



Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection report for
St George's Catholic School

URN: 1393696

Carried out on behalf of the Most Rev. Cardinal Vincent Nichols, Archbishop of Westminster on:

Date: 23 -24 November 2023

Overall effectiveness The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school.....	1
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
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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	✓
The school is fully compliant with all requirements of the diocesan bishop	✓
The school has responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection	Fully

Summary of key findings

What the school does well

- Pupils readily embrace the distinctive mission of this outstanding Catholic school.
- Leaders and governors are fastidious guardians of the Catholic life and mission of the school.
- The progress and achievement of pupils in RE is outstanding with different groups, including disadvantaged pupils, all making excellent progress.
- Pupils enjoy their RE and consequently behaviour in lessons is outstanding.
- Prayer is at the heart of this school and a carefully planned programme ensures that pupils experience the richness and breadth of the Catholic tradition.

What the school needs to improve:

- Further develop the subject expertise of RE teachers.
- Further develop pupils' collaboration with others in planning and preparing prayer and liturgy.

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:.....

1

Pupil outcomes

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

1

Provision

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

1

Leadership

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

1



This is an outstanding Catholic school where pupils readily embrace the distinctiveness of the mission. They appreciate that the school is committed to following the teaching and example of Jesus. Pupils understand the motto, 'to learn, to achieve, to excel' and can easily make links to Gospel values. Pupils feel safe in the school, and valued and cared for as unique human beings. Charity work has a high profile; pupils are proud of their commitment to serve the wider community. They have a keen sense of the theological reasoning that underpins their charity work, understanding the call to service to help others in need. Pupils value the chaplaincy provision; the liturgy prefects take an active role in promoting the Catholic life and mission of the school. A strength of this outstanding Catholic school is the richness of community life; positive relationships are valued and as a result, behaviour is excellent. The school offers a very nurturing environment where pupils are enabled to thrive academically.

This school has a clear mission statement that expresses the educational mission of the Church. Staff are committed to activities that promote the Catholic life of the school. The sense of community is a real strength, and this is developed through a culture that is inclusive and welcoming, all are known by name. The school celebrates diversity, supporting those with different cultures and belief systems. Staff are effective role models for pupils. The use of symbols reinforces the distinctive Catholic nature of the school. There are many opportunities to support charities; an example of Christian action is the food hampers that are given to those in need. Sixth Formers engage in weekly acts of service, that range from helping younger pupils with their reading to being with older adults in the local parish centre. The chaplaincy provision is flourishing, the chapel is at the physical centre of the school and is used well. The pastoral support of pupils is excellent, for

example, the support for pupils with diabetes is outstanding. The provision for Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) meets both the diocesan and statutory requirements; the programme is firmly rooted in the teaching of the Catholic Church.

Leaders and governors are fastidious guardians of the Catholic life and mission of the school, and as a result the school flourishes as an outstanding school. The head teacher, through his witness to Gospel values, demonstrates an authenticity and faithfulness to the Church's educational mission. Partnerships with the diocese are very strong, leaders and governors not only engage but also serve the diocese; they support other Catholic schools in their multi-academy trust and beyond. Parish links are strong and the school enjoys very positive support from clergy. Parental support for the school is excellent, the parent survey demonstrated high levels of response that were overwhelmingly positive. Parents appreciate the distinctive nature of the school, a parent commented, 'the staff at St George's really care for their pupils'. The school has developed partnerships with local Catholic feeder schools, for example, a design and technology project focused on St Joseph the carpenter. Governors make a significant contribution to the Catholic life and mission of the school, holding leaders to account. A key strength of the school is that it recruits many former students to various roles in the school including teaching. New staff are supported well in developing their understanding of what it means to work in a Catholic school.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade:.....

1

Pupil outcomes

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education.....

1

Provision

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

1

Leadership

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

2



The progress and achievement of pupils in RE is outstanding. The outcomes for pupils at the end of Key Stage 4 are very strong, this is evident in comparison to other core subjects in the school. Different groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, all make excellent progress. The number of high grades in GCSE RE are significant. There is scope to build on pupil success at GCSE RE by improving recruitment for A level Religious Studies. Pupils, relative to their age and capacity, are religiously literate. In lessons pupils used a range of subject-specific vocabulary. It is evident from their written work that pupils use their understanding to think critically and theologically. Pupils' books demonstrate that they care about RE. They engage with written tasks in lessons as they are familiar with the writing frames provided by their teachers. Pupils respond confidently to the structure of their RE lessons, concentrating exceptionally well and responding to the challenge of their learning. In the lessons on pilgrimage and marriage, pupils were curious and interested in their learning. They are engaged in self-assessment, reviewing their learning and responding to teacher feedback. The behaviour of pupils in RE lessons is outstanding because they enjoy RE.

