



SECTION 48 INSPECTION REPORT

Canonical Inspection under Canon 806 on behalf of the
Archbishop of Southwark and Inspection of
Denominational Education under Section 48
of the Education Act 2005

URN 102681

Wimbledon College
Edge Hill
London
SW19 4NS

Inspection date: 7 - 8 JULY 2015

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SECTION 48

Introduction

Description of the school

Wimbledon College is an above average size, boys' Catholic school under the Trusteeship of the Society of Jesus. It is situated in the Merton deanery of the Archdiocese of Southwark. It is maintained by the Merton Local Authority. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholics is 93.6%. 35% of pupils are recruited from five feeder Catholic primary schools. The overall number of primary schools from which pupils were recruited is 56.

The school takes pupils from 11–18 years. The number of pupils currently on roll is 1265 with 270 in the Sixth Form. The attainment of pupils on entry for last year's Year 11 was in line with the national average. Current Year 11 was above average and for Key Stage 3 pupils it is significantly above average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is 18.5% which is below average. 187 pupils receive Pupil Premium funding. 244 (19%) receive support through their statements of Special Educational Needs (SEN) or because of other learning needs. 57% of pupils are from ethnic minorities and the proportion of pupils from homes where English is an additional language is 18.3% which is above average.

Date of previous inspection:

27/01/2010

Overall Grade:

2

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1
Grade 2

Outstanding
Good

Grade 3
Grade 4

Requires improvement
Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school in providing Catholic Education

GRADE
1

Wimbledon College is an outstanding school overall. It has improved on the 'Good' grade given in the last inspection. It has been in the trusteeship of the Jesuits since its foundation in 1892.

The Governors of the College are outstanding. They are very active in monitoring, challenging and supporting the work of the College. There is a governor with specific responsibility for this and a new committee has been set up this year to oversee Cura Personalis (care for the individual). The minutes of meetings show that the Governors are fully informed about Catholic life and Religious Education. Since appointing the first lay Headteacher, they have continued to ensure that the Jesuit understanding of teaching and prayer is lived in and shared by the community.

The leadership of the Headteacher is outstanding. He has ensured that there continues to be a distinct Jesuit identity which all pupils manifest in their lives. He has a clear understanding of where the College is and the steps that are needed both to maintain and build on the College's achievements.

Pupils said that they felt safe and that bullying, when it occurs, is effectively dealt with. Pupils of all ages, particularly those pupils in the sixth form, are fiercely proud of being members of the College. In their daily lives they manifest their understanding of the Jesuit idea of being 'men for others'. They describe the College as outstanding because, as one sixth form pupil stated, "the constant desire to get better makes us outstanding."

Of the parental responses, 96% were extremely positive and supportive of the work of the College in nurturing their children.

What steps need to be taken to improve further?

Governors, Headteacher and staff should:

- Ensure that Religious Education teachers receive further training to continue the improvement in their teaching with particular emphasis on paired/group work, high level questioning and providing learning activities which are more challenging for higher ability pupils.
- Continue to develop marking and dialogue between teachers and pupils to improve learning.
- Continue to develop the Sixth Form Faith Days to embed the spiritual experiences and to ensure they are cross referenced with the Curriculum Directory.
- Ensure that the 10% allocation for Religious Education at Key Stage 3 is in place, as planned, for 2016-2017.

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school

Pupils take full advantage of the many opportunities to contribute to and participate in the Catholic life of the school. In discussions, pupils confirmed that they are always involved with assemblies and Masses by reading, serving or singing in the choir. One pupil, who has just returned from performing in St Mark's in Venice with the Choir, said that the opportunity to sing to inspire others was why he did it. There are also many occasions, for example, Year assemblies, when they prepare and present the assemblies with the support of their teachers.

The extensive pupil feedback from retreats and sixth form leavers' reflect the impact of the Catholic life on them. For example, one younger pupil said, "I felt relaxed and at one with God." A sixth form pupil commented that, "The College has made me more empathetic and understanding of others."

