



Salvatorian College

High Road, Harrow Weald, London HA3 5DY

Date of inspection: 13 –14 November 2014

A. Classroom Religious Education

What is the overall effectiveness of classroom religious education in developing pupils' religious literacy?

Overall Grade 2

The Salvatorian College provides its students with good, and rapidly improving, opportunities to develop their religious literacy. The revised curriculum, new for this academic year, is based securely on the Curriculum Directory. It engages students well in their learning so that they are now making good progress across all year groups. Students' performance in religious education examinations has been lower than that in other core curricular subjects. This is now changing and students are set to achieve far more successfully than previously in religious education. Teaching is typically good and is reflected in its improved impact on learning. The leadership of the department models good practice and is working steadily to build a cohesive staff team. Liaison with the new chaplain, with the parish, and with the on-site religious community, is strong. The department's evaluation of its work is accurate and provides clear evidence of moving on with its improvement plans and clearly identified areas for development. The department is engaging well with the diocese and takes part in the range of diocesan events, including moderation. The contribution of the religious education department to the Catholic life of the school is growing and playing an increasingly positive role in the students' experience of this Catholic school. Governors and trustees are fully informed about the department and supportive of the current drive for improvement.

B. The Catholic life of the school

What is the overall effectiveness of the Catholic life of the school in developing pupils' experience of the richness of a Catholic way of living and believing?

Overall Grade 2

The provision and experience of Catholic life at the Salvatorian College is good. Religious education provision, although not yet meeting all the requirements of a highly successful school, has improved significantly, particularly in its subject leadership. The departmental leader is very well supported by the senior team, chaplain, trustees and governors.

Prayer and worship are increasingly central to the daily life of the college community. There is a growing awareness among staff and students of the importance of a distinctive Catholic ethos to underpin the work of supporting the flourishing of the students. There are strong links with the local religious community, with the parish, the wider diocesan family and increasingly with parents. Students very actively engage with the Common Good, although they are sometimes unclear as to the links between the Church's social teaching, care of those in need throughout the world, and the call to human flourishing. The senior leadership of the school is driving improvement on all fronts. The governors and trustees are working well in collaboration with the school to reinforce a shared Catholic identity and a secure future for the college.

Introduction

The inspectors would like to thank the governors, head teacher, staff, pupils and parents for their co-operation over the conduct of the inspection. The inspectors spent two days in school, visited ten lessons, two assemblies, joined the school in the celebration of Mass, and carried out a significant number of formal and informal interviews with school staff, the chaplain, pupils, chair of trustees and governors. Other evidence was gathered from contacts with parents through a questionnaire, scrutiny of books, samples of pupils' work in lessons, observation of pupils in and out of lessons and examination of school documents.

The inspection of the Salvatorian College, Harrow Wealdstone, was carried out under the requirements of the Canon 806 and Education Act 2005, and in accordance with the Framework for Section 48 Inspections approved by the Archbishop of Westminster. The inspectors are appointed by the Archbishop. The inspection reviews and evaluates how effective the school is in providing Catholic education. This process begins with the school's own self-evaluation.

Inspection Team

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Description of School

The school is a smaller than average secondary in the local authority of Harrow and the locality of Harrow Weald. The school serves the parish of St Joseph's, Wealdstone. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholic is 85%. The proportion of pupils who are from other Christian denominations is 8.75% and from other Faiths is almost 6%. The percentage of Catholic teachers in the school is just over 55%, three of whom teach religious education full-time and one, part-time. There are 651 pupils on roll. Sixteen pupils have a statement of special educational need. The proportion of pupils from ethnic minority groups is well above average as is the number of pupils speaking English as an additional language. There is an average proportion of families claiming free school meals. One hundred and thirty three pupils are eligible for the Pupil Premium.

The Salvatorian College was established in 1926 by the Fathers of the Salvatorian Order. The school is in the Trusteeship of the Order and became an academy in 2012. The college is scheduled to have a new building, starting within the next year.

