



# **DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION REPORT**

incorporating Section 48 and Canonical Inspection under Canon 806 on  
behalf of the Archbishop of Southwark

**URN 135762**

**St John Bosco College**

**Parkham Street**

**London**

**SW11 3DQ**

**Inspection date: 21 & 22 May 2019**

**Chair of Governors: Jane Hargrave**

**Headteacher: Paul Dunne**

**Inspectors: Damian G Fox  
Judy Strong**

## **EDUCATION COMMISSION**

St Edward's House, St Paul's Wood Hill, Orpington, Kent BR5 2SR  
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**Director of Education: Dr Simon Hughes**



### Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding	Grade 3	Requires improvement
Grade 2	Good	Grade 4	Inadequate

## FULL REPORT

### INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St John Bosco College is a Voluntary Aided mixed Catholic comprehensive in the joint trusteeship of the Salesians of Don Bosco and the Archdiocese of Southwark. It is located in the London Borough of Wandsworth. It is situated in the Wandsworth Deanery of the Archdiocese of Southwark. The principal parishes the school serves are the Sacred Heart, Battersea and the parish of St Mary's, Battersea. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholics is 40% with 70% being from Christian families. 10% of pupils are Muslim. The average weekly proportion of curriculum time given to Religious Education is 10% in key stages 3 and 4 and 7% in the Sixth Form.

The school takes pupils from 11 to 18 years. The number of pupils currently on roll is 587. The attainment of most pupils on entering the school is significantly below average. The proportion of students eligible for Pupil Premium funding is above average. The College is in the top quintile for deprivation. The number of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) or an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP) is significantly above national average. The percentage of pupils whose first language is not English is above national average at 55%. 90% of students are from ethnic minority groups from 15 categories identified by the Department of Education.

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## SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

St John Bosco College is an outstanding Catholic school because:

- It is a distinctly Catholic school. It has a profound impact on the lives of students and staff. Built on the Salesian tradition and the educative system of St John Bosco, it focuses effectively on the holistic development of each child through 'reason, religion and kindness'. Pupils identify strongly with their school and its manifest Catholic values.
- The headteacher is an inspirational presence in the school. He is ably supported by senior leaders in constantly developing the Catholic character of the school and its academic achievements. Governors are knowledgeable and experienced and have a clear understanding of the strengths of the school. They demonstrate excellent leadership in all areas.
- Pastoral care is significantly effective in providing a secure, spiritual learning environment. It encapsulates the mission of St John Bosco that 'It is not enough for young people to be loved. They must know that they are loved'. Pupils respond respectfully and willingly to the mission of service to others.
- Collective Worship is recognised as fundamental to deepening the spiritual development of students. It is central to the daily life of the school. The effectiveness of chaplaincy is evident in the quality of liturgical opportunities for all members of the community. These opportunities inspire thoughtful spiritual responses from pupils.

## WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER

- Ensure the continuing improvement in pupils' achievement and progress in Religious Education by further developing expertise in raising standards of teaching and learning, especially in the sixth form.
- Extend the leadership of pupils by providing further opportunities for them to plan and lead spiritual and effective prayer and worship.



## Overall Effectiveness

How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education.

1

### Catholic Life

1

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.

1

The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school.

1

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school.

1

### Religious Education

1

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.

1

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education.

1

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.

1

### Collective Worship

1

How well pupils respond to and participate in the schools' Collective Worship.

1

The quality of provision for Collective Worship.

1

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship.

1

## CATHOLIC LIFE

**The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.**

Pupils derive great benefit from and make a significant contribution to the Catholic life of the school. They are excellent ambassadors for Catholic education. In discussions and in lessons, pupils articulate their understanding of what it means to belong to a Salesian school.

RUAH, respect-understanding-affection-humour, means the 'breath of God'. Pupils described it as the ethos of the school. Their understanding of RUAH is demonstrated by the spirit of friendship and mutual respect between all members of the community. Pupils are happy and confident.

