



ST MICHAEL'S CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

THE SCHOOL AND ITS CATCHMENT AREA

St Michael's is a Catholic Comprehensive School with a mission statement '*Bringing Christ to All and All to Christ*'. The school is an 11 – 18 co-educational comprehensive school with a strong philosophy of lifelong learning. Its motto in keeping with its Dominican roots and heritage is 'Veritas' ('Truth'). The school was founded by the Dominican Sisters of Rosary Priory, Bushey Heath in 1955 and since then the ethos of the school has been distinctively religious. The mission statement, motto and spiritual, moral, cultural and social education (SMSC) permeate the whole of school life.

St. Michael's is located in the South West of Hertfordshire, in the Leavesden Ward of the district council of Three Rivers and is at the edge of the adjacent borough of Watford and close to the M1 and M25 motorways. The immediate area is mainly residential and two other secondary schools, a special school and a Catholic primary school are within close proximity. St Michael's converted to Academy Status in March 2012 under the Diocese of Westminster Academy Trust.

The school has been twinned with a clinic in Rwanda since 2005 and more recently with the 'Mission of Hope' project in Ethiopia. The students and staff have raised over £400K to support a variety of Social Justice projects.

St. Michael's serves not only the Catholic parish of Our Lady and St Michael, Garston, in which it is situated, but also all the parishes of the Watford Deanery and beyond. The school works closely with the parishes and families to inspire young Catholics 'to make a difference'. The Catholic primary school close by is one of our main feeder schools but students come from a number of schools, mainly in the Watford area. Students come from a diverse range of ethnic, social and economic backgrounds.

St. Michael's became designated a 'Teaching School' in 2016 and is a lead school in the South West Herts Partnership Group that works in close partnership with other schools and a college. St. Michael's operates a loose partnership with two other secondary schools on our campus and exchange students and best practice, particularly at middle and senior management level. St. Michael's was confirmed in the most recent inspections; Ofsted (November 2014) and Section 48 (May 2013), as 'Outstanding' and an 'Outstanding Catholic School in all categories.

Our intake spans the full ability range - 6.4% of the students are entitled to free school meals. Nearly all students admitted are Catholic. All participate in RE and Catholic Worship. 4.9% of students have statements of SEN which is above average for maintained secondary schools in shire authorities and for Hertfordshire itself. The ethnic make-up of the school's population is 74.8% British, 8.4% white other and 3.6% Irish.

About 5% of the school population is black and the remainder is mainly made up of students of mixed heritage. All groups achieve above national averages and the school was identified by the LA as a leading school for the achievement of students from lower socio-economic backgrounds. Our high attendance rate reflects the commitment of parents, students and staff to the principle that 'you need to be at school if you want to learn'.

The greatest strength of the school is the people who work here and students who genuinely come to the school to succeed. Teachers are fully committed to ensure that students achieve their potential and beyond (examples of this are school educational trips, revision classes, mentoring, master classes, extra and co-curricular activities, including sport). Support staff including; administration, finance, site management, catering and cleaning are fully dedicated to working closely with teachers to ensure educational success. The quality of continuing professional development (CPD) is reflected in the school's Investor in People "Gold" Standard (2011) and Performance Management process.

We are a school that prides itself in innovative practice and staff who demonstrate excellence are invited to lead other schools in Continuing Professional Development (CPD). All departments are involved in supporting other local secondary schools in areas of teaching and learning, assessment and management and leadership. Ofsted have visited the school to record lessons across a variety of departments, and in house we have a system of recording lessons which are used for internal Twilight sessions. Our Pastoral and Academic Reporting System (PARS) and Academic and Pastoral Review day (APR) have been recommended by Ofsted inspectors and HMIs to other schools from Newcastle to Southampton. We have supported schools in challenging circumstances in leadership and management and policy development. The school supports Hertfordshire in monitoring and raising ethnic awareness and achievement. Our work on curriculum development and raising achievement with the introduction of diverse curriculum pathways in Year 10 and the Sixth Form has captured much interest from various Hertfordshire Schools and other schools in Barnet LA and across Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Westminster.

In summary we are focused on the holistic development of every individual student. sport, music, drama and the arts all contribute to our vision of a St Michael's student. As a Catholic school we aim to be a sign in the local community of the person of Christ who sought excellence in all things. As a Dominican school it is important that our community is based on prayer and preaching the Gospel by our good example and high academic performance. We are committed to seeking to improve our standards, management, leadership and quality of learning and teaching. All this is done in a context of Christian agape or selfless love.