



## DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION REPORT

incorporating Section 48 and Canonical Inspection under Canon 806 on  
behalf of the Archbishop of Southwark

URN 100193

St Ursula's Convent School for Girls

70 Crooms Hill

Greenwich

London SE10 8HN

Inspection date: 23<sup>rd</sup> & 24<sup>th</sup> February 2023

Chair of Governors: Anthony Moffatt

Headteacher: Ursula Norbert

Inspectors: Catherine Burnett

Stephen Horsman

### EDUCATION COMMISSION

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Interim Director of Education: Angela Cox OBE



### Key for inspection grades

|         |             |         |                      |
|---------|-------------|---------|----------------------|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding | Grade 3 | Requires improvement |
| Grade 2 | Good        | Grade 4 | Inadequate           |

## FULL REPORT

### INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Ursula's Convent School was founded in 1877 by the Ursuline Sisters. It is a smaller than average 11-16 girls secondary school aligned to the Ursuline order. St Ursula's Convent School is situated in the Greenwich Deanery of the Archdiocese of Southwark. The school underpins its provision and teachings to that of Serviam, 'I will serve' and the Ursuline virtues.

Progress of girls at the school is above the local and national averages, seeing a slight dip in 2022, with EBacc scores sitting constantly well above the national average.

The percentage of Catholic pupils and application numbers have remained consistent up until 2022 admissions where there has been an 18% drop in the number of Catholic families admitted in the current Year 7.

St Ursula's draws from a wide range of primary schools from across eight London Boroughs.

Pupils with an Education Health Care Plan, EHCP or classified as SEND are below the government published national averages.

Inspectors evidenced partial progress towards targets set at the last inspection, however noted that due to the extended period between inspections there had been fluctuation regarding adoption and action towards the targets since 2015.

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## SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

St Ursula's Convent School is a good Catholic school because:

- Pupils make the most of the provision and leadership opportunities offered to them taking an active part in 'Serviam' across the school.
- Leaders embed Catholic life across the curriculum through whole school development planning and appraisal.
- A relatively newly structured and highly skilled governing body are committed to whole school improvement with regular monitoring and support provided for school leaders.

## WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER

- Provide opportunities for school leaders to fully understand and be able to implement the denominational inspection criteria for the new national inspectorate.
- Proactively manage resources to provide a consistently high level of teaching in Religious Education.
- Embed strategic planning for acts of collective worship which enable staff training to ensure confidence and consistency of impact.

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## Overall Effectiveness

|   |   |
|---|---|
| How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education.  | 2 |
| <b>Catholic Life</b>  | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.                      | 2 |
| The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school.   | 2 |
| How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school. | 2 |
| <b>Religious Education</b>  | 2 |
| How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.  | 2 |
| The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education.  | 2 |
| How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.             | 2 |
| <b>Collective Worship</b>   | 2 |
| How well pupils respond to and participate in the schools' Collective Worship.                                  | 2 |
| The quality of provision for Collective Worship.  | 2 |
| How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship.              | 2 |



## CATHOLIC LIFE

2

### **The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school is**

- Pupils are provided with a range of leadership opportunities including chaplaincy prefects, Ursuline Community Educators, UEC and student voice which they embrace and in which they take an active role. This was seen through discussions with various groups, reviews of events as well as pupils seeking out inspectors to discuss the roles they played and the opportunities they engage with.
- Pupils support a wide range of charities across the academic year such as the Greenwich food bank, Aid to the Church in Need, Cash for Kids, Missio and CAFOD, enabling 'Serviam' to manifest throughout the school. Most recently pupils raised donations for the Turkish/ Syria earthquake disaster as an additional and immediate response to the needs of others. In addition, pupils have a theological understanding of why they engage in charity work.
- Pupils readily express their appreciation of the school and their appreciation for the experiences and wide range of activities available to them.
- The recently formed UEC group comprising of year 10 pupils enables networking with pupils from other Ursuline schools leading to pupils disseminating ideas, informing planning of future events and sharing faith, learning and experiences.

