the local and wider community is evident in the many activities which are a central feature of the school. Pupils show a strong commitment to raising money for local and international charities through a range of activities such as the Reindeer Run and the Easter Bunny Hop. Pupils show a clear understanding of the importance of these activities in a Catholic school.

Pupil voice in the school is strong. Through the School Council pupils are able to contribute to Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) initiatives that enhance the Catholic life of the school.

Parents were overwhelmingly appreciative of the Headteacher and her staff. "When pupils leave, they do so with a strong moral compass", reflects the overwhelming view of parents about the moral and spiritual impact of the school on their children. Non-Catholic parents particularly noted the influence of the school on the lives of their children and their understanding of the faith.

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

The impact of the mission statement, 'Think deeply, live wisely, love generously', is evident in the joyful and harmonious relationships throughout the school. By their words and actions, pupils demonstrate a deep understanding of these words. Across all ages, pupils ensure the mission statement is a living reality. All staff are fully committed to its implementation, as confirmed by pupils who were overwhelming in their appreciation of staff. Pupils confirmed that they are happy, safe and are proud to be pupils at the school.

The school is distinctly Catholic. The impact of the founding sisters cannot be overstated. Pupils know and live by the words of Sister Campion, 'Do your best and God will do the rest.' Testimony from staff and pupils emphasised an understanding of their own personal responsibility in building the Kingdom of God within the school community. They overwhelmingly respond by creating an authentic Christian ethos in which each person is treated with dignity.

It is evident in the daily routine in the life of the school that staff are driven by a shared desire to provide the best possible care and education for pupils. They model Christian behaviour that reflects the shared vision of the school to serve. Powerful testimony from a member of staff affirmed that the community work together in creating a warm, supportive and prayerful school.

Pastoral care for all members of the community is a significant strength. The impact of policies is evident in pupils' exemplary behaviour. Strong relationships throughout the community evidence the value the school places on the well-being of its family. Testimony from pupils and parents shows that people genuinely care 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.

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

Leaders and governors are totally committed to the continued deepening of faith and practice. They are energised by their responsibility to give staff, pupils and parents a school that teaches the faith and provides opportunities to worship together.

As a result of close collaboration between governors and the Headteacher, the quality of the Catholic life of the school is evaluated regularly. Plans for further improvement reflect the vision and dedication of school leaders to the community. They both value their mutual support and challenge as they work together to ensure the school remains an outstanding faith community.

As a result of strong and visionary leadership, the school is an environment with Gospel values at its heart. Staff and governors contribute to enhancing and deepening the moral and spiritual values thus creating a supportive and committed community.

The Headteacher has had and continues to have a major impact on the spiritual life of the school and its caring ethos. She understands her mission to sustain the spiritual development across the school. Her dedication to others is evident in the prayerful and harmonious school community. The Headteacher embodies the mission of the school to 'Think deeply, live wisely, love generously.' She is supported by all staff who demonstrate their own commitment to offering unstinting support to pupils and their families.

Although the governing body is developing its effectiveness, it is evident from discussions and the School Development Plan that they have a sincere commitment to the continued success of the school as a Catholic school. The link governor will bring professional and spiritual expertise that will ensure that the priorities of the school community are identified and addressed. He is supported by a governing body who are increasingly effective in their monitoring role and in both supporting and challenging school leaders.

The religious education Head of Department demonstrates excellent leadership. She ensures governors have a good understanding of strengths and areas for development. This leads to well informed planning for further development.

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 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.

Religious education is held in high regard by pupils. Lesson observations and discussions show that pupils genuinely enjoy their lessons. They respond positively to the curriculum and enjoy their learning. This is evidenced by outstanding behaviour for learning and high levels of engagement in observations during the inspection.

Pupils show great pride and respect for their written work. This is evident from their beautiful religious education books which show coverage, breadth and a variety of recorded activities. There is a productive two-way dialogue between pupils and their teachers in their books.

Their understanding and use of scripture in their responses is excellent and they make very good use of religious vocabulary.

Pupils work with enthusiasm, eagerness and interest. They are developing the skills to reflect spiritually and morally. Pupils apply themselves in lessons, strive to produce their best work and work independently and with others, consequently their behaviour is excellent.

The school's response and plans for improvement are detailed and pupils acknowledge that their lessons are now more varied and interesting. They said that they are challenged and supported and consequently, pupils are rarely off task. They have an enthusiasm in lessons regardless of the nature of the task.

Lessons observed were never less than good. Outstanding teaching was characterised by the level of challenge, pace and style of delivery. All lessons observed were well paced with good structure and clear learning objectives. Pupils thrive in the challenging, stimulating environment.

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

Nearly all the teaching is highly effective in enthusing pupils and ensuring they learn and make progress. All lessons were characterised by a tangible sense of spirituality from the opening prayer to activities that included scriptural and moral learning. Consequently, pupils are highly motivated and enjoy their learning.

All pupils whom inspectors met, confirmed the high level of challenge that engaged and motivated them to think, reason and work collaboratively. They responded intelligently and enthusiastically to high level questioning and thought provoking dialogue.

Pupils' behaviour in all lessons is exemplary and reflects their enjoyment of learning in religious education. The consistent response from pupils during the inspection was praise for all teachers and the way they use a range of strategies to help them learn.

