



St Cuthbert's RC Primary School

Lovaine Place, North Shields, Tyne & Wear, NE29 0BU

School Unique Reference Number: **108616**

Inspection dates:	05 – 06 March 2015
Lead inspector:	Mrs Lisa Stokoe

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Catholic Life:		Outstanding	1
Collective Worship:		Good	2
Religious Education:		Good	2

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

St Cuthbert's RC Primary School is a good Catholic school because:

- St Cuthbert's is a warm and welcoming school where the shared vision of the leadership is evident. The mission and ethos of Catholic education is at the centre of this faith community.
- The Catholic Life of the school is outstanding. It has been given the highest possible priority and underpins everything the school does. Pupils are actively involved in a range of activities which support their community, contributing significantly to their moral, social and emotional development.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Pupils are not consistently given the opportunity to plan and lead Collective Worship independently and consistently in different contexts.
- The pace and progress in Religious Education is not yet in line with other core subjects within the school.
- Not all teachers plan to differentiate tasks fully across ability groups but especially for the most able.
- The standard and consistency of marking and feedback varies between classes.

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- This is an average sized primary school serving the parish of St Cuthbert and St Joseph.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium is above the national average.
- Most pupils are from White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils with special education needs or with a statement of special education needs is below national average.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- Develop the provision of Collective Worship further by:
 - Allowing pupils to take the initiative in regularly planning and leading the community life of prayer and Collective Worship within a wider variety of contexts.
- Further develop the quality of teaching and learning by:
 - Ensuring teachers consistently plan differentiated tasks that are sufficiently challenging and engaging for all pupils throughout the school but especially for the more able pupils to attain the higher levels.
 - Improving the pace and progress in Religious Education, in lessons and over time, making sure it is in line with other core subjects.
 - Ensuring marking and feedback is consistently effective and constructive throughout the school, allowing pupils to respond.

CATHOLIC LIFE

THE QUALITY OF THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

1

- The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.
- The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school.
- How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school.

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The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.

- The school mission prayer recently created by pupils, parish priest and senior staff is intrinsic to the everyday life of the school. All pupils are aware of and highly value the mission prayer which is very accessible to all having been made extremely visible around the school.
- There is a powerful sense of belonging and involvement from the pupils of St Cuthbert's with pupils taking responsibility for many roles such as: nursery nurturers, reception buddies and school councillors. A particular strength in the school is the leadership of the Mini Vinnies group, one of the first established groups in the Diocese, which now has a membership of thirty plus pupils and leads the school in a variety of ways.
- Almost all pupils have a profound understanding of what it means to have a vocation and they joyfully offer their gifts in service of others. This alertness to the needs of others and sense of social justice is highlighted by their awareness and fundraising for CAFOD World Gifts; their instigation of fundraising for a health centre is also indicative of this. They are joined in this most recent endeavour by the neighbouring Catholic primary school and parish community.
- Pupils work together well demonstrating very positive and enthusiastic attitudes to all aspects of school life particularly evidenced by a 'Diversity Week' recently celebrated by the school.
- Behaviour management is very effective: pupils are extremely polite, demonstrating good emotional awareness through their treatment of others. Behaviour policies are rooted in Gospel values and the teaching of the Catholic church. The importance of this is spoken of with great conviction by all school leaders and echoed by the pupils themselves who explain how 'friendly' and 'safe' their school is and how they are helped to 'make the right choices'.
- Pupils value the Catholic tradition of their school and are proud of it. Pupils throughout the school are regularly involved with both parish and diocesan celebrations and activities.

The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.

- The quality of provision for Catholic Life has the highest priority. The school's mission statement has been adopted as the school prayer and is lived out daily. All staff and governors have high expectations and a shared vision with regard to the Catholic ethos and mission of the school which 'has Jesus at the centre of our community'.

