

# Bishop Thomas Grant Catholic Secondary School

URN: 100638

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Most Rev. John Wilson, Archbishop of Southwark

18–19 January 2024

## Summary of key findings

### Overall effectiveness

The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school

#### Catholic life and mission (p.2)

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.3)

The quality of curriculum religious education

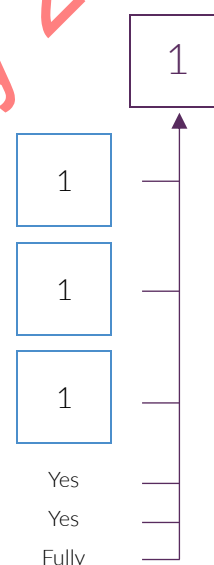
#### Collective worship (p.4)

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

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



## What the school does well

- Provides an environment of deep love and care, positively affecting the wellbeing and outcomes of all members of the school community.
- Embeds prayer and reflection into all aspects of school life.
- Strength of leadership in senior leadership, governance and chaplaincy.
- Creates a community who embody dignified reverence and respect.

## What the school needs to improve

- An understanding of the Catholic Schools Inspectorate self-evaluation process amongst all staff.
- Formalise opportunities for the students to have a positive impact on the school and wider community.
- Deepen further whole school professional development for all staff through bespoke Catholic formation and training where appropriate.

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## 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

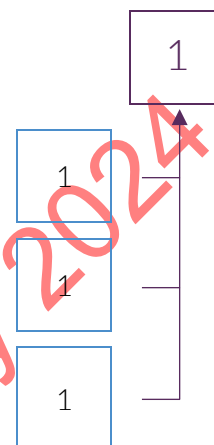
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

#### 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



The love and care in this school is distinctly identifiable. The school goes above and beyond to support the welfare of all members of the school community leading to engagement and participation in all spiritual aspects of the school. The school truly unites the whole Bishop Thomas Grant community in Christ, living out its motto to develop a happy, friendly and supportive environment where there is a willingness to participate and learn. All pupils spoken to, talk openly about a range of opportunities to engage with Christ. The Service Passport celebrates the many acts of charity, and good deeds whilst encouraging and supporting every child to use their gifts for the good of others. Pupils speak about how giving to others enhances their own happiness and sense of worth. The fundraising arm of the school council is impressive and includes all members of the school led by the school councillors. Furthermore, the sixth form core religious education programme is a key driver for service in action, with post 16 students embracing a wide range of activities such as hamper drives every Christmas which all feed in to the Service Passport.

The school mission statement is actively lived out. Big Sisters and Boy Minds are exceptional examples of pupils leading the Catholic life of the school through the active use of the Catholic social teaching principles. A member of the chaplaincy team describes a 'Palpable Catholic identity'. Pupils clearly value the chaplaincy provision and take advantage of leadership roles to serve within the school. Activities are recorded and celebrated through the Service Passport. Extra-curricular provision caters for every child's needs and the library opens late to support student learning. There is an embedded culture of welcome, a member of staff stated that 'staff and pupils alike are loved and cherished here'. This is exemplified in pupil welfare support beyond the school gate with safety reminders across the tannoy and a staff presence in the local vicinity as pupils make their way home. The school goes the extra mile to provide an exceptionally supportive, joyful, loving and caring community for the Bishop Thomas Grant family. A local parish priest who is also a key member of the chaplaincy team is a visible focus around the school. Pupils value his presence and guidance as seen by the well-attended Y Club, where pupils are enabled to ask deep questions about life and scripture leading to reflection, debate and discussion.

Provision for relationships, sex and health education, (RSHE) meets both the statutory and diocesan requirements. Parents are overwhelming positive and appreciative of the opportunities the school provides for their children and feel part of the wider school family. Leaders have created what a staff member described as a 'truly remarkable school'. The care, compassionate and attention to each individual is overwhelming, creating a strong family in Christ. The head teacher cares deeply about every member of the community. This is modelled through leadership and beyond. Leaders place Catholic social teachings at the heart of school improvement. One of the chaplaincy team commented, 'Staff here are in such a good place due to strong leadership, this enables staff to support pupils'. Governors, leaders and chaplaincy work in strong collaborations to place Christ at the heart of strategic and organisational decisions, enabling a strong purposeful spiritual community to thrive. This is underpinned by a comprehensive professional development programme including weekly voluntary sessions for teaching and learning. A governor stated that 'Strong personal relationships and collegiality generated by the leadership team leads to exceptionally strong partnerships.' Governors are a regular presence in school attending a wide range of functions.

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

### Religious education key judgement grade

#### Pupil outcomes

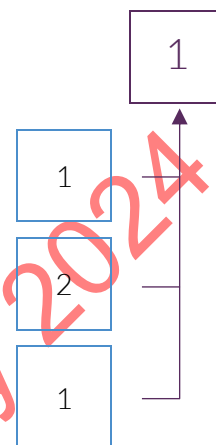
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

#### 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



Outcomes of all pupils whatever their starting point are at or above local and national averages. Pupils demonstrate deep respect of each other resulting in a supportive environment in which all pupils make progress whatever their starting points. Pupils awareness of the importance of care and love and inherent respect of learning leads to not only the achievement but great enjoyment of their learning with a reverence of others opinions evidenced in reflection of learning. As a consequence, they concentrate exceptionally well and are interested learners. Pupils speak animatedly about the purpose of religious education, not purely as an academic subject but as lessons and learning for their own lives. They value being taught to think, accept and form opinions and become their own person through the study of religious education. Pupils greatly appreciate the encouragement and individualised feedback they receive affording this as the reason for feeling confident and highly motivated to aim high. A pupil stated that the one to one feedback they receive, results in 'drastic improvements' in their work. Another key stage 4 pupil stated how the teachers 'keeping belief in me made me want to try'.

