



Sacred Heart Catholic High School

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

School Unique Reference Number: **137708**

Inspection dates:	20 – 21 March 2019
Lead inspector:	Monica Shepherd
Team inspector:	Philippa Ronan

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

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

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

- The school is infused with the charism of Saint Madeleine Sophie Barat the founder of the Sacred Heart order. Her mission permeates all aspects of school life. The foundations laid by the Sacred Heart sisters are lived out on a daily basis within this inspirational and inclusive community.
- Collective Worship is outstanding. Varied, wide ranging and creative opportunities for worship are prepared and delivered by strong leaders at all levels including student leaders.
- The Catholic Life of the school is outstanding. There is a strong sense of belonging which is evident within relationships at every level. Understanding and respect for everyone within the community ensures that students thrive and grow spiritually, socially, emotionally and educationally.
- Religious Education is outstanding. The department care deeply about their pupils. Staff demonstrate superb subject knowledge coupled with high level teaching and learning strategies. As a result, the subject is loved by pupils and outcomes are excellent.

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- Sacred Heart High School is a larger than average secondary school within the Society of the Sacred Heart tradition.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for Pupil Premium is above average.
- The proportion of pupils with special needs is lower than average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above average.
- The proportion of pupils from ethnic backgrounds has risen and is 35%.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standard, which sets minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and Mathematics.
- The academy is a cohort 1 teaching school.
- The academy became an academy sponsor in 2017.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- To continue to build upon the firm foundations :
 - by further developing links with parishes
 - sharing practice across the diocese, nationally and internationally

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.

- The involvement of the whole community in the Catholic life of the school is tangible. This is evidenced in all aspects of school life and in local, national and international links through the Sacred Heart Foundation such as 'Heart News' and 'Heartfest' conference which the school has led at national and international level.
- All pupils deeply value and participate in the distinctive mission of this Catholic school. They show great respect for themselves and for others and actively embrace all that is on offer within the school.
- Behaviour is exemplary within this diverse school community. Service to others is routine and palpable in relationships within and beyond the school community.
- Outstanding leadership from governors and the headteacher, who senior pupils described as 'journeying with them', is at the core of school life and ensures that leaders at all levels support the individual student to the best of their ability.
- All students are welcomed into this inclusive community and they speak with confidence about the inspirational opportunities which the school offers and what makes their school distinct.
- The holistic development of every student is evident through all aspects of school life and examples of student leadership are very apparent. Two girls, who had recently won the annual regional Catenian public speaking competition, led staff briefing and modelled outstanding practice.
- Opportunities for students to develop spiritually, personally and educationally are outstanding and embedded within all aspects of provision. Girls highly value the annual whole school Mass and all opportunities to come together in communion to celebrate the Sacred Heart ethos.
- Aspirational planning and attention to detail combined with systematic approaches to the monitoring and evaluation of the Catholic life of the school; ensure that the school continues to be an exemplar to others.

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

- All aspects of school life are structured around the key elements, or goals, of the Sacred Heart ethos: faith, community, social awareness, intellect and personal development. Clear organisation by the 'Goals Coordinator' ensures that one aspect of the school ethos features prominently each year in annual school planning. Policies, systems and structures are outstanding and firmly rooted in clarity of ethos.
- The school's ethos forms a very clear thread through every aspect of school life. This is evident throughout curriculum and pastoral care, opportunities for student and staff prayer, liturgy, assembly and the continuing development of all members of the community.
- The Chaplain is very highly regarded by students and staff. She provides varied opportunities to develop class prayer and take part in retreat programmes and her work is evident in the day to day interaction of all members of the community.
- Students and staff speak with much pride about their school and how to cater for individual needs.
- Staff ensure that expectations are clear and that kindness is always evident. Careful induction for students and staff places an emphasis on 'settle and study', 'self and society and 'ethos and identity' is apparent within the post-16 induction programme.
- Staff ensure that their example, more than their words, is an eloquent lesson to the world by modelling the ethos by their actions. Young women of all faiths, and none, speak movingly about their spiritual and educational journey at the school.
- Students enjoy working in local care homes, taking part in Christmas carol concerts within local Catholic churches, presenting to their form in the sixth form and being 'Goals Ambassadors'. The commitment to 'faith in action' through charitable work and volunteering are also powerful ways in which the school transmits its ethos to future generations. Staff appreciate the leadership role played by the school in the 'Passing on the Flame' conference for the European Sacred Heart Network.
- Powerful cross-curricular links are apparent. For example, the creation of a Remembrance Book of thoughts and prayers linked to a 2018 educational visit to the battlefields of the First World War. The desire to offer the very best opportunities, 'for the sake of one child' and fulfilling the ethos of Madeleine Sophie Barat, is clear and consistent throughout every aspect of school life.

