

Sacred Heart High School

212 Hammersmith Road, Hammersmith, London W6 7DG

Inspection dates

26–27 September 2017

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
16 to 19 study programmes	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- Sacred Heart High School is an exceptional school led by an outstanding headteacher. The headteacher, together with her senior team, works tirelessly to promote the principle of academic excellence on which the school was founded.
- Senior leaders have established a caring environment where pupils from all backgrounds excel.
- Teachers use assessment information highly effectively to plan lessons and monitor pupils' progress. Pupils make excellent progress in school and achieve outstanding outcomes in public examinations.
- Governance is strong; governors are highly active in their support of the school.
- There is a strong culture of safeguarding. Staff and pupils are well informed about possible local risks to pupils' safety and how to avoid them.
- Senior leaders constantly reflect on how they can do even more to support their pupils.
- There is a strong Catholic ethos in the school and pupils show profound respect for other faiths, cultures, and lifestyles.
- The sixth form opened in 2013. It is now outstanding. Leaders are developing teaching and learning to further support students in the transition to the new A-level courses from GCSE.
- Pupils show excellent attitudes to learning, and they maintain high standards of behaviour throughout the school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Leaders in the sixth form should improve teaching, learning and assessment even more by securing active engagement from all students, leading to further improved outcomes.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The headteacher drives a culture of constant improvement. Since her appointment, a strong focus has been placed on improving teaching and learning. Together with her senior team, she looks for best practice outside the school, both from across England and in some international cities, adapting this to support her own pupils.
- Leaders use their expertise to support other schools and to learn from them. This includes through the teaching school and the international group of Sacred Heart schools.
- Leaders set exceptionally high targets for themselves and their pupils. They promote an ethos that 'postcode and background must not limit pupils' outcomes'. This ethos is realised in the very good progress made by disadvantaged pupils.
- The headteacher and her senior leaders have a very clear understanding of the school's performance now, and where they are aiming in the future. Future plans include a new centre for well-being and mental health to reduce barriers to learning for those pupils in need.
- Training for teachers is focused and effective. All staff who responded to the school questionnaire were hugely positive about the training they have received. This includes teachers who are new to the profession.
- Leaders' use of funding to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has significant impact. Pastoral leaders support all pupils in the school, with a strong focus on the needs of disadvantaged pupils and pupils with any other form of need. Disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make progress which is much greater than pupils with the same starting points nationally.
- The curriculum is adapted to meet the needs of all pupils. The enrichment programme provides a wide range of extra-curricular activities. This programme includes sports, book clubs, drama, music, and many other activities; for example, during the inspection a group of students were taking part in an outdoor expedition. The piano in the cloisters is used by pupils during breaks, and visitors are often welcomed by the sound of this music.
- Leaders actively promote equality of opportunity. Pupils are encouraged to discuss other faiths and cultures. They develop a keen sense of respect and tolerance for others.
- The pupil premium and Year 7 catch-up funding is used very effectively. The impact of this funding is seen in the excellent outcomes achieved by disadvantaged pupils. Year 7 pupils who join the school with low starting points in reading and mathematics make very strong progress. Those who find reading difficult are given reading support. These pupils improve their reading skills because of this support. Pupils say they now enjoy reading and really like the support they get from older pupils.

- Prior to the inspection, information about the use of pupil premium funding and Year 7 catch-up funding was not available on the school's website. This omission was corrected during the first day of the inspection.
- Leaders give parents regular information about their daughters' progress and how to support them. Parents who responded to the Ofsted online questionnaire say that the school communicates effectively with them. Ninety-nine per cent of parents who responded say they would recommend the school.
- Leaders promote a strong Catholic, spiritual ethos within the school. Pupils develop a deep sense of moral purpose and understand the impact of their actions on others. They have opportunities to work with and support the local community. This prepares pupils extremely well for life in modern Britain.

