



## **DIOCESE OF BRENTWOOD**

### **Denominational (S48) Inspection Report**

**Name of School:** Loyola Preparatory School  
**Local Authority:** Independent  
**Inspection Date:** 15<sup>th</sup> May 2019  
**Reporting Inspector:** Mr Stephen Beck

This Inspection was carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005 and 2011.

<b>Type of School:</b>	Primary	<b>School Address:</b>	103 Palmerston Road
<b>School Category:</b>	Independent		Buckhurst Hill
<b>Age range of pupils:</b>	3 - 11		Essex
<b>Gender of pupils:</b>	Boys		IG9 5NH
<b>Number on roll:</b>	184	<b>Tel. No.</b>	020 8504 7372
<b>Appropriate Authority:</b>	The Governing Body	<b>Headteacher:</b>	Mrs Kirsty Anthony
<b>Date of previous inspection:</b>	January 2014	<b>Chair of Governors:</b>	Mrs Anne Marie Fox

## Information about the school

Loyola Preparatory School is an independent Catholic school for boys in Buckhurst Hill, Essex in the Diocese of Brentwood. Pupils come from nearby parishes and the surrounding area. The school was founded by the Trustees originally as St Ignatius Junior School. In 1950 it moved to its present location in Buckhurst Hill and has been a separate trust since 2000. The school maintains its Ignatian roots both by seeking to implement the Jesuit Characteristics of Education as part of its Mission Statement and through the patronage of its Houses by English Jesuit Martyrs (Campion, Owen, Garnet and Southwell) and the annual celebrations or anticipations of the feasts of St Edmund Campion and St Ignatius Loyola.

Pupils are drawn from a range of local parishes with the highest percentage (19%) coming from St Thomas of Canterbury, Woodford along with St James' & Chigwell Convent, both of which are affiliated with St Thomas' followed by St Edmund's, Loughton (7%). There are currently 180 boys aged 3-11 on roll. 50% are of White British Heritage and about 9.5% come from a range of other ethnic backgrounds. Currently 42% of pupils are Catholics. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is well below the national average and no pupils receive free school meals.

### Key grades for inspection

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

## Overall effectiveness of this Catholic school

**Grade 1**

Loyola Preparatory School is an outstanding school that has a *raison d'être* of striving to be ever better. It is to the credit of the school's leaders that, having been graded as outstanding at its last inspection, all have strived to build on the school's strengths whilst recognising and working on areas identified for development. This strong capacity for improvement reflects the headteacher's inspirational leadership and strong subject leadership that is facilitated by the priority given to religious education by senior staff and governors, who all know their school well.

Loyola is an exceptional school with the Catholic Life of the School being outstanding because the well-being and personal and spiritual development of pupils and staff is at the heart of the school's vision and mission. The quality of Religious Education is good because staff know their pupils well and consistently teach lessons which engage them, ensuring progress and achievement. Leaders and managers ensure that monitoring and evaluation is accurate, timely and embedded in the work of the school. The quality of Collective Worship is outstanding because it is central to the life of the school. Staff plan and lead high quality Acts of Worship and pupils act with the deepest reverence and respect which is enhanced by the school's well-established choral group (Schola) that leads the school in weekly liturgical celebrations.

Pupil voice is strong at the school with one pupil describing the school council as, *'The pupils gateway to the school'*. A high number (66%) of parental questionnaires were returned, expressing extremely high affirmation of the school. The school successfully fosters ongoing links with the Jesuit community and a Jesuit priest comes into school regularly. A number of other priests from local parishes are also regular visitors to the school and actively support the school's Collective Worship. Their input into school life is greatly valued by the school community.

