



Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection report for St Joan Of Arc Catholic School

URN: 137914

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

Date: 24-25 May 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
Religious education (p.5) The quality of curriculum religious education.....	1
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

- Leaders, governors and staff can clearly articulate the Church's mission in education.
- Pupils are proud of their school, understanding and embracing its distinctive Catholic identity.
- There is a real sense of community at St Joan of Arc with relationships throughout the school based on the highest levels of care.
- Pupil outcomes at Key Stage 4 and 5 are outstanding.
- The school's mission statement 'Love Christ, inspire others' is supported by the prayer life of the school which primarily seeks to enable all to know that they are loved by God.

What the school needs to improve

- Ensure all pupils know how to extend their learning with consistent opportunities to then access stretch and challenge activities.
- Ensure pupils are given extensive opportunities to present their learning using a wide variety of forms of expression in order to meet the needs of all pupils.
- Develop a chaplaincy team to engage more pupils in the planning and leading of collective worship.

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



Pupils understand and embrace the distinctive Catholic identity of their school. They value it greatly, are happy, confident and feel secure at the school. They have a clear understanding that they are valued and cared for and many of them spoke about the excellent pastoral care that is provided. Pupils have a clear understanding that the school community is committed to following the teaching of Gospel values. There has been a recent change of house names, where pupils were involved in helping to choose the revised names of saints. Pupils show a deep respect for their own dignity and the dignity of others and take a leading role in responding to the demands of Catholic Social Teaching. They support many local and international projects such as hampers at Christmas, supporting Aid to the Church In Need and Udayan, a centre that supports affected by leprosy in Calcutta, India. Pupils value the school's chaplaincy provision and actively participate in and contribute to opportunities provided by the school.

The school's mission statement 'Love Christ, Inspire Others' is supported by the prayer life of the school which primarily seeks to enable all to know that they are loved by God. There is a strong culture of welcome and a flourishing community spirit within the school. Staff welcome this sense of community which in turn fosters respectful relationships with pupils. The staff are overwhelmingly positive about their experience of working in this Catholic school. They embrace opportunities to support one another, for example the induction and mentoring programmes. Staff spoke about the strong spiritual community and the peer support that exists in the school. They are exemplary in the relationships and the care they show for the pupils and each other, providing the highest levels of pastoral care. The chaplaincy provision is a central and celebrated aspect of the life and mission of the school and seeks to engage all pupils and staff. A vast range

of creative and high-quality opportunities enable pupils to further their spiritual and moral development including participating in class liturgies or being part of a prayer group, choir, altar servers, band or readers. Some of those in Key Stage 4 and 5 support Year 7 pupils in the school retreats. The Sixth Form students take a leadership role in the school by being part of a secondary executive committee and working with younger pupils in paired reading, running clubs and preparing for the house Masses. The provision for RSHE is carefully planned and as a result pupils value the lessons.

The head teacher, leadership team and governors can clearly articulate the Church's mission in education. They actively promote the Archbishop's vision for the diocese and are enthusiastic in their response to diocesan policies and initiatives. Both the leadership team and governors embrace and actively promote the principle that Catholic schools are at the service of the local church and work hard to ensure a flourishing partnership between the school and the local parishes. The local clergy participate fully in the life of the school. Leaders and governors of the school truly embrace the principle that parents are the first educators of their children and fully support and empower them in meeting the demands of that vocation. The school engages parents and carers to the very obvious benefit of pupils. Many of the parents commented on how the school supported their children on their faith journey and one parent remarked that 'St Joan's is a wonderful Catholic community where the spiritual well-being of every child is promoted as equally as their academic ability. It has a very strong Catholic ethos which reflects the Gospel values and offers many opportunities for pupils to pray throughout the day and to put into practice the idea of serving the wider community.' The leadership team are supported by a fully committed governing body who are effective guardians of the Catholic life and mission of the school. They remarked on how it was an authentic Catholic school for all staff and pupils. There is a Catholic life group of governors that meet with the head teacher, subject lead and the chaplain throughout the year. The school's self-evaluation is detailed and honest but could be more evaluative.

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.....

2

Leadership

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

1



Pupils are developing excellent knowledge, understanding and skills that exemplify the learning required by the *Religious Education Directory*. They make consistently good progress and achieve the best possible outcomes. Pupil progress from starting points is above average when compared with other core curriculum subjects in the school. Pupils enjoy their religious education lessons and are both reflective and actively engaged. They are religiously literate, speaking confidently using key concepts and subject specific vocabulary. Showing notable independence in their learning, they can think for themselves and are curious and interested learners. Pupil outcomes are outstanding, relative to their starting points and capabilities. At the end of Key Stage 4 pupils in RE make excellent progress compared to other core subjects. All groups of learners make excellent progress in GCSE RE. Pupils also make excellent progress at the end of Key Stage 5, consistently achieving some of the best results in the school. They achieve above average attainment when compared with other core curriculum subjects or using national data. This has been sustained for the last three years.

