



St Pius X Catholic High School

URN: 106962

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Hallam

02–03 May 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

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 curriculum requirements laid down by the Bishops' Conference

No

The school is fully compliant with all requirements of the diocesan bishop

Yes

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

Fully

2

What the school does well

- The school's mission statement is known to all. Staff and students embrace this and ensure it is at the centre of all that they do.
- Staff provide outstanding pastoral care to each other and all students. They go the extra mile to create an environment of acceptance and inclusivity.
- The provision for relationships, sex and health education is exemplary. The coordinator works closely with others to ensure that content is relevant and age appropriate, with students of all abilities able to access this.
- The chaplain, skilfully supported by her line manager, works hard to offer a wide range of opportunities for prayer and liturgy.

- Leaders and governors have a clear vision for prayer and liturgy that is well communicated to all members of the school community; this results in staff acting as exemplary role models during prayer and liturgies.

What the school needs to improve

- Review provision to ensure that more curriculum time is given to religious education and there is parity with other core subjects.
- Create a communal prayer space in school that accommodates more students and staff, thus allowing larger groups to pray together.
- Strengthen links with the parish by offering the Sacrament of Reconciliation at key points in the liturgical year.

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

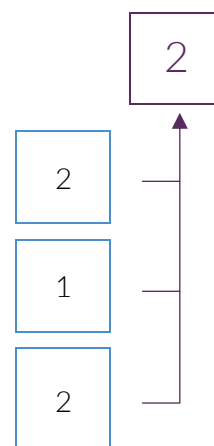
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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



Outcomes for Catholic life and mission are good because staff and students understand and identify with the distinctive Catholic identity and charism of their school. They appreciate the school's caring environment and all feel valued and accepted as unique individuals; part of an inclusive community. Students often comment that they feel happy and safe at St Pius, with strong pastoral structures helping to ensure this. Pastoral managers use praise and an effective rewards system to celebrate positive behaviour. They also model the teachings of Jesus to all students. Catholic social teaching principles are at the heart of all that the school does and work is ongoing to ensure that all areas of the curriculum play a part in promoting these. Opportunities are provided for students to respond to the demands of Catholic Social Teaching at local, national and global levels through their work with organisations such as the Wath Food Bank, the Good Shepherd and CAFOD Young Leaders. This enables students to live out the mission of the school, supporting the most vulnerable in society. They underpin this commitment by responding with social action. Events such as 'Pledge Day' allow them to plan and prepare activities that raise awareness of the plight of others and fundraise for those in need. However, some students cannot articulate the link between their social actions and the theology that underpins them.

The school's mission is witnessed and evident upon entering the building. Students know the school mission statement and demonstrate this by respecting themselves and others. Staff embrace this and, as strong role models, ensure that it is at the fore of all that they do. There is a tangible sense of community in St Pius, with students commenting that they are 'a family' and feeling that they benefit from being part of a smaller school where they 'are all known and loved'. Discussions with students of other faiths comment on the welcome that they were given when

they came to St Pius. This also extends to the wider community; parents and carers are effusive about the outstanding care that their children receive. Chaplaincy provision is strong and, as such, all members of the school community benefit from a range of opportunities that aids their spiritual and moral development. Staff, students and those in the wider community comment on the activities and opportunities that they are involved in, with one member of staff commenting that they are 'pleased to be making this journey' with the children. The provision for relationships, sex and health education (RSHE) is outstanding. The RSHE co-ordinator, in collaboration with senior leaders, has ensured a well-sequenced, tailored scheme which is suited to the needs of the students and fully meets all diocesan requirements.

Leaders and governors strive to deliver an authentically Catholic experience for all members of the St Pius community, seeing Catholic life and mission as the core of their work. They work well with parents and carers to ensure this. The parish priest comes into school regularly to meet with staff and students. However, he recognises that more is to be done to further strengthen the students' Catholic life and mission experience. Monitoring and self-evaluation carried out by leaders and governors is good. Students are involved in this process and their input is considered when leaders plan for improvement. Professional development is well planned, involving all staff and they appreciate the care and support they receive from leaders and governors. They are happy here.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

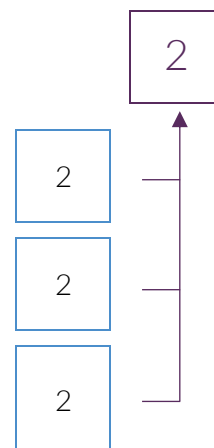
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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



Outcomes in religious education are good, with the majority of students achieving broadly in line with other core subjects. Over the last three validated years there has been an upward trend in students achieving higher grades. However, there is still work to be done to ensure that there is parity with other core subjects across all grades at GCSE, and the school recognises this. Robust internal assessment and monitoring shows that good progress is being made by the majority of students at Key Stage 3. Students comment that they enjoy the subject. Religious literacy is good, with students using this well to articulate their understanding and reflect on their work, thus furthering their understanding. They are also given a range of opportunities to work independently and cope well with the rigour of the *Religious Education Directory*. The work in students' books is of a high standard. They take pride in their work and strive to do better through the modelling of the work of others. Staff work hard to foster good relationships with students and this is evident in lessons, culminating in good engagement and excellent behaviour. This results in a purposeful learning environment, with the vast majority of students having a good understanding of the work they are doing. However, some students don't always understand what they need to do to make progress. All students recognise the importance of learning about other faiths and cultures, understanding that this prepares them well for life in a multicultural society.

