

The Federation of The Annunciation Catholic Schools

Governing Board Strategic Plan 2023-2026

Context

The Annunciation Catholic Infant, Nursery and Junior Schools are voluntary aided, two form entry primary schools situated in Burnt Oak in the London Borough of Barnet. The Dominican Sisters of the Congregation of St. Catherine of Siena, Natal South Africa set up the community as one school in 1931 and thereafter due to demand for places, the school expanded. A second school building was opened in The Meads in 1975. Although now in the trusteeship of the Archdiocese of Westminster, both schools retain strong Dominican traditions, not least the schools' motto Veritas.

Over the years, despite being located on separate sites, both schools worked together in close partnership. It was for this reason, that in 2020 both governing boards under the guidance of the Archdiocese of Westminster began to explore the idea of federating the two boards into one board. Governors in both schools believed that a federated governing board would offer the opportunity for a genuinely shared vision and educational philosophy across both schools, one that translates into a positive joined up experience for all children. Governors wanted to value, nurture and further develop the strengths and identities of the two schools, whilst working together to enhance pupil outcomes by delivering an outstanding and memorable educational experience based on Gospel values.

Governors want to give all pupils the opportunity to fulfil their potential as confident, sociable and well rounded individuals ready for the next stage of their personal and educational journey. Governors believed that this could be achieved more effectively by both schools working even more closely. In their view, a federated board would provide a shared strategic direction, strengthen ties between both schools and facilitate a shared approach to best educational practice for the benefit of pupils. To this end, a federated Governing Board was established in January 2022.

Situated in the parish of Our Lady of The Annunciation, Burnt Oak, the schools enjoy close links with the parish community and benefit from regular visits from Canon Colin Davies, our parish priest. The majority of Year 2 pupils transfer to the Junior School and at the end of Year 6, many pupils transfer to St. James' Catholic High School, a local secondary school with a Dominican Foundation.

The overall effectiveness of The Annunciation Infant and Nursery School was judged to be good when it was inspected by OFSTED in October 2022. In June 2022 Ofsted judged The Annunciation Junior School as a good school with enough evidence of improved performance to suggest that the school could be judged outstanding if a Section 5 inspection were to be carried out at that time. Therefore, the Junior School's next inspection will be a Section 5 inspection. In partnership with the Headteacher, the federated Governing Board will continue to ensure that the schools are the best they can be for the pupils they serve.

Following Section 48 inspections in November 2018, the Catholic life in both schools was judged outstanding with a recommendation that the outstanding practice seen should be shared with other schools across the Archdiocese of Westminster. Inspectors judged that classroom religious education in both schools was good with outstanding aspects in evidence, most notably the effectiveness of leadership and management which included the monitoring and challenge provided by experienced and committed governors who always want the best for pupils.

Our Mission and Ethos

We believe that children in our schools deserve the very best educational opportunities and life fulfilling experiences, in a community which has the teaching of Jesus Christ and His Church at the centre.

The aim of Catholic education as set out by the Church under Canon Law 795 states that:

'Education must pay regard to the formation of the whole person, so that all may attain their eternal destiny and at the same time promote the common good of society. Children are therefore to be cared for in such a way that their physical, moral and intellectual talents may develop in a harmonious manner, so that they may attain a greater sense of responsibility and the right use of freedom, and be formed to take an active part in social life'.

In this way, we as Catholic schools, are at the service of the Church's mission in education.

Our Vision

Our vision for both schools is to provide an outstanding standard of education for our pupils. Our vision, encapsulated in our mission statement: 'Be who God meant you to be and you will set the world on fire' is that children will leave us well prepared for life's journey in an ever changing world.

Strategic Priorities

1. To preserve and develop the Catholic ethos of the schools.
2. To ensure that the ambitious, broad and balanced curriculum on offer promotes pupils' understanding of the wider world so that it provides a high quality education which meets the needs of all pupils.
3. To promote pupils' emotional health and well-being in order to reduce barriers to learning so that all pupils make at least expected progress in a safe and supportive learning environment which nurtures and develops the whole person while celebrating equality and diversity.
4. To continuously improve and sustain the quality of teaching and learning so that it is at least good or outstanding in all lessons.
5. To strengthen the engagement between the schools, governors, parents and the community.
6. To develop and embed strong governance, effective leadership and robust financial management.
7. To prioritise excellence in recruitment and monitor staff wellbeing.
8. To improve and enhance the environment in both schools.
9. To continue to develop and monitor the delivery of Relationship and Health Education under the direction of the Archdiocese of Westminster.
10. To consider the amalgamation of both schools and academisation under the direction of the Archdiocese of Westminster.

Critical Incidents

During the recent lockdowns due to the Covid 19 Pandemic, the school deployed an effective on line offer to pupils. In the event of any future incident taking place which may result in the need to close one or both schools, the Governing Board will use this tested strategy and endeavour to do everything possible to maintain systems, in order to provide high quality learning remotely so that all pupils can optimise their learning opportunities and make good progress.

Strategic Direction

With reference to our mission, vision and priorities, the Governing Board through the work of its committees will implement its priorities in conjunction with the priorities of focus in the school development plan. In keeping with its core strategic functions, the Governing Board will continue to preserve the Catholic ethos of the schools ensuring that our Mission Statement is at the heart of all that we do in monitoring the educational performance of all pupils and ensuring that funding is well spent and provides value for money.

The Governing Board Strategic Plan will be reviewed annually.

Reviewed July 2023