



## DIOCESE OF BRENTWOOD



### Inspection Report

**Name of School: Loyola Preparatory School (Ind)**

**Inspection Date: 24<sup>th</sup> January 2014**

**Reporting Inspectors: Mrs Pamela Brannigan**

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

**Type of School: Primary**  
**School Category: Independent**  
**Age range of pupils: 3-11**  
**Gender of pupils: Boys**  
**Number on roll: 184**  
**Appropriate Authority: The governing body**  
**Date of previous inspection: -**

**School Address: 103 Palmerston Road**  
**Buckhurst Hill**  
**IG9 5NH.**  
**Tel. No. 020 8504 7372**  
**Fax No. 020 8504 7372**  
**Chair of Governors:**  
**Headteacher: Mr Peter Nicholson**

## 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. There are currently 184 boys aged 3-11 on roll. The majority of pupils are of White British Heritage and about 40% come from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds. Currently 44% 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: Satisfactory    4: Unsatisfactory

## Overall effectiveness of this Catholic school

**Grade 1**

Loyola Preparatory is an outstanding school with a Catholic ethos which is based on the principles and characteristics of Ignation education. Prayer and worship are central to the life of the school and opportunities for pupils' spiritual and moral development are excellent. The senior leadership is currently putting in place a number of new initiatives linked to lay chaplaincy and the development of the role of subject leaders. Pastoral care is very good and shared by all members of the school community. Relationships within the school are excellent and pupils feel well cared for and supported in their learning. Parents appreciate the good communication with staff and the way the school keeps them informed about the content of the curriculum. Pupils' standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 often exceed diocesan expectations.

## The school's capacity for sustained improvement

**Grade 1**

The school has an outstanding capacity for sustained improvement and has put in place systems which ensure self-evaluation is accurate and rigorous. Assessment is securely linked to planning and staff are confident with the implementation of the new Curriculum Directory. The school gives a high profile to religious education and has very good strategies to share good practice and support new teachers.

The senior leadership team and governors have a clear vision for the Catholicity of the school and the central place of prayer, worship and religious education. Senior staff are very good role models and all staff are given opportunities to extend their knowledge and improve their skills through attendance at training courses linked to the nature of Catholic education.

The current leadership has an excellent capacity to maintain effectiveness. Governors have a very wide range of expertise and many are involved in the life of the school. Systems are in place to develop and strengthen initiatives which lead to very good outcomes for all pupils. The subject leader and liturgical leader for religious education are well placed to support colleagues.

## What the school should do to improve further

Enhance the Catholic life of the school by

- Continuing to build on the prayer life of pupils by re-instating retreat days and continuing to have weekly masses for the whole school.
- Consider involving pupils in the review of the Mission Statement

Support attainment by:

- Ensuring that high quality developmental marking is used consistently across Key Stage 2 to enable pupils to identify the next steps in their learning.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Grade 1**

Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the Catholic life of the school. They respond very well to opportunities to understand the needs of others in school and the wider community. Members of the School Council, prefects, monitors and mentors play a major part in school life and older pupils help and support younger ones. Several local, national and international charities are supported throughout the year and pupils have recently supported a local riding for the disabled centre. Pupils show respect for adults and each other. Behaviour is excellent and pupils value the sense of community created within the school.

Prayer and worship are central to school life. Pupils respond positively to opportunities to develop their faith journey. They are involved in preparation for weekly masses on a year group basis and participate with enthusiasm. The traditional prayers of the Church are well known and pupils are given time for reflection and meditation. They are able to apply aspects of Jesus' life and teaching to their own lives. They understand the importance of worship and are given opportunities to create their own prayers, examples of which were seen during the inspection.

Pastoral care is very good and given a high priority by staff and governors who work closely together to promote the spiritual development of pupils and the Catholic life of the community. Pupils feel safe, well cared for and know where to go when they need support. They value being in a friendly environment where they are listened to and encouraged to help each other and the wider community. Parents value the care given to their children, the very good quality of education and the approachability of staff.

Progress in religious education is outstanding. Pupils work with application and interest. They enjoy their religious education lessons and work very well together. They are eager to participate in activities and keen to do well. They have a very good knowledge of the Catholic faith appropriate to their age and abilities. In addition, knowledge of the range of other faiths represented in the school is good. Workbooks are generally well presented, show coverage of the curriculum and indicate a varied range of tasks. Standards of attainment often exceed diocesan expectations.

