

St John Bosco Catholic Arts College

URN: 104715

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Archbishop of Liverpool

25–26 September 2024

Summary of key findings

Overall effectiveness

The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school

Catholic life and mission (p.3)

How faithfully the school responds to the call to live as a Catholic community at the service of the Church's educational mission

Religious education (p.5)

The quality of curriculum religious education

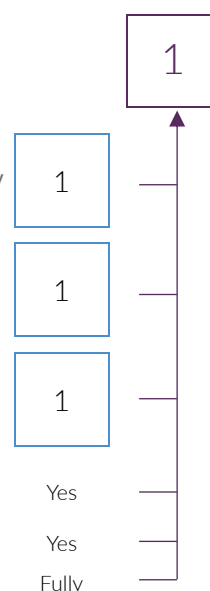
Collective worship (p.7)

The quality and range of liturgy and prayer provided by the school

The school is fully compliant with the general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishops' Conference

The school is fully compliant with any additional requirements of the diocesan bishop

The school has responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection



Compliance statement

- The school is fully compliant with the general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishops' Conference.
- The school is fully compliant with the additional requirements of the archdiocesan bishop.
- The school is fully compliant with regard to its previously identified areas for improvement, having addressed the targets set from the previous inspection.

What the school does well

- The Salesian principles of Respect, Understanding, Affection and Humour are at the heart of all that the school does; ensuring that Christ is at the centre of its work.
- The head teacher, leaders and the chaplaincy coordinator are outstanding role models. Their passion ensures that the school's Catholic life and mission are vibrant and relevant to all members of the community.
- Pastoral care is second to none; with the school placing a particular focus on supporting the most vulnerable within their community.
- Prayer and liturgy are a focal point of school life, with all students benefiting from this regardless of faith. Student participation is outstanding.
- The religious education programme is well sequenced and supports a strong relationships, health and sex education framework, which is tailored to suits the needs of the students.

What the school needs to improve

- Review and strengthen Catholic life induction training so that it is understood and applied by all staff.
- Provide questioning techniques in religious education lessons by sharing the existing good practice, so that all students can maximise their learning.
- Enable students to understand the progress they are making and can articulate this in a way that helps them to improve their learning.

Catholic life and mission

How faithfully the school responds to the call to live as a Catholic community at the service of the Church's educational mission.

Catholic life and mission key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

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

Provision

The quality of provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school



All staff and students at St John Bosco exemplify their mission statement, 'Together we inspire each other to flourish in faith, hope and love.' Consequently, students are happy and feel safe, resulting in a calm and purposeful feel throughout the school. The Salesian heritage of the school enables staff and students to readily articulate their principles of respect, understanding, affection, and humour and, more importantly, to live them in their interactions with others. The school excels in its mission to serve. Examples of this include support for the local food bank, Cafod and MacMillan; just some of the many events and activities in place. Younger students have some understanding of the Catholic social teaching principles, but for most this is centred around the Option for the Poor and Stewardship. Leaders recognise this and have initiated a whole school approach to further develop Catholic social teaching across the curriculum, which is impacting on the student experience. Discussions with students highlight the influence of the sterling work of the chaplain, who is seen as the head of the school family and loved by everyone. This was echoed by staff. Because the head of Catholic Life is also head of religious education, there is seamless interplay between the subject and chaplaincy.

Staff and students are aware of the school's recently reviewed mission statement and understand that it impacts on their actions. Provision is underpinned by the belief that Christ is at the centre of all that the school does. This forms the foundation of the whole school curriculum intent. There are strong pastoral systems in place, with all staff modelling the behaviours expected from children. Staff are wholly committed to their students, particularly the most vulnerable. Consequently, all students, regardless of their background, faith or culture, feel appreciated and show respect to each other and to adults. Although numbers of students of other faiths are small, they flourish and identify with the values promoted and developed by

teachers and leaders. The physical environment at St John Bosco enhances this through quality displays that are appropriate for the liturgical year. Students contribute to this and are proud of their work. The chaplaincy team ensures that the Catholic Salesian mission of human flourishing is extended to all through a creative and ever-evolving programme of events and activities. The provision for relationships, health and sex education is well-planned and suitably tailored to the needs of students. The content fully meets archdiocesan requirements.

