

De La Salle School

URN: 150833

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Archbishop of Liverpool

01–02 October 2025

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

1

Religious education (p.5)

The quality of curriculum religious education

2

Collective worship (p.7)

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

1

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

Yes

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

Yes

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

Fully

2

Compliance statement

- 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 laid down by Archbishop of Liverpool.
- The school has responded fully to the areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection.

What the school does well

- At De La Salle School, students, staff, parents and governors proudly understand and wholeheartedly live out the school's distinctive Lasallian identity and mission.
- Staff provide exceptional pastoral care for all students, with a clear and unwavering commitment to supporting the most vulnerable.
- The new Religious Education subject leader has a clear, ambitious vision and is already demonstrating positive initial progress in implementing it.
- Prayer and liturgy provide students with a rich variety of engaging and creative experiences that reflect the depth of the Catholic tradition.
- Students' views are actively valued and regularly sought in the school's evaluation of prayer and liturgy, leading to meaningful and tangible improvements.

What the school needs to improve

- Provide students with the theological knowledge and understanding to explain the reasons behind their actions in relation to Catholic social teaching.
- Secure pupil outcomes in religious education that are at least in line with average attainment across core subjects and national benchmarks.
- Establish parity for religious education with other core subjects in the provision of professional development, resourcing, timetabling, and staffing.

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

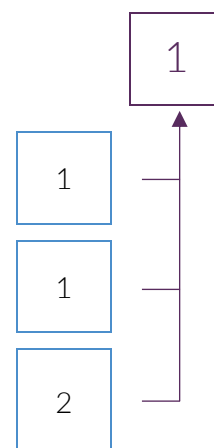
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

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



Students at De La Salle School clearly understand and actively embrace the school's distinctive Lasallian identity and mission, contributing significantly to its Catholic life through the Gospel values they demonstrate daily. They are recognised for living out the school's charism through 'star points,' used for rewarding actions that reflect core values. Students express confidence in feeling valued, cared for, and recognised as unique individuals made in the image and likeness of God, and they feel happy, secure, and confident within the school community. Their commitment to Catholic social teaching is evident through initiatives such as the Anthony Walker Foundation, Saint Vincent de Paul group, and Mission Team. This membership could be further enriched if all students could articulate the theology behind their actions. They understand the school's call to follow Jesus' teachings and grow in virtue, taking responsibility for caring for our common home and serving those in need; the Eco Schools group has earned the prestigious Green Flag award, reflecting their promotion of sustainability inspired by Pope Francis' *Laudato Si*. Students engage respectfully with peers from diverse backgrounds and faiths, with facilities such as the prayer cabin supporting different religious practices. Behaviour is strong throughout the school, students value chaplaincy provision, actively participate in spiritual life, and readily take on leadership roles that embody the school's charism.

The mission of De La Salle School is clear, well-articulated, and actively lived throughout the school community, visibly shaping its culture, environment, and daily life. Students and staff understand that they are part of a Catholic community rooted in Lasallian traditions and values. Staff embody this mission by delivering a curriculum informed by those traditions and through engagement in formation opportunities both within school and across the broader Lasallian network. The school fosters a strong sense of community, reflected in the quality of

relationships, inclusion, and pastoral care, with particular attention to supporting the most vulnerable. Individuals from all backgrounds and beliefs are welcomed and supported in many ways, including a multi-faith prayer space, student-led assemblies on diversity, and collaborative initiatives. Staff serve as exemplary role models, demonstrating the school's mission through interactions, pastoral care, and participation in prayer and formation. The school's environment reinforces its identity by sacred displays and liturgical decorations, whilst chaplaincy provides opportunities for spiritual and moral development, retreats and Lasallian social, and student-led initiatives such as the De La Salle foodbank. Relationships, sex and health education is aligned with the school's mission and values. The content is regularly quality assured to meet archdiocesan standards, ensuring students develop morally, spiritually, and academically.

