



# St John Bosco College

URN: 135762

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Archbishop of Southwark

08–09 May 2025

## Summary of key findings

### Overall effectiveness

The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school

1

#### 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

1

#### Religious education (p.5)

The quality of curriculum religious education

1

#### Collective worship (p.7)

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

1

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

- Religious education is taught for a specified portion of each repeating cycle and this constitutes equal to or greater than is necessary for compliance with the requirements of the Bishop's conference.
- The school is fully compliant in relation to any additional requirements of the diocesan bishop.
- The school has responded fully and appropriately in relation to previous areas for improvement.

## What the school does well

- Staff and leaders enact the words of St. John Bosco in ensuring that students know they are loved.
- The school community demonstrates inclusivity in all aspects of daily life.
- Leaders provide a loving and caring oversight, creating an environment where staff and students feel they can achieve beyond expectations.
- There is a dynamic and creative vision for religious education in which the students' experience and learning is placed at the heart of decision making.
- Prayer and liturgy are a central feature of the life of the school with the consistent presence of members of the Salesian community is valued by students and staff.

## What the school needs to improve

- Leaders to work together to make connections between different areas of the curriculum and Catholic social teaching.
- Staff to ensure all students understand, and can reflect upon, what they need to do to make progress in their religious education learning.
- Provide opportunities for students to have a developed capacity for evaluating the quality of the prayer and liturgy they have planned.

## 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

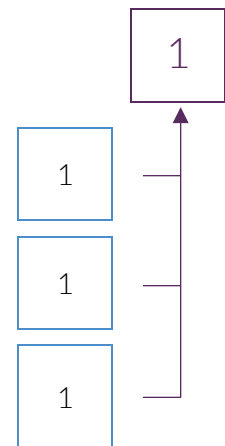
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

#### 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



RUAH, a Hebrew word meaning the 'breath of God,' serves as a powerful acronym encapsulating the ethos of St John Bosco College: Respect, Understanding, Affection, and Humour. This ethos permeates all interactions within the school community and beyond. Students take pride in their school and readily share the positive impact it has on their lives. One student remarked to inspectors, "At St John Bosco College, we always put God first and find ways to apply that to our lives." The students genuinely embrace the principles of RUAH and inclusivity, reflecting their Salesian charism through active participation, which significantly enhances the Catholic life and mission of the school. Examples of this commitment include the recent Lenten Walk, weekly Newsflash publications, appearances on Radio Maria, and fundraising efforts to support overseas Salesian communities. Students clearly understand that the school community is dedicated to following St John Bosco's teaching that children need to "know that they are loved."

St John Bosco College embodies a powerful sense of community, reflected in its inclusive environment and welcoming culture. Inclusivity permeates all aspects of the community, with an explicit and concrete commitment to the most vulnerable. The support offered within the Devereux and Savio bases, for students with autism spectrum disorder and other needs is simply inspirational in its acknowledgement of Christ's presence in one another. The school celebrates the diversity of cultures and belief traditions within its community. The institution goes above and beyond to understand and support the unique needs of its members, ensuring they can live and practice their faith with integrity. The chaplaincy provision and pastoral care bears witness to the school's commitment to the flourishing of every member of the school community. One parent stated, "The school has helped my child spiritually and mentally, which has changed his life immensely." The school's environment is a testament to its mission and identity, prominently displaying images and symbols of its Catholic and Salesian heritage. This visual representation reinforces the school's commitment to its values and

beliefs. Staff members are deeply committed to the school's mission statement, integrating it seamlessly into the curriculum and all aspects of school life. They actively engage in and contribute to activities that embody the school's mission and the service it provides to the community. The provision for relationships, sex and health education aligns with diocesan requirements and remains true to Church teachings.

Leaders and governors of the school actively foster connections with the local church and the broader Salesian community. Governors play a crucial role in enhancing the Catholic ethos and mission of the school. They are dedicated, highly skilled, and meticulous in their duties. The RUAH Committee, a part of the governing body, ensures the Salesian Catholic identity is maintained and celebrated within the community. School leaders embody their faith, serving as outstanding role models whose respect and relationships shape student interactions with peers and staff. Leaders and governors offer exceptional pastoral care to staff. One staff member noted, "It (the school) is a warm and welcoming place to work for staff...where the message of Don Bosco is felt at the heart of everything we do." Staff professional development, focusing on the Catholic life and mission of the school, is frequent, engaging, and effective, resulting in a clear understanding of the school's mission among staff. The leaders and governors of the school exemplify the Church's preferential option for the poor by strategically directing resources to those who need them most, both in terms of material support and educational opportunities. Their decisions consistently reflect a strong commitment to the common good and serving those in greatest need.

