



St Cuthbert's RC Primary School

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

School Unique Reference Number: **108616**

Inspection dates:	12 – 13 March 2020
Lead inspector:	Barbara Reilly-O'Donnell

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

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

St Cuthbert's RC Primary School is an outstanding Catholic school because:

- It is a happy, vibrant and welcoming faith community. Pupils, staff, governors and parents are inspired by the passion of the leadership team to place Jesus at the heart of the school.
- The Catholic Life of the school is outstanding. The mission statement is central to everything that the school does. All members of the school community support one another to grow in faith and fulfil the mission of the Church.
- The quality of Religious Education is outstanding. The excellent subject knowledge of staff and their effective classroom practice ensures that pupils engage well in lessons, enjoy their learning and make outstanding progress over time. Behaviour is exemplary because pupils know they are valued.
- The quality of Collective Worship is outstanding. Prayer is central to the life of the school and pupils, supported by skilled staff, can plan and lead high quality acts of worship. The spiritual environment of the school is rich.

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- St Cuthbert's RC Primary School is an average sized primary school, serving the Parish of St Cuthbert and St Joseph, North Shields.
- A minority of pupils are baptised Catholics.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is higher than national figures.
- The proportion of boys in the school is significantly higher than the national figure.
- Almost all pupils are of white, British heritage.
- A very small minority of pupils speak a home language other than English.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below the national average.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- Further develop the Catholic life of the school by:
 - continuing to respond to the rapidly changing demography of the school community in order to maintain an inclusive and just environment where all pupils are valued.
- Maintain outstanding teaching and learning by:
 - further embedding successful professional development opportunities so that new staff ensure consistently high standards are maintained.

CATHOLIC LIFE

THE QUALITY OF 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.
- 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 statement is prayed daily and underpins the work of the school. Pupils have extensive opportunities to contribute to the Catholic Life of St Cuthbert's and benefit greatly from it. As a result, pupils recognise that 'Jesus is at the centre of the community'.
- Pupils are confident in their own spiritual growth. One pupil stated, 'We are like a family. We express our love for Jesus in different ways.' Pupils respect and celebrate the strengths of one another, nominating their peers for awards. One pupil commented, 'We follow the same path as Jesus. We do things for Him through each other.'
- As a result of the outstanding pastoral support they receive children are confident and happy. Pupil wellbeing is given the highest priority.
- Pupils are highly respectful of Catholic traditions and willingly participate in school and parish events. A grandparent reported, 'The links to the parish are very strong. The children are a powerful presence when they go to Mass. They are very spiritual.'
- Pupils recognise their responsibility to act justly in support of the vulnerable. They are enthusiastic about their charitable acts as they have a strong sense of vocation. They proudly speak of their contributions to charities including Nite Bite, Shoe Share and Children in Crossfire.
- Pope Francis's encyclical, Laudato Si, is a feature of the work of the school and the need to recycle and upcycle was evidenced across the school. Even the youngest learners shared their understanding of their responsibility to take care of plants and animals.
- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding as a result of the support they receive from adults in school. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school, feel safe and are valued; they are happy, confident and work hard.

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

- The school mission statement permeates all aspects of school life. Pupils are confident when they say that they, 'learn, achieve, enjoy and succeed with Him in our thoughts, in our words and in our hearts.'
- Displays across the school are of a high quality and the Catholic ethos of the school is evident.

- Staff value the support they receive from the senior leadership team and from one another and welcome the opportunity to pray together as a staff. New members of staff spoke graciously about the encouragement and advice they were given from the wider staff team.
- The school curriculum provides significant opportunities for the moral development of pupils. The UNICEF Rights of a Child are frequently referred to and key campaigners are studied. Consequently, pupils are able to articulate a sense of justice and fairness which they can apply in their own lives.
- Positive relationships are a strong feature of the school and much time is invested in developing partnerships. Consequently, there is a strong sense of community. Parents report that they are warmly welcomed, and governors are eager to 'respond to our community identity' by promoting the Catholic ethos.
- Because policies and structures are embedded, a meaningful pastoral programme which reflects Catholic teachings is a feature of school life. The pastoral care of staff is also given a high priority by senior leaders.
- Pupils are given a wide range of opportunities which promote spiritual development. They have respect for the spiritual and faith development of others.
- Clergy are regular visitors to school and the partnerships between school, parish and home are cherished.

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

- School leaders inspire the whole school community to live out the Catholic mission of the school and as a result, all members of the school community contribute fully. They prioritise an understanding of the Catholic mission, are ambitious for the Catholic Life of the school and eagerly support the development of staff.
- Leaders are an active presence in the school and know pupils well. They discern the experiences of pupils through 'typicality' walks and use the outcomes of discussions to shape school developments.
- Governors contribute to the evaluation of the Catholic Life of the school and as a result, opportunities for pupils to contribute to the mission of the Church through charitable acts are given the highest priority. One governor stated that the Catholic Life of the school was given precedence, 'to ensure human flourishing.'
- Staff and pupils work with senior leaders to evaluate the Catholic Life of the school and as a result, there is a deep understanding of the Catholic mission and all are fully committed to shaping and supporting it.
- Pastoral care is prioritised, and pupils know that they are treated with justice and kindness. Leaders are proactive in responding to the rapidly changing needs of the community.
- Senior leaders successfully engage with parents and carers and as a result, they are extremely supportive of the Catholic Life of the school. They value greatly the inclusivity of the school. One parent commented, 'I feel very strongly about this school. The Catholic ethos is second to none. My children are loved and looked after with kindness. I know that the Catholic nature of the school runs through everything.'
- The school is fully committed to Diocesan policies and initiatives and promotes the Bishop's vision in all aspects of school life.

Religious Education

THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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- 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.

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

- Pupils enjoy Religious Education lessons and engage fully. They concentrate extremely well. Behaviour for learning is excellent because pupils are interested and motivated to learn. Pupils respond exceptionally well to tasks which are carefully selected to enthuse. A wide range of resources are used to enhance lessons.
- Teachers have high expectations of and high aspirations for their pupils.
- Pupils consistently have pride in their work, evidenced in well-presented books.
- Overall, pupils progress well from their starting points, with many pupils making outstanding progress over time. Where school leaders have identified that some pupils are making less rapid progress than others, they have implemented measures to address this. Evidence presented by the school and inspection findings indicate that outcomes for these pupils are improving.
- Pupils can use their knowledge and skills to reflect spiritually and to think theologically and ethically, relative to their age and level of their development. This is because teachers provide opportunities to develop religious literacy and they challenge pupils to make links to their own lives.
- Pupils are given effective feedback so they have a clear understanding of what they need to do to be successful and how to improve. Therefore, learning is enhanced.
- Pupils say that their lessons are fun and interesting. They enjoy opportunities to learn about World Faiths and to celebrate diversity. They are particularly enthused about recent curriculum developments in which a text is used by all classes to reflect on the links between Catholic teaching and life experiences.

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

- