



## Blanchelande Catholic College

URN: 132507

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Portsmouth

29 April 2026 – 30 April 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

2

2

2

2

Yes

Yes

N/A

## What the school does well

- Pupils and students value the school's Catholic mission and charism, which is led by a deeply committed and knowledgeable principal, supported by her strong and capable team, and overseen by well-informed and deeply committed governors and trustees.
- The culture of care and respect imbues this happy and generous school, as reflected in the relationships between pupils and staff and in the lived commitment to volunteering and service for the common good.
- This outward-facing school is both ambitious and has the clear capacity to ensure that the Catholic identity of the school is rapidly strengthening.
- Leaders, including those for religious education, have been resolute in overseeing significant structural changes to the timetable and curriculum to ensure rapid progress.
- Pupils and students both value and respond to the blend of prayer, music and the opportunity to participate, supporting the development of ministries of service, as well as celebrating their artistic and musical gifts.

## What the school needs to improve

- The quality of prayer and worship is not yet fully consistent and will be strengthened by ongoing staff development, greater chaplaincy provision and ensuring that greater pupil and student involvement in the planning and leading aspects of their worship becomes the norm.
- Some pupil work in religious education in key stages one and two is weaker and lacks parity with work in other subjects, and as compared with that of older students. Higher expectations for content and presentation are required to ensure consistency across the school.

## 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

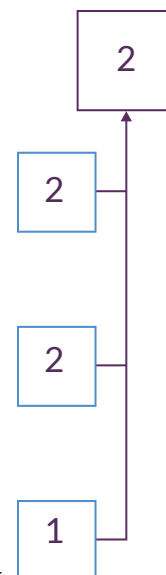
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

#### 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



Pupils and students are rightly proud of this happy and deeply caring school and its long history on the island. The school community, from nursery to sixth form, increasingly embraces and actively contributes to the school's Catholic life and mission. Its distinctive ethos is valued by parents, pupils and students. One sixth form student confidently stated 'Semper Fidelis – together, learning to become all that God wants us to be'. The core values of joy in learning, joy in service and joy in faith are lived realities. Recently arrived pupils and students, and those from outside the Catholic tradition, value how they have been welcomed by a school culture where inclusivity is valued and lived. 'The teachers are amazing. No one gets left behind' Pupils' and students' behaviour is excellent, with a high degree of courtesy and respect shown to all. The commitment to service, volunteering and charitable work is sincere and self-motivated, with a growing understanding that this is directly aligned with Catholic social teaching. Chaplaincy provision, while still developing, is appreciated by pupils and students, with an increasing number of them participating in chaplaincy events. Further developing the role and scope of the prayer and liturgy co-ordinator, and the resources available for chaplaincy, will secure further rapid progress. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school. 'My children are the fourth generation to attend the college as we hold it in such high regard.'

In light of the considerable work undertaken in recent years to strengthen and clarify the Catholic distinctiveness of the school, so that it is fully understood and lived by all, pupils, students and staff are growing in their understanding of how mission, prayer and service are inextricably linked within a Catholic worldview. This now needs to be embedded through

continued staff training and a school-wide understanding that all have a role in this. The sense of community is strongly supported by dedicated staff and a strong pastoral offer, including the highly regarded Emmaus Space, providing welcome and support when students need it. The beautiful environment is highly regarded by pupils, students and staff alike. Students are proud of their work in the community, facilitated by staff but increasingly led by pupils and students. This includes befriending elderly and vulnerable people, raising money, CAFOD events, the Buddy Club, Faith and Charity Ambassadors and Rotary Shoe Box. Chaplaincy provision, undertaken by a team, including a highly regarded prayer and liturgy co-ordinator, is developing in impact. Provision for RSHE meets diocesan requirements and presents a holistic understanding of the human person.