- There is a strong sense of family in all areas of school life evidenced in the quality of relationships that exist between all stakeholders, from dinner supervisors, to leaders and governors. Excellent relationships and the close cooperation of the whole school team are key strengths of the school. As several parents said, 'the school always goes the extra mile to support anyone who needs it'.
- Clear policies and procedures are in place, which provide the highest levels of pastoral support to pupils and their families and there is an explicit commitment to the most vulnerable.
- Pastoral programmes, such as the drop-in sessions with the school nurse, have a significant impact on pupils and their families. Policies for personal; social and health education (PSHE) and sex and relationship education (SRE) are carefully planned in conjunction with the North Tyneside family of schools' cluster and are taught well across the age ranges.
- St Cuthbert's has a vibrant and engaging learning environment apparent both in the classrooms and around the school itself, where focal points and displays linked to the Church's seasons provide opportunities to pray, reflect and celebrate its Catholic character.

How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.

- The headteacher and Religious Education coordinator provide a clear direction and vision for the Catholic Life of the school. They are conscientious in their task, providing a strong sense of spiritual purpose. They have a very clear understanding of the vision of Catholic education and the role of the Catholic school in the mission of the Church.
- School leaders are outstanding role models in the continued development of the Catholic life of the school. The school's self-evaluation is rigorous and gathered from a range of sources. It identifies correctly the areas for further development and has clear links to the school improvement plan.
- Governors know the school well, they are knowledgeable, well informed and provide support as well as effective challenge. This leads to well targeted school improvements to continually enhance the Catholic Life of the school. As a result, staff and pupils' understanding of the mission of the school is outstanding.
- The outstanding leadership of the Catholic Life at St Cuthbert's ensures that all pupils are extremely well cared for and nurtured in a caring, safe and supportive environment.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

2

- How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship.
- The quality of provision for Collective Worship.
- How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship.

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How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship is good.

- Pupils' response to and participation in Collective Worship across the whole school is good. Pupils are at ease when praying with their school and parish community and their response in both large and small gatherings is both reverent and respectful. Pupils speak of 'feeling safe and calm and knowing Jesus is with me' after attending Collective Worship.
- Pupils prepare worship with increasing confidence and independence as they move through the school, adopting a variety of approaches including scripture, liturgical dance, religious art and are often supported by their fantastic school choir. As a result, pupils are fully engaged by the worship planned by their peers as shown in the whole school 'Question of the Week' liturgy led by year six.
- Planning and leading worship in a class context is not yet fully established.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the Church's year and liturgical seasons and feasts appropriate to their age and ability.
- Pupils are at ease in sharing prayer experiences with those of different faiths and can clearly articulate the difference that a community of prayer has made to their own sense of identity, security and growth – 'when we pray here I feel emotional and think about others' and 'it makes me happy and calm'.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship is good.

- Developing the spirituality of all is seen as central in supporting the Catholic ethos of the school and this ensures the needs of pupils are well met. Prayer is a key part of the school's life. Staff pray together regularly and model prayer and Collective Worship for pupils throughout the day. These experiences have a positive impact on the school's sense of community.
- The Collective Worship policy provides a clear structure for staff.
- Acts of worship are well resourced and age appropriate, centred on themes and messages which are easily accessible to pupils. A well planned programme of liturgies, celebration assemblies, Masses and other liturgical celebrations provide many opportunities for participation from the wider school and parish community. Parents and carers appreciate these occasions and comment on the warm welcome they always receive and the sense of 'being a big family'.
- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to plan and lead Collective Worship independently in class based settings.
- Families are encouraged to become involved in their children's spiritual growth through the

'Travelling Crib' and 'Lenten bags' which are sent home at significant points in the Church's year.

- Focal points are evident both in classrooms and around the school, providing further encouragement for independent reflection and prayer. As one pupil said, 'it helps us keep Jesus at the centre of our thoughts'.

How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship is outstanding.

- Leaders and managers have expert knowledge of how to plan and deliver quality Collective Worship which is modelled very effectively with pupils. They have a very clear understanding of the Church's liturgical year and traditions which are shared with both pupils and staff enthusiastically. They are exemplary role models and along with the very capable Religious Education coordinator are a source of knowledge and inspiration to others.
- Leaders, including the Religious Education link governor, see their own spiritual development as a high priority and regularly attend retreats together. This has led to the planning of a whole staff retreat to Holy Island in the summer term this year.
- Leaders recognise the importance of nurturing staff as well as pupils; consequently all feel valued.
- Collective Worship is regularly reviewed as part of the self-evaluation process. Leaders have sought the views of staff, pupils and parents. All responses are highly valued and used to inform the continual improvement in driving the school to work towards outstanding Collective Worship opportunities for all.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

2

- How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.
- The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education.
- How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.