The inclusion of all members of the community is a significant strength of the school. Pupils with different strengths and challenges acknowledge that the school is welcoming. Pastoral staff comment on the unstinting support given to families.

Pupils play an active role in shaping the mission and ethos of the school as pupil governors. They serve on the Learning and Ethos committee. A growing number of pupils are becoming engaged in chaplaincy to develop the school's youth ministry.

The words of the Head Boy, 'do not aspire to make a living, aspire to make a difference', sum up the vision of pupils to address the needs of the school and wider community. Raising funds for the street children in Kolkata and the local children's hospice, for example, demonstrate pupils' willingness to participate in a range of fundraising activities.

Pupil leadership is a strength of the school. Sixth form pupil leaders are outstanding role models for younger pupils and contribute effectively to creating an environment in which pupils know they are secure and cared for. Pupils are alert to the needs of their peers.

The College's concern for all pupils is reflected in the highly effective work of the Devereux and Savio centres for pupils with a range of complex needs, particularly Autistic Spectrum Disorders. A visit to the centres during the inspection witnessed the care and intense support by specialist teachers for these pupils.

A parent, reflecting the overwhelming support of parents, said it is a school with 'patience and understanding' that 'deeply upholds the ethos that every child should know that they are loved'.

**The quality of provision of the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.**

The impact of the mission statement is evident in the joyful and harmonious relationships throughout the school. All staff are fully committed to its implementation, as confirmed by pupils who spoke warmly of the support, praise and encouragement they receive.

The school is distinctly Catholic. The impact of the Salesian priests and brothers cannot be overstated. Testimony from staff and pupils emphasised an understanding of their own personal responsibility in building the Kingdom of God within the school community. They overwhelmingly respond by creating an authentic Salesian school through prayer and service to others.

The school environment reflects the Catholic mission and identity through tangible and effective signs of the school's character. Scriptural and spiritual quotations around the school serve to remind and inspire pupils of the fundamental purpose of the Salesians. The chapel is at the physical centre of the school and the spiritual heart of the community. It is a permanent presence of God and a focus for prayer and worship.

The efficacy of chaplaincy provision is profound. It is instrumental in providing a range of opportunities for pupils to develop the practice of their faith.

Pastoral care is a significant strength. The highest level of pastoral care for pupils is appreciated by the overwhelming majority of parents. This is particularly the case for pupils who join during the school year. Their development and success demonstrate the passion and commitment of staff to all pupils regardless of ability, faith or circumstances.

#### **How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding**

The school's leaders are deeply committed to the Church's mission in education. They have a strong sense of vocation to provide a school that responds to the needs and strengths of staff and pupils. The development of the Catholic Life of the school is viewed by leaders and governors as a core leadership responsibility.

Leaders have a well-informed understanding of the strengths of the provision for the Catholic life of the school and areas for development. This is reflected in the self-evaluation activities prior to the inspection that was fully endorsed by inspectors in all areas.

The governing body describe their understanding of Catholic Social Teaching as a 'Politics of hope'. Throughout the successful transition to the new building, they have not lost sight of the steps needed to ensure that developing young people is the essence of their vocation. One governor described their work as 'presenting an acceptable face of God' to students.

The professional expertise and leadership of the headteacher is a significant factor in strengthening spiritual development across the school. He is supported by all staff who demonstrate their own deep understanding of service in the way they conduct themselves. Staff appreciate that their well-being is prioritised with senior leaders and staff, including the chaplain, trained as mental health champions.

The school is effective in engaging parents in the education of their children. The powerful testimony from one parent, encapsulates the views of the vast majority of parents that they overwhelmingly support the school and appreciate the care and education provided for families.



As leaders, the governing body are highly ambitious for the school. They monitor the Catholic life of the school through the Ethos committee and through the chaplain's reports. The link governor and the Salesian priests regularly carry out formal and informal visits. These provide effective means of monitoring and challenging school leaders on the quality of provision.

