



Diocese of Arundel and Brighton

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

**Chatsmore Catholic High School**  
Goring Street, Worthing, West Sussex BN12 5AF  
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DES Number: 126096

Headteacher: Mr M Madden  
Chair of Governors: Mrs N Davies

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Canonical Inspection under Canon 806 on behalf of the Bishop of Arundel & Brighton  
and inspection of Denominational Education under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

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Date of inspection: 9-10 December 2013  
Date of previous inspection: 21-22 June 2010

Lead Inspector: Mr P Ward  
Associate Inspector: Dr J Lydon

## **Description of School**

Chatsmore Catholic High School is a voluntary aided 11-16 mixed all-ability school maintained by West Sussex Education Authority. The number of students on free school meals is 9% and is lower than average (15.9%). The number of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is much higher than the national average. The percentage of students from minority groups is below average as is the number of students for whom English is not their first language. The school is a Specialist Arts College and has the ArtsMark Gold and SportsMark Awards.

The current number on roll is 616. The school is situated in the Worthing Deanery and the principal parishes which the school serves are East Preston, Goring, High Salvington, Lancing, Littlehampton, Rustington, Shoreham, Steyning and Worthing. The proportion of students who are baptised Catholics is 46%. The proportion from other denominations and faiths is 46%.

### **Key for inspection grades**

Grade 1: Outstanding;      Grade 2: Good;      Grade 3: Satisfactory;      Grade 4: Inadequate

## **Overall effectiveness of this Catholic school**

Chatsmore is a good Catholic school with the Catholic Christian faith at its heart, in line with its philosophy of "the School as a worshipping community where students take an active role in shaping the future of our School community and the community of the wider world". This is the result of the committed leadership of the headteacher, leadership team and Governing Body. Prayer and collective worship including the regular celebration of Mass support the religious and spiritual development of students, while the school and its lay chaplain contribute significantly to the life of the Worthing deanery, its parishes and primary schools. The school works collaboratively with its students and their parents. There is a strong focus on raising academic standards in all subjects including religious education by providing an education that addresses the academic and pastoral needs of each student and thus fulfil its mission statement "to help every individual to achieve the best they can through giving witness to the way of life inspired by Christ and taught by his Church".

**Grade 2**

### **Improvement since the last inspection**

There has been development since the last inspection but the action points have been met only partly.

**Grade 2**

## **What the school should do to improve further**

- Introduce more opportunities for student participation in liturgical preparation.
  - Further develop in-service training for religious education teachers to support the delivery of outstanding teaching
  - Secure the religious education curriculum to ensure that it is mapped fully against and meets all the requirements of the Curriculum Directory
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## **The Catholic Life of the School**

### **Leadership and Management**

The leadership of the school is strongly focused on the school's Catholic mission, on raising standards and on promoting the personal development of students. The headteacher, who has a positive presence about the school, leads a senior team that has created a shared sense of mission among staff. The inclusion of all is a central feature of the school reflecting its belief that all are created in the image and likeness of God. To this end specific school systems and resources are deployed to support the most disadvantaged, including a specialist Inclusion Team of three. There is a strong commitment to the thoughtful pastoral support of students, including the early identification of individual needs in order to provide timely intervention. Good links with local agencies and organisations support this commitment in a variety of innovative ways. Personal relationships throughout the school community are good and reinforced by the effective application of restorative justice principles.

Prayer and worship are central to the life of the school, benefitting from the outstanding lay chaplain who is an assistant headteacher and member of the school leadership team. He also line manages the religious education department and supports chaplaincy and Catholic life in the deanery, thus promoting good links throughout the local Church community. Links with parents and parishes are excellent. The Governing Body is very mindful of its responsibilities in relation to the school's Catholic foundation and is strengthening its understanding of them, and of Catholic religious education in particular, in order to discharge them more fully.

