



Ursuline College

URN: 141628

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

22–23 February 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

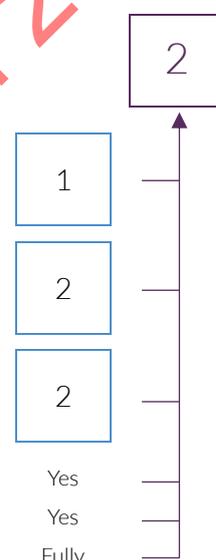
Collective worship (p.7)

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

The school is fully compliant with the 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

- Relentless focus on pastoral care to support learning through a comprehensive house system.
- Embeds the charism making it accessible to those of all faiths and none.
- Provides an impactful daily pattern of prayer and worship.
- Embeds Catholic social teaching principles across the whole school curriculum.

What the school needs to improve

- Improve governance to aid the guardianship role of religious education.
- Develop an age-appropriate plan for collective worship further enhancing the delivery of prayer and liturgy across the school.
- Adopt an adaptive pedagogy across teaching and learning in religious education to enable greater engagement.

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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

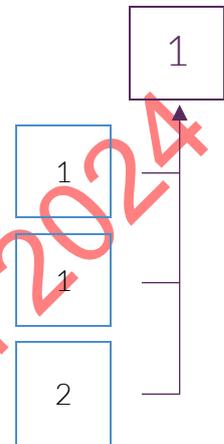
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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



Students show a deep care and respect for each other based on the core principles of Serviam and the teachings of St Angela Merici. They are passionate about engaging in opportunities to help others as seen by the uptake in the range of leadership opportunities offered by the school. Students feel supported, motivated and encouraged to take on roles enthusiastically. Students talk proudly about the impact they have been able to make on their school environment and on the lives of the wider community. For example, prefects leading change on school uniform policies, sports leaders supporting extra curriculum activities and sixth formers acting out Serviam within the school supporting learning. Formation of Youth SVP personifies the Serviam mission and is a driving force for common good. The Youth SVP members have developed a commendable community project following them presenting to a local company, resulting in a generous donation to develop a project impacting the local community. Students are clear that they are proud to be Ursulines. Sixth form students volunteer one hour every week to help younger students. This is highly valued by younger students with one Year 7 boy going out of his way to point out the sixth former who helps with his key board playing. A large group of volunteers visit a local care home weekly, to sing, chat and play bingo with the residents.

The Ursuline charism underpins all aspects of the life and work of the school. Staff said 'I feel so at home here.' 'There are lots of ministries here but one mission.' All staff say how much they feel part of the school community. There is a real sense of team. Long serving staff describe a sense of stability and belonging. Staff talk overwhelmingly about the care and support provided to enable them to do their jobs, speaking openly about respect and dignity of all workers. This support extends to weekly professional development opportunities including induction for new staff. The mission, and Ursuline Student Profile, underpins all actions and opportunities to impact on the wider school environment. A consequence card carried by all students, informs expectation and promotes good decision making and self-regulatory behaviour. Staff in all roles provide high levels of pastoral care catering for the unique character of the school. The vertical house system provides families within the family, leading to a sense of belonging and building trusting relationships. This is led by a committed team whose

work extends to the direct support of families ensuring a constant focus on attendance supporting progress.

Partnerships with local universities, Greenwich and Canterbury Christchurch, supports a drive to raise aspiration with a high uptake of university and post 16 learning opportunities. The school has adopted the Live Simply programme which works alongside other relevant resources such as Cafod, enabling staff and students to have a deep and lived out understanding of Catholic social teachings. Provision for relationships and sex education meets statutory requirements. The commitment of staff and governors to the Catholic life and mission of the school is palpable. There is a passion to provide opportunity to all, ensuring that the school works in service with the local parish including provision of food and Christmas hampers to members of the community. A highly skilled chaplain alongside a dedicated senior leader for catholicity, plan and embed events across the year. They are supported by a school improvement partner from Kent Catholic Schools' Partnership, (KCSP), who provides regular advice when required. Leaders have adopted the Trust programme of an annual focus on Catholic social teaching principles, which provides a focus for the whole school curriculum.

Governors support the unique charism of the Ursuline, whilst working alongside the vision for Catholic formation from both the diocese and the Trust.

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Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

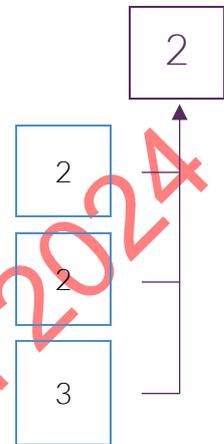
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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 make progress set against core subjects in the school, making at least average progress against other core subjects, with religious education showing an improving trend. Teaching through the *Religious Education Directory* in Key Stage 3 curriculum is developing secure knowledge and understanding. Students are able to work independently and when given the opportunity are able to take initiative in their learning. Most pupils, relative to their age and capacity, are religiously literate, using correct language to respond and answers questions and discuss topics. They are respectful of each others' learning, listening to each others' opinions and working well in teams when provided with the opportunity. Students take pride in their work with books being well presented. Students books show consistency with sequential work in line with the required schemes. Most students know where they are at and what next steps they need to take. Students respond to direction and work through activities with each other in teams allowing each other space and time to take part in discussion. Students respond to teacher and student led questions. In a Year 13 class students were using high level discussion which deepened their learning when presenting arguments for and against the argument 'science is incompatibility with belief in God', using McGrath's and Darwin's theories .

