



Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection report for **Bishop Challoner Catholic School**

URN: 100978

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

Date: 30 November- 1 December 2023

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The school is fully compliant with the curriculum requirements laid down by the Bishops' Conference	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The school is fully compliant with all requirements of the diocesan bishop	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The school has responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection	Fully

Summary of key findings

What the school does well

- Bishop Challoner Catholic School serves a diverse community where all are valued, ensuring an excellent sense of welcome and inclusivity.
- Staff are positive role models for pupils, shown through their relationships with each other and the supportive pastoral care they provide for pupils.
- The school motto and mission statement 'Christ at the Centre' is the first line of the school prayer and is shared together on a daily basis, reminding all of their culture, purpose and faith.
- Pupils enjoy RE lessons and are positively engaged in their learning.
- Leaders including governors are ambitious for the school and work hard to ensure its Catholic identity is strengthened and preserved.

What the school needs to improve:

- Share good practice in teaching across the RE department so there is a consistency in pupil outcomes.
- Promote the chapel more effectively, so it is at the heart of the school and create more opportunities for prayer and liturgy.
- Review and evaluate the school's Catholic Self Evaluation and involve more staff, governors and pupils in its formation.

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:.....

2

Pupil outcomes

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

2

Provision

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

2

Leadership

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

2



Pupils understand the distinctive Catholic identity and mission of the Bishop Challoner Catholic School. The school motto and mission statement of 'Christ at the Centre' is the first line of the school prayer and is shared on a daily basis, during form time and liturgical and pastoral assemblies. Pupils are happy and confident in school and can express an understanding that they are valued and cared for as unique persons. They understand that the school is committed to Catholic Social Teaching, but this could be further embedded in both the school curriculum and in prayer and liturgy. Pupils are actively engaged in raising funds for local, national, and international charities such as Cafod, Bow Foodbank, St Francis Family Centre and a Turkish school recovering from the effects of the earthquake. Sixth form students spoke about volunteering at a local night shelter and their role in helping others. The school is building a relationship with local charity 'Neighbours in Poplar' and is also working with the Jesuit Refugee Service for their Christmas appeal. Pupils will be donating food and clothes as part of this year's Advent Giving Calendar. They clearly understand the call to 'love thy neighbour' through actions as well as words, acknowledging their responsibility to support others.

The mission statement is a clear expression of the school's Catholic educational mission, and staff are committed to its implementation across the curriculum and the whole of school life. The word of God informs and shapes the school's life and mission; there is a warm sense of welcome and inclusivity and pupils have a well-developed sense of respect for those of other faiths, religions, and none. Pupils acknowledge Christ's presence in others and demonstrate a deep sense of faith enabling them to live and pray in fidelity to their commitments. Staff are positive role models, through their relationships with each other and the dedication and care they show for pupils. One of the strengths of the school is its supportive pastoral care and pupils spoke eloquently about

'teachers going the extra mile' and really encouraging and supporting them to reach their full potential. The provision of RSHE meets both statutory and diocesan requirements and is faithful to the teaching of the Church.

Leaders and governors can articulate the Church's mission in education and are thorough in exercising their duty as guardians of the Catholic life and mission of the school. The head teacher is working with the newly formed leadership team as well as staff, governors, and parents to ensure that Christ is at the heart of the school. Policies and procedures demonstrate the Catholic identity and mission of the school. Leaders and governors promote the bishop's vision for the diocese and respond well to diocesan policies and initiatives, recognising that Catholic schools are at the service of the local Church. They work well with the local parish and pupils attend Masses there on holy days of obligation. Governors are ambitious for the Catholic life of the school and ensure it is a school improvement priority. The school's self-evaluation is thorough but could be more evaluative to include more governor, staff and pupil involvement. The school has effective strategies for engaging with parents and carers for the benefit of pupils. There was a very positive response to the parent survey, one parent commented that, 'The school provides a good education. They encourage pupils to follow in the footsteps of Christ in everything they do'. Leaders and governors put into practice the Church's preferential option for the poor by ensuring resources are used effectively to support those in greatest need, both materially and educationally. They also demonstrate respect for the dignity of staff in their decision making; policies and structures are in place which provide supportive pastoral care for staff. One member of staff commented that, 'the Catholic ethos underpins everything we do, and the pupils have a real sense of community'.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade:.....

2

Pupil outcomes

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

2

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.....

2



Pupils make good progress in knowing, remembering, and doing more when measured against the planned curriculum for each year. As a result, pupils including disadvantaged and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are making progress in all age phases and most years. Pupils enjoy their religious education lessons and are both enthusiastic and actively engaged. They produce good work which is well presented and are religiously literate, speaking confidently using key concepts and subject specific vocabulary. Pupils show notable independence in their learning and can build on prior knowledge. They have a clear understanding of how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. Since the boys' and the girls' schools have amalgamated, pupils achieve in line with national averages in their GCSE RE compared to national data, although the gender gap in outcomes needs to be addressed. There is an improving trend in attainment for Key Stage 5.

