



Loreto Grammar School

URN: 138464

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Shrewsbury

25 February 2026 – 26 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

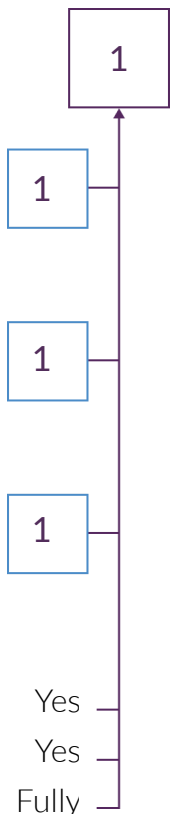
#### Collective worship (p.7)

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

- Staff are exemplary role models in promoting the values of Mary Ward. This ensures students can demonstrate and clearly articulate Catholic social teaching principles through the prism of these values. The headteacher supports them in this with great compassion.
- Inclusivity is a priority for all and the school celebrates the uniqueness of the individual. Discussions with students and staff highlight the caring and positive environment that is synonymous with Loreto, ensuring all students are known and held in high esteem.
- Religious education is taught by a dedicated team of expert practitioners. Students appreciate this, they talk with enthusiasm about their lessons and make the most of the support offered by their teachers. Consequently, academic outcomes are outstanding.
- The subject leader for religious education has ensured that the department's scheme of work offers a wide range of activities that are true to the Religious Education Directory. Her creative efforts have culminated in lessons which offer a wide variety of activities that stimulate students and develop curious minds.
- Staff are confident in planning prayer and liturgy activities. They are skilled in their delivery and promote student participation. Consequently, students are able to make connections between prayer and their own lives.

## What the school needs to improve

- N/A

## 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

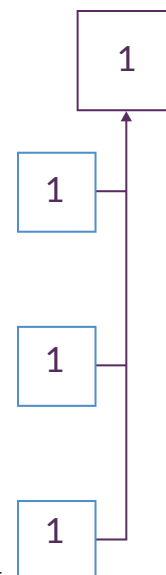
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

#### 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 identity and purpose of Loreto Grammar School has its foundations in the teachings and Ignatian values of Mary Ward. The school's mission statement is known and understood by students in the context of three intimate questions: 'Who am I? Who do I want to become? How do I get there?' One Year 7 student summed up its impact by commenting, 'Our mission statement centres our faith around a common goal which is shared by everyone'. Catholic social teaching is lived out through the prism of the 'Mary Ward Values', which are clearly articulated by students. One student comments that the values are a 'moral compass that inspires me to serve others.' Consequently, students are keen to instigate, lead on and participate in the many opportunities that are on offer. Groups such as SVP and Faith in Action allow all students to contribute to improving the lives of their peers, the local community, and those further afield. There is a palpable sense of worth among students and staff, with the sense of Imago Dei evident in all aspects of school life. This fosters confidence and a feeling of community that is valued by all.

Driven by leaders' explicit focus on the school mission, there is an extraordinary commitment from staff and students. Expressed as 'I am the Way the Truth and The Life', the mission statement is at the core of all that is revealed in curriculum experiences, in and beyond the classroom. Staff are highly committed to this and are fully immersed in the Loreto tradition. They love their school, want to contribute and are grateful to be part of something special. The witness of the headteacher has a profound impact on staff, who are excellent role models and show their own strong witness in the way they live out their vocation. This culminates in outstanding relationships at every level. Pastoral care is exceptional and students value the

support they receive. All staff work hard to successfully foster a community where equality and diversity are promoted, with forgiveness, reconciliation, and inclusion being the norm. The beautiful chapel is a fitting focal point for the community, being witness to the school's charism. Chaplaincy is a central feature of the school's provision and the support of the recently appointed lay chaplain is highly valued. Her work in creating new opportunities for staff and students to grow spiritually is impressive and developing.

