



The Douay Martyrs Catholic Secondary School

URN: 137925

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Archbishop of Westminster

12 February 2026 – 13 February 2026

Summary of key findings

Overall effectiveness

The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school

Catholic life and mission (p.3)

How faithfully the school responds to the call to live as a Catholic community at the service of the Church's educational mission

Religious education (p.5)

The quality of curriculum religious education RE

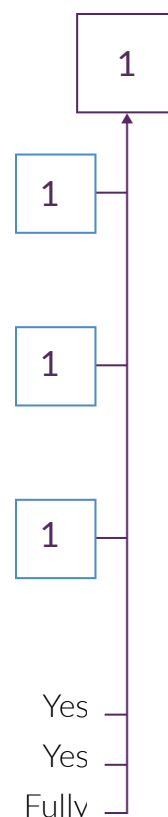
Collective worship (p.7)

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

The school is fully compliant with the general norms for religious education laid down by the Bishops' Conference

The school is fully compliant with any additional requirements of the diocesan bishop

The school has responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection



What the school does well

- An inclusive, friendly culture permeates the school, and there are strong relationships between staff and students.
- The Catholic life committee and student ambassadors enable students to grow in their Catholic faith through participation, engagement and leadership of prayer and liturgy.
- Students enjoy religious education and truly appreciate the efforts of teachers to make lessons interesting and challenging, leading to outstanding behaviour.
- The staff, leaders and governors work tirelessly with the common aim of creating a joyful, Christ-centred community where students flourish.
- Students take a leading role in responding to the demands of Catholic social teaching by providing a wide range of charitable events which support those in need locally, nationally and globally.

What the school needs to improve

- Develop a consistent approach to feedback in religious education, so that students can articulate with confidence the next steps in their learning.
- Promote the lives of the Douay saints so that students have a fuller understanding of the school's rich charism.

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

Pupil outcomes

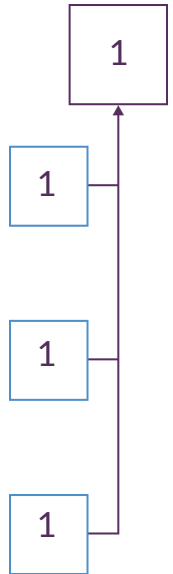
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

Provision

The quality of provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school



The 'Douay Way' with its values of inclusion, aspiration, faith and love, permeates the life of the school and strengthens its Catholic identity. A teacher summed it up succinctly, saying, 'Our mission is reflected in our daily practice from the way we treat students and each other'. Students and staff don't just wear the school prayer on their lanyards; they know it and live it each day through the positive relationships they create. A common catch phrase among the staff is, 'Catholic life is lived at Douay, not laminated'. Students fully embrace their responsibility to pursue the common good and serve those in need. They can articulate the theology underpinning Catholic social teaching and can relate it to the wide range of charitable activities they pursue, including cinema mornings, sports competitions, 'wear purple' days and regular donations to food banks. The school has been without a full-time chaplain for a while. However, the Catholic life committee, made up of prayer, fundraising and liturgy champions, with the support and guidance of the Catholic life leadership team and director of Catholic life, have taken on the role of meeting the spiritual, prayerful and liturgical needs of the school. Their enthusiasm, confidence and pride in what they do for the school is truly inspiring.

The school mission, 'To be a Christ centred learning community where all are able to fulfil their potential' is lived and witnessed throughout the school. However, the profile of the Douay saints needs to be more prominent, and there is now the opportunity to capitalise on the work of the Catholic life committee so that students can have a fuller understanding of the school's rich charism. Staff enthusiastically participate and contribute to activities which reflect the Catholic life of the school. A member of staff noted, 'No one feels judged, we are all

supported'. There is a clear sense of inclusivity which permeates throughout the school. A display of saints from around the world highlights the universal, catholic nature of the Church. The school celebrates the presence of those from various cultures and faiths during culture week, and this year, students are also planning to celebrate prayers in students' home languages. There is an explicit and concrete commitment to the vulnerable at Douay. Student ambassadors have set up a neurodiversity club and a confidential messaging service called 'Douay my voice' where students can express any concerns and ask for help. The relationships, sex and health education programme adheres to Catholic teaching and is not just part of the curriculum but also part of form time and talks from guest speakers to reaffirm what is being taught.