### **Grade 2**

### **The Prayer Life of the School**

Eucharist and prayer are prominent in the life of the school community. Whole school Mass is celebrated in school four times a year in addition to the Mass of Welcome and Year 11 Thanksgiving Mass celebrated in the parish church. Each House also marks its saints' day with a celebration of Mass. Fortnightly Mass is celebrated on Friday morning attended by two tutor groups. Five staff Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist have recently been joined by ten Year 11 students who were commissioned in Advent having been prepared by the Dean. Senior Ambassador students also distribute ashes on Ash Wednesday. Opportunities for students to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation in Advent and Lent have recently been complemented by the introduction of 'Listening Posts' so that those who are not Catholic or who choose not to receive the sacrament may also be included.

There is a range of formal and informal opportunities for students and staff to engage in prayer and acts of collective worship. An annual student survey monitors the impact of this provision. Daily prayer in tutor groups and assemblies is a significant feature of school life. It is very well supported by a comprehensive weekly prayer bulletin featuring a specific theme based on the liturgical cycle and ideas and resources to support prayer which is produced by the lay chaplain

and circulated to staff. The bulletin is also posted on the school website, displayed around the school and circulated to Worthing deanery clergy and primary schools. Each House has recently created their own prayer which is included in the school prayer book, one of a range of resources that is widely used to support daily prayer. Students contribute to devising and leading prayer and worship but the development of a chaplaincy team is seen as key in the context of developing student participation in liturgical preparation. Collaboration with art, music, dance and drama departments constitutes a significant strength.

The established retreat and spiritually programme provides a variety of scheduled and voluntary opportunities for students to develop their faith and includes day retreats and participation in deanery and diocesan liturgies and Taizé prayer evenings. Annually Year 9 students participate in a Taizé weekend experience and Year 10 students join a pilgrimage to Taizé, France. The assistant headteacher (Catholic Chaplaincy Ethos and Mission) makes a substantial contribution to the school community and across the Worthing deanery. He is line managed by the headteacher and is well supported by the school's own structures. Prayer and worship makes an excellent contribution to the spiritual and moral development of students.

## **Grade 1**

### **How effectively does the school /college promote community cohesion?**

The school is a strong community inspired by its Catholic faith. This manifested itself to a very high degree when a senior student died suddenly during the year. The generous endowment by students, parents, staff and others associated with the school of a foundation in the name of the student is an enduring example of this. Vertical tutor groups comprising students from all five year groups contribute significantly to the community spirit and ensure that students joining in Year 7 promptly feel members of the school community. Students, parents and staff all commented to inspectors on how vertical tutor groups supported the development of students, for example those joining the school having older students to advise and guide them while more senior students are able to exercise leadership in informal as well as formal situations. A thoughtful range of roles and responsibilities enables students to contribute positively to the school community while enhancing the self-esteem and leadership of student ambassadors. Over 20% of Year 10 students participate in the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme. Some past students now studying A Level maths regularly support current students in both Key Stage 3 and 4. Relationships throughout the school are excellent. Parents confirm that they are kept well informed of school activities as well as their children's progress instancing in particular the homework tracker that is available electronically.

There are very close links with parish clergy and Primary schools across the Worthing Deanery, all of whom receive the weekly prayer bulletin by email. These are facilitated by the assistant headteacher (Catholic Chaplaincy Ethos and Mission) and include an annual conference and termly meetings as well as a wide range of support including school chaplaincy and professional development for staff. Deanery-wide liturgical celebrations, including Mass and an Advent service are welcomed and well supported by Worthing Deanery schools. Primary students also have access to some of the school's specialist facilities, Year 4 undertaking baking in the domestic science facility during the inspection. A significant programme of charitable activity includes each House supporting a local charity as well as school support for Cabrini and Cafod. In addition the school supports and has significant links with the Kimilili school in Kenya. There is also an established tradition of 'Red Shirt' helpers supporting the annual diocesan pilgrimage to Lourdes.