## **Leaders and managers**

## **Grade 1**

The headteacher supported by his deputy demonstrates excellent leadership of the school through the way he promotes the provision for the Catholic life of the school. He communicates a clear Catholic vision to the whole community which is affirmed by staff and governors who are all committed to providing the best possible environment for the pupils. Together with senior staff he has developed a system of self-evaluation which is detailed, accurate and identifies areas for improvement. He has a very good knowledge of areas for development and, along with subject leaders is well placed to support colleagues.

Senior leaders monitor religious education by means of lesson observations, work scrutiny and joint planning which is followed by feedback to individual teachers as necessary. The school has identified the need to create opportunities for more differentiation in religious education and further develop moderation within the subject. There is currently a very strong focus on planning and assessment as the school implements the new Curriculum Directory through 'The Way, The Truth and The Life' religious education programme. Much emphasis is placed on staff development which includes teaching assistants who play a key role in lessons.

Governors work closely with senior leadership and have a clear understanding of their role in safeguarding the Catholicity of the school. They have a good grasp of current strengths and areas for development. They are well informed about the life of the school through the headteacher's report, meetings with subject leaders and frequent visits. Two trustees are priests who represent the religious community which founded the school. The experienced link governor for religious education is knowledgeable and involved in lesson observations. Governors recognise the need to ensure that there is an effective monitoring system in place to evaluate all aspects of the religious life of the school and to enable the governing body to challenge and support effectively.

Leaders ensure that the school is a welcoming community where everyone is respected and valued. Diversity is celebrated and pupils are taught to respect and accept other faiths. The multi-ethnic composition of the school has allowed an appreciation of a wide range of cultures and beliefs. The school participates in local sporting and cultural events and there are good links with the senior school to which most pupils transfer at the end of Key Stage 2. A wide range of charities including Cafod, Samaritan's Purse and Children in Need are supported throughout the year and pupils are given many opportunities to develop a sense of service and show compassion for others including a local special school. The excellent choral schola leads the weekly liturgical celebration and has sung in Rome, Brentwood Cathedral as well as local parishes. Provision for spiritual development ensures that pupils are able to reflect on their own lives and experiences. Parents are invited to many school events and are kept well informed about their children's welfare and progress. They appreciate the weekly curriculum information which includes details of homework and enables them to support their sons' learning.

## **Provision**

## **Grade 1**

Provision for prayer and worship at Loyola Preparatory School is outstanding. Liturgies are very well planned and contribute to a great extent to pupils' spiritual development. Pupils are also involved in collective worship in their classrooms and are given opportunities for personal reflection. Each classroom has a prayer focus with religious artefacts and display boards which sometimes includes children's work. Pupils from Year 2 are given a school prayer book and in Year 3 a copy of the 'Good News' bible. During October early morning prayers include a decade of the Rosary and in Lent there is a meditation on each of the Stations of the Cross. A large multi-purpose hall is at the heart of the school and is available for classes as well as the masses which are celebrated each week. Parents and families are invited to many celebrations. Priests from local parishes support the school through masses and informal visits.

The quality of teaching and learning in religious education is excellent. During the inspection, lessons observed were good or outstanding. Lessons are planned with clear learning intentions and an interesting range of activities. Pupils work well and make very good progress. Teachers respond well to pupils' comments and take every opportunity to extend knowledge and develop understanding. Good support by teaching assistants is a feature of lessons. Marking is positive and sometimes includes suggestions of ways to improve. Very good assessment, planning and tracking supports the learning and progress of pupils. Conversations with pupils indicate that they like to know the next steps in their learning and this is to be developed as part of the marking policy.

The quality of the religious education curriculum is outstanding. Generally 10% of curriculum time is devoted to religious education. The requirements of the new Curriculum Directory' have been in place for a year and are currently being embedded. The headteacher gives religious education a central place in the life of the school and this is demonstrated by the budget devoted to it and the recent review of resources. Religious education displays around the school emphasise the centrality of faith to the work of the community. The curriculum enables pupils to become aware of their responsibility for each other and their environment. It contributes very well to their spiritual and moral development. The excellent range of extra-curricular activities enables pupils to develop their gifts and talents. There is every indication that current high standards are likely to be maintained or improved.

The inspector would like to express her thanks and appreciation to all members of the school community for their welcome and openness during the inspection.