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

### Religious education key judgement grade

#### Pupil outcomes

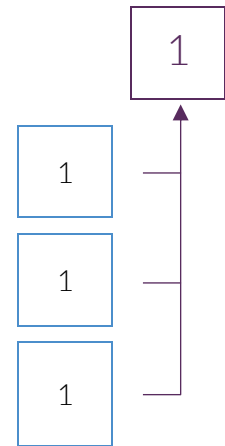
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

#### 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



The religious education department excels in nurturing students' knowledge, understanding, and skills as outlined by the *Religious Education Directory*. Students, including those who are disadvantaged and those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), consistently make considerable progress across all age groups. They are religiously literate and engaged, using their knowledge to reflect spiritually and think ethically. The regular presence of Salesian staff helps students understand the demands of religious commitment in daily life. Confident in their learning, students use key concepts and subject-specific vocabulary fluently, asking insightful questions that demonstrate their curiosity. Independent learning is encouraged, with students taking initiative and concentrating well on their tasks. Their work is of high quality, displaying excellent presentation, creativity, and individuality, which inspires their peers. Active engagement in lessons is evident, with students showing a strong commitment to improving their skills. Their enthusiasm for learning and respect for the staff result in excellent behaviour. One parent commented, "My child enjoys Religious Education so much. He finds the lessons extremely interesting. He often comes home sharing what he has learnt." Many students show an awareness of their academic progress and understand how to improve their work. Emphasising self-reflection opportunities for all students can ensure consistency. Students consistently achieve above-average attainment compared to other core subjects and national figures.

The religious education department boasts a team of highly confident teachers, whose subject knowledge and teaching ability are suited to the classes and age ranges they teach. Their commitment to religious education and high expectations are effectively communicated to students, fostering a strong learning environment. Lesson planning is well-linked to students' current assessments and individual knowledge, ensuring that lessons both consolidate and extend understanding. This approach enables students to learn exceptionally well. In the best lessons, teachers employ strategic

questioning during lessons to gauge students' comprehension, adapting explanations and tasks to enhance learning outcomes for most students. Celebrating student effort is a frequent practice, leading to high levels of motivation. Teachers provide constructive feedback, ensuring students understand the steps needed to progress in their learning. Staff's understanding of the impact of religious education on students' moral and spiritual development helps students make meaningful sense of their experiences. The careful planning ensures students have appropriate opportunities to present their learning through various forms of expression, catering to the diverse needs within the classes. High-quality resources, including effective use of additional adults, structures the learning for all students. This comprehensive approach ensures that every student receives the support and encouragement needed to achieve academically and personally.

Leaders and governors ensure that the curriculum faithfully reflects the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*. They employ imaginative and creative methods to enhance the delivery of the curriculum, making it engaging and effective. Religious education is equitable in importance to other core subjects, with comparable professional development, resources, timetabling, staffing, and accommodation. Leaders and governors provide consistent, high-quality professional development for all religious education practitioners, focusing on both subject knowledge and teaching methods. The subject leader for religious education has a clear vision and expertise, which are effectively utilised to improve teaching and learning, ensuring consistently good outcomes. The curriculum is planned to offer many opportunities for students to progress through the subject content. Plans for the introduction of new topics within the *Religious Education Directory* are thoughtfully designed to meet the diverse needs of different student groups, within each key stage, building on prior learning. The strong links with the Salesian community provides a variety of enrichment activities, enhancing students' engagement with religious education. Leaders and governors conduct thorough self-evaluation, leading to strategic actions and well-targeted planning that result in positive outcomes.

