



# Gumley House RC Convent School, FCJ

URN: 137928

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Archbishop of Westminster

09–10 November 2023

## 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

1

#### Religious education (p.5)

The quality of curriculum religious education

2

#### Collective worship (p.7)

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

1

The school is fully compliant with the curriculum requirements laid down by the Bishops' Conference

Yes

The school is fully compliant with all requirements of the diocesan bishop

Yes

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

Fully

2

## What the school does well

- Pupils and staff have a deep understanding of the distinctive Catholic identity and mission of Gumley House, which is a truly lived experience across the school.
- There is an exceptionally strong culture of welcome and a tangible sense of community.
- Pupils make consistently good progress in religious education and achieve excellent outcomes in all years and age phases.
- Pupils enjoy their religious education lessons and are challenged to think ethically and theologically.
- Prayer and liturgy and Bethany (the school's chapel) are at the heart of life at Gumley House, ensuring that the school is prayerful community.

## What the school needs to improve

- Ensure there is high quality targeted professional development to support the consistency of teaching across the RE Department.
- Ensure that the Core RE curriculum provides consistent opportunities for pupils to deepen their theological understanding.
- Ensure that assessment in Core RE is consistent across the Sixth Form.

## 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**

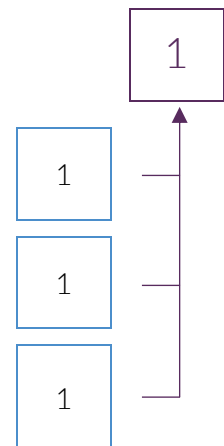
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

**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



Pupils have a deep understanding of the distinctive Catholic identity and mission of Gumley House. The school's mission statement 'Vive ut Vivas' (Life that you may have life) is understood by all and consequently is a truly lived experience across the school. Pupils speak with confidence and passion about the distinctive charism of the Faithful Companions of Jesus (FCJ). The six FCJ values are seen in every aspect of school life and underpin a deep commitment to Catholic Social Teaching. Pupils take a leading role in responding to those in need, both locally and far beyond and they can articulate the underpinning theology of their actions. Pupils support a wide range of charities including local food banks, Mary's Meals and Aid to the Church in Need in the Ukraine.

There is an exceptionally strong culture of welcome at Gumley House and a tangible sense of community. Staff are deeply committed to both the mission and the FCJ charism. One member of staff told inspectors, 'The FCJ charism informs every aspect of school life. As staff, we are called to be strong in action and gentle in manner'. Pastoral care is a visible strength of life at Gumley House. Pupils repeatedly told inspectors how much they value the quality of relationships that exist between staff and the pupils, and how they feel safe and secure at school. Pupils of all faiths feel included, and staff ensure that there are opportunities for them to live and pray in fidelity to their own religious tradition. One parent commented, 'As a non-Catholic family, we have been warmly welcomed. The school has provided a truly nurturing environment for my daughter'. The school environment effectively witnesses to its distinctive Catholic identity and the FCJ charism through displays and the consideration given to prayer spaces. The Chaplaincy provision is central to the life of the school and plays a key role in the school's commitment to helping each young person flourish and discern their own unique vocation. The RSHE programme has been

carefully planned and mapped across all key stages to ensure it meets both statutory and diocesan guidelines.

Leaders, governors and trustees have a deep understanding of both the Church's educational mission and the distinct educational philosophy of the Faithful Companions of Jesus. The development of the Catholic life and mission of the school is embraced as a core leadership responsibility by all, with leaders ensuring the FCJ values are at the heart of all decision making. Governors are ambitious for the school and actively engage in a range of strategies to ensure the school is celebrated widely in the local community and beyond. The school has strong partnerships across the diocese and is actively working with others in preparation for a move into a multi academy trust. The school works hard to maintain and develop links with local parishes and clergy. Leaders are committed to ensuring local clergy are engaged with the Catholic life of the school. The school has strong relationships with parents and highly effective systems both formally and informally for securing their views. Many parents commented on how the school has supported their children on their faith journey and how fortunate their children are to attend the school. Leaders recognise the importance of pastoral care for staff. Staff stated that it was clear that well-being is a priority for leaders. The FCJ Educational Trust work closely with governors to ensure the school's work is an authentic expression of the charism. They provide extensive support for leaders and governors in every aspect of their work. One governor told inspectors, 'our philosophy is formation alongside education'. Professional development focused on the Catholic life and mission of the school is well planned and ensures all staff have a deep understanding of the mission of the school. Leaders are committed to supporting new staff through a rich and rigorous induction programme which includes a commitment to the FCJ charism. The school's self evaluation is accurate and explicitly focused on the Catholic life and mission of the school.

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

### Religious education key judgement grade

**Pupil outcomes**

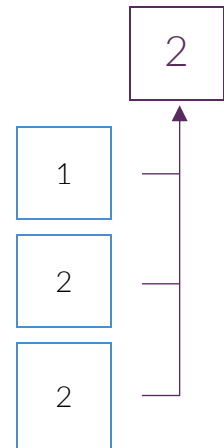
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

**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



Pupils are developing excellent knowledge, understanding and skills that exemplify the learning required by the *Religious Education Directory*. Pupils enjoy their religious education lessons and are challenged to think ethically and theologically. They understand how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. Pupils are religiously literate and are encouraged to strengthen their understanding of key vocabulary. A good example of this was seen in a Year 9 lesson where students were challenged to deepen their understanding of the concept of a deity. Pupils asked incisive questions which moved the learning to a greater depth. They understand and implement the steps required to make progress and achieve above average attainment when compared with other core curriculum subjects. There are no significant gaps in attainment between different pupil groups.

