



Notre Dame Catholic High School

URN: 138361

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Hallam

28 January 2026 – 29 January 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

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Yes

Yes

Fully

What the school does well

Inclusivity and the celebration of diversity are priorities for all at Notre Dame; the school celebrates the uniqueness of the individual. Discussions with students and staff highlight the caring and positive environment that has developed in the school, ensuring all students are held in high esteem.

Staff are outstanding role models in promoting servant leadership. The headteacher, senior leaders and the highly effective chaplaincy team support them in this with great compassion. They have worked hard to establish a culture of respect within the school, which is valued by students.

The senior leader for Catholic life and the lay chaplain are cited as key players in the drive to offer the best the school can. They support all members of the school community with compassion and humility, with staff and students valuing their nurturing approach.

Leaders' ability to self-evaluate incisively has given them a thorough understanding of what needs to be done to develop religious education further.

The wide variety and inclusive nature of the prayer and liturgy experience at Notre Dame enables all members of the school community to feel 'connected', regardless of faith.

What the school needs to improve

Ensure that students can articulate the Catholic social teaching principles in a wider context by embedding these principles across the curriculum.

Ensure that there is consistency of delivery regarding the expectations of high-quality classroom practice across the religious education department.

Plan explicit activities throughout the school year that enable members of the wider community to experience the school's prayer and liturgy.

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

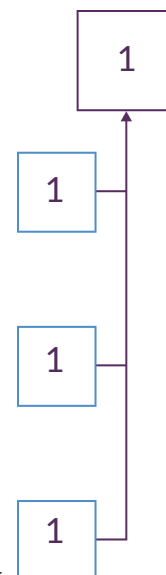
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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



Notre Dame is a school which rightly celebrates the fact that it is a diverse and welcoming community. Its mission, 'Sharing the love and goodness of God with everyone', is not just a statement but a principle to live by. It forms the ethos and life of the school. Students embrace their religious identity, recognising that faith is at the heart of all that they do. The Hallmarks of the Sisters of Notre Dame, based on the principles of Catholic social teaching, are known and articulated well by all members of the school community. They offer a clear reference point for all aspects of school life and have inspired a number of student leadership groups such as the Chaplaincy Champions, the Faith in Action Team and Sixth Form Chaplaincy Leaders. Regardless of faith, students and staff clearly explain how the Hallmark principles impact on their actions and their spiritual wellbeing. Students feel valued, knowing that they are unique individuals made in the image of God. They take a leading role on charitable initiatives in school that enhance and strengthen the school and the wider community. The high tariff placed on chaplaincy by the school ensures that everyone, regardless of faith, benefits from the rich offer.

The school's mission is clear and profoundly influential. It is evidenced through the strength of relationships between students and staff, which are built on respect and a mutual understanding of their work within school. This creates a harmonious environment rooted in Catholic tradition. Staff serve as outstanding role models, living out Gospel values and demonstrating a firm commitment to the school and the wider community. Students recognise this and appreciate their work, knowing that staff go above and beyond to ensure that all students in their care flourish. The school exemplifies inclusivity and celebrates

individuality. Every student is known, with diversity being embraced and spiritual growth encouraged. The Hallmark of Notre Dame Award, which celebrates students who embody the school's charism, ensures student ownership of the school's mission. Chaplaincy provision is outstanding. Discussions with all groups highlight that the school's lay chaplain is highly valued. Her dedication is commented on by many; with her drive to offer guidance and support being valued. She enables new and established staff to develop their chaplaincy skills; working creatively to provide opportunities for all members of the community. This strengthens the Notre Dame experience for all members of the school community.

