



St Anthony's School for Boys

URN: 100070

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Archbishop of Westminster

25–26 April 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

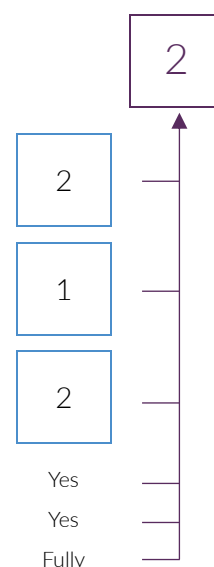
Collective worship (p.7)

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

- Leaders have demonstrated a clear vision for school improvement in religious education which has ensured outstanding outcomes for pupils.
- Pupils are exceptionally religiously literate as a result of high expectations and consistently challenging lessons.
- Excellent relationships between pupils and staff result in positive behaviour for learning across the school.
- The commitment to its Catholic ethos ensures that the school is a place of great religious diversity, characterised by tolerance and respect.
- Leaders, including governors, are committed to strengthening all aspects of the Catholic life and mission of the school.

What the school needs to improve

- Leaders need to work with pupils, staff and governors to ensure the mission statement of St Anthony's is clearly articulated and lived by all.
- Enable pupils to use their leadership skills to share ownership of the Catholic life and mission, and prayer life of the school.
- Ensure the principles of Catholic social teaching are included explicitly in the plans to develop Catholic life and mission.

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

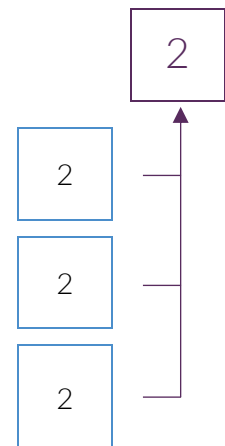
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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 at St Anthony's School for Boys appreciate and value the Catholic life and mission which lies at the core of the school's ethos. They are very proud of their school and understand that the education they receive is a privilege. Although they are able to discuss the school's mission in terms of respect, kindness and care, they are not as clear when asked to explain how the school's mission statement makes St Anthony's distinctive. The mission statement, therefore, needs to become less ambiguous, explicitly understood, embraced and accessible to all pupils. School Masses and assemblies provide opportunities for pupils to flourish as they respond to the demands of the Church to serve those in need. As a result of inspirational guest speakers in assemblies, pupils can make links to their personal responsibilities to pursue the common good. The Mini Vinnie and chaplaincy groups are beginning to strengthen the Catholic life and mission of the school. Although the implementation of pupils taking a leading role in explicitly linking the demands of Catholic Social Teaching to finding ways of responding locally, nationally and globally is in its infancy, through these groups, pupils thoroughly enjoy taking part and feel inspired to make a difference. They can talk animatedly about the school's fundraising efforts and their involvement in the collection of food for a local foodbank as well as other charities such as Mary's Meals and the Cardinal Hume centre.

Pupils benefit greatly from the pastoral care of the staff and are inspired by teachers who act as excellent role models, such as the staff member who recently ran the London Marathon in aid of 'Maggie's' centres. Strong relationships between staff and pupils are indicative of the respect they have for each other and this is especially notable in the way the pupils talk about how much they feel valued, irrespective of their faith or religion. Although the mission statement needs reviewing as it is not yet clearly expressed by all, staff bear witness to the school's charism by contributing with great enthusiasm to activities which reflect the life and mission of the school, such as the recent family quiz night in aid of Mary's Meals. There is a clear sense of welcome in the community, and this is evident, for example, in the provision for pupils with special educational needs who are valued and increasingly well served as staff development continues

to improve. Relationships, sex and health education is planned effectively and meets all diocesan guidelines. A response from the staff survey acknowledged the quality of provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school, saying, 'The school is true to its Catholic ethos in emphasising the individual worth of each pupil.'

Catholic life and mission is clearly prioritised and embraced in the school's development plan and self-evaluation. Leaders, including the school's advisory Pastoral Board are able to articulate the Church's mission in education and are clear about the strengths and developments needed for the school. The recent, untimely death of a member of staff was an example of the strength of leadership where the school community was galvanised, through the strength of its Catholic ethos, to bear witness to the suffering of the family and to console one another. Links with the diocese and deanery ensure policies and practice continue to improve. As part of the school's self-evaluation, they understand the need for pupils to become leaders in developing the emerging chaplaincy provision to ensure Catholic social teaching is explicit across all areas of the Catholic life of the school.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

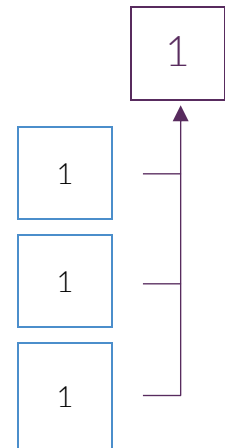
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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



Religious education at St Anthony's is outstanding. Pupils benefit from excellent teaching across the school and most notably in the upper end of the school where theology, philosophy and religion are taught with superb subject knowledge by teachers. Expectations of the pupils are highly ambitious and, as a result, pupils are exceptionally religiously literate and demonstrate very strong vocabulary. During the inspection, one pupil explained how they were currently 'decoding the book of Revelation' in the Bible and could explain their reasons around this as being inspired by their learning in RE. Religious education lessons are valued by pupils who are able to make links between their learning and how this affects their actions, especially in terms of behaviour where 'when we disagree, it's worked out in two minutes.' They described a focus on mental health and wellbeing through learning about strengthening relationships in RSE and appreciate the school's focus on mental health and wellbeing through the reporting tool 'Tootoot.' Pupils describe their RE lessons as 'really good,' 'detailed and challenging,' and were keen to tell inspectors that they valued the fact that they learnt about a range of religions. In RE lessons, pupils are engaged and display excellent behaviour for learning.