Governance of the school

- Governors have undertaken a skills audit and a review by an external consultant. Governance is now a real strength of the school.
- Governors are aware of the strengths of the school and the areas for development.
- Governors acted on all the recommendations in the review.
- Governors work closely with different areas across the school, including a highly effective safeguarding governor.
- Governors support and challenge school leaders. They contributed fully to the development of the new teaching and learning policy.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff are given clear guidance around safeguarding. Every member of the school community understands their role and responsibility in keeping pupils safe.
- Senior leaders are fully trained and have relevant qualifications to manage their safeguarding roles. The process of recruiting new staff is rigorous and ensures that all relevant checks are carried out.
- Pupils who spoke to inspectors said they feel safe and know how to keep themselves safe. Through the curriculum pupils learn about risks to their safety, including bullying, cyber bullying, potential issues in the local community, and how to avoid these dangers.
- Leaders have developed a culture of vigilance, and pastoral leaders monitor vulnerable pupils very carefully. Pupils express confidence that staff really care about their safety.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Teachers have excellent subject knowledge, and make lessons interesting and fun for pupils. Pupils are keen to learn, and take intense pride in their work. Pupils were pleased to share their work with inspectors during the inspection.

- Leaders give high-quality information to teachers about their pupils' needs and starting points. Teachers use this information extremely well to plan stimulating lessons and set challenging targets for their pupils. Pupils' progress is exceptional; any pupils with low starting points are supported very effectively and quickly catch up with their peers.
- Teachers deepen pupils' understanding by use of highly effective questioning. Pupils thrive in lessons and display curiosity. They are encouraged to support their peers, and do so readily and regularly. For example, pupils are able to explain difficult concepts to one another without needing to be prompted by the teacher.
- Where pupils need support, teachers provide this. Teachers also give reports to parents in which strategies are clearly outlined that can be used to support their daughters. There is excellent communication between the school and parents. Parents were very positive in their responses to the online questionnaire about all aspects of the school, including support for their daughters.
- Leaders have an exact understanding about the quality of teaching. They develop their views through their own observations and by asking pupils. Teachers say they are supported well in developing and improving their teaching.
- Teachers give very effective guidance to pupils in class and in their books to support their learning. They encourage pupils to learn from their mistakes. Pupils, especially the sixth-form students, say this is a great help in their learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils are very self-confident because leaders establish a culture which promotes this. Teachers use extremely positive language in class. Pupils are highly confident in their learning because of this support.
- Staff strongly promote healthy lifestyles in lessons and in the canteen. Physical education teachers thoroughly check and place emphasis on pupils' health and fitness. Pupils take an extremely keen interest in developing as healthy individuals.
- A strong personal, social, health and citizenship programme for pupils includes outstanding preparation for life in modern Britain. Pupils develop extremely mature, caring and sensitive attitudes. Last year, pupils raised over £20,000 for charity.
- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe. There are lessons about online safety, radicalisation, and child sexual exploitation.
- Leaders are constantly looking for new methods and research to support pupils who find school and learning a challenge, for example they have introduced a new, streamlined online system to check behaviour. There are very few exclusions. The school needs to make use of alternative provision for pupils only on very rare occasions, and, even then, only for short-term interventions.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils show exacting standards of behaviour throughout the school. Pupils conduct themselves very well in social times and in lessons. They show respect for their teachers and each other. Pupils manage their own behaviour very effectively.
- Teachers have developed a culture of openness and tolerance. The incidence of bullying and prejudice incidents are exceptionally low. Pupils say when they do occur they are dealt with effectively.
- Pastoral leaders rigorously watch and support disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have other needs. Pupils' attendance, including the attendance of vulnerable pupils, is well above national averages.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- The school has very strong systems for monitoring pupils' performance, and tracks closely pupils' academic achievement. Any barriers to learning are tackled swiftly. Pupils who start in Year 7 with attainment behind that of their peers are given extremely effective support. By Year 11, any differences in attainment between groups of pupils have significantly reduced. Pupils make excellent progress.
- Teaching is very strong in all subjects. In books reviewed by inspectors, disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are shown to be making very good progress. Pupils' books show strong progress over time. Pupils' progress and attainment in GCSE examinations, especially in English and mathematics, is outstanding. Disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve outcomes which are above national averages.
- The school uses the pupil premium funding very effectively. Disadvantaged pupils make substantial progress because of a range of highly effective specialist support. Teachers are quick to provide support for disadvantaged pupils if they appear to be falling behind their peers. In public examinations, disadvantaged pupils achieve much stronger outcomes than non-disadvantaged pupils in other schools.
- Pupils are encouraged to read widely. They are very articulate and are confident in holding conversations both with adults and with their peers. This also shows the extent to which they develop as thoughtful young women.
- Leaders provide extremely effective careers guidance. This prepares pupils very well for employment and the next stages in their lives. Pupils said that they find this guidance very useful when making GCSE subject choices and selecting higher education destinations.