Loreto's Ignatian tradition forms the backbone of leaders' strategic approach, informing policy and practice. Governors know their school well, bringing expert support and challenge. Their strategic involvement, alongside their involvement in regular monitoring, including lesson observations and student voice activities, allows them to work with leaders to refine and improve the Catholic life experience for all. Students play a key role in this quality assurance process, regularly commenting that their views are acted upon. There are strong links with local parishes and this work, coupled with frequent visits by local clergy, ensures that they are central to the school's mission. Parents and carers fully engage with leaders in their work and are hugely supportive. Staff value the care and support they receive from leaders and understand that this has a profound impact on their wellbeing. Immersion in Catholic life and the Loreto values are defining features of induction training for staff new to the school, with continued training addressing individual and whole-school priorities. The school engages strongly with the diocese and support is very much reciprocal as the school offers a great deal of training and guidance to other schools.

## 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

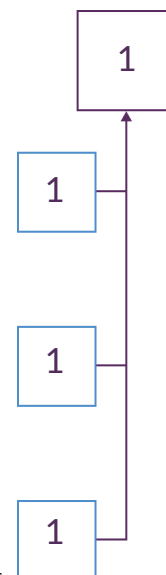
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

#### 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 their religious education lessons, feeling challenged and supported in achieving their potential. Religious literacy is excellent and students use it appropriately during discussions, articulating their knowledge well. They are keen to ask questions and take risks with their learning, a consequence of the excellent working relationships that exist between themselves and staff. They are keen to praise each other, and teachers reward effort and progress with genuine words of warm encouragement and celebration. Students show great pride in their work and books are beautifully presented; they meet the standards expected of them. They excel when working independently and value the opportunities for reflection in lessons. This furthers their understanding and fosters a natural curiosity about their learning. Strong progress is evident in students' books and folders, a direct result of their enthusiasm for the subject and a strategy adopted by the department where teachers model the standard of work expected during lessons. The wide variety of assessment methods used in religious education lessons means that students have a clear understanding of where they are in their learning and what they need to do to progress further. For all learners academic attainment is outstanding.

All religious education teachers are, without exception, passionate about their subject. They demonstrate outstanding subject knowledge and teaching skills, working extremely well together as a team. This enhances a dynamic and well-planned curriculum which is coherently sequenced, theologically sound and faithful to the teachings of the Church. Consequently, all learners are empowered to examine and deepen their faith, as well as being encouraged to

deepen their sense of responsibility and self-worth. Teaching is skilfully adaptive, with subject staff building on students' prior knowledge and guiding them to deeper understanding through expert questioning and reflection. Questioning is exceptional and the use of 'hinge questions' during lessons to formatively assess understanding is particularly effective, no child is left behind as lessons progress. Assessment is well-planned, consistent and thorough, ensuring that students' knowledge and skills are robustly tested and developed. This, coupled with feedback that is appropriate and thought-provoking, ensures that students develop curiosity and further their learning. Staff have planned the curriculum carefully to incorporate a wide range of activities that include discussion, art, poetry and reflection. This allows students to express their learning in a variety of ways.

Leaders have adopted a strategic and theologically grounded approach to religious education that ensures high standards across all key stages. The curriculum is thoughtfully sequenced and intellectually rigorous, with dialogue and encounter intentionally embedded throughout, thus enabling students to engage with Catholic theology and contemporary issues. The subject leader for religious education is strong. She has a clear vision for her subject and understands the importance of its impact across the school. Her dynamism is recognised by her team; they understand the impact she has had on her department. She has overseen the development of a creative curriculum that reinforces the role of staff in preparing students both spiritually, and as citizens in a diverse society. The *Religious Education Directory* has been fully embraced and implemented with integrity and academic rigour. There is highly effective collaboration between the subject lead and the senior leadership team and this is underpinned by a meticulous, evidence-based approach to self-evaluation. Through the school's robust quality assurance cycle and detailed analysis of assessment data, resources are continually refined, with professional development tailored to meet the specific needs of staff. Leaders place a strong emphasis on staff wellbeing and professional sustainability, ensuring that assessment and curriculum demands are manageable and purposeful. This has resulted in a motivated, confident and highly effective team.