Teachers are highly confident in pedagogical techniques; some teachers have high levels of subject knowledge. This was seen in an excellent Year 11 lesson on marriage; the teacher was able to lead a sophisticated discussion on both Islamic and Catholic perspectives. Teachers have high expectations for all pupils regardless of which set they are in. In a different Year 11 lesson on marriage, the teacher demonstrated and communicated high expectations for pupil attainment in completing an exam style question. All lessons observed included a starter activity based on retrieval from previous lessons; however, if over-used such a formulaic approach can hinder lesson creativity. Questioning is skilfully used in lessons to critique pupil responses that in turn extend their thinking. In a Year 10 lesson on pilgrimage, teacher questioning increased pupil engagement by challenging them to use their own experiences to make conceptual links to the subject content.

Feedback is regularly given to pupils in written form and verbally; as a result pupils are clear about how to make progress in their learning. Teachers work well with other adults in the classroom to facilitate learning. There is a culture of praise in RE lessons that encourages pupils to engage in class discussion. Teachers have developed positive relationships with pupils, resulting in classrooms where pupils thrive.

Leaders have ensured that the religious education curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference. The recently revised *Religious Education Directory* is being implemented in Year 7 and there are clear plans in place to fully implement the Bishops' Conference curriculum requirements for RE. Leaders have ensured that RE has parity with other core subjects. Whilst some members of the RE department have strong subject knowledge, there is a need for regular high quality professional development. Progress is being made to address this issue; three members of the RE department are engaged in completing the Catholic Certificate of Religious Studies (CCRS). There have been changes in the leadership of the RE department over the last three years. The newly appointed Head of RE demonstrates a clear and strident vision of RE within a Catholic school. The Head of RE is engaging with diocesan professional development to support their new role. There is a strong culture of monitoring within the department, teachers are regularly observed, and feedback supports ongoing professional development. Leaders plan the curriculum to provide an effective programme that meets pupils' needs. The RE team is working collaboratively to develop resources for the new Year 7 curriculum.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade:.....

1

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

Prayer is at the heart of this school. One pupil stated that 'we pray a lot' but then clarified that she thought that this was a good thing. As a result of the prayer and liturgical life of the school, pupils are given many opportunities to develop spiritually. Pupil participation in prayer and liturgy is strong, for example, pupils enthusiastically engage in communal singing. There is some evidence of pupils engaging in prayerful silence, however this could be developed further. Each class has liturgy prefects that support the prayer life of the school; they are having a positive effect on ensuring that prayer and liturgy have a high profile. There is scope to develop their role in helping pupils prepare and plan liturgy. The liturgical formation of pupils is developing well in line with their ability to evaluate their experiences of prayer and liturgy. Pupils can readily reflect on their prayer and liturgy experiences and relate this to how it has inspired them to social action. In an assembly that focused on the previous Sunday Gospel reading, pupils could make links between the parable of the talents and the demands of Christian life.

The centrality of prayer and liturgy to the life of the school is very well evidenced. There is a carefully planned programme that ensures that pupils experience the richness and breath of the Catholic tradition. Mass is an integral part of the prayer and liturgy provision. There are regular opportunities for Mass; whole school, year group, as well as a weekly voluntary Mass that is well attended. Each tutor group in turn is invited with their parents to attend the weekly Mass. Each lesson starts with a prayer, this is a significant strength of the school. Staff across different subjects have creatively engaged with this tradition of the school, for example, music lessons start with a hymn reflecting the relevant liturgical season and in modern languages prayers are said in the target language. Staff, particularly the chaplain and head teacher, are models of exemplary practice as leaders of prayer for pupils. The comprehensive retreat programme for Key Stage 3, that is focused on the values of the school, is another significant strength. Pupils speak very positively about the retreat

experiences that take place in the local parish centre, valuing the time to be together and reflect. The school has organised several successful pilgrimages, for example to Rome and Walsingham. Staff meetings start with a prayer and are effective in modelling good practice.

The school's policy on prayer and liturgy is well formulated, though will need to be renewed to reflect the publication of the Bishops' Conference *Prayer and Liturgy Directory*. Leaders, including governors, have ensured that prayer and liturgy have a high profile in the school. There is a well thought through school calendar that ensures there are regular opportunities to celebrate the Eucharist and for pupils to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Significant liturgical occasions are prioritised in the school's calendar, such as the patronal feast day. The chaplain has a growing presence in the school community. There are good opportunities for liturgical formation for staff who are well supported in leading prayer with their tutor groups. Leaders place a high priority on the evaluation of the quality and impact of prayer and liturgy. The voice of pupils is valued and systematically gathered. Pupils regularly use online questionnaire to give feedback on their experiences; this in turn has a positive impact on shaping the priorities in the school management plan.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St George's Catholic School
School unique reference number (URN)	139369
Full postal address of the school	Lanark Road, Maida Vale, Westminster, W9 1RB
School phone number	0207 328 0904
Name of head teacher or principal	Cathal Gregory
Chair of governing board	Christopher Horsburgh
School Website	https://www.stgeorgesrc.org
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	The Cardinal Hume Academies
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy
Age-range of pupils	11-18
Trustees	N/A
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	16 - 17 March 2016
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

The inspection team

Matthew Dell	Lead inspector
Lisa McDermott	Team inspector
Carol Ransom	Team inspector

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