Staff training in religious education has been prioritised and, as a result, teachers' confidence and subject knowledge has greatly increased so that lessons that are very well planned and sequenced. Teachers ask searching, open ended questions which encourage pupils to think deeply. The use of retrieval practice in lessons supports pupils to build on prior knowledge and develop their responses with great skill. Feedback to pupils, either verbally or through initiatives such as the use of a 'purple pen,' enables pupils to make excellent progress. One observed lesson had the challenging learning objective 'to begin exploring diverse religious and non-religious views about life and death,' and pupils were guided to success by adaptive questioning. Teachers include creative elements such as drama, role-play, freeze frames and debates to further deepen pupils' learning. A sense of 'awe and wonder' was clearly evident in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where the pupils were 'hooked' into the lesson by having to guess what was in a box left on the carpet, which then linked to learning about Easter Sunday. Pupils produce work of a high

quality with higher order answers due to the school's introduction of 'reflective' questions around written tasks. Outstanding provision in RE can be characterised by a comment in the parent survey, 'Our son has developed a very clear pathway for his Catholic journey, regularly surprising us with his knowledge!'

Leaders have ensured that religious education has been planned carefully around the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory* and, during the inspection, all staff were keen to emphasise how a variety of materials are used to supplement the main scheme of work to provide lessons that are inspiring and ambitious for all pupils. Leaders have worked tirelessly to ensure that the planning, delivery and outcomes for RE are as ambitious, if not more ambitious, than other core subjects. They have mapped the curriculum to ensure required coverage and to enable all pupils to make excellent progress. Leaders strongly encourage all staff to take the opportunity to engage in training either internally with the appointment of a priest to the school one day a week, or through diocesan courses. In a discussion with staff during the inspection, they explained that this provision has supported them with their subject knowledge and understanding to feel increasingly confident in delivering outstanding lessons.

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

A variety of experiences of prayer and liturgy is becoming established at St Anthony's and pupils respond with great respect and reverence to all forms of collective worship. Pupils from all faith traditions join in prayers at key times of the day and there is an understanding and respect for all religious traditions. The chaplaincy group, as they become increasingly knowledgeable in undertaking opportunities to share liturgical ministries, must be encouraged to become confident in sharing a variety of ways of praying with other year groups. Pupils are not yet given enough opportunities to lead prayer and to take ownership of the planning, preparation and evaluation of prayer and liturgy throughout the school. They are able to articulate how prayer can lead to action, for example, on reflecting on the words of some eminent guest speakers to the school who have shared their faith in action. Pupils are knowledgeable about the Church's liturgical year and how it influences the prayer life of the school. Daily Gospel readings have been planned meticulously to ensure coverage of the Gospels across the academic year, and pupils are keen to share their understanding of these readings with their peers.

Staff are committed to ensuring that opportunities for prayer and worship are a daily experience and pupils display a dignified reverence, particularly noticed in the daily reflection and Gospel reading in each class. Staff, as excellent role models, need to ensure that pupils are given ownership of class prayer and worship to support their understanding of the Church's daily pattern of prayer, as well as the variety in ways of praying. The school plans celebrations in line with the liturgical year and ensures the celebration of the Eucharist is at the heart of its provision. During the inspection, pupils were keen to talk about their roles in the celebration of Mass as altar servers and readers. St Anthony's has a strong catechetical programme where pupils are prepared for the sacrament of First Holy Communion. Pupils are also involved in 'mini retreats' throughout the school year. The school endeavours to include parents as much as possible in the experience of Catholic worship including end of year Masses, the annual Carol service and nativity plays. Parents of different faiths are welcomed into the school to talk about celebrations and festivals, and pupils spoke about this parental involvement with great enthusiasm.

Irrespective of faith tradition, all pupils are invited to write and respond to prayers and some classes have dedicated prayer books. The 'floor books' in each year group demonstrate the school's commitment to prayer and liturgy. As testament to the strength of the prayer life of the school, pupils wrote prayers for the recent requiem Mass for a member of staff and offered these to the family.

Leaders, including governors and the Pastoral Board, have recognised the need for a more rigorous, consistent, approach to prayer and liturgy and, in doing so, have made a strategic appointment of a priest to support all staff on a part time basis. This has strengthened prayer and liturgy across the school and staff feel increasingly confident to support pupils in planning, leading and evaluating this area. The school's self-evaluation is clear about the need for more direction around collective worship which will include robust monitoring of prayer and liturgy alongside a vision for incorporating a strong focus on pupil voice and feedback. The leadership and advisory Pastoral Board of the school are committed to embedding prayer and liturgy and this is clear in their open and honest self-evaluation of St Anthony's.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Anthony's School for Boys
School unique reference number (URN)	100070
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	2026181
Full postal address of the school	St Anthony's School for Boys, 90 Fitzjohn's Avenue, London, NW3 6NP
School phone number	02074353597
Headteacher	Richard Berlie
Chair of Governors/Trustees	Nicholas Wergen
School Website	www.stanthonysprep.org.uk
Trusteeship	Independent
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	N/A
Phase	Primary
Type of school	Catholic Independent School
Admissions policy	N/A
Age-range of pupils	4-13
Gender of pupils	Boys
Date of last denominational inspection	June 2017
Previous denominational inspection grade	Good

The inspection team

Monica McCarthy
James Stacey

Lead
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