Under the inspirational leadership of the headteacher, leaders and governors ensure that Christ is always at the heart of this school. A member of staff commented, 'The diversity of the body of Christ is well seen and celebrated here'. Owing to the strong communication, the school enjoys excellent relationships with parents. The volume of responses to the parents' survey was most impressive, and 100% of respondents understand and support the school's mission. The high standard of displays in classrooms, corridors and communal areas is an effective witness to the school's Catholic identity. A range of departments take every opportunity to make links between Catholic social teaching and the topics being taught. An early careers teacher commented, 'All my lessons include Catholic social teaching, so to help my planning, I have a box with a link to prompt me to the principles'. The rights and dignity of workers are fully respected. A member of staff commented, 'This school is an amazing place to work in, with wonderful colleagues around you to support you at all times'. Governors are actively involved in the school's evaluation process and make a highly significant contribution to the Catholic life of the school. Students take a leading role in evaluating Catholic life. They review their initiatives regularly and make adjustments accordingly.

Religious education

How faithfully the school responds to the call to live as a Catholic community at the service of the Church's educational mission.

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

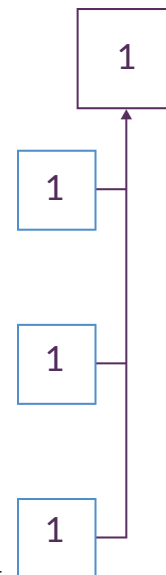
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

Provision

The quality of teaching, learning, and assessment in religious education

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for religious education



GCSE results are outstanding and demonstrate the progress students make as they move through the school. Consequently, disadvantaged students and students with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieved the best possible results. Students achieve well above the average attainment in religious education when compared to the national, regional and diocesan results. Attainment in religious education at Douay also regularly surpasses the rest of the core curriculum at Key Stage 4. Students enjoy the subject and a Year 8 student commented, 'I like religious education because we can learn how to make the world a better place'. Students can speak fluently and confidently about what they have learnt, using key concepts and subject specific knowledge. At Key Stage 3 there were examples of GCSE style questions which served to stretch students' thinking and develop their ability to produce extended answers. In an excellent Year 10 lesson students were encouraged to 'speak like a theologian' from both a Catholic and Jewish perspective. The group work enabled them to use the traffic light system to show their level of understanding and the mantra used to confirm their learning was, 'hear it speak it write it'. The number of students opting for A level has increased dramatically in recent years, and the results are improving. The subject leader is aware of the need for attainment to improve further and has put interventions in place, acknowledging that targeted group interventions would be even more impactful.

Teachers have a high level of knowledge and teaching expertise. Resources are shared ahead of lessons, and the subject leader regularly meets with non-specialists to ensure theological understanding is correct. In the vast majority of lessons, teachers had high expectations and

this was demonstrated in outstanding behaviour and the quality of work produced. Sixth formers spoke enthusiastically about core religious education, and the carefully planned flipped learning approach enables students to present topics such as 'What does it mean to be human?' using a booklet to guide them. One student noted, 'The topics are interesting and take your mind off your studies because they challenge how you think'. Teachers use questioning skilfully during lessons, thus increasing engagement and maximising learning. A Year 10 lesson on 'Good and Evil' led a student to ask, 'Is it possible for humans to be blamed for natural evil in the world?' Displays of students' work in classrooms reflect the excellent standard produced in their books. They clearly take pride in their presentation. However, not all students are clear about what grade they are working at, what grade they are aiming for by the end of the year and what they need to do to reach it. A consistent approach to feedback is now required across the department.

Not only do students meet the learning requirements of the Religious Education Directory but they also develop a deep understanding of the principles of Catholic social teaching and how they relate to the 'Douay Way'. Religious education has at least full parity with the rest of the core curriculum in relation to resourcing, timetabling, staffing and accommodation. The subject leader has an inspiring vision for the subject, which is shared by the whole department and supported by senior leaders. His expertise has enabled the school to reduce staff workload, create innovative curriculum approaches and enhance assessment practice. Several members of the department are examiners and can share their knowledge and experience with the rest of the team. The team avail themselves of every opportunity to attend subject specific diocesan training and work closely with the rest of the schools in the Trust. Positive engagement is reflected in the high proportion of school rewards issued to students, which confirms their commitment and enthusiasm for the subject. However, opportunities were missed to acknowledge and celebrate the high standard of work being produced during lessons observed. Governors and leaders' self-evaluation of religious education is informed by thorough monitoring, analysis and personal challenge.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

