



Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection report for
Ursuline Preparatory School

URN: 102874

Carried out on behalf of the Right Rev. Alan Williams sm, Bishop of Brentwood on:

Date: 03 March 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

- The charism of the Ursuline sisters and its motto, “Serviam”- I serve, is clearly understood by all and is at the centre of all that the School does
- Senior leaders demonstrate the importance of service to the whole community
- Pupils are able to articulate the values of the school and refer to them with pride

What the school needs to improve:

- Ensure that all staff access high quality professional development relevant to Religious Education

- Ensure that the Religious Education subject leader is given sufficient time to carry out her role and develops links with the Diocese and local schools to further enhance the practice and provision within the school
- Senior leaders and governors should work together to form an accurate evaluation of Religious Education in the school

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

The mission statement of the school is clearly visible around the premises and is known by all the pupils, who often make links to it during their learning. It underpins the many relationships in the school. The school has formed a community where all feel safe and are able to talk about their understanding of how the teaching of Jesus relates to them and their lives. The school chaplaincy team plays an important role around the school, ensuring that prayer tables are up to date and tidy. They also lead pupil responses to events like the recent earthquake in Turkey, when they quickly organised a cake sale to raise funds. One member of the team reflected, "We are not just thinking about ourselves, but the lives of others". Pupils have the chance to take other leadership roles through the school council and the Eco team and by acting as prefects. Pupils from other faiths feel part of the community and are happy to share their own experiences which are valued by the others. One commented, "It is fascinating to learn about similarities and differences". The school should now look at incorporating the principles of Catholic Social Teaching into their provision to help the pupils develop their understanding of the theology behind why Catholics respond to their mission in the way that they do.

The Ursuline motto "Serviam - I serve" is demonstrated in the leadership of the school and this is recognised and valued by all members of the community: pupils, staff and parents. Pupils should now explore what this can look like in their own lives. Staff know their pupils well, and the positive relationships they have enhance the pastoral care which they are able to provide. Pupils learn about positive relationships through staff role models and also through a well-planned relationship, sex and health education programme which meets diocesan and

statutory requirements. The displays around the school reflect its Catholic mission, and celebrate St Angela, the founder of the Ursuline sisters, as well as St Ursula and the house saints. All classrooms give suitable space to prayer areas and displays and the school also has a prayer room. A parent said the school "...provides a tranquil environment where the life of Jesus is important and translates into the love of the school community". The school chaplain is a frequent visitor to the school, recently blessing all the classrooms for Lent, and is well known amongst pupils of all faiths.

School leaders have made sure that the charism of the school permeates all policies and procedures. They have shown a good understanding of staff well-being and staff are grateful for the care that they are given. There is a good induction process in place for new staff and staff new to Catholic schools, but the subject leader does not have the necessary time in the current staffing structure to implement this as effectively as possible. Parents are welcomed into school to share in its mission and to develop their relationship with staff to ensure the best for the pupils. A parent commented, "...assemblies ... clearly show the Catholic mission". Governors also take part in some of these events. A new link governor for religious education has recently been appointed who is developing an understanding of the role; this will lead to a greater input into the school self-evaluation document from the governing body. Pupils are articulate about their work in this area, and their views and opinions should be a part of the school's self-evaluation.

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 follow a well-planned curriculum based on the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory*. It is clearly sequenced and pupils are able to make links between new learning and what they have been taught before. Pupils are engaged in their learning and participate well; they are keen to answer questions and are confident in putting forward their ideas and suggestions. They can use religious language appropriate to their age and the topics they are studying; Key Stage 1 pupils could use the word “Eucharist” correctly and Key Stage 2 pupils defined “consecration” correctly. Older children are able to find passages in their Bibles quickly. They can work independently, but also work together well. In one class, pupils worked together to draw out the main points of one of the Eucharistic Prayers. Role play and activities such as “freeze frame” help the pupils approach the subject with creativity. Pupils behave well in lessons and present the work in their books to a good standard, reflecting the importance given to the subject. Attainment in religious education is in line with that of other subjects and a new tracking system has recently been introduced. Marking shows that staff use positive feedback to show pupils how to improve; this could be used more consistently in order to maximise the progress made by pupils.

