



St. Bonaventure's
Catholic Comprehensive School



a dfes designated technology and language college

Teaching at St. Bonaventure's

At the forefront of learning for almost 120 years, St. Bonaventure's provides a first-rate education for boys aged 11 to 18. Originally a grammar school founded by the Franciscans, we are a voluntary-aided comprehensive school serving the Catholic boys of East London.

"St. Bonaventure's is an outstanding school of which students, parents, staff, governors and the Diocese are rightly proud."

OFSTED 2006

St Bonaventure's has achieved an excellent public examination record for many years. Its results are consistently amongst the highest in the borough and are well above the national average. This has been recognised with St Bonaventure's being awarded both Technology College and Language College status.

Our teachers are committed to providing the boys with the very best. St. Bonaventure's endeavours to promote an educational climate which is scientific, technological and vocational. We have established strong links with industry and the community, and have developed an innovative curriculum of academic and vocational programmes. With industry's sponsorship in promoting work placements and team-teaching strategies, our pupils benefit from being well-educated and technologically skilled. Our pupils can approach employment and further or higher education with confidence.

The school boasts impressive buildings and facilities, which include a state-of-the-art music technology suite and a fully networked technology block. Every department utilises interactive whiteboards to ensure that all our pupils benefit from the most up-to-date technology that education has to offer. We are in the first stages of a school-wide initiative to provide every student with a laptop to enhance their learning potential.

Above all, as a multi-ethnic school, St. Bonaventure's prepares pupils to take their place in a diverse society. Through all aspects of school life we create conditions where boys from wide-ranging backgrounds can work together harmoniously and with respect for one another.

We offer our boys the challenge of maintaining and promoting a Catholic community in which all members are equally valued. All our staff are dedicated to the service of young people and empowering them to play their full role in society.

"During the one day in school, inspectors saw not a single incident of careless or impolite behaviour."

OFSTED 2006

St Bonaventure's has an exemplary academic record, but we also pride ourselves on the fact that our students are happy and secure and can thrive in an environment that values their personal development and well-being. We provide our boys with every opportunity to achieve the very highest standards of academic success and to enable them to grow into responsible, independent and confident young men with a commitment to their faith.



"Standards are high and overall are above the national average and above those of similar schools at the end of Key Stage 3 in English, Mathematics and Science. The proportions of pupils obtaining 5 or more GCSE grades at A-C and A*-G are well above the national average, and are very high in comparison to similar schools."*

OFSTED 2006



“This is a school wishing to be at the cutting edge of national developments in education, tailored wisely to suits the needs of the boys it serves. The boys spoke enthusiastically of the extracurricular events in which they are engaged, from debating, choir and basketball to overseas trips and study support sessions.”

OFSTED 2006

“The overall quality of teaching and learning is very good. The academic progress of pupils is promoted very effectively. There is a positive learning culture driven by high expectations.”

OFSTED 2006

“Relationships in class between staff and boys are very positive, something identified by students of all ages as being a characteristic of the teaching at St Bonaventure's.”

OFSTED 2006

St. Bonaventure's appeared in the Chief Inspector's Report which identifies the most successful schools in the United Kingdom. The OFSTED inspection in 2006 reaffirmed St. Bonaventure's as an outstanding school. The School was awarded a second specialism in Languages in April 2006 to enhance our work as a Technology College. The school's excellent public examination results, which are well above national norms, speak for themselves.

In short, we will always provide a situation in which boys are enabled to develop their talents, be they many or few, so that they may leave us as responsible young men, aware of their duties to themselves, their neighbours and their God.

Examination Results

Both at 'A' Level and GCSE our results have been outstanding in recent years and are very much above the Newham and National averages.



“As it is recognised in the local community, St. Bonaventure's is an outstanding school of which students, parents, staff, governors and the Diocese are rightly proud. Since its last inspection six years ago, the school has sustained the rich quality of education on offer to the boys in this area of East London. The harmonious cultural diversity among the boys is a distinctive feature.”

OFSTED 2006

“The boys' attendance, consistently in excess of 95% in recent years, is well above national averages for secondary schools in England. Notably, all the boys thrive in an environment which values their cultural, linguistic and social differences. The Catholic ethos of firm discipline, care and comradeship permeates all aspects of school life.”

OFSTED 2006



“The boys are the beneficiaries of continuity with skilled and committed teachers.”

OFSTED 2006

“The boys' positive attitudes and very good behaviour mean that they arrive at each lesson wanting to learn.”