Leaders and governors ensure all staff are shown dignity, respect and appreciation of the value of their work. Their commitment acts as a witness to all and this culture of support is embedded across the whole school. The Catholic life of the school has the highest priority among governors. There is active involvement in quality assurance processes including visiting lessons, partaking in work scrutiny and the robust analysis of the work of staff who hold posts of responsibility. These processes have enabled leaders to more easily identify areas that can be further developed. The chaplain and head of Catholic Life work dynamically and in strategic collaboration to ensure that all members of the school community experience faith, hope and love. Governors and leaders value this. Self-evaluation is thorough and student involvement in this process is evident. Teachers new to the school speak enthusiastically about their induction experience. Leaders have identified the need to strengthen Catholic life training and are committed to further developing the induction programme.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

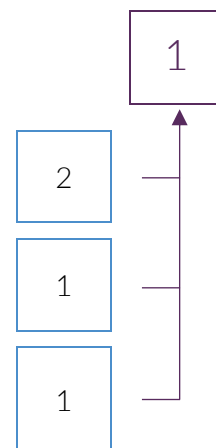
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

Provision

The quality of teaching, learning, and assessment in religious education

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for religious education



Students enjoy religious education. They appreciate that the subject helps them to explore their own faith and prepares them for life in a multi-faith society. Students are religiously literate and older students use this ability well to articulate their understanding and reflect on their work. Students are given a range of opportunities to work independently. This was observed at the beginning of lessons and is notably strong at Key Stage 5, wherein all students willingly participate in lessons with behaviour being outstanding in and out of the classroom. Student work is of a high standard and they take pride in this. Scrutiny of recent assessment data has culminated in practical plans for improvement and a robust internal assessment process at Key Stage 3. This, coupled with live marking at Key Stages 4 and 5 makes for an assessment process which is beginning to impact on student outcomes and shows an improving picture at Key Stage 4. Although numbers at Key Stage 5 are small, outcomes are strong with the subject outperforming all other subjects in the school. Regular 'knowledge checks' effectively inform students of their progress, but work is to be done on developing how students can articulate this.

Staff have a very strong subject knowledge and demonstrate a deep commitment to communicating the value of religious education. Planning is appropriately sequenced and ensures well-paced lessons that can be adapted to suit the needs of the learner. Questioning was at least good in all lessons. When better than good it was used to assess understanding and adapt explanations to good effect, thus maximising learning. There were some missed opportunities and a sharing of good practice would benefit students' learning. Praise is used well in all lessons and students respond positively to this. Teachers provide regular feedback through 'strong starts', 'essential knowledge checks' and live marking. Teachers routinely take advantage of opportunities to develop moral and spiritual awareness so that they can use their learning in

their own lives. Staff are skilled in offering a wide variety of different approaches within lessons to assist students in their learning. These approaches are matched to a variety of assessment methods that meet the different needs of pupils. The deployment of capable teaching assistants is excellent and this ensures that all pupils, regardless of need or ability, are fully engaged in classroom activities.

Governors and leaders ensure that religious education is at the core of the curriculum; well-resourced and permeating the wider school curriculum. In geography a display on stewardship complements the work in religious education and students recognise this. Subject training is highly valued and a strong programme includes input from a governor whose knowledge as an examiner has been shared with the department. The training programme highlights leaders' understanding of departmental need and governors' commitment in supporting this. The subject leader is a strong classroom practitioner who has the respect of those in her department. She is a strong role model who has swiftly implemented a positive plan for change and inspires others in the department to give their best in the classroom. Consequently, teaching is consistently good and often better. Leaders have scrutinised, resequenced and refined the curriculum to benefit the students, particularly through the introduction of creative resources that engage students and strengthen their learning experience. A wide range of enrichment activities are available to students through the wider community, particularly the parish. Leaders and governors are excellent at communicating their intentions and this strong interaction, coupled with an adaptive approach to self-evaluation, ensures that staff can manage change with confidence and continue to deliver effective provision.