Leaders ensure that the Catholic life and mission of the school is at the heart of their work. They are ambitious, always seeking ways to strengthen the school's offer. Governors regularly visit the school and are fully aware of the priorities for improvement. They know their community well, bringing effective support and appropriate challenge to senior leaders, with the school's Hallmarks being the focus that drives their strategic thinking. Consequently, Catholic social teaching values and the mission statement inform all policy decisions. Governors have high expectations and this demonstrates a clear commitment to the school's ongoing thirst for improvement. The senior lead for Catholic life and mission is inspirational in his work and is expertly supported by senior leaders. The reflective quality assurance process, adopted by all leaders, spurs them on to offer the best they can to all members of the community. Their collaborative approach as servant leaders benefits staff and students; strengthening the school's commitment to shared responsibility for improvement. Wellbeing is a priority for leaders and governors, and this is recognised by staff, who speak highly of the practical and spiritual support they receive through training and chaplaincy provision.

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

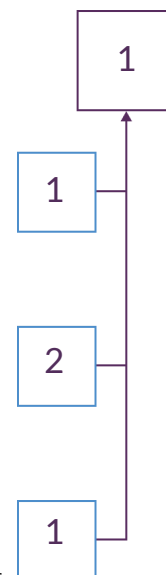
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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



Students enjoy religious education and talk positively about their lessons. The outstanding relationships that have been developed with staff culminate in students feeling valued; enabling them to flourish and develop an appreciation of the subject. This appreciation, and clear mutual respect, fosters positive engagement in lessons. Students demonstrate secure, age-appropriate knowledge and the consistent use of recall tasks within lessons develops strong religious literacy. Consequently, they are keen to question others, which develops their learning further. There is good evidence of independent working and students are focused when carrying this out. Students respond well to the wide variety of activities on offer in the classroom which results in high quality work that is typically presented well. At Key Stage 5 students can articulate their learning fluently, making links across the curriculum. They demonstrate curiosity and a keen interest in the subject. The majority of students know how well they are doing and can explain what they need to do to improve. This results in strong attainment in religious education for all groups of students when compared to national figures and other core subjects within school.

Religious education staff have strong subject knowledge and this is reflected in their confident approach to teaching. The vast majority of teaching is at least good, with there being clear evidence of outstanding practice within the department. In the best lessons, teachers have the highest expectations; coupled with skilful questioning techniques that increase engagement and maximise learning. However, in some instances classroom routines are not consistently implemented which has an impact on students' learning. Feedback provided by

teachers helps most students make progress with their learning journey. Praise is used frequently to motivate and recognise the work of students in lessons. The inclusive practices adopted by the department not only meet the differing needs of students, but culminate in students expressing their learning in a variety of different ways. This is largely due to the wide range of creative strategies employed in lessons that engage students and hold their interest. Provision in A Level and core religious education is very strong, with students speaking positively about their experiences. Across all key stages, time to reflect on learning is planned in, and when used at its best, it gives students an excellent opportunity to consider their next steps for progress.

Leaders and Governors hold religious education in high regard, seen as the beacon subject at Notre Dame. They have ensured that the religious education curriculum is faithful to the Religious Education Directory, with students' work reflecting this. There is parity with other core subjects and leaders prioritise training for religious education, taking up the development opportunities on offer through the St Clare Catholic Multi Academy Trust and the Diocese. The subject leader for religious education is new to her position and has a clear vision for her department. She is well supported by other senior leaders, who have an in-depth understanding of religious education at Notre Dame and know what needs to be done to improve further. Her committed and reflective nature offers considered leadership, which is valued by those who work with her. The religious education curriculum is carefully planned, ensuring that all students access their learning in a manner that allows them to confidently build on their prior learning. Leaders ensure that all students are exposed to enrichment. Leaders at all levels keep monitoring and evaluation at the forefront of their work, with all members of the school community being involved in this. This ensures a holistic approach to the school's learning experience that informs future planning and refines the subject offer for all students.