Teachers show deep care of the students in their classes and religious education staff are confident in their subject knowledge. Religious education teachers are committed to the value of their subject and communicate this well with students. Lessons are planned and sequenced with celebration and feedback, using resource banks such as the Magister programme. Whole school interventions are having an incremental impact on progress with religious education being included in provision for additional mentoring within the intervention programme. This includes targeted mentoring of Year 11 students in preparation for their upcoming examinations. However, there is a need for more creative pedagogical ways to deliver subject matter to secure greater engagement and deepen learning. In the best lessons, questioning moves learning forward. Similarly, where a range of formative assessment techniques are being used, challenge of learning occurs. Where activities are scaffolded and supported by prior learning, pupils are able to explore key theological concepts against Catholic social teaching principles. This is seen in Year 8 lessons where students were working in teams to analyse 'conscience' against the Ten Commandments, rights and dignity. Religious education impacts

directly on the behaviour of students in all areas of the school and across all key stages providing a moral compass embedded through the behaviour code of conduct. The school is committed to the provision and resourcing of religious education with religious education being comparable with other core subjects in respect of timetable, budgeting and resourcing. All key stages receive slightly above the required taught timetabled provision. Whilst monitoring of teaching and learning is evident, the department would benefit from impactful follow up and formalised staff development over and above the use of informal chats and departmental meetings.

Senior leaders have accurate evaluations of the departmental strengths and areas for development which are reported back at Trust level. Plans are already in place for the sustainability of succession planning in the religious education department. This includes an increase in the number of teaching staff and leadership roles within the department for September 2024. Whilst governors and Trust leaders have secure knowledge of the strengths and areas for development within religious education, active governance is limited in the support, monitoring and focus in their role of guardianship of religious education.

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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

2

Provision

The quality of collective worship provided by the school

2

Leadership

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

2

2

Students show reverence and respect for prayer and liturgy including assemblies, as seen in the house assemblies focusing on the first week in Lent, where students led prayer and reflection as well as playing music and singing. Students of all faiths and none, expressed how they value times for prayer and reflection and choose to take active roles in liturgical events. Students of faith and no faith engage respectfully and fully in the prayer life of the school. In a Key Stage 3 tutorial session, pupils wrote individual prayers after reflecting on scripture, with all pupils contributing to the form prayer book which is kept on display for everyone to use. Students are keen to take on a range of roles and responsibilities selecting areas of strength and confidence such as preparation, music, and carrying out readings. They work collaboratively with the chaplain, who encourages as many students as possible to play an active part in prayer. Daily prayer is respected and valued by students. A parent commented that 'the openness and safety provided by the school means my child learns to respect others and their faith, whilst feeling safe to practice his own'. The school is a place of Catholic formation. There is a daily pattern of prayer which reflects the liturgical seasons. Prayer at the end of days provides a spiritual reflection on achievements of the day. A parent commented that 'it helps my child to lead a better and spiritual life in the future'.

Variety and range of prayer and liturgy is well planned across the year, which engage the school members and the wider community. Parents and students commented about the joyfulness they felt from attending the school carol service. Voluntary Masses have evolved into community Masses and are scheduled at the end of the day each week with an invitation to the whole school community, including parents. A full programme of Masses and retreats is now in place to enable participation of all. Staff commitment to living out the charism and supporting whole school worship is evident. All staff are supported to deliver daily prayer and feel comfortable to do so. The richness of traditions and culture in the school are reflected in prayer opportunities. This is reflected in and reinforced by the message in the school prayer which is universally known and understood. A highly knowledgeable and skilled chaplain leads learning of others to enable consistency of delivery of prayer through the school. Planning recognises a wide variety of ways of engaging in prayer that is part of the Catholic tradition. A parent commented that 'the chaplain is an excellent role model for my child, she will

always engage and all the staff are fantastic at making parents feel like they belong and feel like they are welcome by the faith’.

A newly formed collaborative partnership with a local parish priest is strengthening strategic vision and planning for the apostolic work of the school, this includes outreach to parishes and wider community engagement. Leaders, including governors, recognise the importance of prayer and liturgy and the impact they have on whole school improvement. This is evident where school leaders have selected three key aspect of the school prayer, respecting each other, bearing with each other and helping each other, linking worship to expectations and behaviour which positively impacts across the whole school. The school prayer and liturgy policy is modelled on the Trust policy. The school would benefit from developing the policy to reflect the prayer and liturgy way of life at The Ursuline College.

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Information about the school

Full name of school	Ursuline College
School unique reference number (URN)	141628
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8864633
Full postal address of the school	Ursuline College, 225 Canterbury Road, Westgate-on-Sea, CT8 8LX
School phone number	01843834431
Head teacher	Danielle Lancefield
Chair of Local Governing Body	Sr Alice Montgomery
School Website	http://www.ursuline.kent.sch.uk/
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Kent Catholic Schools' Partnership
Phase	Secondary
Type of school	Academy
Admissions policy	Non-selective
Age-range of pupils	11-18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	22-23 February 2018
Previous denominational inspection grade	2

The inspection team

Catherine Burnett	Lead
Maria Noone	Team
Ciaran Graham	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