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DFE Number: 310/5400
URN Number: 138458

Headteacher: Mr Paul Kassapian
Chair of Governors: Mr G Prazer

Date of previous inspection: November 2007

Key for inspection grades:

<i>Grade 1*</i>	<i>Outstanding</i>
<i>Grade 1</i>	<i>Very Good</i>
<i>Grade 2</i>	<i>Good</i>
<i>Grade 3</i>	<i>Requires improvement</i>
<i>Grade 4</i>	<i>Causing Concern</i>

A. Classroom Religious Education

How religiously literate are pupils in the teachings and traditions of the Catholic faith and how well do they know, understand and appreciate the importance of religious faith and practice in everyday life?

What has improved in classroom religious education since the last inspection?

Since the last inspection, the college has faced significant challenges in the development of religious education. At the beginning of this school year, a substantive head of department was appointed after several unsuccessful attempts to find a suitable candidate for the post. Outcomes in GCSE religious education and at Key Stage 3 are beginning to improve because of the support of senior managers in promoting higher aspirations, the effective use of data to clarify progress and attainment and the on-going development of the teaching in religious education, guided by the new head of department. A new chaplain has also been appointed to strengthen the school's promotion of the Catholic life of its community. A new scheme of work is in place and the development of staff is on-going. There is a well-considered emphasis on the development of religious literacy, particularly in Key Stage 3. The school has made a good start on its improvement journey for classroom religious education. The use of the diocesan initial base-line assessment is proving a useful tool in informing the department of gaps in students' understanding and knowledge.

How well does the content of classroom religious education meet the requirements of the Curriculum Directory?

Grade 2

The religious education curriculum has been extensively reviewed and a new scheme of work has been in place since September, following the appointment of a subject leader. It is well grounded in the requirements of the Curriculum Directory. Programmes of study have been carefully directed to meet the students' needs very well and at the same time encompassing fully the four strands of the Directory. However, too little time has passed since the introduction of the scheme of work to see fully its impact on the students' performance and their growth in religious literacy.

The small departmental team are working collaboratively to develop further creative resources for students and staff. There is close cooperation with other staff such as those who work in special needs so that resources are used creatively to help learning and build on previous knowledge. The curriculum has also been geared to build progressively on the gaps in students' understanding as surfaced through the diocesan base-line assessment. Good liaison with the Chaplain and strengthening links with the Salvatorian community are increasing the contribution of the department in the whole school drive to promote the spiritual development of the students. The teaching of other faiths is embedded in the programmes of study at both Key Stages so that all major faiths are covered.

Pupils' achievement (as well as attainment and progress) in religious education

Grade 3

Students' attainment in religious education requires improvement. Inspection findings agree with the school's judgement that students should be doing better given their starting points. The previous turbulence within the department has meant that students' rates of progress have been slower than in other core areas. In 2014, GCSE results at 66% were 10 percentage points below English and 13 percentage points below mathematics. At Key Stage 3, there is historical underachievement, particularly for the most able.

The regular school data drop shows that the school is making up ground with regard to the students' attainment and progress. Evidence suggests that the current Year 11 will achieve much more in line with what is expected from their starting points. However, the legacy of staff turbulence and subsequent underachievement means that GCSE outcomes may fall short of the school's ambitious target. The school has a helpful raising attainment plan with a strong focus on the close monitoring of students' on-going progress and early mentoring and intervention. The greater stability in the religious education department is a key factor in the increasingly successful efforts to provide for students' academic progress in religious education.

The development of the students' religious literacy is at the heart of the department's drive to support students' learning. The department is using the diocesan base-line assessment well to identify gaps in knowledge when students enter Year 7. Younger students are making good gains in using religious vocabulary as in the Year 7 lessons on prayer. The department checks on students' progress are increasingly rigorous and moderation procedures much more secure than previously. Diocesan attainment targets are used effectively to inform staff and students' work. The impact of this on-going work is clearly seen in the students' very positive attitudes to learning in religious education.

The quality of teaching

Grade 2

Typically, teaching in religious education is good and is reflected in the students' improving progress. There is a positive climate for learning in all lessons with students engaged and eager to succeed. Teachers work hard to foster students' efforts in thinking deeply about the areas under consideration. In a Year 7 lesson, for example, creative resources facilitated a thought-provoking discussion about conversations with God. Year 11, also, were challenged through the very good use of historical information to consider attitudes to marriage over time, the background to these attitudes, and their congruence with Catholic teaching.