Collective worship

The quality and range of liturgy and prayer provided by the school

Collective worship key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

1

Provision

The quality of collective worship provided by the school

1

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for collective worship

1

1

Students engage in a variety of prayer and liturgy activities that promote participation and are thought provoking. During form time and assemblies, they are responsive to prayer and liturgy themes. They show respect and are attentive. They recognise and appreciate the importance of the opportunities to reflect in moments of prayer. Often students undertake ministries during prayer and liturgy and mostly they do this with confidence and flair. The school has developed systems which include student evaluations of prayer and liturgy experiences whereby student comments are collected in a standard format at the conclusion of acts of worship. Students comment positively on this, valuing the school's response to their input. Discussions with students illustrate that they are able to draw links between their experiences in prayer and the school curriculum. One Year 10 student described prayer, 'as an affirmation of each person at the beginning of the school day.' Students show the ability to reflect on their own lives and are adept in translating how this leads them to be proactive in issues such as sustainability, support for the disadvantaged and with political issues. Students are aware of the Liturgical Year and those who are older have a good understanding of how prayer and liturgy in school is linked to this, so realising that there is a thematic approach to the prayers used at key times in the Church year.

The centrality of prayer and liturgy is paramount at St John Bosco. Staff provide children with a variety of ways to pray, and are adept in providing these in an age-appropriate way. Traditional prayers, scripture and silent reflection are among the range of prayerful experiences on offer and students respond to these well, the vast majority being fully engaged. This centrality is evident through the pattern of prayer offered during the school day and the students' familiarity with this. Staff in the school know their students well and this allows them to nurture and skilfully integrate their gifts and talents into prayer and liturgy. The regular use of the chapel, which can

be visited at any time during the day, is valued by pupils. The chaplaincy team has successfully integrated the principles of inclusivity and sacred space so that students of all faiths and none benefit from being there. The use of the chapel for religious education lessons allows students to deepen their understanding of the sacraments. The parish priest works with the chaplaincy team to ensure that the 'school is church' for the student. This includes a monthly community Mass which is well attended by families and those in the wider community, alongside students and staff in school.

Leaders and governors continuously monitor and review the provision for prayer and liturgy. They realise the importance of evaluation and involve all staff and students in participating in this process. This recently led to an improvement in the quality and confidence of staff commentary upon Scripture during gatherings for prayer and worship. Staff also appreciate the 'expert support' offered by the head of Catholic life and the chaplain in supporting prayer through weekly briefings. Events and activities are offered in an age-appropriate way that ensure greater involvement as students progress through the school. The school calendar prioritises key dates in the liturgical year and days which are important to the school. The parish priest is a regular visitor to the school and has helped to prepare a full calendar of joint school and church community events. Students comment on the strong catechesis programme offered by the school to Confirmation candidates and the offer of Reconciliation at key times in the year.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St John Bosco Catholic Arts College
School unique reference number (URN)	104715
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	3414794
Full postal address of the school	St John Bosco Catholic Arts College, Storrington Avenue, Croxteth, L11 9DQ
School phone number	0151 330 5142
Headteacher	Darren Gidman
Chair of governors	Cath O'Leary
School Website	http://www.stjohnboscoartscollege.com/
Trusteeship	Salesian Sisters
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	N/A
Phase	Secondary
Type of school	Voluntary Aided School
Admissions policy	Non-selective
Age-range of pupils	11-18
Gender of pupils	Girls
Date of last denominational inspection	10 th January 2018
Previous denominational inspection grade	1

The inspection team

Mark Taylor	Lead
Catherine Danaher	Team
Phil Mooney	Team

Key to grade judgements

Grade	England	Wales
1	Outstanding	Excellent
2	Good	Good
3	Requires improvement	Adequate and requires improvement
4	Inadequate	Unsatisfactory and in need of urgent improvement