



St Boniface's Catholic College

URN: 140693

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Plymouth

30-01 May 2026

Summary of key findings

Overall effectiveness

The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school

2

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

2

Religious education (p.5)

The quality of curriculum religious education

2

Collective worship (p.7)

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

2

The school is fully compliant with the general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishops' Conference

Yes

The school is fully compliant with any additional requirements of the diocesan bishop

Yes

The school has responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection

Fully

Compliance statement

- The school is fully compliant with the general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishops' Conference.
- The school is fully compliant with any additional requirements of the diocesan bishop.
- The school has responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection.

What the school does well

- St Boniface's Catholic College goes to great length to provide a range of full and enriching activities to support the formation of students.
- There is a strong culture of learning in all classrooms and across all key stages.
- The subject leader for religious education has a secure understanding of the strengths of the department and has a clear plan of how to improve and support learners to succeed.
- The pastoral care for students is outstanding and allows students to flourish.
- Students are respectful and engage thoughtfully in prayer and respond well to the opportunities provided.

What the school needs to improve

- Map Catholic social teaching across the curriculum so that all subjects can contribute fully to the Catholic ethos of the school and explicitly reference this in their lessons so that students' knowledge and understanding becomes embedded.
- Ensure systems are in place to support all groups of learners to achieve in line with expectation, particularly at key stage 4.
- Increase the number of students involved in the planning and delivery of meaningful prayer and liturgy across all year groups.

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

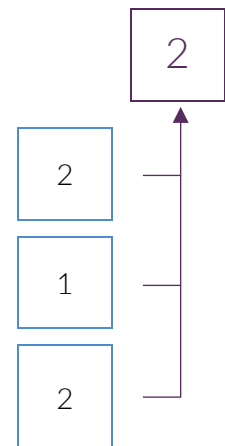
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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 at St Boniface's Catholic College thrive within a strong community ethos. The mission statement has been re-written, and the involvement of students and staff has been integral to its successful launch. Students have a clear understanding of their distinctive Catholic identity and articulate this through the virtues of 'Temperance, Prudence, Fortitude, Justice'. They are encouraged to show respect for themselves and for others and feel highly valued for who they are and what they achieve. They are proud to be a 'Bonnie's Boy'. Students explain coherently how the virtues relate to the school motto 'Bona Facite – Do Good, Honour, Integrity, Service' and how this relates to them in their everyday lives. Catholic social teaching is implicit rather than explicit although students seek to put faith into action through their charity work. Students respond extremely positively to the call to service and recognise how helping others enriches them in their own lives. They speak enthusiastically about the work they have successfully accomplished for Cafod, 'Red Wednesday', Shekinah Mission and Plymouth Soup Run. All students know what is expected of them to ensure that they can learn in a purposeful way. One student explained that 'teachers really care about us and want us to do well'.

St Boniface's goes to great length to provide a range of full and enriching activities to support the formation of students. Year 7 and 8 have a bespoke ethos focussed curriculum. 'Ubuntu' and 'Kairos' are woven through the scheme of work for religious education, and this successfully enhances students' understanding of what it means to belong to an active faith community. The work on 'Taking Boys Seriously', MK Heroes, KICK mentors and support for Young Carers in school all promote the resilience of students and successfully builds their self-esteem. The pastoral care for students is outstanding and allows students to flourish. Staff commitment at all levels is exceptional. They readily serve the community and participate willingly in activities

and routines which promote the school's high expectations and standards, especially those which reinforce Catholic virtues. Attractive displays are evident throughout the school and include quotations from scripture. This reflects the pride the community has as witnesses to their faith. Parents regard the school highly as evidenced by the overwhelmingly positive parental questionnaire. One parent explained 'the school has enabled my son to flourish and become secure in his character and confident in his leadership', and another parent commenting 'it has been wonderful to see my boys continue to grow into kind, respectful young men'.

Catholic life and mission is a priority for school leaders and they are committed to its ongoing development. They foster an environment of mutual respect and support within the school community. Collaborative relationships with the sister school and the Diocese of Plymouth ensure that the school remains aligned to its Catholic mission, benefitting from shared expertise and guidance. Students' views are regularly sought, and they are readily involved in shaping the Catholic life and mission of the school. Governors and leaders enthusiastically support new staff induction which encourages full participation in the Catholic life of the school. The school prioritises professional development and one training day each year is used to enhance teachers' understanding of Catholic ethos. This supports their commitment to their own spiritual growth, for example, the 'Pilgrims of Hope'. Consequently, staff speak eloquently about what their involvement means to them on both a practical and personal level. Leaders and governors contribute effectively to the systematic review of Catholic life and are ambitious to support and develop the Catholic life of the school. Governors undertake regular monitoring visits which enables them to challenge effectively which leads to further improvement.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

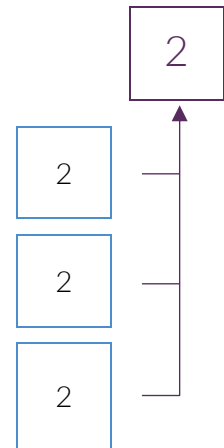
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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 develop secure subject knowledge, understanding and skills in religious education. There is a strong culture of learning in all classrooms and across all key stages and teachers use a range of strategies to support learning. Clearly embedded routines across the department enable learning to flow seamlessly in lessons, from when the students enter the classroom to when they move through the school's different phases of learning to extended writing tasks. Consideration has been given to the learning needs of all students through class setting, additional support and student passports. The curriculum is carefully crafted linked to the *Religious Education Directory* (RED). The emphasis on retrieval tasks at the start of lessons with 'Do Now Exercises' supports students in knowing and remembering more. Students treat each other with respect and listen attentively when discussing religious concepts and alternative views. Key vocabulary is re-visited routinely which supports students well in becoming confident in their use of religious language. Although outcomes in religious education have been below those achieved nationally at GCSE the school has put in place strategies for improvement which are proving effective. The average point score for religious education indicates that it is the highest performing core subject in the school.