Teachers are confident in their subject knowledge and have a good understanding of how pupils learn, appropriate to the phase in which they are teaching. They are committed to the value of religious education, and they communicate this effectively to their pupils. Planning is linked to pupils' current assessment, so pupils learn well. Teachers use questioning in lessons to identify where pupils are in their understanding. This was evident in a Year 8 lesson where pupils had a task on whether Margaret Clitherow should be executed or not, where the students acted out a court trial and put the evidence forward followed by a debate and some extended writing. In a Year 12 lesson on Jung the teacher demonstrated expert subject knowledge. The pupils were engaged and gave open and honest answers that were built upon prior learning. The teacher also prepared

pupils for the A level exam by relating the lesson to the grading criteria. Teachers provide pupils with feedback which ensures that most pupils understand what they need to do to make progress although this is not yet consistent across the department.

Leaders and governors ensure that the school curriculum for religious education is a faithful expression of the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*. Leaders and governors ensure that religious education is comparable to other core curriculum subjects, in terms of professional development, resourcing, timetabling, staffing and accommodation. The school has experienced a turbulent time recently with regard to staffing in RE, however leaders and governors have a plan in place to address this. Leaders and governors are committed to securing regular, high quality professional development in religious education, resulting in teaching that is consistently good. Leaders plan the curriculum to provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to progress sequentially through the subject content. The subject leader ensures that religious education is effectively planned to meet the needs of different groups of pupils and to secure coherence across different stages and phases. This is evident in the scaffolding used in lessons and the setting up of a lunchtime analysis club for pupils in Year 11. Excellent links are forged with other appropriate agencies and the wider community to provide a wider range of enrichment activities to promote pupils' learning and engagement in RE.

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

The experience of prayer and liturgy in the school fully engages the pupils and leads to 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 their teachers and chaplain to prepare creative and well-constructed experiences of prayer and liturgy. The virtual collective act of worship is used effectively throughout the school and inspectors observed that pupils responded enthusiastically to this. Pupils also have opportunities to pray in the chapel, in tutor time, assemblies, year and house Masses, and Masses at the beginning and end of term. The school has been unable to gather in large groups for collective worship and school Masses as the school hall is being re-built, however Masses are currently being celebrated in a local theatre to allow whole houses to come together from Years 7-13. Pupils and staff collaborate to deliver some liturgies within the form room, with pupils and staff taking on leadership roles. Staff commented on the creative online assemblies provided by the school chaplain instead of large group worship. Some teachers said they had been both empowered and trained to deliver collective worship in tutor periods effectively, even though they may not be of the Catholic faith. Pupils demonstrate an excellent understanding of the liturgical year and how it is expressed in the prayer life of the school. They can articulate the ways in which prayer and liturgy are influenced by both the curriculum and wider life of the school and how it has shaped them. They understand how to reflect on the experiences of prayer and liturgy and can articulate ways in which these experiences have led to active-stewardship.

The centrality of prayer is evident in all areas of school life. The school is a prayerful community with prayer used to support all its members. There is a naturally embedded daily pattern of prayer that faithfully reflects the rhythm of the prayer life of the Church. The prayer and worship observed offered pupils a wide range of creative and engaging experiences highlighting the breadth and

richness of the Catholic tradition. Pupils are also provided with the opportunity to lead on form worship and class Masses and the school could further develop this by setting up a chaplaincy team. The chaplain has developed opportunities for residential retreats in different year groups. The school works hard to ensure a flourishing partnership with the local parishes to help pupils to participate more fully in liturgy. Pupils visit a local parish for year Masses, they also attend parish Masses and the school has also linked visiting priests with the school houses of Bakhita, Jerome, Kolbe and Romero.

The school's policy on prayer and liturgy is carefully planned and regularly reviewed. Leaders, including governors have a well developed understanding of the different levels of skills of participation that are reflective of age and capacity of pupils. The school calendar is planned to provide opportunities to celebrate the Eucharist and these are regularly offered to the entire school community, particularly at key times in the liturgical year such as feast days and holy days of obligation. School leaders and the chaplain work hard to ensure that the Sacrament of Reconciliation is offered to pupils at key times in the liturgical year. They can confidently articulate the Church's understanding of the relationship between participation and ministry. This results in pupils and staff providing prayer and liturgy opportunities that are engaging, of a consistently high quality and are accessible and meaningful for the whole community. The leadership team, RE department and governors regularly review the quality and impact of prayer and liturgy as part of school's cycle of self-evaluation and planned improvement.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Joan of Arc Catholic school
School unique reference number (URN)	137914
Full postal address of the school	High Street Rickmansworth. WD3 1HG
School phone number	01923 773881
Name of head teacher or principal	Bernadette O' Hanlon
Chair of governing board	Stuart Hynes
School Website	www.joa.herts.sch.uk
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	All Saints Catholic Academy Trust
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy
Age-range of pupils	11-18
Trustees	Click or tap here to enter text.
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	October 2016
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

The inspection team

Mary Coyle	Lead inspector
Brian Finnegan	Team inspector
Winnie Greer	Team inspector
Lisa McDermott	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