Staff know the importance of religious education in the curriculum and this is communicated to the pupils in their approach to lessons. Teachers use time at the start of the lesson to recap previous learning and are able to question pupils about their understanding, making links to previous work, but some opportunities to deepen this understanding were missed. Staff should make full use of professional development, especially that provided by the diocese, in order to make sure that they have secure subject knowledge. Several lessons began with prayer and more included the chance for pupils to reflect on how what they had learned

applied to their lives. In all classes, there are good relationships between staff and pupils which means that pupils are comfortable in putting forward their ideas and suggestions as they know they will be respected by their teachers and their peers. Praise is used particularly well to encourage participation from all members of the class.

Religious education is given a high priority within the curriculum. It is well planned and pupils are able to see how each new topic builds on what they already know. It has sufficient time allocated to it and is well resourced. Pupils have access to age-appropriate Bibles and prayer books. The classroom displays and prayer table support the current learning, with good reminders of key words and “the big question” associated with the topic. Pupils complete homework in religious education. The subject leader delivers professional development around teaching and learning in religious education which staff share, but they would benefit from external training as well in order to develop their subject knowledge. The subject leader has a clear vision for teaching and learning in the subject and strategies for monitoring its impact and application, but it is hard for them to be as rigorous as is necessary within the confines of the current staffing structure. Governors are kept up to date with progress in classroom religious education through reports to the governing body, but it would improve their understanding of what it looks like in the school to spend time in the classrooms with the staff and pupils. This could then feed into the school self-evaluation more closely.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship 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 know and enjoy the prayer rituals of the school. Children in Early Years Foundation Stage showed great enthusiasm to join in the school prayer and pupils in Year 6 were able to respond to an invitation to extemporise a prayer at the start of a lesson using a clear format. Throughout the school, pupils show enthusiasm and enjoyment in joining in prayer no matter whether they are Catholic or of another or no faith. The music at Mass, which was led by some of the pupils themselves was particularly joyful. The school follows the liturgical year and pupils are aware of how this changes. The chaplaincy team was able to talk about how and why they had changed the class displays to reflect the season of Lent. Pupils participate well in liturgies and Masses and should now be given more opportunities to plan and lead these events themselves. Pupils are offered a range of different styles for praying as a community, and the moments when the youngest children spent time in silent, private prayer was moving.

The school has a clear pattern of prayer and the pupils are very familiar with this. They begin each morning and afternoon with set prayers and have a planned introduction to traditional church prayers as they move through the school. Class displays and prayer tables support this. Weekly Gospel assemblies, led by teachers on a rota basis, help the pupils make links between what they hear in the Gospel and how they should live. One pupil said, "We are all one family, so no one should be sad." The school marks the Marian months with recitation of the Rosary and the school chaplain, as well as being a regular and very visible visitor to the school, makes sure that the Sacrament of Reconciliation is available to Catholic pupils. School Masses mark the liturgical year, as well as important feast days such as that of St Angela Merici and the school house saints. The local parish church is also used, for example for the school Advent carol service. Parents support the school at these events, with a large number attending. Music in prayer and the use of art, in class and around the school, all enhance the prayer

opportunities the pupils receive. The school has a separate prayer room which the pupils can use. It is hoped that the older pupils will be able to attend off-site retreats now that the pandemic is over.

The school has clear policy which sets out how and why the pupils come together to pray. During the inspection, it was clear that pupils are able to access prayer at their own level, and that their experiences change as they move through the school, building on what has gone before. School leaders and governors have made sure that the school maintains its commitment to the fullness of Catholic worship, whilst ensuring that those of others of other faiths or no faith still feel included and valued. Staff commented on how strong this vision is in the school. The chaplain is a well-known figure in the school, and is able to add to the experiences of the pupils in more formal prayer services and Masses. Pupils have a good vocabulary of prayer and should be given more chances to plan and prepare their own liturgies. School leaders and governors should make sure that the views of pupils and their parents are gathered and fed into the next round of school self-evaluation.

Information about the school

Full name of school	The Ursuline Preparatory School Ilford
School unique reference number (URN)	102874
Full postal address of the school	2-4 Coventry Road, Ilford, Essex IG1 4QR
School phone number	0208 518 4050
Name of head teacher or principal	Mrs Lorraine Pereira
Chair of governing board	Mr Simon Bird
School Website	www.urspsi.org.uk
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Click or tap here to enter text.
Type of school	Primary
School category	Independent
Age-range of pupils	3-11
Trustees	Mr Simon Bird, Chair of Trust Board
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	6 th November 2015
Previous denominational inspection grade	Good

The inspection team

Catherine McMahon	Lead inspector
Katherine Parker	Team inspector
Name of inspector	Lead/team
Name of inspector	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