The Jesuit vision permeates throughout the College and impacts on the life and work of the whole community. Pupils are at ease talking about being, "men for others". Pupils of all ages spoke knowledgeably and confidently about the impact of the Jesuit message of living and working for the glory of God. Relationships within the community show the obvious mutual respect and care they have for each other.

The awareness that, "love is shown in deeds" is evident in their response to the needs of others in the international and local community. There is a wide range of fundraising activities. In 2012 the College established links with a Jesuit school in Zimbabwe and this continues to develop. Other programmes to raise funds and awareness of need have included the sponsored homeless sleep out, engagement with the Cardinal Hume Centre and working with the Association of Christians Against Torture by sending Christmas cards for people unjustly imprisoned.

Inspectors felt that the senior pupils should be encouraged to take more of a lead in raising awareness of the needs of others and in organising fundraising activities. The pupils said that they were very keen to take more leadership responsibility in the College in this area.

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education

The GCSE results are good at 68% A*-C. Although the results were down from 2013, more so than other core subjects, they are not in line with the upward trend in Religious Education over the previous three years. They do not reflect the engagement and enjoyment of the pupils which they articulated very clearly. The College maintains that the 2014 results were unexpected and governors discussed the external marking. The department responded by introducing more focussed tracking so that certain pupils were identified and supported more carefully with extra study sessions. Key Stage 3 attainment had increased over the last three years. 86% of pupils achieved level 6/7. However, inspectors felt that the College needed to monitor moderation to guarantee it was rigorous, possibly using partner schools, to ensure the accuracy of the levels awarded.

Pupils, both in the classroom and in discussions with inspectors were all very happy with their Religious Education lessons. They recognised and appreciated the various ways of learning, especially interacting with others in pairs or small groups, although inspectors considered this an area for development. In lessons, pupils behaved well and showed respect both for the teacher and each other. Pupils were keen to do well. The presentation in the exercise books was of a high standard and showed they were proud of their work.

How well pupils respond to and participate in Collective Worship

Acts of Worship engage all pupils and inspire a sincere reverence and respect. In the assembly they entered in silence and responded keenly to the questions about the influence of Jesuit role models. Inspectors suggested that as assemblies take place in the hall, there could be a more obvious religious impression, such as a candle, a crucifix and some quiet religious music.

Pupils prepare and participate in all forms of Collective Worship. There are formal prayers which pupils say, but they acknowledged that they often contribute their own prayers. In the acts of worship observed during the inspection there were periods of quiet reflection which allowed pupils to talk to God about their own intentions.

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How well leaders, governors and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life of the school and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils

The Governors, Headteacher and senior leaders, have demonstrated a deep commitment to the Church's mission in education. They are inspired by and committed to the Jesuit vision that, "Schools should be places where people are believed in, honoured and cared for." The strong Jesuit identity throughout College life is recognised and valued by pupils, especially sixth formers. The Governors ensure that they are fully informed of the achievements of the College and they actively support the Headteacher.

There is a link Governor and in the last year a new committee was formed, "Admissions, Welfare and Religious Formation", with particular emphasis on overseeing the Cura Personalis aspect of College life. The Governors have ensured that retreats and assemblies have changed to develop a greater sense of ethos and faith.

It is evident from the pupils and the general spirit of care they receive, that the Headteacher and Chaplain have a major impact on the growth of spirituality in the school community. As a result, pupils are aware of and are actively involved in the College's mission where their faith is reflected in their good works. As one pupil said that it was about, "doing the best of your ability for yourself and for others."

Each year there is a full day's CPD on the spiritual and religious dimension of the school's work, which is attended by all teaching and classroom support staff. The School Development Plan has a detailed and extensive section on the Catholic and spiritual life of the College.

How well leaders, governors and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan and implement for improvement to outcomes for pupils

Leaders, governors and managers have a detailed tracking system for Religious Education. They monitor the work of the Religious Education Department through regular lesson observations and this year, have added more focussed follow-up observations to monitor developments in identified areas of concern.