OFSTED 2006

Academic Organisation

St. Bonaventure's operates on seven forms of entry with a banding arrangement in Year 7. Thereafter, each year is divided into half-year bands which are set according to ability in the various subject areas. Departments meet regularly to review these setting arrangements, assess the performance of individual pupils and ensure sufficient movement between teaching groups.

Key Stage 3 Curriculum

Years 7 – 9 (core subjects)

English, Mathematics, Science, RE, Geography, History, Modern Languages, Technology, Information Technology, Music, Art, PE, Citizenship, Drama in years 8 and 9.

Key Stage 4 Curriculum

Years 10 & 11 (core subjects)

English, Mathematics, Science, Technology, RE, Citizenship, PE, Modern Languages

We also offer increased work related learning experiences to year 10 and year 11 students.

Pupils can choose additional subjects according to their personal interest from the following: History, Geography, Music, Art, Drama, Information Technology, Business Studies, BTEC Music and Media, the DIDA (Diploma in Digital Applications), and in addition vocational courses are delivered off site in GCSE Construction, City and Guilds Construction and NVQ Hospitality and Catering.

The above curriculum pattern is based on a 25 period week and 5 hour day, with a small number of lessons taking place in twilight hours.

The Learning Support Department withdraws pupils with learning difficulties from classes for varying periods of time as well as supporting them within individual lessons.

Features of our curriculum

include:

A challenging and varied curriculum has been developed for these important GCSE years Double Award Science for all Key Stage 4 students, as well as Single Award Science for our most able students. Pupils in the top two sets studying Mathematics at the Higher Level also study Statistics.

We have four different routes through the Key Stage 4 curriculum which allow students access to at least 5 GCSE's, but also other qualifications depending on their ability and interest.

Assessment

Continuous assessment and monitoring of pupil's academic and social development proceeds throughout the school year.

The integration of the pastoral and academic structure of the school supports the individual student whose performance is carefully tracked and reported to parents via a termly report. We have developed, over the last few years, a very detailed target setting system for each individual student.

Tutors interview each member of their tutor group on a regular basis to set targets and monitor students' progress in achieving these targets. We also use the Assertive Mentoring scheme for Year 10 and 11 pupils to ensure that every pupil achieves their potential in all areas of school life.

Recruitment of New Staff

Recruitment of well qualified staff is a key issue for the school. We have a commitment to Initial Teacher Training working in partnership with the Institute of Education, Goldsmiths and the University of St. Mark and St. John.

A number of PGCE students on teaching practice placements at the school have been appointed on a full time basis. The school has also developed links with the University of Canterbury through the Graduate Registered Teacher programme. We have also successfully recruited graduates from several Irish Universities, which include Cork, Limerick and Galway.

The induction programme for Newly Qualified Teachers has three inter related components. These are mentoring, monitoring and assessment. Members of the Senior Management Team, Heads of Department and Advanced Skills Teachers are actively involved in this process.

Regular lesson observations are undertaken, NQTs are provided with detailed feedback, which ensures professional growth and progression.

Three formal assessments are undertaken throughout the year with targets for development clearly identified.

The induction programmes for both PGCE students and newly qualified teachers have received high praise from members of the OFSTED inspectorate, HMI and visiting lecturers from various institutions of higher education.

St Bonaventure's has crèche facilities on-site for the children of members of staff.

The Local Education Authority has recently introduced an Early Professional Development initiative, which has been well received by our teachers who are in their second and third year of teaching in the school. Funding is available to ensure that the professional development of aspiring teachers is maintained.

All new members of staff to the school will be engaged on an induction programme during their first year in school. The intention is to quickly establish these new members of staff through an 'in-house' professional studies programme. Our aim is to turn out excellent classroom practitioners through a supported induction framework.

"As an NQT this is the best place to be. They put you through your paces but you become a much better teacher for it. The support from parents and staff is second to none."

Joe Ackah
(Assistant Head of Year)

"The NQT year has been one of the most challenging periods of my life. Thanks to the excellent support offered by everybody in the school I have been able to develop into a confident practitioner. I have also been actively encouraged by my mentors to take up extra responsibilities which has helped me develop both personally and professionally."

Esther Peternek (NQT)



"Having been recruited in Ireland as an NQT I found the induction process in St. Bonaventure's highly beneficial to my professional development. The school provides an extremely supportive environment which has allowed me to progress within the school. I was appointed an Assistant Head of Year at the end of my first year."

Michelle Roddy
(Assistant Head of Year)

"The quality of leadership and management is very good. Monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance lead to effective action."