It is a school that truly lives out its Mission Statement, *"Loyola Preparatory School will strive to instil recognition of the talents and achievements of all its members. It will seek to identify and develop a range of skills, techniques and abilities within its pupils which will serve the individual in future life, but will also be put to use as an expression of the Greater Glory of God, both in the personal development of the self and in service to others and the community."*

## What the school should do to improve further:

The school produced a very clear analysis of its strengths and areas for development for this inspection. Its self-evaluation form is a working document that links to exemplar Religious Education action and school development plans, with time lines and responsibilities identified. The school leadership and governors should implement their proposed developments, giving priority to;

- Liaising with the Trustees, Governors and Staff to review the school's Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) policy with a view to utilising the 'Journey In Love' scheme and diocesan guidance to provide a whole school, age appropriate, approach to this area of the curriculum to meet statutory requirements within a Catholic framework.
- Reviewing the school's Religious Education scheme and piloting of the "Come & See" programme to secure continuity and progression from Nursery to Year 6. Link this to a review of assessment systems to ensure that progress in Religious Education is accurately recorded and impacts on moving pupils on and that through a broadening of moderation teacher assessments are secure.
- Further developing pupils' independent leadership of Collective Worship

## CATHOLIC LIFE

## Grade 1

The overall effectiveness of the Catholic Life of the School is outstanding. It is an extremely welcoming school and is marked by a strong Catholic ethos which is achieved through the leadership and shared vision of the Headteacher who supports the Religious Education Co-ordinator and is in turn supported by Governors and all staff. Together they make a significant contribution to the Catholic dimension of the school. Pupils are highly articulate, always well behaved and show a real love for developing a Catholic way of living. Prayer, worship and liturgy all have high prominence in the school and partnerships at all levels are highly developed. Parents recognise and are very appreciative of the school's provision for their children. This outstanding judgement is significantly down to leadership, especially that shown by the fairly recently appointed headteacher who has built on the school's previous strengths whilst managing change with skill and sensitivity as she moves the school forward and develops a shared philosophy that ensures complacency is not an option.

The Catholic Life of the School is rich in opportunities for pupils to encounter God and to deepen their relationship with Him as a loving, compassionate Father. This includes prayer, both traditional and informal, liturgies and Religious Education lessons where pupils receive direct teaching of the faith. Through the relationships and support for each other that pupils, staff and parents enjoy within the school community, they are helped to come to, know and love God. Class focal areas and displays of Religious Education work in classrooms and round the school are of good quality. The Christian values at the heart of the Catholic faith, incorporate the British values and the school aims, in everything it does to further each pupil's sense of commitment and responsibility to themselves, to others and in the wider world. Pupils have an understanding of the school's Mission Statement and reflect on this regularly. The school plans to undertake a review of the statement with a view to making it more accessible to pupils, who currently articulate that their mantra for all they do is, '*To the Greater Glory of God*', which is a phrase displayed throughout the school.

The school's approach to RSE is less well defined and it would be an opportune time for the school to liaise with the Trustees, Governors and Staff in order to review the school's current policies. They could then implement a proposal to utilise the 'Journey In Love' scheme to provide a whole school, age appropriate, approach to the RSE aspect of the curriculum to meet statutory requirements within a Catholic framework.

Pupils wholeheartedly and generously support those in need. They lead and take responsibility for raising money through a range of events for charities such as CAFOD, Samaritan's Purse, Children in

Need, the British Legion, Crisis, etc. After the Harvest Collection last October, pupils wanted to help more within the local community and as a result the class leading the weekly Mass make a contribution to the Epping Food Bank.

The Parish community is widespread and pupils come from a range of backgrounds. They work collaboratively and confidently together to create a very strong sense of what it is to belong to Loyola. Visitor and parental comments often highlight the strong faith and sense of belonging and community at the school.

