



Sacred Heart Catholic High School

Fenham Hall Drive, Fenham, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE4 9YH

School Unique Reference Number: **137708**

Inspection dates: 26 – 27 February 2014

Lead inspector: Tony McCourt

Team inspector: Dan Murray

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Catholic Life:		Outstanding	1
Collective Worship:		Outstanding	1
Religious Education:		Outstanding	1

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

Sacred Heart Catholic High School is an outstanding Catholic school because:

- The quality of the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding because the philosophy of the founder of the Sacred Heart Society, St Madeleine Sophie Barat, is embraced by all and is the inspiration for the pursuit of excellence in learning, relationships and worship. The strong sense of the Sacred Heart High School's Catholic identity is evident in the day to day life of the school where pupils of whatever faith or culture feel welcome and secure in a happy and confident community.
- The quality of Collective Worship is outstanding because worship is at the very heart of the school community. Governors, headteacher, senior leaders, staff and pupils work together to plan and deliver deep and meaningful acts of worship which promote the school's ethos.
- The quality of Religious Education is outstanding because pupils are imbued with a desire and commitment to achieve success. Inspired leadership has ensured that the high profile department has a significant impact upon the spiritual and moral development of the pupils and is at the heart of the school. Teaching is good to outstanding, behaviour for learning is excellent and, as a consequence, outcomes are outstanding.

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- Sacred Heart Catholic High School is an above average sized girls' school whose pupils come from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds. 60% of the girls are Catholic.
- The majority of pupils come from a white British background with above average numbers from ethnic groups and well above average numbers of pupils with English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium is above the national average.
- The number of pupils with disabilities, with special educational needs, school action plus and with statements of special educational needs is below average.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- Improve Collective Worship by:
 - establishing systems to formalise pupil responses to acts of Collective Worship
- Improve Religious Education by:
 - developing a consistent approach to regular, high quality teacher marking and feedback
 - embedding the pupil improvement strategies such as 'purple pen response' and pupil 'progress sheet'
 - continuing to share good classroom practice through peer observation to ensure outstanding progress in lessons

CATHOLIC LIFE

THE QUALITY OF 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.
- The quality of provision for 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.

- All members of the Sacred Heart community have a deep sense and lived experience of belonging to what they passionately call a family. The firm conviction 'for the sake of one child' is a lived reality and provides inspiration for school life on a daily basis.
- Pupils and staff embrace the demands of living in a Catholic community and are readily able and willing to embody the challenge of their 2013 school mission, 'Step Up to Life'. A positive, happy attitude pervades all aspects of school life. The pupils are courteous, conscientious and considerate. Pupil behaviour is impeccable.
- The work of the Sacred Heart Network, the 2013 school mission, the retreat programme and numerous other opportunities provided are warmly embraced by pupils and contribute positively to their spiritual and emotional growth. Through these opportunities the pupils are encouraged and enabled to promote the 'Sacred Heart Ethos' within and beyond the school community.
- There is a strong sense of Catholic identity with the added dimension of being a Sacred Heart School. The school community is passionate about its origins, traditions and character whilst adopting an inclusive and welcoming approach to those of other faiths and cultures.

The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.

- The educational vision of St Madeleine Sophie Barat provides a focused and clear expression of the school's educational mission. The five goals of Sacred Heart Schools provide a framework through which each pupil can be inspired to 'live life to the full'.
- The school is a joyful, supportive community evidenced by the high quality and positive relationships that exist between all members of the school community.
- The five goals of the Sacred Heart Schools: faith, character, intellect, community and social concern are paramount and a concrete, effective sign of the school's Catholic character. The goals provide the framework and focus to make the school's Catholic identity a living reality.

- Clear and effective policies and procedures, administered by highly capable school staff, ensure the provision of the highest levels of pastoral care. In ensuring that everything is done 'for the sake of one child' the most vulnerable members of this community are indeed the closest to its heart.

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

- Taking their inspiration from their founder St Madeleine Sophie, the headteacher and her team are as passionate as their foundress in providing high quality learning and a pursuit of excellence for the girls in their care.
- The Catholic Life of this school is the very essence of its existence, providing the inspiration and focus of all aspects of school life. The headteacher and her team are relentless in their pursuit of the highest quality Catholic education. This witness is shared with and by all members of staff, who are committed to its continuation and development.
- Governors are truly critical friends of the school, who know it exceptionally well and are highly ambitious for its continued success. They are passionate advocates of the school's Catholicity and provide firm challenge and substantial support.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

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- How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship.
- The quality of provision for Collective Worship.
- How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship.

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How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship is outstanding.