OFSTED 2006

"Since training at St. Bonaventure's as a Graduate teacher I feel I have been stretched both personally and professionally. The support and guidance given by experienced professionals has allowed me to develop into a confident practitioner. I have been encouraged and supported to climb the promotion ladder and I was appointed Head of Year after 3 years of teaching. St. Bonaventure's is a place where you feel part a community."

Aine Reynolds (Head of Year)

The Sixth Form: Years 12 & 13

The Sixth Form Centre is a real strength of the school, and the majority of our Year 11 students choose to stay with us to pursue their post-16 studies. Students benefit from a programme of studies which, in addition to their subject choices, supports and guides them through the process of university application. In addition, a specialist careers advisor is available to discuss students' career and further education options.



Sixth Form students contribute to the life of the school in many ways – not only by their outstanding exam results, but also by their participation in the mentoring of younger students and the many enrichment activities they carry out within the wider community.

The joint Sixth Form Centre of St. Angela's and St. Bonaventure's provides a flexible and wide ranging curriculum which meets student needs, aspirations and abilities including AS and A2 level subjects as well as Vocational A level courses, computer courses in Microsoft and CISCO and BTEC programmes. The number of courses is constantly reviewed and updated to meet demand.

The majority of our students choose to stay on and pursue their post-sixteen studies in the Sixth Form.

A level subjects include: Art, Biology, Business Studies, Chemistry, Computing, Design, Technology, Drama, English, Economics, French, Geography, German, Government and Politics, History, IT, Mathematics, Media Studies, Music, Music Technology, Physics, Psychology, Religious Studies, Sociology, Spanish and Textiles. All students also study either Critical Thinking or General Studies, in addition to their chosen subjects. Our A-Level results are consistently above the national average.

Staff Participation in Management

All members of staff are encouraged to participate in policy formation through the use of working groups and relevant committees in the School. These take place on a four weekly cycle and comprise of:

- SLT/HOD Meeting
- Year Meetings
[Head of Year & Form Teachers]
- Heads of Department Meeting
- Pastoral Committee
[Assistant Headteacher-Pastoral and Heads of Year]

Staff Meetings are held approximately once every term. These are for clarifying and emphasising School policy which is formulated by the Headteacher and Senior Management on the basis of advice given in the consultative process just described. The Senior Management Team of Headteacher, Deputies, and Assistant Headteachers meet once a week.

Pastoral Care

The School operates a Year system 7-11 co-ordinated by the Assistant Headteacher Pastoral with Heads of Year and Assistant Heads of Year responsible for the day-to-day administration of their groups. Close liaison exists between the Heads of Year and the form tutors who are an integral part of the guidance system. The Year Heads are key people in maintaining the discipline and ethos of the school.

The emphasis is on firm management, a determination to maintain high standards of work and behaviour and a deep-seated concern for the welfare of every pupil in the School.

Uniform is compulsory and rigorously enforced.

The local parish clergy are always welcome in the School and frequently visit either on an informal basis or to say Mass to a class/year group or to the whole School.



Extra-curricular Activities

Life at St Bonaventure's does not stop when the school day ends. All boys are encouraged to develop all their talents and skills by participating in the wealth of activities which take place at lunchtimes and after school.

Various departments offer opportunities for the students to carry their interests and talents beyond the school grounds. This year the highly successful school choir performed in Euro Disney and enjoyed a trip to the West-End musical 'Stomp'. The P.E. department visited the new Arsenal grounds and also organized a trip to a water sports centre in France. This flexibility reflects the school's commitment to holistic learning and personal development.

The boys' choir is very quickly gaining an exciting reputation and was invited to sing at the Primary Proms in 2005. More recently, the choir got through to the second round of the BBC Choir of the Year competition, where they were voted Choir of the Day.

St Bonaventure's is justifiably proud of its sporting success. The school's main sport is soccer and up to twelve matches are played each Saturday during the season. Teams compete regularly at local, county and national level and over the last few years have won borough championships in volleyball. Over the last two years the school boasts of having been London and Essex Football Cup Winners and National Basketball Champions.

"A diverse range of additional activities gives the boys a wider experience of life."

OFSTED 2006

"An extended after-school learning session seen... was well organised and productive."

HMI Report



Catholic Ethos

We are fully committed to supporting the journey of faith of all members of this school community. The school has a Chaplain, very close links with St. Antony's Church.



In conclusion, it should be emphasised that St. Bonaventure's is an inner city, multi-ethnic school. It is, a highly successful school with a well-motivated, flexible and committed staff. We strive for, and, in many areas, achieve high standards. Enthusiasm for teaching itself, for pastoral care, for extra-curricular activities and for participation in our consultative procedures will be the most important qualifications for appointment at this School.

Stephen Foster
Headteacher





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