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

- All aspects of Catholic Life, and all school life, exhibit challenge, progress, adaptation, questioning, assessment and 'next steps'.
- Leadership at all levels is inspiring and authentic. Staff provide the finest role models. This is mirrored in the student body from the exceptional head girls to the students in corridors and social areas who are polite and purposeful.
- Governance and leadership is truly outstanding and witnessed throughout the community. Governors are extremely ambitious, set clear direction and make a significant contribution to the Catholic Life of the school.

- Leaders actively support Catholic Life within and beyond the Diocesan family of schools through Teaching School links and peer to peer support networks. Support from leaders for all members of the community is exceptional. Students commented that staff were, 'amazing and inspirational'. This commitment is firmly rooted within the distinctive faith tradition of the school. Students respond to the welcome provided, the opportunities on offer and the inspirational female and male leadership role models.
- Monitoring is clear, systematic and considers student and staff well-being. Staff remarked on the high levels of personal and professional support from senior staff which enabled them to do their job to the best of their ability.
- Parents are routinely consulted during Parent Evening questionnaires and the support in place for vulnerable students is a great strength.

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.

- Examination results are outstanding at all key stages. This triangulates with lesson observations and work scrutiny. Progress from all starting points is both rapid and sustained.
- In all lessons observed, students were actively engaged in the lesson and no 'off-task' behaviour was observed. There was a tangible atmosphere of enthusiasm and passion for the subject across all key stages.
- Student's books demonstrate high quality knowledge and understanding. The marking of books and student work is systematic and rigorous.
- Students are religiously literate and exceptionally articulate. They speak with confidence and with enthusiasm about their work. They regularly work collaboratively using the 'think, pair and share' strategy and there are varied opportunities for both individual and group work. Students are confident about their levels of achievement and secure in where they are in their own particular 'learning journey'.
- The volume and depth of student work is outstanding. Extended writing at all key stages is an area of great strength. In the very best lessons, the teacher acts as facilitator to ensure student learning.
- At all key stages sound practice has been embedded to ensure very high standards and expectations are achieved. All students spoken to were very aware about what was needed to further improve their work and students were challenged through differentiated learning objectives.
- The 'Nurture' groups within key stage 3 exemplify what it is possible to achieve with the most vulnerable students when empowered by aspirational expectations, high standards and high-quality literacy skills.

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

- In the vast majority of lessons teaching was consistently outstanding at all key stages and never less than good. All staff demonstrated superb subject knowledge and innovative methods of teaching and learning which have proven outcomes.
- Lessons are taught with pace to engage and enthuse. Questioning is skilfully employed, particularly at key stage 5, and is often used very sophisticatedly to guide students through common misconceptions and to deepen their understanding. Praise is an integral part of

lessons and is used consistently to optimize student esteem and participation.

- A systematic approach to marking and assessment is very evident, clearly understood, and followed by the whole community and supports swift and rapid progress.