## **Grade 1**

## Religious Education

### Achievement and Standards in Religious Education

Related to student ability, achievement and standards in religious education are good. School data shows achievement at GCSE in Religious Studies for the past three years to have been statistically significantly above expectations. In 2013 59% of all Year 11 students and 63% of all Year 10 students achieved at least GCSE grade C in Religious Studies, thus ensuring that achievement in 2014 will continue this positive trend. 29% of Year 11 students achieved their best GCSE grade in Religious Studies. 16% of Year 11 students achieved grades A\* or A. There is some difference in achievement between different groups of students. At Key Stage 3 58% of students reach level 5 or above which is less than in English.

In religious education lessons students displayed evidence of progress in becoming religiously literate and some parents commented upon how their children explored issues of faith with them and actively lived it out in their parish and community. Based on student interviews with inspectors, students have a positive attitude to religious education. Behaviour in lessons is overall good.

**Grade 2**

### Teaching and learning in Religious Education

Teaching and learning in religious education is good overall. Teachers have good subject knowledge, know their students well, display high expectations and strive to enable them to make good progress. Students are well disposed to religious education and generally work well with teachers and each other to further their learning despite some lack of differentiated teaching. There is a good range of resources and some use of student iPads is made with those students who have them.

There is evidence of a range of formative assessment being used, including some peer assessment. A structured pattern of half termly assessment complements the formative assessment and supports departmental tracking and intervention as appropriate. Most students have a clear understanding of their level or grade and what is required in order to improve it. Good lessons display an appropriate range of teaching strategies to engage and challenge students of all abilities. A Year 9 lesson on the Just War theory included students in a collaborative task resulting in a report back to the class, probing questions by the teacher and a realistic written task with clear grade descriptors to extend students' learning. Descriptors are also prominently displayed in classrooms. However, in some lessons there is a lack of focus and pace so students are not sufficiently engaged and there is a lack of learning.

**Grade 2**

### Quality of the Curriculum

A series of changes to the years in which the two GCSE Religious Studies modules are sat has impacted on the religious education curriculum in all Years. Key Stage 3 is confined to Years 7 and 8 while in Years 9-11 students prepare to sit the Edexcel GCSE Religious Studies papers 'Christianity' and 'Religion and Life based on a study of Christianity'. This has necessitated the writing of a two-year religious education course in Years 7-8 which, when complemented by the Year 9 GCSE course, will ensure that the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory for Schools*

and Colleges 2012 Areas of Study are covered. However in summer 2013 Year 10 students sat GCSE Religious Studies so current Year 11 students, unless they are preparing to re-sit the examination, are following a non-examination course based closely on a GCSE Religious Studies module that they have not previously sat, thereby providing the same rigour and challenge as in all their other GCSE courses. The Year 7-8 curriculum revision is taking account of students' previous learning and of the introduction of the 'Come and See' programme in primary schools includes material on world religions.

The curriculum time devoted to religious education is 8.4% overall, 6% in Year 8, 8% in Years 7, 10 and 11 and 12% in Year 9. Thus curriculum time is slightly less than the Bishops' Conference requirement, repeated in the *Curriculum Directory 2012*, of 10% as it is the core subject in Catholic schools.

**Grade 2**

### **Leadership and management of Religious Education**

The leadership of the subject is focused on the school's Catholic mission, on raising standards and promoting the faith development of students. The team of three specialist teachers, complemented by two further teachers with limited subject teaching commitments, has a shared sense of purpose. The department is well organised and managed by the head of department and professional development needs to promote student learning are identified and addressed. In recent years significant management time has been devoted to curriculum change as a result of evolving school policy concerning the year students are entered for GCSE Religious Studies. Dedicated well-appointed classrooms with inter-active whiteboards contribute to student learning. Formula funding based on curriculum presence results in adequate funding but less than that of other core subjects. Good links with parents, parishes and the diocese also contribute to the good progress made by most students.

The department is line managed by the assistant headteacher (Catholic Chaplaincy Ethos and Mission) responsible for spirituality which ensures that the subject contributes significantly to the spiritual and moral development of students. A local parish priest is the link governor who regularly visits the department and so can keep the Governing Body appropriately informed.

**Grade 2**