Programmes for the professional development of staff reflect the Salesian ethos of the school. Examples such as how to lead prayer and helping pupils self-reflect through the Salesian Circle Time are included.

The induction into the Catholic ethos for new staff and regular inset on Catholic Life are instrumental in developing a deep awareness of what it means to be a Salesian. Staff across the school expressed their understanding of their responsibilities to do the best for each other and for pupils and their families.

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## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

### **How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education is outstanding.**

Outcomes in Religious Education have consistently improved for the last three years. From attainment levels below the national average on entry, almost all pupils make at least good, and often outstanding, progress in Religious Education above the national average and significantly above the school average. Groups of pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and disabilities, make at least their expected level of progress, whilst some make outstanding progress.

During the inspection, pupils displayed good, and in most cases, outstanding, age-appropriate standards of religious literacy.

Religious Education is held in high regard by pupils. They genuinely enjoy their lessons and appreciate the range of opportunities to learn about Christianity and other world religions. They respond positively to the curriculum and enjoy their learning. This is evidenced by outstanding behaviour for learning and high levels of engagement in observations during the inspection.

Pupils in all key stages are able to articulate high levels of motivation to learn, as a result of the praise and encouragement they receive for their work and attitude. Observations and a review of written work showed that most pupils can apply a range of skills to enhance learning, including independence, collaborative work and the ability to interpret sources. The quality of pupils' current work is outstanding.

The average grade in GCSE Religious Education is higher than the average of other subjects in the school. Pupils' performance at A level was in line with the school's other results. School leaders have identified outcomes at A level as a development point for next year.

### **The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education is outstanding.**

Almost all pupils make rapid and sustained progress in Religious Education as a result of teaching that is consistently good and often outstanding. Pupils confidently work together, and individually, as a result of highly effective lessons that are characterised by excellent teacher subject knowledge. A range of methods motivate pupils to engage in their own learning.

Consistently inspiring and well-planned learning across the department was exemplified in nearly all lessons. For example, GCSE lessons were based on the challenging question of the presence of God during the Holocaust from a Jewish perspective. They were characterised by effective questioning and differentiated approaches that resulted in reasoned and well thought out discussion amongst pupils.



Teachers are confident in using a wide range of resources and strategies that inspire pupils' engagement and learning. Pupils acknowledged that they are supported and challenged as appropriate throughout lessons. The effective support given to pupils with various needs was observed during the inspection.

A rigorous and effective assessment process at all key stages is undertaken in line with the school's policy. It is used to measure progress against set criteria. Assessment identifies pupils' strengths and areas that need further support. Moderation within the department, and across the school, results in consistent and accurate assessment of pupils' attainment and progress.

Almost all pupils know their current grades and how to achieve their target grades because of regular high quality feedback from teachers.

**How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education is outstanding.**

Leaders and governors ensure that the Religious Education curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference in every respect and in each key stage. At least the required amount of curriculum time is given to Religious Education.

Leaders and managers are ambitious for sustaining high standards of teaching and learning in Religious Education. Governors are proud of the school's achievements and are determined to lead the school in continually improving standards.

The link governor carries out formal observations three times a year. He affirmed an improvement in the quality of teaching over the last three years. Governors are informed of the strategic direction of the department through the Ethos committee. As a result, the self-evaluation of Religious Education is an accurate reflection of rigorous monitoring and analysis of teaching and learning that is well informed by current practice.

The headteacher and his senior team demonstrate strong and inspirational leadership of teaching and learning in Religious Education. They regularly monitor teaching and learning through learning walks and joint observations with the Head of Department. This results in consistent feedback and accurate judgement. Regular formal and informal meetings ensure staff are well supported. There is a culture of wanting to draw out an area of strength and an area for development.