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

- The Religious Education curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference and Religious Education is a core and leading department within the school with regard to examination results, the quality of teaching and learning and provision for all.
- The head of department has a very clear vision for the department and this inspires others to strive for excellence, in all aspects of their work, within a team setting. She exemplifies servant leadership by celebrating and crediting her staff with all that has been achieved and continues to be achieved.
- The head of department is exceptionally well supported by the assistant head teacher and together they exemplify what is strongest about both the department and the school as a whole. An example of this is the commitment to securing the highest outcomes for students by insisting upon and delivering the highest standards
- The key stage 3 curriculum leader has worked tirelessly and with much enthusiasm, alongside the head of department, to ensure a very rich and diverse curriculum provides a firm foundation at key stage 3. This engages and motivates students and is permeated by the inspiration of Madeleine Sophie Barat.
- The department cares deeply about the young people in their care and they do all they can to ensure that they achieve their potential.

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 school provides a wealth of enriching experiences for the whole community to, 'aim unceasingly at becoming a soul at prayer' as Madeleine Sophie Barat remarked. Students from the Catholic faith tradition, other Christian faiths, other world faiths and from no faith tradition pray and reflect together respectfully.
- Examples of students gathering, listening to the Word, responding to it and living out the mission of the school are apparent in the daily life of the school. The quality of staff briefing, student assembly and class prayers is very high. This was evidenced in the leadership of the headteacher. She delivered a powerful assembly which seamlessly linked the season of Lent to comparative religious practice firmly rooted in the Gospel which ensured clear understanding regarding the gifts of the Holy Spirit, whilst also making contemporary cross-curricular references to language, literature and film.
- Worship is part of the liturgical calendar and events are carefully planned and delivered to ensure students access learning. Staff are highly skilled at offering very varied opportunities through music, dance, art and craft and engage with the school's historic specialism of performing arts. Rich, regular and purposeful worship opportunities permeate the school day.
- Well-chosen and varied artefacts are evident throughout the school. They range from the permanent display of the 'Mater Admirabilis' to temporary displays marking the liturgical season. They contribute substantially to the welcoming school environment and pay tribute to the school's heritage.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship is outstanding.

- Collective Worship underpins the school day, terms and academic year. It is a lived experience which follows the liturgical year.
- The assistant headteacher ensures with the head and other senior leaders that Collective Worship is given top priority. Staff are extremely knowledgeable and skilled, at providing very creative approaches which students are enriched by and very much appreciate.

- Students are familiar with traditional hymns within music lessons and traditional acts of worship as well as more innovative and creative opportunities. For example, daily monitoring of agreed Lenten pledges within tutor group.
- The whole community benefits from the intellectual rigour, variety and creativity which underpins Collective Worship practice and ensures that the whole community draws strength and light from high quality Collective Worship, which is owned and lead, at all levels by knowledgeable and skilled staff and students.
- Students and staff clearly appreciate the quality of Collective Worship on offer and welcome the opportunities for meditation within the 'Espacio' programme as well as staff and student retreat opportunities. One student spoke with passion about the opportunity provided to contribute to and lead the development of a school Prayer Book.
- The spiritual and personal development of the whole community is apparent within the Collective Worship programme and is epitomised in the desire to develop, 'loving, great and generous hearts', in line with the school's distinctive ethos.

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

- Governors and senior staff approach all aspects of strategic school development using key lines of enquiry. They are incisive in their monitoring and evaluation of Collective Worship.
- Governors show much support and commitment for Collective Worship within the school and are highly skilled and knowledgeable.
- School leaders very effectively model, promote and continue to constantly develop outstanding practice regarding Collective Worship.
- Leaders at all levels have very high expectation and support students and staff to aim high. Self-evaluation of Collective Worship is evident at every level, is given top priority and clearly feeds into whole school developmental priorities.
- All students are familiar with preparing quality prayers in class and liturgy for Mass. High quality liturgical music and dance offer diversity and depth to Collective Worship opportunities. Pupils also very much enjoy participating in Collective Worship opportunities beyond the school community at larger scale events such as The Source and Flame Congress at Wembley Arena. Staff and students work hard to organise, and take part in such opportunities.

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

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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 Seamus Cunningham, the Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle, under canon 806 of Canon Law. For voluntary aided schools it also fulfils the responsibility the governing body has to inspect the school under s48 of the Education Act 2005.	
Chair of governors	Mrs Denise Kendall.
Head teacher	Mrs Anita Bath.
Date of previous school inspection	February 2019
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