In a few lessons, however, lesson planning does not take enough account of the range of ability within the group or ensure that there are enough opportunities to probe the students' understanding of their work. Students' work is marked regularly although procedures for checking written work do not always follow the departmental guidelines so that students' response to guidance is sometimes confused. Nevertheless, staff know the students well, have very good working relationships and have high expectations of both behaviour and outcomes.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of religious education

Grade 2

Past turbulence within the department has left a legacy of challenges for the present subject leader who joined the school at the beginning of this academic year. The subject leader's short-term impact on the work of the department is good. There is a well-considered plan to raise attainment, improve the students' experience of religious education in the classroom, and build relationships both within the department, with the chaplain, also new to the school, and with the parish and trustees.

The subject leader has a clear view of how to take the department forward. His quiet determination to strive for the improvements needed has already resulted in a new scheme of work, geared to fill gaps in the students' previous learning in Year 7, and maximise outcomes at the end of Year 11. He has established robust systems to develop consistency within religious education, support departmental staff, develop teaching and refine checks on students' progress. Resources are regularly shared and the professional development of the staff is a priority. Self-evaluation is honest and accurate and reflects the professional integrity of the department. The subject leader is very well supported by the head teacher and leadership team. There is a joint understanding that

current issues of time, staffing, resources and accommodation will be addressed, particularly in the new building.

What should the school do to improve further in classroom religious education?

- Implement fully the raising attainment plan so that students achieve at least as well in religious education as in the other core subjects.
- Continue to develop the quality of teaching and learning by:-
 - ensuring that students' learning is checked carefully in every lesson and that they have time to reflect and absorb ideas and facts
 - simplify the language used in some lessons so that students have a command of vocabulary that supports the development of genuine religious literacy
 - refine the procedures for eliciting students' responses to marked work so that they are in a position to fully understand how to improve
 - further develop the resources available to staff so that they plan a range to match the interests of students with varying styles of learning.

B. The Catholic life of the school

How well do pupils experience the richness of a Catholic way of living and believing through all areas of school life?

What has improved since the last inspection?

The school has recently appointed a Chaplain and Head of Department to strengthen significantly the work of the religious education department and the promotion of the Catholic life of the school. This is a significant step forward for the college following a turbulent period of instability. There are well-considered strategies to improve outcomes for students at both Key Stages and to develop the involvement of staff and students in a vibrant Catholic community. Staff, and increasingly, students, are supported by the Chaplain in the provision and preparation of prayer, including within assemblies.

The place of religious education as the core of the curriculum – time, staffing, accommodation, resources, budget

Grade 2

The school does not yet meet the Bishops' Conference recommended time allocation for religious education at Key Stages 3 and 4. The College acknowledges that this is not yet in place because of the legacy of staffing and other issues associated with the department in past years. School leaders have a clear understanding that as soon as possible, this time allocation must be addressed. Equally, they are clear that the recruitment of high quality staff to boost the department and provide parity with other core areas is essential as is the re-siting of the departmental teaching area to lie at the heart of the school when the new building is complete. The new subject leader and chaplain are well supported by trustees and governors as well as by school leaders. Although the apparent allocation of resources appears less than in other core areas, school leaders are generous in supplementing this allocation when needed.

The experience of Catholic worship – prayer and liturgy – for the whole school community.

Grade 2

Salvatorian College is a strong community, open and welcoming to all. There are many opportunities to reflect on what it means to be part of the Church and the wider community through retreat programmes, daily prayer and discussion groups. Liturgical events, assembly themes and daily prayers reflect the rhythm of the Church's calendar and the Gospel values are embedded in the school's ethos. Mass is central to the experience offered to the students through their participation in the parish Mass. Every week, a group of students attends the parish Mass with the congregation in the adjacent Church.