Students are taught by a committed team of teachers who have nurtured good relationships with all those they teach in religious education. Lessons are well planned and provide a range of diverse activities which enhances the sense of enjoyment that students express for their learning. Questioning is used effectively to maximise engagement and to ensure that students are challenged appropriately in their thinking. Pair work is used well to consolidate student understanding. This enables students to debate topics confidently and use scripture to support and accurately reinforce the points they are making. Students learn about other faiths as part of the curriculum and value the opportunity this gives them and they articulate how this reflects

the world we live in. Students improve their work through regular self-assessment, and the use of 'purple pen' is regular and consistent across the department. Student voice has an impact on practice as evidenced through the summer surveys where ideas have been acted on and in lessons where students identified knowledge gaps which were used by teachers in planning subsequent lessons. Whole school training in the quality of learning and teaching and the adoption of 'Embedding Formative Assessment' clearly indicates that religious education is taught well and there is a shared determination to continue to improve.

The subject leader for religious education has a clear vision for learning and teaching which is shared and understood by all members of the department. They are proactive, pragmatic and ambitious for the department. Leaders have a secure understanding of the strengths of the department and have a clear plan of how to improve and support learners through the religious education action plan. Training has been provided at all levels, including leadership, to embed subject knowledge and pedagogical development. Further work on adaptive teaching will ensure that all students make progress and achieve in line with expectation. Marking in books is regular, however, teachers' comments lack sufficient detail to enable students to understand precisely what they need to do to improve their work and make progress. Learning walks, lesson observations and book scrutiny all occur as part of the school's regular monitoring, evaluation and review processes. Leaders and governors have ensured that religious education receives the required time allocation in all year groups. Therefore, this complies with the requirements of the Bishops' Conference. The budget allocation for religious education is below that for other core subjects. However, when the chaplaincy budget is added to this there is parity between subjects.

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 articulate that prayer and worship is an expected part of the school day. They are respectful and engage thoughtfully in prayer and respond well to the opportunities provided. The school's emphasis on prayer affirms self-worth and human dignity. Students appreciate and benefit greatly from the work of the GIFT team (Growing In Faith Together) who write prayers for use during 'Sacred Time'. They meet with the lay chaplain every week to promote the prayer life of the school. However, numbers involved are small and the school acknowledges that this needs to be developed further to include students from all year groups. Students are supported effectively by the lay chaplain when planning, organising, leading and evaluating their own acts of worship. They explain that they are happy to be involved with this work and are growing in confidence. Through their involvement in whole school Masses, the sacraments and Ash Wednesday, students have a growing understanding of the liturgical life of the Church. Form tutors recognise the importance of considering students' different experiences of prayer so that everyone feels able to contribute. Students from other faiths and indeed no faith at all are supported well and feel that they are welcomed and valued as members of the school community.

Praying together is part of the daily experience for all students and staff and is embedded into school routines. Most students articulate that they are aware of different forms of praying including traditional prayers and reflection. Scripture is referred to routinely and the Gospel from the previous Sunday is used effectively as the focus for the theme of the week during 'Sacred Time'. Consequently, themes are appropriately linked to the liturgical year, supporting the school's Catholic identity well. Reflection is used to allow students to make connections between current issues being experienced by communities around the world and the impact this has on their daily lives. For example, the theme of the week on 'love one another' and how

treating each other with respect and living a life of service underpins the ethos of the school. The 'RISE' theatre group performed the passion play during Lent followed by a question-and-answer session with students. This reinforces the evangelisation of gospel values and enhances the knowledge and understanding of students. The school benefits greatly from the support of the priest chaplain and lay chaplain who provide a wide variety of meaningful worship experiences for students and staff.

Leaders and governors place a high priority on the prayer life of the school. They have put in place a policy which identifies the requirements for prayer and liturgy. Student leadership of prayer is positive and opportunities for students to contribute and participate are evident. Leaders plan the calendar carefully to ensure that all key celebrations in the Church's year are observed including Mass, the sacraments and Holy Days of Obligation. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is available to students during Advent and Lent. Students who cannot receive this sacrament are encouraged to speak with the priest during this time which supports the inclusive nature of the school. All staff have access to Google classroom with resources for prayer and liturgy which are updated weekly. Staff welcome the structured tutor programme prayer and articulate that this gives them confidence to facilitate prayer and in asking students to lead prayer. The lay chaplain has a strong vision for achieving excellence in prayer and liturgy and has the knowledge and skills to support students and staff to secure that vision. Cyclical monitoring exercises are undertaken to ensure that all tutor groups are praying together daily. Systems are formalised which ensures that provision for collective worship is appropriate for all.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Boniface's Catholic College
School unique reference number (URN)	140693
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8794002
Full postal address of the school	21 Boniface Lane, Manadon Park, Plymouth, Devon, PL5 3AG
School phone number	01752 779051
Executive headteacher	Michael Antram
Head of school	David Clift
Chair of governors	Karen Cooke
School Website	http://www.stbonifaces.com/
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Plymouth Cast
Phase	Secondary
Type of school	Academy
Admissions policy	Non-selective
Age-range of pupils	11-16
Gender of pupils	Boys
Date of last denominational inspection	9 - 10 March 2023
Previous denominational inspection grade	3 – Requires Improvement

The inspection team

Garry Maher
Paul Cotter

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