Feedback in pupils' exercise books is effective. It provides opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding. Consequently, they make further progress. The school should now investigate ways to monitor the use of assessment to build on these strong foundations.

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

Leaders and governors ensure that the religious education curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference in every respect and in each key stage. At least the required amount of curriculum time is given to religious education.

Leaders and governors are ambitious for sustaining high standards of teaching and learning in religious education. They are proud of the school's achievements. They are effective in their role. Regular and effective dialogue between governors and the school ensures governors are fully informed of standards of teaching and learning. The development of the governing body is reflected in detailed plans to identify the strengths of the religious education and address areas for development.

The Headteacher demonstrates strong and inspirational leadership of teaching and learning in religious education. They regularly monitor teaching and learning through learning walks and joint observations with the Head of Department. This results in regular feedback to teachers. Regular formal and informal meetings ensure staff are well supported.

The Head of Department is outstanding. She is driven by the desire to see pupils learn. She regularly meets Diocesan subject leads to share best practice and inform her own expertise. The Head of Department is presently developing a deeper understanding of the new assessment framework to build on the good practice already established.

The vision and plans for further improvement of progress in religious education and the Catholic life of the school show that Leaders and governors have a deep and sincere commitment to the Church's mission in education. Their self-evaluation is an honest and accurate appraisal of the areas for development and the challenges they face in embedding rigorous monitoring of standards.

The school development plan is explicit in the school's plans for improvement in pupil progress. Leaders and governors know what is required and how to achieve their goals. Governors, particularly, monitor and evaluate school leadership effectively and give support to the new school leaders. They have ensured that religious education is central to the curriculum, but they acknowledge that it will take more time to ensure that their leadership is consistently effective.

There is a clear focus on adapting assessment systems in line with current curriculum changes. Assessments are recorded appropriately and retained as evidence. The Head of Department also ensures there is quality assurance through moderating exercises within the school and within the Diocese.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP AND PRAYER LIFE

THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP AND PRAYER LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

- 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.

Acts of collective worship engage all pupils' interests and inspire them in deep and heartfelt response. The parish priest affirmed inspectors' findings that pupils are involved in preparing and leading acts of worship. Pupils said that they are always involved in preparing for worship, especially class assemblies. Every day begins with shared prayer.

The 'Praise' assembly that took place during the inspection evidenced the reverence and respect pupils have when praying and singing. Pupils were attentive and participated prayerfully. They sang beautifully which added to a spiritual and meaningful act of worship.

Pupils recognise that prayer is part of the daily rhythm of school life. The confidence they have in praying and offering their intentions was explicitly articulated by pupils across the school. Year 6 pupils are beginning to prepare assemblies for younger pupils.

There is a deep sense of respect for other faith traditions. Pupils of other faiths affirmed the inclusivity of collective worship. They were confident to participate in liturgical opportunities and to discuss their own beliefs and practices. A parent from another faith tradition expressed her appreciation for the respect pupils have for the family's faith and practice.

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

Collective worship is an integral part of school life. Pupils confirmed the extensive and varied religious experiences form the heart of school celebrations and are part of the daily routine of learning. As a result, the school is a prayerful and spiritual community where individual, group and collective worship is an integral aspect of pupils' time in school, irrespective of their ability, faith or cultural background.

The range of Masses, weekly assemblies and daily prayer serves to offer outstanding provision. The parish priest and parents acknowledged that the rich variety of opportunities to pray was an integral part of their children's education. Collective worship has a clear purpose, message and direction which enables pupils to grow in their understanding of the value of prayer in their lives.

Acts of worship reflect the Catholic character of the school in their depth and variety. The variety of faith backgrounds in the community are respected to ensure everyone feels included.

Collective worship is planned, led and evaluated by knowledgeable staff with a clear message and purpose. They actively teach, encourage and support pupils to take an active role in planning and delivering quality worship for individuals and in class or whole school settings.

The school provides attractive areas in school for prayer and reflection.

Parents are welcomed to Masses and liturgies. They said they feel included, particularly enjoying music in the liturgy and the involvement of their children in the Masses.

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

The Headteacher has effectively established prayer and worship as part of the rhythm of daily life. They are inclusive of all pupils. She is recognised by parents as a highly visible Catholic leader and role model for their children.

The commitment of staff to understanding and leading prayer is evident in the way pupils are inspired to engage in collective worship. Governors understand the role they play in ensuring high quality provision for collective worship. They monitor and evaluate the provision for collective worship through their regular visits to the school.

The provision for collective worship is a very high priority for leaders and governors. Their understanding of the Church's liturgical year, seasons and feasts enables them to provide high quality liturgy and worship for everyone. They have a shared vision for establishing a programme of liturgical opportunities for the community to pray together and individually.

The expertise of the link governor will enable them to self-evaluate its delivery more consistently to ensure the ever-deepening efficacy of prayer across the school.

Leaders provide professional development opportunities, advice and assistance for staff on planning and delivering collective worship. Resources are provided to support teachers and empower them to lead and inspire pupils in prayer.

Leaders and governors are effective in supporting the development of thought-provoking, age-appropriate and accessible collective worship for all pupils, irrespective of ability, faith or culture. They are committed to releasing the potential of pupils to lead acts of worship for the community.

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 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 pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.

1

The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education

1

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

2

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.

1

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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