Collective worship

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

Collective worship key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

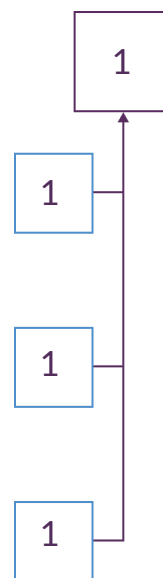
How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

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 regularity and consistency of prayer and liturgy, that are true to the liturgical calendar, enables students to talk eloquently about the wide variety of ways that they pray. Students participate fully during these moments and can make links between prayer and liturgy and their actions in school; commenting that they are motivated to support their peers and consider their own spiritual growth. Students work with staff to prepare and lead prayer and liturgy that is meaningful and has impact. Under the guidance of the chaplaincy team, they have developed a greater confidence in planning and leading on collective worship. Chaplaincy Champions play a key role in shaping the prayer life of the school, approaching this responsibility with passion and a genuine desire to inspire their peers. This familiar pattern of high-quality, daily prayer provides a reflective and purposeful start to each day, helping students to prepare for their day ahead with the school Hallmarks as their focus. Students can clearly articulate their prayer and liturgy experiences across the curriculum, an example being the service carried out during the annual Battlefields Trip, an experience that students found profoundly moving. Their reflections are testimony to the impact of these moments.

Prayer and liturgy are central to the life of the school, with the chaplaincy team being skilled in creating initiatives that ensure prayer is embedded effectively. Daily form-time prayer and liturgy provide opportunities for reflection on weekly themes and the school's Hallmarks. Students also demonstrate confidence with traditional Catholic prayers. Frequent visits from clergy further enhance the richness of Catholic tradition within the school and their strong links with the lay chaplain ensure support in her work. Staff lead well-structured prayer and

liturgy with skill, working collaboratively with the chaplaincy team and students to plan meaningful experiences. This stems from the robust induction process in place, and ongoing professional development. Through this, the lay chaplain, ably supported by the senior team, provides thought-provoking guidance that enables staff to deliver prayer and liturgy which matches the needs of individuals. She knows the talents of those in the community and is always keen to develop these. Dedicated prayer spaces, including the Prayer Room, are highly valued by students and staff. These are used frequently for planned moments such as the Rosary and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. It is also available to all members of the school community throughout the day and is used by many. There are opportunities for those in local parishes to participate in prayer and liturgy opportunities but this could be developed further.

The school's policy on prayer and liturgy exemplifies how its mission is present in every aspect of school life, prioritising spiritual benefit for all students. Leaders ensure that comprehensive training enables staff to understand their responsibilities, with the school's cycle of professional development continually evolving and embedding consistent practice. Staff unanimously affirm the centrality of prayer for both students and adults, supported by strong partnerships with local clergy who enrich the community. Through the expertise of the chaplaincy team and senior leaders, students experience a diverse and meaningful range of prayer and liturgy opportunities. Leaders and the chaplain demonstrate a profound understanding of how to make prayer accessible and respectful for students of all faith backgrounds. This ensures that all students can express how they engage with prayer in a way that aligns with their beliefs. Quality assurance processes, including healthy collaboration with the Trust and the diocese, ensure rigorous evaluation and continuous improvement. Attention to detail is evident in resources that are prayerful yet accessible, reinforcing the school's commitment to excellence in provision.

Information about the school

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| Full name of school | Notre Dame Catholic High School |
| School unique reference number (URN) | 138361 |
| School DfE Number (LAESTAB) | 3735400 |
| Full postal address of the school | Fulwood Road, , Sheffield, S10 3BT |
| School phone number | 0114 2302536 |
| Executive Headteacher | |
| Headteacher or Head of School | Mrs Deirdre Cleary |
| Chair of Governors | Mrs Petra Klompenhouwer- Meijer |
| School Website | www.notredame-high.co.uk |
| Trusteeship | Diocesan |
| Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable) | St Clare CMAT |
| Phase | Secondary |
| Type of school | Academy |
| Admissions policy | |
| Age-range of pupils | 11 - 18 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Date of last denominational inspection | 1 May 2019 |
| Previous denominational inspection grade | Outstanding |

The Inspection Team

| | |
|-------------------|------|
| Mark Taylor | Lead |
| Kathleen Bailey | Team |
| Catherine Danaher | Team |
| Andrew Riding | Team |

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 |