Leaders, including a knowledgeable and deeply caring board of governors and trustees, are committed to the Catholic character of the school and fully supportive of the work of the inspirational principal to ensure that Catholic life and mission are lived. In securing remarkably rapid progress, they are actively supporting the Bishop's vision, a view supported by parish clergy who speak of the work undertaken in recent years as 'stunning', with parish links strengthening and school staff, including the principal, fully engaged. Governors and senior leaders' support for parents as the first educators is reflected in the principal's regular communication, including a school website which proudly recognises the school's Catholic mission, history and charisma. Governors and senior leaders are self-evaluative and ambitious for the school, and their investment in high-quality pastoral provision, such as the Emmaus Space, reflects their understanding that Catholic social teaching lies at the heart of their decision-making. The school's curriculum increasingly reflects a holistic Catholic worldview, supported by a well-received induction programme for new staff, with one new teacher saying, 'I had fallen out of love with teaching, but coming to Blanchelande was like coming home.'

## 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

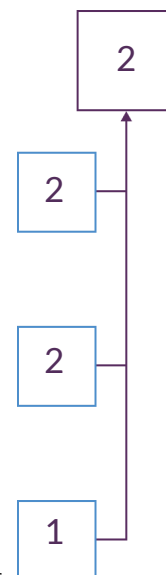
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

#### 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



Most pupils and students are making good progress in their learning, with many demonstrating a high degree of religious literacy, as reflected in both their accurate understanding of theological concepts and their ability to argue and debate persuasively and respectfully. This is aligned with the requirements of the *Religious Education Directory*. For many, though not yet all, in the lower years, the standard of written work is good or excellent. Recall and questioning are embedded features of lessons; for instance, in a Year 13 religious studies lesson, students could recall prior learning and apply it to a discussion of Augustine's *Theodicy*. Students demonstrate a quiet but sincere confidence and express a positive experience of religious education. For one Year 11 student, 'I enjoy the subject because it makes me think more deeply. I like learning about other religions and understanding how others think.' Pupils in a Year 4 lesson reflecting on the age of Jesus showed real sophistication in their thinking, able to examine the question from a number of angles. Attainment at the secondary level is good, having experienced a steady increase and is now aligned with other core curriculum subjects. At Key Stages 1 and 2, attainment will be strengthened through consistent high expectations and ongoing training within the new curriculum.

Teachers demonstrate a high degree of competence, including excellent subject knowledge, with many instances of high challenge questioning, as well as the ability to show the relevance of religious education to a coherent understanding of the world. For the most part, expectations are high, though in some lower-school books, work was less well presented and

showed lower expectations than in other subjects and key stages. Planning is linked to pupils and students' current assessment, with evidence of how higher-order questioning stretches the more able. In some cases, further scope exists to ensure that work is more effectively scaffolded to support those who need more help. Questioning for able and more able pupils and students is a clear strength, challenging students through a variety of pedagogical approaches, including cold calling, pair work and invitations to deeper thinking. In one Thought and Culture (post-16) class, students were invited to apply a range of philosophical approaches to contemporary films. Younger pupils, when asked were able to show their prior learning and also explain why religious education was important for their own development. For one infant pupil 'we learn about Jesus and the saints. It's fun and it is interesting'

Leaders are ensuring that religious education is a faithful representation of the *Religious Education Directory*, with staff showing a good understanding of the new material and how to deliver it effectively. The combination of the support given by the governing body and principal to ensure appropriate curriculum time for religious education, in line with the requirements of a Catholic school, combined with the work of the highly effective head of department, has led to a rapid improvement in provision and outcomes. Leaders ensure core parity for the subject through high-quality professional development, investing in resources, and supporting A-level religious education, notwithstanding the numbers being small. When weaknesses exist, the highly effective head of department is tenacious and relentless in addressing them, fully aware of where further measures are needed, and remains ambitious for the department. Professional development, including the induction of new staff, is highly effective, with one new member of staff effusive in his praise for how he had been welcomed to the department, and that he felt he had 'come home' in his teaching. There is a programme of enrichment, notwithstanding the challenges of the island location, with recent examples including the Holocaust Memorial, the National Bible Project short story and for younger children, the Laudato Si club as well as the Rosary Group.