- The pupils demonstrate a profound and clearly heartfelt respect and reverence during acts of Collective Worship. There is a marked quality of prayerful silence and an apparent collective encouragement to allow both the time and space necessary to pray. Both traditional and less structured forms of prayer enable the pupils to involve themselves in the prayer life of the school in a deep and meaningful way. The school community is clearly working to encourage a 'spirituality of the heart'.
- The comfort and confidence that the pupils present in leading acts of Collective Worship is laudable and undoubtedly contributes to the prayer life of the entire school community. Pupils are at home in praying with their peers and in leading prayers for the staff. The 'Ethos Briefing' for staff observed during the inspection, was indicative of this clear strength.
- A wide variety of resources to create an atmosphere conducive to prayer is used to great effect.
- The liturgical year is celebrated in a way that both signifies its importance and continues to educate the whole community as to its meaning. What is perhaps most notable is how the 'Sacred Heart Ethos' is clearly celebrated through the liturgical life of the school community and is a clear testimony to the school's heritage and tradition.
- Sensitive to both its context and its heritage the school equips pupils with a deep sense of mutual respect for other faiths whilst staying faithful to its Catholic character. This mutual respect is routinely reflected in the liturgy and prayer life of the school and the life of the school community.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship is outstanding.

- Collective Worship is at the very heart of this school community. Prayer for both staff and pupils is an integral part of life at Sacred Heart.
- The liturgical year is creatively used as a clear structure in planning and resourcing the high quality Collective Worship from which every member of the school community benefits.
- Imaginative opportunities afford the pupils the chance to pray for and address their own concerns and feelings.

- School leaders work hard to empower all members of the school community to develop their skills in planning and delivering high quality worship. The Church's Liturgical heritage is respected, acknowledged and well-used in providing a wide variety of opportunities for prayer and worship.

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

- Leaders and managers are adept at both planning and delivering quality experiences based upon a thorough and coherent knowledge and understanding of the Church's liturgical year.
- Staff, at all levels, embrace and promote spiritual formation and any initiative or training is well-received. School leaders are proactive in the promotion of Collective Worship. The high profile and inspirational work of the lay chaplain is exemplary and with the support of her colleagues, enables a deep appreciation of the Catholic tradition in a contemporary context.
- Coherent and considered development planning enables an effective review of Collective Worship although, at present, the pupil voice element of this review is insufficiently developed in terms of formal opportunities for pupils to give feedback about their experiences of Collective Worship. The Sacred Heart network enables the school to develop in partnership an annual 'goal', which permeates the life of the community.
- The evident involvement of all stakeholders in evaluating Collective Worship ensures the school has a holistic and thorough approach to developing this essential aspect of school life.

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.

- Pupils demonstrate a passion and commitment to Religious Education. Behaviour for learning is outstanding and the pupils are focused and driven in their studies.
- Progress over time, and progress in a significant majority of lessons, is both rapid and sustained.
- The Religious Education department embody the Sacred Heart concept of 'for the sake of one child' and ensure that all pupils, including the most vulnerable, are able to both enjoy and achieve in this subject.
- The acquisition of a wider range of skills and an in-depth religious knowledge enables the pupils to make significant progress.
- The attainment and achievement of pupils in Religious Education is outstanding.

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

- The teaching of Religious Education at Sacred Heart Catholic High School is highly effective in enthusing pupils and ensures that they make exceptional progress. The teaching is consistently good and a significant proportion is outstanding.
- Teachers clearly have high expectations of all pupils and share a passion for, and commitment to, Religious Education. Their expertise, experience and confidence assists in the delivery of innovative and highly effective lessons which enable pupils to be actively involved in their learning. As a result, pupils across the ability range make outstanding progress.
- Effective approaches to peer and self-assessment contribute to pupils' learning and are being developed to afford the pupils the opportunity to comment upon their learning. The introduction of the 'purple pen response' is one aspect of this work.
- Constructive oral feedback is given to pupils on a regular basis; through this and the development of 'progress sheets', pupils clearly understand how to improve. Detailed marking and written feedback from teachers is, however, less frequent and so is limited in its effectiveness.
- The celebration of achievement is central to all Religious Education lessons and all teachers use praise well.

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

- The leadership of the Religious Education Department is inspiring and evokes a confident, genuine commitment from both pupils and staff alike. This high-profile department has a significant impact upon the spiritual and moral development of the pupils and is at the heart of the life of the school.
- A rigorous approach to self-evaluation and monitoring, well-informed by current best practice, ensures that the strategic leadership of the department secures outstanding outcomes.
- The head of department passionately communicates a clear vision for excellence and encourages an open, team-centred approach to all aspects of departmental work. This empowers all members of her team, supporting them to develop their classroom practice, ensuring consistently good and, in some cases, outstanding teaching.
- The Religious Education curriculum is skilfully designed to match the full range of pupil needs. The GCSE units are well-chosen and appropriate to the school community whilst also fully meeting the requirements of the Bishops' Conference.
- Working collaboratively with the lay chaplain and local clergy, the department also affords pupils the opportunity to gain first hand quality experiences of the liturgical life of the Catholic Church.

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:

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How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship.

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The quality of provision for Collective Worship.

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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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SCHOOL DETAILS

School name	Sacred Heart Catholic High School
Unique reference number	137708
Local authority	Newcastle
This Inspection Report is produced for the Rt. Reverend Séamus Cunningham the Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle Diocese, (c.f. Code Canon Law, 804, 806), and for the Governing Body of the school (Education Act 2005, Section 48). The inspection schedule follows criteria set by the National Board of Advisers and Inspectors.	
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Head teacher	Mrs Anita Bath
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