



# Jesuit Schools

## A Quick Introduction

# Introduction

People sometimes ask what makes a Jesuit school different or distinctive. Saint Ignatius Loyola (the 16<sup>th</sup> century founder of the Society of Jesus and Jesuit schools) gave the answer that a Jesuit school should be about “improvement in living and learning for the greater glory of God and the common good.”



Jesuit schools strive to give a first class education but they are also places committed to outstanding formation of character, wanting their pupils to develop into well-educated adults who will live good and virtuous lives.

Jesuit schools hope that the young people they form, in partnership with parents, will make the most of their God-given gifts and talents and use their education as ‘men and women for others’ to make the world a better place, especially for the least well off and most socially marginalized.

This twofold emphasis on **living** and **learning** is, if you like, the DNA of Jesuit education.

The eight Jesuit schools in the UK are part of a network of Jesuit education that stretches back over 450-years, and reaches out around the globe today. The vision of Jesuit education looks with faith and hope to the continued transformation of the world for the greater glory of God and the common good.



# The Jesuits

The Society of Jesus (the Jesuits) is a religious order within the Catholic Church founded by St Ignatius Loyola and nine companions in 1540. Today there are around 18,000 Jesuits in 112 countries on six continents.



Jesuit priests and brothers live in community and do a wide variety of work including in universities and schools, spirituality centres, parishes and missions, the media and creative arts, in prison, hospital and military chaplaincy, and working with refugees.

Their work in schools and universities began in 1548 when a small group of Jesuits was sent to Sicily to begin a school at the request of the town council of Messina. Other towns and cities followed suit and, over the next two centuries, a network of some 850 Jesuit schools and universities was established across the world. Today, Jesuit schools are staffed largely by people who are not themselves Jesuits but whose work continues and builds upon the 450-year old tradition of Jesuit education.

Jesuits, and those who work with us, follow a spirituality that comes from the little book of *Spiritual Exercises* which St Ignatius began in 1521. Ignatian spirituality is rooted in the Christian gospel and the desire to give greater glory to God by following Jesus Christ and serving others as he did. It encourages us to be attentive to our lived experience and to discern what is truly good for us and what is not, and to act accordingly. It encourages basic attitudes of gratitude and generosity.



You will notice these hallmarks of Ignatian spirituality in the Catholic communities that are the Jesuit schools.

# Jesuit Schools in the UK



## **St Aloysius College (founded 1859)**

Independent day school for 450 pupils, ages 12-18

## **St Aloysius College Junior School (1954)**

Independent day junior school for 161 pupils, ages 4-12



## **Stonyhurst College (founded 1593)**

Independent day and boarding school for 523 pupils, ages 13-18

## **St Mary's Hall (founded 1807)**

Independent day and boarding preparatory school for 117 pupils, ages 4-13



## **St Joseph's School (founded 1686)**

Voluntary aided primary school for 107 pupils, ages 3-11



## **St Ignatius College (founded 1894)** Voluntary

aided comprehensive school for 1,100 boys, ages 11-18



## **Wimbledon College (founded 1892)** Voluntary

aided comprehensive school for 1,300 boys, ages 11-18



## **Donhead Preparatory School (founded 1933)**

Independent day preparatory school for 330 pupils, ages 4-11



JESUIT  
SCHOOLS



St Aloysius College  
St Aloysius College Junior School



Stonyhurst College  
St Mary's Hall  
St Joseph's School



St Ignatius College  
Wimbledon College  
Donhead Preparatory School

The eight Jesuit schools in the UK educate over four thousand pupils, ages 4 to 18. In Europe, there are 169 Jesuit primary and secondary schools educating just over 162,000 pupils. Worldwide, 2,326 Jesuit primary and secondary schools educate over 2.4 million young people and 186 Jesuit universities and institutes of higher education have a further 1 million students

*'for improvement in living and learning for the greater glory of God and the common good.'*

(St Ignatius Constitutions, n.440)

# Jesuit Education

Jesuit education has at its core the principle of *cura personalis* – care for each person so that they may flourish academically, emotionally, socially and spiritually.



Jesuit schools strive to offer an excellent **intellectual formation** through outstanding teaching and a ***magis* curriculum** that is as broad and deep as the school's resources will allow, together with a rich offering

of extra-curricular activities, so that as many as possible of each child's interests, gifts and talents are developed.

Underlying teaching and learning in a Jesuit school is outstanding **pastoral care** – teachers and support staff get to know children very well and step in with challenge, encouragement and support in the ups and downs of growing up.



**Religious formation** is an important part of Jesuit education, giving pupils the opportunity to encounter God in prayer, reflection and worship, in study of the Catholic Christian faith and other faiths, and in the service of others.



Through links with Jesuit schools and institutions around the world, we encourage our pupils to have outward looking **horizons and perspectives**, exploring what it is like to live in very different circumstances and cultures, close to home and on the other side of the planet.

# Jesuit Pupil Profile

The **Jesuit Pupil Profile** articulates the qualities of character that Jesuit schools seek to develop in their pupils. These virtues are rooted in the gospel values of Jesus Christ and in the spirituality of St Ignatius but they are also, of course, fundamental human values which are shared by people of all faiths and backgrounds.

Pupils in a Jesuit school are growing to be . . .

**Grateful** for their own gifts, for the gift of other people, and for the blessings of each day; and **generous** with their gifts, becoming men and women for others.

**Attentive** to their experience and to their vocation; and **discerning** about the choices they make and the effects of those choices.

**Compassionate** towards others, near and far, especially the less fortunate; and **loving** by their just actions and forgiving words.

**Faith-filled** in their beliefs and **hopeful** for the future.

**Eloquent** and **truthful** in what they say of themselves, the relations between people, and the world.

**Learned**, finding God in all things; and **wise** in the ways they use their learning for the common good.

**Curious** about everything; and **active** in their engagement with the world, changing what they can for the better.

**Intentional** in the way they live and use the resources of the earth, guided by conscience; and **prophetic** in the example they set to others.





“Jesuit schools should be places where people are believed in, honoured and cared for; where natural talents and creative abilities are recognized and celebrated; where individual contributions and accomplishments are appreciated; where everyone is treated fairly and justly; where sacrifice on behalf of the economically poor, the socially deprived, and the educationally disadvantaged is commonplace; where each of us finds the challenge, encouragement and support we need to reach our fullest individual potential for excellence; where we help one another and work together with enthusiasm and generosity, attempting to model concretely in word and action the ideals we uphold.”

Ignatian Pedagogy (1993) is also available from the Jesuit Institute, in full text and abridged versions.

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