Teachers demonstrate high expectations of pupils and are committed to the value of religious education. Consequently, pupils show independence in their learning and respond well to teachers' feedback both in their lessons and books. Pupils spoke at length about the support given by teachers in advance of public exams through a detailed focus on exam skills and the sharing of excellent preparatory material. Questioning is used in lessons to identify where pupils are in their learning. For example, in a Year 7 lesson on the topic of salvation, structured retrieval questions were used to prepare students for new learning and consolidate prior knowledge. Teachers plan to meet the needs of all pupils and consequently pupils know what they need to do to make progress in their learning. Time is made in lessons for students to reflect on questions of deep meaning. For example, in a Core RE lesson, pupils were given the opportunity to discuss a variety of religious and ethical issues connected with the theme of Remembrance. In the best lessons, teachers demonstrate high levels of subject knowledge and pedagogical skill

which allows lessons to move at both pace and depth. However, this is not consistent yet across all lessons and is an area for further development.

Leaders and governors ensure that the planned curriculum for RE is compliant with the Directory and that RE has at least full parity with other core curriculum subjects in relation to resourcing, timetable, staffing and accommodation. Leaders have created links with appropriate agencies and the wider community to provide a range of enrichment activities which promote pupil learning and engagement with religious education. Pupils told inspectors that they value these opportunities and greatly enjoyed visiting other places of worship. Leaders have ensured that there are professional development opportunities available for teachers, but these are not yet focused on ensuring consistency in the quality of teaching across the department. The subject leader has a clear vision for religious education and has the requisite level of expertise necessary to secure this vision. Leaders have planned a curriculum which is increasingly creative and contains a detailed study of Marie Madeleine, the foundress of the Faithful Companions of Jesus. However, there is further work to be undertaken on the curriculum and assessment in Core RE in the Sixth Form to ensure it matches the quality and depth of other programmes of study across the school. Leaders and Governors work closely together to monitor standards in religious education and ensure the curriculum is a faithful expression of the FCJ charism.

## 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

The experience of prayer and liturgy in the school fully engages pupils and results in full, active and conscious participation. Pupils have a deep understanding of the wide variety of ways of praying that are part of the Catholic tradition. They work collaboratively with a variety of staff and the chaplain to prepare creative and well-constructed experiences of prayer and liturgy. This occurs in form time, assemblies, lessons and in the celebration of Mass. Pupils demonstrate an excellent understanding of the liturgical year and how it is expressed in the prayer life of the school. They told inspectors of the wide variety of opportunities that exist to become involved in the planning and leadership of collective worship. Consequently, they willingly undertake a variety of liturgical ministries. In keeping with the wider culture of the school, collective worship is also deeply inclusive, one pupil commented, 'even though I am not a Christian, morning prayer is still incredibly valuable to me'. Pupils confidently expressed to inspectors how they valued prayer during the course of their school journey, and how it shaped both their thinking and their actions. Pupils have an opportunity to deepen their understanding further through collaborative planning across the network of FCJ schools.

Prayer and liturgy are at the centre of life at Gumley House and are evident everywhere. This is a prayerful community, with Bethany (the school's chapel) at the heart of the school. It is exceptionally well resourced and highly valued by the entire school community. One member of staff commented 'the chapel fills my own cup, so that I can serve effectively'. The prayer and worship observed offers pupils a wide range of creative and engaging experiences highlighting the breadth and richness of the Catholic tradition. The start of each school day and all gatherings of staff are opportunities for meaningful and creative prayer. Staff are skilled in the leading of collective worship and act as role models for pupils. Pupils spoke about the variety of creative and invitational ways they are encouraged to pray. Art, music and dance are all integrated into

the liturgy in a way that significantly enhances pupils' experience and reflects the riches of the Church. The school works successfully with parents to include them in the prayer life of the school. One parent commented, 'school liturgies are prayerful and joyful. Parents are regularly invited to share in them throughout the year'.

The school's policy on prayer and liturgy is carefully planned and regularly reviewed. Leaders, including governors and trustees have a developed understanding of the different levels of skills and participation that are reflective of the age and capacity of pupils. The school calendar is planned to provide regular opportunities to celebrate the Eucharist. Whole school Masses are arranged for the entire school community, particularly at key times in the liturgical year such as holy days of obligation and FCJ Days. Leaders and governors have ensured that professional development is well planned and highly effective. As a result, all staff understand the importance and centrality of prayer in the life of the school. The leadership team and governors regularly review the quality and impact of prayer and liturgy as part of the school's cycle of self-evaluation and planned improvement. However, there are opportunities to develop systems even further so that more pupils are given structured opportunities to suggest improvements. The chaplain commented 'my role is to bring the light of the Gospel to all pupils'. A significant number of parents commented about the exceptional witness value and leadership of the head teacher. Leaders, including governors place the highest importance on ensuring that the young people Gumley House serve, experience a truly distinctive Catholic education which is faithful and authentic to the charism of the Faithful Companions of Jesus.



## Information about the school

Full name of school	Gumley House Catholic Convent Secondary School
School unique reference number (URN)	137928
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	3135400
Full postal address of the school	Gumley House RC Catholic Convent School, FCJ St John's Road, Isleworth, TW7 6XF
School phone number	02085688692
Headteacher	Stephen Byrne
Chair of Trustees	Christine Grindrod
School Website	<a href="https://www.gumleyhouse.com/">https://www.gumleyhouse.com/</a>
Trusteeship	Faithful Companions of Jesus
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Gumley House Convent School FCJ
Phase	Secondary
Type of school	Academy
Admissions policy	Non-selective
Age-range of pupils	11-18
Gender of pupils	Girls
Date of last denominational inspection	December 2017
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

## The inspection team

Adam Hall	Lead
Kate Pereira	Team
Alison Berwick	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