Students have knowledge, respect and tolerance for other faiths and are encouraged to share their own experiences within school. There are regular opportunities for staff and students to pray together with good resources to support tutor group prayers. Students were observed in quiet reflection, sharing and discussing in lessons, at Mass and in assemblies. They are encouraged to participate in the planning and delivery of assemblies, although students are less involved in planning for the liturgy. They appreciate time for reflection. Collective worship is well organised, reflective and relevant to the lives of the students. Although students have regular opportunities to lead in

prayer, they are at the early stages of recognising their central roles in the leadership of the spiritual life of the school. The newly appointed Chaplain has had a very positive impact on the school and although plans are embryonic, there is a clear sense of direction and development in monitoring and evaluating the quality of experience of prayer and worship. Events such as the annual mission week, and the celebration of Founder's day are highlights in the school calendar. Traditional Catholic practices, such as the Stations of the Cross and the Rosary are part of the annual calendar. Sacramental practice is encouraged through opportunities for reconciliation in Advent and Lent, as well as in preparation for First Communion and Confirmation.

The commitment and contribution to the Common Good – service and social justice.

Grade 2

The Salvatorian College is an inclusive community where students, whatever their backgrounds, feel secure. They have good opportunities to flourish through acting as role models, for example, through the prefect system, as peer workers and as support workers for younger pupils. Students have opportunities to reflect on the needs of vulnerable members of the wider community through their charitable outreach work such as providing Christmas hampers for the elderly and through fundraising for local charities. Plans are in place to widen the scope of fundraising to support national and international campaigns, and to foster links with the wider Salvatorian community in the Congo and in Austria. The Chaplain recognizes that there is more to do to develop students' understanding of the link between their call to service, and the theology supporting their actions. Within school, systems support the value placed on community and relationships and reflect the schools motto 'Deo Duce', articulated through a call to inspire, achieve and motivate. Students sum this up in their catch phrase 'iamsalvo'. Pupils from different backgrounds are recognised and valued and every opportunity is taken to encourage mutual respect. This creates an atmosphere in which pupils have the confidence to flourish, celebrating their gifts and talents. Their spiritual, moral, cultural and social development is good.

Enabling the authentic partnership between parents, school and parish as an integral part of the Diocese, particularly through its relationship with the Diocesan Bishop and those acting on his behalf.

Grade 2

The school enjoys very positive relationships with parents and the local parish. The school website and regular newsletters serve to inform parents of the various aspects of school life. Nevertheless, a quarter (around 5% of the total parent body) of the 125 parents who responded to the questionnaire did not consider they were well informed about what students were doing in religious education. The school does provide weekly newsletter for parents and has much useful information on its website. The newly appointed Chaplain has done much to strengthen relationships between the school, parish and local feeder schools. The parish and Society of the Divine Saviour are very supportive of this Catholic College.

There are very positive links with the Diocese and the family of Catholic secondary schools, many of whom have lent support through staffing and expertise. The religious education department is involved in diocesan moderation and professional development events. Senior leaders call on the Westminster Education Service for support with training and recruitment of staff as required.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management in promoting the Catholic life of the school.

Grade 2

The sense of common purpose to improve the school stems from the clear vision of the leadership team of what a Catholic school should be. The head teacher, senior team, chaplain and departmental team are all driven to fulfil the school's motto, 'iamsalvo'. Governors and trustees have a clear understanding of their roles and the issues facing the college. They are actively involved in the life of the school and are generous in their support.

Middle leaders, alongside senior staff, are increasingly encouraging an aspirational ethos and a strong respect for the students, well founded in a vision of a Catholic school. The college's journey of improvement in the quality of the education provided is paralleled by its journey to become a very effective Catholic school.

What should the school do to develop further the Catholic life of the school?

- As soon as possible, ensure that religious education is given the 10% time allocation recommended by the Bishop's Conference.
- Rapidly review the accommodation provided for religious education so that it is seen as at the heart of the school, particularly in the light of the proposed new building.
- Give high priority to the recruitment of sufficient quality staff in religious education so that there is parity with the other core areas.
- Continue to explore new and innovative ways of engaging students in personal reflection through an expansion of the retreat programme and through involving them more actively in preparing for liturgical worship.
- Explore further how the chaplaincy team can capture the students' voice on how best to promote Catholic life and ensure the quality of worship.
- Take forward plans to ensure that students have a sound understanding of the theology underpinning their charity work.