### **The quality of provision of the Catholic Life of the school is**

- In house retreats are in place for Years 7, 8 and 9, with 40 Year 9 pupils attending a recent pilgrimage to Rome.
- Feast days and key liturgical events involve all pupils with activities planned and differentiated for each year group. Artefacts and outcomes include prayer stones, shells and cards based on the Ursuline virtues. The prominent tree and cross created this year being displayed centrally as a focus and reminder for the whole school community.

### **How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school is**

- Catholic life is embedded as a priority across the school through the whole school development priorities and as a mandatory performance target for all staff.
- Governors readily engage with, monitor and participate in activities and events by both actively supporting with and attending activities.



- The school leaders provide staff training for new staff to enable them to fully engage with and embed the Ursuline virtues across the school.
- School leaders are actively seeking to appoint a school chaplain and work in close partnership with the parish priest.

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## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

2

### How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education is

- Pupils engage productively in lessons presenting responses eloquently and confidently.
- Positive learning behaviours were experienced in the majority of lessons observed. Pupils demonstrate a high level of respect towards each other leading to pupils readily contributing to discussion.
- Books are of a very high standard and pupils clearly take pride in presentation of their work.
- Pupils who spoke with inspectors spoke positively about the value they place on their Religious Education and displayed very good knowledge of, for example, worship in Judaism and the Hajj in Islam.
- Outcomes in Religious Education are above the national average and Religious Education contributes favourably to the overall school results.

### The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education is

- A range of learning experiences were observed. Where regular, scheduled teachers deliver lessons inspectors observed pace and progress in the majority of lessons.
- A range of assessment for learning techniques are used by some of the Religious Education teachers to assist in moving learning forward and consolidate prior learning.
- The heavy reliance on green pen formative assessment leads to limited follow up and monitoring by class teachers.
- Lesson materials for temporary and substitute teachers is consistent, however there is an inconsistency of delivery, marking and follow up where lessons are not taken by the scheduled teacher.

### How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education is

- The head of department has a clear plan for the department with schemes of work which follow the curriculum directory.
- Adjustments to the structure of the timetable has meant provision of 10% Religious Education is in place for key stage 3 and 12% for key stage 4 meeting the Bishops requirements.



- An up-to-date relationships and sex education, RSE, policy is in place and RSE provision is mapped through a comprehensive personal, social and health education, PSHE, scheme of work.
- Governors regularly visit the school and carry out learning walks in Religious Education.

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## COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

### How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship and Prayer Life is

- The weekly Friday Mass was well attended and pupils took an active part in the Mass, singing with enthusiastic respect and reading confidently.
- Pupils told inspectors of their involvement in the school's liturgy even though they were not of the Catholic faith and how much they valued their inclusion.
- Staff and pupils are well versed in the school prayer which is used regularly throughout the day.
- A large cohort of pupils were observed after school preparing a Lenten Passion which enabled an exciting spiritual opportunity for all involved. Inspectors observed focus, leadership and partnership in action from all pupils taking part.
- Year 10 pupils prepare and deliver assemblies to younger age groups. Pupils were able to discuss confidently their preparation, decision making and were observed presenting clearly in a key stage 3 assembly. This included a skilled performance by a Year 10 pianist.

### The quality of provision for Collective Worship and Prayer Life is

- Collective worship is planned for at the end of every school day. Inspectors observed reverence, however the sessions would benefit from opportunities to reflect and review.
- The homily observed in the weekly Mass was accessible to pupils who were able to discuss how they would put the advice given into action.
- Masses and liturgies are scheduled throughout the year including a community carol service in the impressive Our Ladye Star of the Sea church on the school grounds, Ash Wednesday Mass and Liturgies, Lenten liturgies, a Feast Day Mass and other whole school celebrations.
- A chapel and prayer garden are available throughout the day for private prayer and reconciliation.

### How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship and Prayer Life is

- School leaders have embedded a policy of all lessons starting with the Ursuline prayer. This was evident in the lessons observed and conversations with staff and pupils showed appreciation of regular opportunities to reflect every lesson prior to learning.
- Governors attend Masses and liturgical events on a regular basis.



- School leaders regularly lead and support pupils in leading assemblies and taking part in liturgies.
- School leaders take feedback via student voice, UEC and chaplaincy to monitor and improve provision.

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