## Collective worship

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

### Collective worship key judgement grade

#### Pupil outcomes

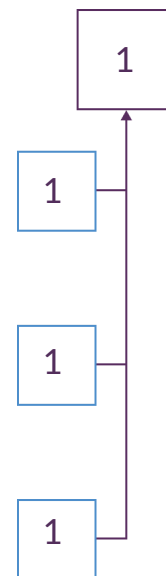
How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

#### 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



Loreto excels at offering a wide variety of opportunities for prayer and liturgy and students value the active and participatory nature of their prayer experiences. This fosters a strong sense of ownership and reverence. Students understand how the liturgical year mirrors their prayer experience and can articulate this clearly; describing the many inclusive opportunities made available to them, including form prayer, Masses, chaplaincy leadership and preparation within religious education lessons. Staff and students work collaboratively and effectively to plan and lead on prayer and liturgy. Consequently, the student prayer and liturgy experience is age-appropriate, accessible and well supported. This results in confident participation through readings, music and ministry. A significant number of students undertake formal liturgical roles, including Eucharistic Ministers, demonstrating trust, responsibility and spiritual maturity. Reflection plays a key role in liturgical celebrations and is appreciated by students; this contributes to deeper understanding and spiritual growth. The impact of high-quality prayer and liturgy in school is profound. Students speak eloquently about the impact of these experiences on their behaviours and actions, citing the numerous charities that they support and the way they interact with others as being a direct result of their prayer experience.

Prayer and liturgy, focused on scripture that is informed by the liturgical year, are central to the life of the school. Daily form-time prayer and liturgy punctuates the school day and provides opportunities for reflection. Students demonstrate confidence with traditional Catholic prayers, which they recall at key moments in the Church's liturgical year. Regular visits from the local parish priest further enhance the richness of Catholic tradition within the

school and his strong links with the lay chaplain support her in her work. The headteacher and her senior leaders are outstanding role models in living out Loreto's Ignatian tradition. This impacts on staff, who are wholly committed to leading well-structured prayer and liturgy with skill, working collaboratively with the chaplaincy team and students to plan deep and meaningful experiences. There is a robust staff induction process in place, and outstanding continuing professional development. The lay chaplain, ably supported by leaders, provides thought-provoking guidance that enables staff to deliver prayer and liturgy which matches the needs of students, who comment that she is always keen to nurture and develop the gifts of others. Consequently, students use their talents well to enhance the spiritual life of the school. The creative use of digital media ensures that families are actively involved in this too, through online prayer opportunities.

The Ethos and values committee are committed to their role as custodians of the school's prayer and liturgy. Consequently, governors and senior leaders have a clear and inspiring vision for prayer and liturgy. Routines of prayer are deeply embedded and develop as each student moves through Loreto, experiencing appropriate prayerful encounters as they grow in their faith. The Year 7 Ampleforth programme, the Rome pilgrimage and the Lourdes pilgrimage are examples of this. Leaders' planning ensures that all staff take part in Ignatian training that prepares them in supporting students with their prayer life. Staff comment on the importance of this, saying that it raises the status of prayer and liturgy in school, assisting students on a spiritual journey that is true to the values of Mary Ward. The local parish priests offer weekly Masses in school and the Sacrament of Reconciliation during Advent and Lent. Leaders ensure that there are regular formation opportunities within their training and development programme and staff value this. The evaluation of prayer and liturgy by leaders, staff and students has high priority and informs future planning, refining the prayer and liturgy experience for all.

## Information about the school

Full name of school	Loreto Grammar School
School unique reference number (URN)	138464
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	3585901
Full postal address of the school	Loreto Grammar School, Dunham Road, Altrincham, WA14 4AH
School phone number	0161 928 3703
Headteacher or Head of School	Mrs Jane Beever
Chair of Governors	Mr Jim Lister
School Website	<a href="http://www.loretogrammar.co.uk">www.loretogrammar.co.uk</a>
Trusteeship	Religious Order Loreto Sisters
Phase	Secondary
Type of school	Academy
Admissions policy	Selective
Age-range of pupils	11 - 18
Gender of pupils	Girls
Date of last denominational inspection	12 March 2019
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

## The Inspection Team

Mark Taylor Lead

Marcela Johnstone

Philip Mooney

## 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