The head of department inspires whole-hearted commitment from staff and pupils. He is driven by the desire to see students achieve their highest possible grades. Lesson observations confirmed his impact. GCSE pupils receive support and expert revision in the Salesian House at weekends as appropriate. There are focused groups for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

## COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

**How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship and Prayer Life is outstanding.**

Pupils respond reverently and respectfully to collective worship of all kinds. Their enjoyment and appreciation of worship is evident in the assemblies observed during the inspection. Visiting clergy confirmed that pupils pray and worship with sincerity and integrity.

Leadership of collective worship is highly effective through the increasing number of pupils who are taking a more active role in preparing and leading chaplaincy activities. The chaplain is developing the effectiveness of chaplaincy by involving and training pupils of all ages. Pupils affirmed their high level of participation and their readiness to prepare and participate as singers, readers and servers.

Pupils spoke of their pride in being prayer partners. They work together to encourage all pupils to write prayers. Of particular significance are the secret prayer partners for pupils who wish to offer intentions but who wish to remain unknown.

Pupils recognise that prayer is part of the daily rhythm of school life. They acknowledge that living in a praying community has a profound effect on the spiritual development of all, irrespective of ability or faith background.

Pupils expressed a deep sense of respect for those of other faiths and this is reflected in the ease with which they spoke of the opportunities to pray in their own way.

**The quality of provision for Collective Worship and Prayer Life is outstanding.**

Collective Worship is central to the life of all pupils and staff, whatever their faith background. Prayer is central to daily life.

Pupils confirmed these extensive and varied religious experiences form the heart of school celebrations and are part of the daily routine of learning. Collective Worship has a clear purpose, message and direction. Themes chosen reflect a deep understanding of the liturgical season. The extensive range of weekly masses, assemblies and prayer experiences serve to offer outstanding provision for all key stages.

Weekly assemblies, half termly school masses and daily form prayer reflect the significance of collective worship in the life of the school. During the inspection, pupils had the opportunity to attend Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament.

Opportunities are there to request the prayer support of the school community for special intentions of family and friends. In addition to the whole school occasions of prayer and reflection, all pupils have the opportunity to attend weekly masses.



The chaplain is passionate about supporting each person on his/her faith journey. He provides extensive resources to staff that deepen their understanding of the purpose of collective worship. There are increasingly more opportunities for pupils to lead prayer and worship that is deeply spiritual and has a profound impact on the community.

Led by the chaplaincy team, staff are skilled in leading quality worship. They display their understanding of the purpose of collective worship as witnessed in a year assembly led by a pastoral leader.

The extensive retreat programme for all pupils provides further opportunities for pupils to examine their faith and develop an understanding of their responsibilities to themselves and to others. Feedback from pupils showed they agree that retreats were meaningful and had an impact on how they lived as one community built on Gospel values.

**How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship and Prayer Life is outstanding.**

Leaders and governors are deeply committed to the provision of highly effective liturgical celebrations. They have an expert understanding of their responsibility to provide spiritual and liturgical opportunities in line with the Church's liturgical year. Staff affirmed that school leaders are models of outstanding practice.

The headteacher is passionately committed to building an authentic Salesian community in partnership with the Salesian Order. He has ensured that prayer and worship are an integral part of each day and are inclusive of all pupils.

Governors monitor and evaluate the provision for collective worship through their regular visits to the school. The link governor, in partnership with the Salesians and other governors, demonstrates a profound understanding of the impact of prayer throughout the school. Governors monitor and evaluate provision through their attendance at mass and seasonal liturgies.

The chapel is at the physical and spiritual heart of the school. It is visually inspiring. It reflects the mission of the school to welcome staff and pupils to feel at ease when at prayer. It serves as a prayerful oasis in the midst of a busy school life.

Chaplaincy constitutes a key strength of the school. The impact of the chaplain was affirmed by governors, staff and pupils. He is respected highly by all members of the community for his inspirational support.