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. A collegiate approach is taken to lesson planning with a centralised system, so that experience and expertise within the department is shared. This should be extended to include sharing good practice in teaching across the department, so there is consistency in pupil outcomes. RE teachers are committed to the value of religious education, and they communicate this effectively to their pupils. They have high expectations of pupils, and they model this in lessons, supporting pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding. Examples of observed best practice included the use of strategies in assessment for learning, active learning such as debates and discussion and the use of mini plenaries that checked pupils' knowledge throughout the lesson. In several observed Year 11

lessons on Judaism and the sanctity of human life, most pupils were enthusiastic and engaged in their learning. In an observed Year12 lesson on Immanuel

Kant, students were able to respond confidently to very challenging and thought-provoking questions asked by the teacher. The pupils were actively engaged in their learning and there was stretch and challenge which increased engagement and maximised learning for all pupils. In a Year13 lesson on logical positivism the teacher's high-quality questioning tested the students and allowed opportunities for reflective responses. There was active discussion in several sixth form general RE lessons. Teachers recognise the impact religious education has on the moral and spiritual development of pupils and give them space and time in lessons to be reflective learners.

Leaders and governors ensure that the curriculum for RE is an expression of the *Religious Education Directory* and that religious education has full parity with other core subjects in relation to whole school policies, homework, marking and reporting to parents. The head of department ensures that staff receive regular training in implementing the religious education curriculum and has an ambitious development plan for improvement. The team works well together to ensure their vision leads to improvements in teaching and learning. Leaders ensure that religious education is thoughtfully planned and resourced to meet the needs of all the pupils and as result a sequential curriculum is provided which ensures subject content is introduced systematically as learners progress through the planned curriculum. New staff are inducted effectively into the department and meet with the head of department regularly. The head of department works effectively with the diocesan advisor and heads of RE in other schools in the diocese. Leaders create links with other appropriate agencies and the wider community to provide a wide range of enrichment activities to promote pupils' learning and engagement with religious education.

Collective worship

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

Religious education key judgement grade:.....

2

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



Pupils respond well to the experiences of prayer and liturgy provided by the school, reflecting in silence and joining in community prayer. There is a daily pattern of prayer, reflecting the rhythm of the prayer life of the Church, at the start of the school day, in assemblies, tutor time and lessons. Masses and liturgies are celebrated at various points in the liturgical calendar during the school year and the Sacrament of Reconciliation is offered during Advent and Lent. The chaplain works with the local parish to promote opportunities for pupils to receive the sacrament of Confirmation. There are two assemblies a week, one is focused on the themes in Gospel Values and the liturgical calendar and the second is led by year leaders. Tutor groups will create and lead prayer in their respective heads of year assemblies on a weekly basis. Pupils have a clear understanding of how to behave during prayer; even though this is a diverse faith community all show reverence and take time for spiritual reflection. Pupils understand ways of praying that are part of the Catholic tradition. The chapel is used by individual pupils and staff for quiet prayer and reflection. Muslim pupils attended Friday prayers during lunchtime on the theme of giving to charity and this reinforced the school's Catholic Social Teaching. The school ensures that some pupils play a role in leading prayer and liturgy, but this could be further developed, to enable more to have this opportunity.

All teachers receive professional development on the meaning and purpose of collective worship and liturgy. New staff receive induction sessions led by both the head teacher and other relevant staff on the importance of the Catholic life of the school and the practical aspects of prayer and worship. Staff and pupils have a clear understanding of liturgical norms. Staff, including senior leaders, are models of good practice to other staff and pupils as participants in and leaders of prayer and liturgy. Each classroom has a designated tutor and prayer board which displays the school's pupil profile, school prayer, house saints and a space for prayers to be written and traditional

prayers to be displayed. Masses and liturgies are celebrated within the local church for the whole school. The school also has a designated prayer room for students and staff of all faiths. Staff work well with families to include them in the prayer life of the school. There are good relationships with the local parishes and local parishioners are offered the opportunity to join the school Masses in church. The school's policy on prayer and liturgy is carefully planned and regularly reviewed.

Leaders, including governors have developed understanding of the different levels of skills of participation that are reflective of age and capacity of pupils. Leaders and governors have faithfully ensured that collective worship and liturgy remains a priority when setting budgets and allocating resources and 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. However, the chapel is not used to best effect and there should be further opportunities for prayer and liturgy. Leaders regularly review the quality and impact of prayer and liturgy as part of the school's cycle of self-evaluation and planned improvement. Staff have a clear understanding of their responsibilities for prayer and liturgy at the school and are able to implement and lead the daily routines that support this.

Information about the school

Full name of school	Bishop Challoner Catholic School
School unique reference number (URN)	100978
Full postal address of the school	352 Commercial Road, London. E1 OLB
School phone number	0207 791 9500
Name of head teacher or principal	Mr John Paul Morrison
Chair of governing board	Fr. David Evans
School Website	www.bishopchallonerfederation.towerhamlets.sch.uk
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Diocesan
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Voluntary aided
Age-range of pupils	11-18
Trustees	Diocesan
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	January 2017
Previous denominational inspection grade	Good

The inspection team

Mary Coyle	Lead inspector
Susan Grace	Team inspector
Dermot O'Neil	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