Leaders and governors at De La Salle School demonstrate an understanding of the Church's mission in education and are committed to its stewardship. The headteacher inspires and unites staff through a strong commitment to Gospel values. Senior leadership is respected for advancing the school's Catholic and Lasallian identity, and most school policies and practices consistently reflect its mission. Leaders promote the archdiocesan vision and policies, and work in partnership with the archdiocese. Governors attend training and contribute to archdiocesan networks. Despite challenges, the school fosters strong links with parishes through school Masses, confirmation classes, and sacramental programmes. Leaders uphold the principle that parents are the primary educators and work in close partnership with families, resulting in strong parental support. Leaders and governors are witnesses to the Gospel and Catholic social teaching, ensuring resources support those most in need. They demonstrate care for staff, as reflected in the staff survey, where 80% agree their physical and mental well-being is well supported. The school curriculum expresses Catholic values, with religious education at its core. Subjects are monitored to ensure they reflect Lasallian principles, but this could be strengthened further across all subjects.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade

Pupil outcomes

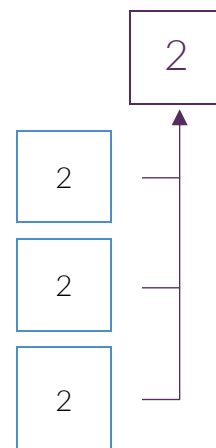
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

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 at De La Salle School are developing strong religious literacy and are actively engaged in learning that is relative to their age and ability. Students build their religious vocabulary through workbooks glossaries that enable them to discuss ethical and theological concepts with sophistication. The structured approach to religious education lessons supports this, with each session beginning with a recall task; at GCSE, this often takes the form of an exam-style question, helping students make meaningful connections across topics. For example, students have drawn on prior learning to debate the role of women in the Catholic Church, presenting thoughtful arguments grounded in the historical context of scripture. They demonstrate good independent working skills, focusing well and rising to the challenge of learning, supported by the deliberate use of 'team time,' 'teacher time,' and 'class time,' which guide them to make progress independently, collaboratively, or as a whole class. While students are increasingly making this progress within the planned curriculum, there is still room for improvement, and teachers have implemented a clear plan for acceleration. Regular self-assessment ensures students understand how well they are doing and the steps needed to improve.

Significant improvements have been made in the provision of religious education at De La Salle, reflecting the department's ongoing commitment to high-quality learning for students. A standardised lesson format, informed by research from the Education Endowment Foundation, ensures that in lessons students can recall knowledge, analyse model answers, set the topic into context, complete independent practice, and self-assess. This structured approach has helped to raise standards across the department, although it can limit opportunities for students to express their learning in different ways and reflect on the moral and spiritual aspects of religious education. The curriculum is regularly reviewed to ensure it meets student needs; for example, a Year 8 unit on the prophets has been refined to provide greater context, helping students

understand the broader journey. Assessments have also been updated to become more rigorous and accessible. Teachers demonstrate a deep commitment to religious education through their contributions to curriculum development and speak positively about the work undertaken to embed religious education as a subject that students value.

The subject leader of religious education has established a clear and ambitious vision for her subject and, in the short time in post, has made significant progress in its implementation. She has fully embedded the Religious Education Directory across Key Stage 3, ensuring that all members of the religious education department have contributed to the development of a curriculum that is both academically rigorous and committed to educating the whole student. Leaders and governors' evaluation of religious education is supported through fortnightly keeping in touch meetings and regular tracking and progress reviews. While religious education generally enjoys core parity with other subjects, some aspects of leadership and timetabling remain less aligned. Teachers speak positively about the professional development they have received, including the science of learning training delivered to all staff last year. Members of the religious education department are currently completing the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies, and the subject leader has completed the training for new heads of religious education provided by the archdiocese. Students are also offered a wide range of enrichment opportunities in religious education, including participation in the Young Citizens' Mock Magistrates competition and the Ethical Craft Club. This involvement has further supported their engagement, skills development, and understanding of ethical and moral issues.