Pastoral care is a strength of the school and at a meeting with pupils they talked about how they feel safe and valued and know where to turn for help should they need it. A culture of mutual respect is fostered throughout the school, with all members of the community acting as role models. Year 6 pupils volunteer to act as class prefects and enjoy taking responsibility for different roles within the school and there is a well-established structure of public offices which includes a Head Boy, Deputy Head Boy, Senior Prefects, Class Prefects, Monitors and Mentors. In discussions pupils demonstrated a good understanding of the expectations of these roles. A Sacristan prefect is appointed each year and with other altar servers has the responsibility of preparing for the weekly school Mass to which parents and the local community are welcomed. Pupils are encouraged to write their own bidding prayers and classes lead the Mass just as they do in their own classes for Collective Worship and more recently a parent has joined the class in the bidding prayers. The school plans to develop opportunities for pupils to plan and lead worship with greater independence. Pupils experience inspiration from the natural world and human achievement as evidenced on the many school trips. The school's drive to Re-cycle, Re-Use, Reduce reflects the same thinking as Laudate Si.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

## **Grade 2**

Religious Education at Loyola is good and has a strong foundation on which to move forward. The school has been using, "The Way, the Truth, the Life" as a scheme of work but have moved to trial, "Come and See" in certain year groups with a view to whole school implementation in September 2019. The school will then focus on embedding the new scheme, supplementing it where appropriate to ensure the best possible provision for all pupils and to secure consistency of provision across the school. The leadership and management of Religious Education are a strength of the school. There is a clear vision and sense of direction and understanding of what is needed to ensure on-going improvement and development. The Headteacher and Religious Education Leader work closely and effectively together to lead and support a dedicated staff.

Provision for Religious Education at Loyola is good and at the heart of the school's curriculum and pupils' learning. Pupils say they enjoy their Religious Education lessons and explain they do a lot of Religious Education work. They have a positive attitude and are most enthusiastic in their response to questions. Behaviour for learning during Religious Education lessons is excellent. Pupils are proud of their work and speak confidently about what they have learnt. They generally make good progress in Religious Education within lessons and over time. There is no significant difference in learning and progress between different groups of pupils. Where targeted support from teaching assistants is well planned, it supports groups of pupils to make at least good progress. Many pupils enter school with a low level of religious understanding, knowledge and skills. The school's data and evidence in books show that pupils make at least good progress over time and in some cases exceed expectations. This reflects where teaching and assessment is consistently good and those lessons where outstanding elements are evident. Work is differentiated, largely by outcome, and provides some opportunities for extension and challenge, with opportunities for cross curricular links between Religious Education and other curriculum areas observed. This could usefully be developed further. Teachers have good subject knowledge which is used well to support pupils' learning. Targeted questioning is used well in some classes to assess understanding, monitor progress and reinforce the learning objective. Assessments are regular and systematic. Internal moderation is accurate and would benefit from being widened and linked to the planned move away from levels and the introduction of some inter school moderation to maximise the security of judgements. The school's marking and feedback policy is becoming embedded across the curriculum and is evident in Religious Education work but lacks consistency.

A review is planned of the school's Religious Education scheme and piloting of the "Come & See" programme to secure continuity and progression from Nursery to Year 6. This will need to be linked to a review of assessment systems to ensure that going forward progress in Religious Education is accurately recorded and impacts on moving pupils on.

Teaching observed during the inspection was good overall. Teaching in Early Years and Key Stage 1 are a strength of the school. It provides pupils with an excellent start to their education. This could be more successfully built on in Key Stage 2 with a sharing of identified outstanding practice in order to secure a greater consistency of approach across the school and ensure all pupils, particularly the more able, are challenged and progress maximised. Where teaching is outstanding, it is less didactic and provides pupils with opportunities to undertake independent work. An example of this was seen where pupils used iPads to make comparisons between two different religious paintings. In the stronger lessons teachers paced the lessons well, utilised open ended questioning, used paired and group discussion, used role play and included a good range of tasks for pupils to undertake.