## Collective worship

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

### Collective worship key judgement grade

#### Pupil outcomes

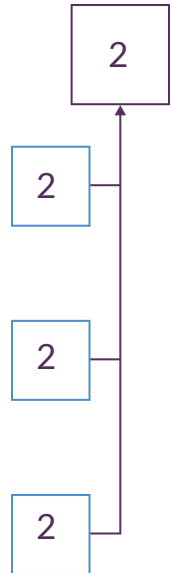
How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

#### 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



In most instances, pupils and students respond well to the experiences of prayer and liturgy provided by the school, showing an increasing desire and capacity to contribute across a range of roles and ministries, supported by the prayer and liturgy co-ordinator and her team. Pupil and student leadership and evaluation of prayer and worship is growing, with the capacity and willingness for this to be developed further. Local clergy are fulsome in their praise for the quality of liturgical engagement, particularly in the last eighteen months, describing how 'active participation is far more the norm'. Prayer in tutor groups and assemblies reflects the Church's liturgical year and students are aware of a range of traditional and modern ways to pray. In a Year 4 rosary group, children were reverent and committed to praying for those in need. In a Key Stage 3 assembly, music, singing, student and staff reflection were blended effectively. For one student, citing the school motto, 'Semper Fidelis means being always faithful, believing in God, which is what we do at Blanchelande.' Further scope exists for all students to take part in collaborative planning and evaluation, and this, together with some observed instances of less student engagement, will require further systematic professional development of all staff.

Prayer and liturgy are becoming more embedded in the life of the school, with clear capacity to be even more impactful, helped by the evident willingness of senior leaders and governors to support this. The movement from prayer as something done, to prayer as an expression of the school's core identity is ongoing, particularly for some more senior students who have had less exposure to the impact of the rapid improvements undertaken by the principal and her team. Occasionally, prayer lacks structure, such as an appropriate scripture reading or start

and finish, which will be addressed through professional development and clarity of expectations. The prayer room offers a charming and intimate space for worship, and the school values the reservation of the Blessed Sacrament. There is, however, a need for further capacity for prayer, worship and reflection. Engagement with the parish is well regarded by local clergy, who welcome the measures taken in recent years and look for this to be further expanded. Families express an overwhelming support for the Catholic character of the school, and the majority welcome the measures taken to ensure its ongoing strengthening.

The school's policy on prayer and liturgy is in place. Its effectiveness will be further enhanced as all staff benefit from the professional development that has been in place in recent times, and which is being embedded. Currently, the effectiveness of the school's prayer life is assessed through student voice and now needs to be strengthened by systematic evaluation commensurate with other aspects of the school's processes. The school's excellent relationship with local clergy ensures that holy days, the Sacrament of Reconciliation and other significant events are marked by the celebration of the sacraments. Trustees, governors and leaders have invested in high-quality professional development for staff, including through staff training days, which were impactful and well-received, especially by non-Catholic staff keen to better understand their role in a Catholic school. The school is blessed with an inspirational and theologically literate school leadership, led by the principal, who can confidently articulate a Catholic understanding of education. Staff, including longstanding staff, are clear as to the impact of her leadership, that the school is more clearly aligned to its Catholic identity and that, going forward, all members of staff will play an increasing part in supporting and developing Blanchelande's ethos and values.

## Information about the school

Full name of school	Blanchelande Catholic College
School unique reference number (URN)	132507
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	0006163
Full postal address of the school	Les Vauxbelets, St Andrews, Guernsey, GY6 8XY
School phone number	01481 237200
Headteacher or Head of School	Mrs Alexa Yeoman
Chair of Governors	Mr Trevor Wakefield
School Website	<a href="http://www.blanchelande.co.uk">www.blanchelande.co.uk</a>
Trusteeship	Independent
Phase	All Through
Type of school	British school overseas
Admissions policy	Non Selective
Age-range of pupils	2 - 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed (Sixth Form: Mixed)

## The Inspection Team

Simon Uttley Lead

Louise Buxton

John Toal

## 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