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

1

Provision

The quality of collective worship provided by the school

1

Leadership

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

1

1

Students engage positively with prayer and liturgy through silent reflection, community prayer, and singing. Lasallian prayers and responses are used at gatherings, with staff and students participating respectfully and confidently; students were observed singing with enthusiasm in assemblies and reflecting quietly during form time. They develop an age-appropriate understanding of the various ways of praying within the Catholic tradition and are familiar with the structure and significance of the Church's liturgical year as represented in the school's prayer practices. The tone of prayer and liturgy adapts to each liturgical season, and student leader training aligns with relevant scripture. For example, Anthony Walker ambassadors led a session in the hall focused on justice and passion, connecting both its Foundation and Sunday's gospel. Students collaborate with teachers, peers, and the lay chaplain to prepare prayer and liturgy experiences, participate with proficiency in liturgical ministries, and assess the quality of their planning to identify improvements. Form time provides thirteen weekly opportunities for students to express preferences, choosing from worship methods and sessions that include social stories, world events, a spotlight on saints and focuses on community events all linked to scripture. Students reflect assuredly on these experiences, articulating how they influence their perspectives and inspire actions to support others and live out Gospel values.

Prayer and liturgy is central to all school gatherings at De La Salle, carefully planned around significant moments and grounded in scripture, with the lay chaplain linking biblical themes, especially the Road to Emmaus, to the school's mission. The school maintains a structured daily prayer routine that reflects Church traditions whilst offering creative opportunities, guided by the principles of welcome, word, worship, and work, each supported by Lasallian Way documents. Students participate in diverse and thoughtfully designed prayer and liturgy organised by form tutors. Each week begins with the introduction of themes on Monday, and

student contributions play an integral role in shaping subsequent prayer and liturgical activities. Scripture passages, selected according to the liturgical season, are central, enabling full participation and integration into staff prayer, meetings, and form time activities each week. Staff, including senior leaders and the headteacher, model exemplary conduct, actively guiding prayer and liturgy, demonstrating strong knowledge of Church norms, and reinforcing the Lasallian ethos. Music, arts, and a dedicated chapel enhance worship experiences, while the school engages families and local parishes by including preparation for Confirmation, and ensuring students' spiritual development is supported, celebrated, and rooted in the Catholic tradition.

The school's policy on prayer and liturgy is regularly reviewed and designed to be accessible for staff, including early career teachers, who use it alongside the Lasallian Way guidance when planning prayer and liturgy. Leaders and governors recognise students' differing abilities and have a clear strategy to develop participation skills, though planning could better align skills development with participation. The school calendar is carefully coordinated to provide regular opportunities for community participation in the Eucharist, particularly during key liturgical dates and school events, with holy days of obligation, founders' days, and other notable celebrations and memorials. There is a structure to ensure all students can attend Mass and take part in school-based celebrations of the word. Leaders prioritise high-quality professional development in liturgical formation and prayer planning, ensuring staff understand the importance of prayer and liturgy and are well-prepared to lead. These include chapel inductions for new staff and ongoing Lasallian charism formation. Chaplaincy and leaders effectively support staff and students in planning and delivering engaging and accessible prayer and liturgy, with budgets and resources allocated strategically to support this work. The quality and impact of prayer and liturgy is routinely evaluated through student feedback, form time activities, and governance oversight. Students are represented on key committees as part of the evaluation process for prayer and liturgy. This is a noted strength of the school.

Information about the school

Full name of school	De La Salle Catholic Secondary School
School unique reference number (URN)	104834
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	3424714
Full postal address of the school	De La Salle Catholic Secondary School, Mill Brow, Eccleston, St Helens, WA10 4QH
School phone number	0174420511
Headteacher	Andrew Rannard
Chair of governors	Samantha Murray
School Website	http://www.delasalle.st-helens.sch.uk/
Trusteeship	De La Salle Brothers
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Laetare Catholic Multi Academy Trust
Phase	Secondary
Type of school	Voluntary Aided School
Admissions policy	Non-selective
Age-range of pupils	11-16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	November 2018
Previous denominational inspection grade	2

The inspection team

Mr A Pontifex	Lead
Mrs J Rowlands	Team
Ms A Stead	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