A sixth former commented that the core religious education provision is 'Very crucial and vital to the school community', going on to say that 'It opens up our minds'. Another went on to say that after winning a Jack Petchey award, his religious education studies around Laudato Si and being stewards of the world, led him to donating the money to the annual hamper fund. All pupils express how the religious education they receive provides a sense of purpose and identity 'allowing us to be who we are and grow in the love of our faith expanding on our core values and why we come to BTG.' Teachers are confident in their subject knowledge. For those staff new to the subject/school a comprehensive bank of resources is provided to support and guide consistency of learning for most. The department has adopted a knowledge organiser document, which enables most pupils to know and feel confident about how to move to the next steps and levels. Planning is linked to assessment with booster classes providing support where gaps in learning are identified. Teachers are committed to the value of religious education giving opportunities to relate learning and scripture to life and the world around them. This would benefit from additional training to enable staff in the religious education department to link subject matter to Catholic formation. They use praise effectively leading to students feeling

motivated and confident to aim high. There is time every lesson for spiritual reflection. The planned curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference and includes the promotion of human dignity and respect linking to British core values.

Leaders and governors regularly monitor and review provision ensuring the school curriculum conforms too and is an expression of the Religious Education Directory. This is enhanced through review of purpose and fit with the cohorts being taught. An example of this is in year 7 where children are taught about the church, the sacraments and their purpose to provide a baseline of learning for every child. Religious education is afforded full timetable parity with core subjects and forms the foundation of strategic planning at both governor and leadership level. The subject leader for religious education has a purposeful vision working collaboratively with other departmental leads including the special educational needs department, to ensure appropriate provision for every child. A carefully planned appropriate curriculum ensures subject content is introduced in an accessible and increasingly demanding program. Strategic decisions made at leadership level have a direct positive impact on learning, ensuring the pupils receive the best opportunities available.

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## Collective worship

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

### Collective worship key judgement grade

#### Pupil outcomes

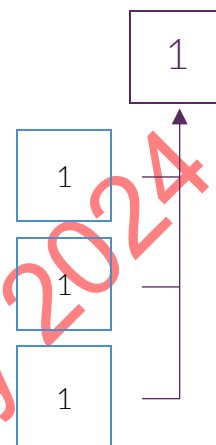
How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

#### Provision

The quality of collective worship provided by the school

#### Leadership

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



Pupils show a deep dignified reverence in all acts of collective worship. An example was a highly spiritual prayer service with year 11, where music, prayer, silence, scripture and homily, led by the chaplain created an ethereal space for reflection. The variety of forms of worship is embraced by pupils, with one member of the chapel choir group stating 'singing is a form of worship it strengthens our relationship with God'. Pupils take advantage of voluntary worship opportunities such as Pop-in Prayer which is well attended and offers a wonderful spiritual opportunity for those in attendance. Pupils are encouraged to pray for special intentions throughout the course of the day. When preparing prayer for liturgies pupils are supported to consider the personal, local, national, the global issues of the world in prayers. The work the school has put into the formation of pupils is commendable. For example, in the year 11 prayer service every single student showed dignified respect where they collectively prayed for a challenging and emotional situation.

A highly skilled chaplaincy team work collaboratively to create consistently high quality prayer and liturgy experiences which involve the whole school community. The team comprises of a local parish priest and a Servite sister who work alongside school staff. Each member of the team has a distinctive role leading to effective and high quality chaplaincy provision. The chaplaincy team work collaboratively with the pupil chaplaincy team to provide high quality purposeful prayer and liturgy opportunities delivered and led by pupils of all ages. A comprehensive plan of worship prayer and liturgy is embedded into the life of the school. Staff including senior leaders engage in and model the power of prayer across all aspects of school. As such prayer takes place in all lessons in addition to formal planned prayer sessions. A wide range of high-quality music is integrated throughout prayer and liturgy led by a dedicated member of staff who is a member of the chaplaincy team. The parish priest, supports pastoral wellbeing alongside leading prayer and liturgy. His presence is welcomed and valued by both staff and pupils. The Servite Sister, ensures a focus on the prayerful nature of the school. Music and prayer are linked to the daily scriptures. The school makes optimum use of a beautiful chapel which sits literally at the centre of the school. The chapel is always open as a focus for prayer, reflection and as a focal point for tributes for members of the school community no longer with us.

Governors and leaders have a clear focus and plan for prioritising the importance of embedding worship into school life. All holy days of obligation and other significant days are included in the school calendar to ensure that those who wish to participate in Mass are able to. Support of liturgy extends beyond the school, with members of the chaplaincy team attending Confirmation celebrations in pupils' parishes. Similarly, parishes use the school facilities for sacramental formation. The governing body includes Confirmation catechists, further extending the wider school links and partnerships in sacramental formation in local parishes. In addition, the chaplain attends Confirmations and follows up with a celebration of pupils' adulthood in the church. The Servite Sister commented, 'This school puts the priority of time on the liturgical, family life. This is the best I have seen. Students are encouraged to grow holistically as a priority.'

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## Information about the school

Full name of school	Bishop Thomas Grant Catholic Secondary School
School unique reference number (URN)	100638
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	2085401
Full postal address of the school	Belltrees Grove, London, SW16 2HY
School phone number	02087693294
Head teacher	Bernadette Boyle
<b>Chair of Governors</b>	Stephen Beck
School Website	<a href="http://www.btg.ac/">http://www.btg.ac/</a>
Trusteeship	Diocesan
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	11-19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	8-9 November 2017
Previous denominational inspection grade	1

## The inspection team

Catherine Burnett	Lead
James Jukes	Team
Shelley Victor	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