There is a strong commitment to Religious Education from the leadership team and the subject lead, who has an action plan which is regularly reviewed and is highlighted within the School Development Plan. The core mission of the school is witnessed every morning as all reflect on the phrase '*To the Greater Glory of God*' while gathering for prayer to place the whole community in God's hands. The school community often prays together with prayers being led by teachers, teaching assistants and pupils themselves on a rota system. In these acts of worship individuals bring their own personal approach to prayer as well as including 'formal prayer'. The pupils often write their own prayers and reflect their belief in how God will support and help both themselves and others in good and difficult times. This was evidenced in Year 6 when pupils applied this to the SAT's they were undergoing. They refer to the message of Jesus when talking about why they should care for others who are less fortunate than themselves and recognise that this may be within the local area or the wider world. They have a good understanding of what it means to be a Christian and an awareness of other Faiths and cultures through teaching and the sharing of experiences by pupils in the school. The school has been active in creating positive links with a local Imam and Rabbi which will result in pupils developing a better understanding of both other faiths and their own. Visits to other places of worship are being planned. The governing body are focussed on the mission of a Catholic school and their discussions and judgement reflect their belief that every child should thrive spiritually, emotionally and academically. Governors visit the school regularly, joining Masses, services and worship. Recently the Religious Education lead has started to report to the governors through the Headteacher's report reflecting the school's strong support for staff development and CPD. The school needs to continue to work on embedding and further developing these recent initiatives.

## **COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

### **Grade 1**

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is outstanding. It is central to the life of the school for all pupils, regardless of their own particular faith background, and forms the heart of every school celebration. They have a well-developed sense of respect for those of other faiths. This is reflected in the manner in which many pupils participate in prayer and liturgy and are at ease when praying with others. Praying together is part of the daily experience for all pupils and staff and has a clear purpose, message and direction. The themes chosen for worship reflect an excellent understanding of the liturgical seasons and the Catholic character of the school. Collective Worship is given a high priority in terms of planning, timing, evaluating and resourcing; as a result, experience of Collective Worship is engaging and all members of the community speak positively about these opportunities. Worship times throughout the school are calm, well-ordered and spiritual occasions where pupils are involved in an age appropriate way. Parents, carers and governors are frequently invited to assemblies, Masses and celebrations. Pupils gather together respectfully, act with great reverence and are keen to participate in Collective Worship, reflect in silence, when enabled to do so, and join in community prayer appropriately and with self-assurance. The excellent quality of the pupils' singing from Latin plainchant to contemporary song, frequently with actions, promotes full participation from all pupils.

The quality and confidence with which pupils from the age of 4 upwards join in with prayers and readings is notable. The underlying celebratory nature of the school's liturgies with pupils contributing through music, drama, readings and offertory celebrations is excellent. In a Mass attended pupils were very reverent, participated fully and read very well. The celebration was greatly enhanced by beautiful singing led by the school's scholar. The celebration concluded with the crowning of a statue of Mary in the school's external reflection area which was adorned with flowers brought in by pupils and provided a real feeling of awe and wonder.

The school is working to develop opportunities for pupils to prepare and lead worship with a greater degree of independence depending on their age and stage of development. Pupils have an excellent understanding of the Church's liturgical year, seasons and feasts and use a variety of approaches to prayer, which includes scripture, religious artefacts, liturgical music and other forms of prayer, both traditional and contemporary in addition to creating and sharing their own.

Pupils value and participate voluntarily in liturgy and prayer, Since November 2018 the school has had a prayer book to remember those who have died and pupils have often been observed writing down their intentions and saying a short prayer for those they wish to remember. This academic year during the month of May, the Angelus is recited daily at 12 noon in Key Stage 2. From next year, in Lent, pupils, parents and staff will be able to join the Religious Education lead once a week before school to pray the Stations of the Cross. During the month of October and May, pupils, parents and staff can join together before school on a Friday to say a decade of the rosary.

These growing experiences of living and working in a faithful, prayerful community are having a positive impact on the spiritual and moral development of pupils and their families and the school plans to develop these further. As a parent wrote, *'My child joined Loyola practising no faith. Since joining the school he has embraced the Catholic faith and is enjoying his new found journey. He now regularly attends Mass at his local church and asks daily to be baptised. It has become a very important part of his life and one he wishes to continue. Loyola has given him so much more than expected'*. This reflects a school environment of evangelisation that welcomes all.