2

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2

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

- Pupils enjoy Religious Education and take pride in their work as evidenced by their books. Pupils are able to say why they enjoy Religious Education and what they learn from it: 'We learn how Jesus treated people and that helps me to know what I should do.'
- Good behaviour has a positive impact on learning across the school. Pupils are thoughtful and articulate in their responses. The majority of pupils apply themselves to the tasks set and work at a good pace. They are able to work independently and collaboratively showing a good level of concentration.
- From starting points which are broadly below average, evidenced by the school's baseline assessment, a large majority of pupils are making progress in Religious Education within lessons and over time.
- Current tracking for 2015 shows that the standards of attainment of the large majority of pupils in each year group are now at least in line with diocesan averages.

The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education is good.

- The teaching in the school is good overall with some outstanding elements. As a result most pupils and groups of pupils make good progress over time however the more able pupils require more challenge.
- The vast majority of teachers have high expectations for their pupils and all have enthusiasm and passion for the subject using the 'Come and See' materials with confidence to plan and deliver Religious Education.
- Within lessons, time is usually used effectively to maximise learning opportunities. In a small minority of lessons a lack of pace has an adverse effect upon pupils' progress. In some lessons, activities are insufficiently differentiated to meet the needs of learners or to enable them to work independently.
- Marking and feedback is used in most classes to provide pupils with clear steps for improvement, however this is inconsistent throughout the school.
- Support staff are used effectively to reinforce learning.

How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education is good.

- St Cuthbert's is well led at every level. Governors, the headteacher and the Religious Education coordinator have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and areas for development. There are detailed action plans in place which ensure that they are given high priority in the future development of the school.
- The extremely conscientious Religious Education coordinator is committed to ensuring that pupils achieve the very best they can. She has a very clear view of strategies to support improvements in teaching and keeps all staff well informed as to current developments in Religious Education.
- The Religious Education curriculum is rich and varied providing a range of interesting activities enabling all pupils to make good progress. The Religious Education curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference.
- The governing body is closely involved in the daily work of the school. They make a significant contribution; giving their time generously, providing both support and challenge where necessary. They are extremely supportive and knowledgeable and discharge their statutory duties effectively. The link governor for Religious Education works closely with the coordinator to monitor provision and assessment and his skilled contributions are appreciated by all staff.
- St Cuthbert's works closely with other primary schools to moderate standards and share good practice. Good links are forged with other agencies and the wider community, allowing pupils to explore and extend their understanding of the diversity of their own school and surrounding area, this is evidenced by the annual 'Diversity Week' which allows pupils to explore a variety of themes such as other faiths, cultures and disabilities.
- Diocesan guidelines for Sacramental preparation are followed enthusiastically by all. The parish priest along with other parish religious members work very effectively with pupils, parents and staff. The programme is being moved to year four this year to allow the pupils greater understanding of the commitment and importance of the Sacraments received.
- Leaders and managers at all levels are committed to striving for excellence. This ensures that all pupils are exceptionally well cared for, known and respected as individuals. The drive for every pupil to be the best that they can be is tangible throughout the school.

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

HOW EFFECTIVE THE SCHOOL IS IN PROVIDING CATHOLIC EDUCATION:**2****CATHOLIC LIFE:****1**

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.

1

The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school.

1

How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school.

1

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP:**2**

How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship.

2

The quality of provision for Collective Worship.

2

How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship.

1

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:**2**

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.

2

The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education.

2

How well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.

2

SCHOOL DETAILS

School name	St Cuthbert's RC Primary School
Unique reference number	108616
Local authority	North Tyneside
This Inspection Report is produced for the Rt. Reverend Séamus Cunningham the Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle Diocese, (c.f. Code Canon Law, 804, 806), and for the Governing Body of the school (Education Act 2005, Section 48). The inspection schedule follows criteria set by the National Board of Advisers and Inspectors.	
Chair of governors	Mrs Sarah Graham
Head teacher	Mr Shaun Dillon
Date of previous school inspection	March 2010
Telephone number	0191 2005620
Email address	stcuthberts.primary@northtyneside.gov.uk