The religious education department is a team of dedicated staff with excellent subject knowledge: this inspires a confidence in students that contributes to their enjoyment of the subject. The curriculum is well sequenced, with planning being linked to the students' current attainment. Staff adopt a variety of approaches to engage students and stretch their thinking and this is capitalised on at the start of lessons through recall activities. Students comfortably work in groups and independently, being engaged in tasks that are well suited to their ability.

Good adaptive teaching ensures all students are engaged in meaningful work, with the weakest benefiting from scaffolded tasks that broaden their learning. Staff use questioning to good effect and when lessons are at their best, targeted deeper questioning provides challenge and deepens understanding. There are a range of activities provided that offer variety and rigour. Written comments in books are thoughtful and well-considered, with constructive feedback comments given. However, there are inconsistencies in marking and feedback. Some students do not respond to staff feedback requests and this is not always followed up by staff.

Governors have a good understanding of the department's strengths and know the areas for development, recognising what needs to be done to improve further. They know their community well and are involved in the school's strategic direction alongside the leadership team. Senior Leaders are effective and rigorous in their approach to improvement. They are good at communicating their intentions and this strong communication, coupled with a rigorous approach to monitoring curriculum impact, ensures that staff can manage change with confidence and deliver effective provision in religious education. The head of the department is a strong leader and teacher. New to the role, he has a love of the subject and a clear vision for religious education. He has a good understanding of his department and has put a number of plans in place to address areas for improvement. However, these plans are newly introduced and are not yet embedded or monitored over time. He is also supported by a leadership team that is fully on board with the mission of the school.

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 enjoy prayer and liturgy experiences at St Pius. A range of opportunities are offered by the chaplaincy team, that are adapted to suit students of all ages and abilities; these include traditional Catholic prayers, reflection, silence and scripture. Students and staff are keen to participate in prayer and liturgy events and some students are involved in preparation and planning of this for key events in the calendar such as the Remembrance assembly. They comment that they would like to prepare and plan more events. They can articulate how prayer and liturgy links to the wider life of the school and their own lives. One student commented that 'prayer makes us feel connected to God and think about the things we deal with in our own lives'. They realise that prayer and reflection prompt them to act for themselves and on behalf of others, particularly the most vulnerable in society, through actions such as fundraising activities.

Prayer and liturgy are central to the work of the school and students are familiar with the pattern of daily prayer in their lives. This pattern, coupled with occasional spontaneous prayer and reflection, is the norm at St Pius. Staff work hard to offer a variety of different ways to pray that are authentically Catholic. Students comment that staff pray with them, modelling good practice in prayer and liturgy. The school also ensures that students of other faiths or none are included in the prayer and liturgy life of the school through the use of paraliturgies. Links with local parishes are good: the parish priest is known to staff and students. He regularly visits the school and celebrates Mass. However, the Sacrament of Reconciliation is not currently offered in school. Leaders are aware of this and recognise it as an area for improvement. Members of the community are also regularly invited to share in the school's prayer and liturgy; they value this. The school chapel is a calm and respected space which is regularly used by staff and students. However, the small space doesn't allow larger groups to pray together and restricts curriculum opportunities, particularly for the religious education department. The school offers a

comprehensive programme of retreats and pilgrimage, both locally and abroad, which is accessible to students in all year groups and the numbers of those who participate are high. This is complemented with events such as the Flame Annual Youth Congress.

The chaplaincy team are a driving force in embedding and raising the profile of prayer and liturgy within the school. The chaplain, ably supported by her line manager, has identified the school's areas for development and has plans in place to address these. Staff feel that they are well led and supported by the Chaplain and this, alongside the staff training programme that the school offers, ensures that most are confident in providing meaningful prayer and liturgy experiences for students. This is a consequence of the impact of the school's policy on prayer and liturgy, which has been recently reviewed after feedback from staff on the effectiveness of resources. Leaders are skilled in articulating and promoting the school's vision for prayer and liturgy and this encourages all staff to plan and lead on prayer and liturgy sessions which are accessible, relevant and encourage greater student participation. This results in students displaying good behaviour and positive interactions with their peers. Leaders and Governors have carefully planned the school calendar to ensure that Mass is planned for key times in the liturgical year, with all staff and those in the wider community invited to participate.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Pius X Catholic High School
School unique reference number (URN)	106962
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	3724601
Full postal address of the school	St Pius X Catholic High School, Wath Wood Road, Wath-upon-Deane, Rotherham, S63 7PQ
School phone number	01709767900
Headteacher	Sue Smith
Chair of Governors	Frances Walsh
School Website	http://www.saintpiusx.school/
Trusteeship	Diocesan
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	11-16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	5 th July 2016
Previous denominational inspection grade	Good

The inspection team:

Mark Taylor	Lead
Catherine Danaher	Team
Clare Masterman	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