There is rigorous tracking of pupils' progress which identifies pupils who need extra support or challenge. The Head of Department has introduced more frequent module tests which enable him to track performance and identify pupils in need of more intensive support.

The GCSE analysis for 2014 was an honest reflection, although inspectors felt that concern over exam marking may have been only one aspect which needed addressing. The evidence showed that leaders at all levels expressed a clear understanding of the action that was necessary to improve the attainment and progress of all pupils and acted promptly by meeting with the Diocesan Advisor and by developing more focussed tracking and intervention.

The quality of teaching and how purposeful learning is in Religious Education

Teaching in its widest sense is typically good. Lessons were generally planned jointly by teachers as a way of mutual support and to ensure that planning was thorough and that all pupils had access to the same learning activities in lessons.

Behaviour was excellent at all times, even though the whole class 'Q and A' sessions were occasionally too long which resulted in some pupils becoming disengaged. Many were erudite in class discussions and were able to move the lesson forward, but their contributions were not always used for other pupils' learning.

It was clear that pupils knew what was expected of them whichever lesson they were in. Teachers were positive and praised pupils appropriately. In most lessons pupils were identified and encouraged to achieve higher outcomes.

The quality of pupils' classwork is very high and they take pride in their work. Marking is consistent, but there were often not enough suggestions for improvement. Pupils achieve well at GCSE and there is an upward trend of attainment at Key Stage 3. They spoke in glowing terms about their lessons and their enjoyment of the lessons was evident in their manner and attitude in class. All pupils said that they appreciated the variety of styles and tasks. Sixth form pupils, in particular, remembered that they were well taught and that they appreciated the enthusiasm of their teachers.

The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum promotes pupils' learning

At Key Stage 3, the College uses various resources to meet the needs of pupils. It uses ICONS, 'The Way, The Truth and The Life' and 'All About Faith' to ensure that the curriculum links to, and is mapped across, the Curriculum Directory.

At GCSE, the College follows the Edexcel course, unit 3, Religion and life with reference to Roman Catholic Christianity, and unit 10, Roman Catholic Christianity.

They offer A Level Philosophy of Religion and Religious Ethics.

General Religious Education is delivered through focus days for all sixth formers. A wide range of topics and issues are covered: Ignatian spirituality; experiencing other faiths; theology experience at Heythrop; social justice initiatives. This ensures that the curriculum is centred on the whole person.

The time allocated for Key Stage 4 is 10%, but at Key Stage 3, the 6.6% does not meet the requirements of the Bishops' Conference. Structural curriculum changes have added one more lesson to Religious Education each week, and the 10% will be met by 2016-2017.

This is balanced by the continuing upward trend in Key Stage 3 attainment and by the overwhelming enjoyment of pupils whose commitment to the College in Religious

Education and the Jesuit idea of being 'men for others' was obvious. The pupils are fiercely proud of being part of this community.

Sixth form pupils were honest about their own faith journeys, but in discussions, they all acknowledged that the focus days were enjoyable, challenging but ultimately rewarding.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the College is outstanding. It is central to the life of the school. Pupils come together for daily prayer, weekly Masses and assemblies, and solemn liturgy according to the Church's calendar and to celebrate special occasions such as the sixth form leavers. Pupils confirmed that prayer is embedded into their lives and that they were at ease talking about their faith, especially those older pupils who were at different stages on their faith journey.

The retreat programme is firmly established and provides all pupils in Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 with opportunities for prayer, reflection and personal spiritual development. Pupils are able to articulate their understanding and appreciation of the Jesuit identity which is central to worship and prayer.

The Chaplain is passionate about his role and the importance of providing regular and meaningful experiences for pupils. His powerful impact is clear in the quality of worship which inspectors observed and in the written and verbal feedback from pupils. The chaplaincy room adjoins the Chapel which is open all day for staff and pupils.

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