## Collective worship

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

### Collective worship key judgement grade

**Pupil outcomes**

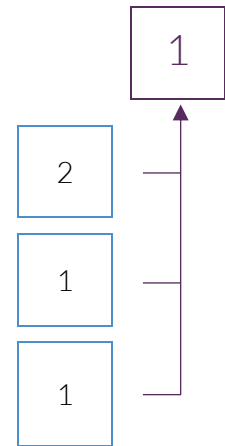
How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

**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



Students at the St John Bosco College show a positive response to the prayer and liturgy experiences provided irrespective of their own faith background. They actively take part by reflecting in silence and confidently joining in community prayers, such as the daily acts of worship. The students have a comprehensive understanding of various prayer methods within the Catholic tradition, particularly enjoying the Atama method which uses rhythmic clapping and dancing. Prayer and liturgy also includes the use of scripture, symbols, silence, meditation, reflection, and liturgical music, performed by the school band. Collaboration is a key aspect of collective worship at St John Bosco College, with students working effectively alongside teachers, peers, and the chaplains to lead engaging prayer and liturgy experiences. The school's provision for evaluating the quality of the prayer and liturgy is completed by the growing student chaplaincy team who are adept at recognising and articulating the ways in which prayer and liturgy impact and are impacted by the broader school environment. The provision would benefit from structures to gather further feedback from the wider student body. Students understand how to reflect on their experiences and can express how these experiences have inspired change and progress within the school community.

The importance of prayer and liturgy is evident throughout the day, as well-planned prayer and liturgy are integral to the school routine, including the two gatherings of students, staff, and leaders. Significant moments of joy are celebrated in prayer, such as the celebration of VE Day and the welcoming of a new Pope during the inspection. The school has a daily pattern of prayer that reflects the Church's prayer life. There is a balance between routine and innovative prayer times. For instance, two Islamic students in the sixth form recently organised a successful multi-faith prayer evening attended by students, staff, and parents. Prayer and liturgy provide participants with engaging and creative experiences of the Catholic tradition's breadth and richness. Staff are skilled in helping students plan and lead well-constructed prayer and liturgy, understanding the Church's liturgical norms and helping students incorporate them into their preparations. Students and staff regularly use

their talents to enhance the school's prayer and liturgy. Music is included in the celebration of Mass when appropriate, enriching these experiences for the student. The chaplaincy team, both staff and students are keen to develop the use of music further. Leaders creatively uses available spaces to provide prayer areas, including the chapel, the popular chaplaincy room, the local church and the next door, Salesian house ensuring access to everything necessary for the celebrations of Mass and other services. These spaces are well-cared for and conducive to prayer.

School leaders, including governors, plan the calendar and timetable to ensure regular celebrations for the entire community, especially during key liturgical periods and significant school events. Holy days of obligation and important dates, such as the Feast of St John Bosco, are prioritised to allow participation in Mass or other liturgies. Additionally, the Sacrament of Reconciliation is offered, and recently facilitated in the school playground to increase participation and understanding. Leaders prioritise high-quality professional development focused on liturgical formation and prayer planning. This ensures all staff understand the importance of prayer and liturgy, with relevant staff being well-trained and committed to its practice. Chaplains and leaders possess a deep understanding of Catholic prayer traditions and liturgical sources, which they use to plan meaningful prayer and liturgy experiences. They assist others in creating engaging and relevant opportunities for students and staff. Regular reviews of the quality and impact of prayer and liturgy are conducted as part of the school's self-evaluation and improvement cycle.

## Information about the school

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Full name of school                            | St John Bosco College   |
| School unique reference number (URN)           | 135762  |
| School DfE Number (LAESTAB)                    | 2124008   |
| Full postal address of the school              | St John Bosco College, Parkham Street, Battersea, London, SW11 3DQ                  |
| School phone number                            | 02079248310   |
| Headteacher                                    | Paul Dunne  |
| Chair of governors                             | Jane Hargrave   |
| School Website                                 | <a href="http://www.sjbc.wandsworth.sch.uk/">http://www.sjbc.wandsworth.sch.uk/</a> |
| Trusteeship                                    | Salesians   |
| 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                            | 11-18   |
| Gender of pupils                               | Mixed   |
| Date of last denominational inspection         | 21 & 22 May 2019  |
| Previous denominational inspection grade       | 1   |

## The inspection team

|                 |      |
|-----------------|------|
| James Jukes     | Lead |
| Bridget Durrant | 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 |