16 to 19 study programmes

Outstanding

- Leaders in the sixth form are extremely effective. They have high expectations for their students. They know their students very well as individuals. They set demanding targets for the students and carry out regular reviews of their progress against these targets. Outcomes for students are improving year on year.
- Leaders constantly review the 16 to 19 study programmes to ensure that they meet the needs of their students. For example, the school changed the business course to a vocational programme. Outcomes in this new programme last summer were exceptional.
- There are no students in 2017 who need to develop their English and mathematical skills in the sixth form through further study at GCSE level. In 2016, there were a small number of students who needed to develop mathematical skills and they all achieved substantial progress in their GCSE mathematics.
- Students' attendance in the sixth form is above national averages and their punctuality is exceptional. Students benefit from the excellent quality of support from their teachers, who encourage them to arrive on time.
- Teachers share effective practice to support their students' learning. Science staff developed support booklets for students who were struggling with some of their work. The students in science made excellent use of these booklets and improved rapidly. Similar booklets are now being developed in other subjects to accelerate students' progress.
- All students have personal careers interviews. They are given excellent support with applications. Last year, 92% of students progressed to higher education.
- Leaders provide a wide range of enrichment opportunities for students. All students contribute to work in the community, supporting younger pupils, and international charities. Sixth-form students say they really enjoy these opportunities to become one of the school's 'responsible citizens'.
- Teachers give students very clear guidance on keeping safe. Topics covered in lessons include the dangers of radicalisation and child sexual exploitation. Students say they feel very safe in school and the local area and are well prepared for life after school.
- Most students remain in the school to progress from Year 12 into Year 13. The school offers A-level courses and one vocational course in business. Those students who struggle with subjects are given excellent additional support by the teachers. However, the few students who are unable to cope with the demands of A level are given appropriate support in finding alternative courses. Pupils make excellent progress in the sixth form, and their outcomes in public examinations continue to improve every year.
- Leaders say that a few students do not show enough initiative in driving their learning. Teachers are further developing teaching, learning and assessment to ensure that students can cope with the new framework for A levels. Already, this development is having an impact on improving the students' outcomes even further.

School details

Unique reference number	137935
Local authority	Hammersmith and Fulham
Inspection number	10036378

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 19
Gender of pupils	Girls
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,024
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	140
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	John Sills
Headteacher	Marian Doyle
Telephone number	020 8748 7600
Website	www.sacredhearhigh.org.uk
Email address	info@sacredh.lbhf.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about pupil premium funding, Year 7 catch-up funding, or the charging and remissions policy on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- Sacred Heart High School is a Catholic school. The school opened its sixth-form provision in 2013.
- The school converted to an academy in 2012.

- The school uses alternative provision run by the TBAP Multi-Academy Trust.
- Sacred Heart High School is a teaching school and supports 55 other schools.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 39 teaching sessions, including lessons. They met with senior leaders, middle leaders, and teachers who are new to the profession. They also conducted a telephone call with a local authority representative.
- There were 245 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents.
- The inspection team considered 44 written responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors received one phone call from a parent.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils and spoke to pupils informally around the school.
- Inspectors carried out a review of work in pupils' books and scrutinised a range of documents relating to safeguarding, behaviour, attendance, and pupils' academic progress.

Inspection team

Joan McVittie, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Hayley Follett	Ofsted Inspector
Duncan Kamyra	Ofsted Inspector
Peter Rodin	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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