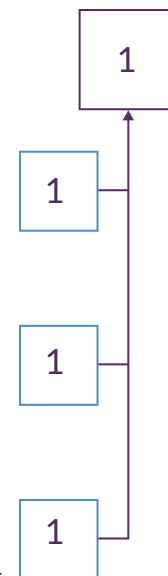
How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

Provision

The quality of collective worship provided by the school

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for collective worship



The large student Catholic life committee makes an outstanding contribution to prayer and liturgy. Consequently, the school provides a wide variety of ways of praying that are part of the Catholic tradition, including the use of scripture, reflections on slides, meditation and liturgical music. The committee has various teams, and one student commented, 'I organise the psalms, and I am, unofficially, the school psalmist'. The altar servers, with the support of the parish priest, are in the process of becoming members of the Guild of St Stephen. The students are very proud of their choir, which now has almost fifty members. They are clearly modelling the Gospel values and fulfilling the command to, 'Go out and make disciples of all' by their faith in action. In a Year 10 assembly on the dignity of the person, the choir and the psalmist made excellent contributions, and students were fully focused and engaged. The dismissal reminded all to look out for and help those among us who may feel left out or marginalised. The students evaluate the quality of their collective worship and identify ways to improve it. A member of staff summed up the provision succinctly by saying, 'Prayer and liturgy form the heartbeat of daily school life, giving students regular opportunities to encounter God through liturgy, reflection and the sacraments'.

Students willingly embrace the responsibility of planning and delivering prayer and liturgy. The liturgy champions oversee the range of activities necessary to celebrate the Mass, including themes, readings, hymns, slides and prayers of the faithful. Staff spoke with enthusiasm about the importance of prayer and worship. They feel supported in their role as form tutors. A member of staff noted, 'We are encouraged to use a range of approaches to pray through poetry, music, art and self-reflection'. Other staff referred to flameless candles,

which they use as a focal point during form time worship. Prayer is also part of every lesson, and a teacher commented, 'I love our practice of starting all lessons with a prayer. This calms students down and prepares them for good learning'. The school makes creative use of space to provide prayer in classrooms. The chapel is regularly used for a monthly voluntary Mass as well as a place for private prayer and reflection. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is made available during Lent with the support of the deanery clergy. Parental links have been strengthened with the introduction of coffee mornings to listen to their concerns, as well as offer support.

The school policy on prayer and liturgy is written in such a way that is easy to follow, accessible and useful to staff. The director of Catholic life, along with the senior leadership are front and centre, promoting, monitoring and evaluating prayer and liturgy to ensure that the highest standards and quality are consistently achieved. Staff value the support and guidance provided by the school. For many, it provides them with an opportunity to reflect and deepen their own faith. Governors are regular visitors to the school and actively participate in worship, demonstrating strong support and understanding of its central role in school life. They lend their support and witness by attending holy days of obligation, the school feast day, Masses and Advent and Lenten Services. Leaders, including governors, are respectful of those of other faiths and none. During Ramadan, a room is allocated at lunchtime for Muslim staff and students to pray while fasting. Formation continues to be a priority at the school with staff receiving training in the 'Douay Way', and there is a clear understanding amongst staff that the delivery of highquality collective worship in all its forms is essential within the school. Students' views are regularly sought, and the voice of the Catholic life committee in particular, is an integral part of the school's evaluation of prayer and liturgy.

Information about the school

Full name of school	The Douay Martyrs Catholic Secondary School
School unique reference number (URN)	137925
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	3125408
Full postal address of the school	Douay Martyrs, Edinburgh Drive, ICKENHAM, UB10 8QY
School phone number	01895 679400
Headteacher or Head of School	Ms Fiona McCloskey
Chair of Governors	Father Tom Montgomery
School Website	www.douaymartyrs.co.uk
Trusteeship	Diocesan
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Diocese of Westminster Academy Trust
Phase	Secondary
Type of school	Academy
Admissions policy	Non Selective
Age-range of pupils	11 - 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	23 May 2019
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

The Inspection Team

Dermot O'Neill Lead

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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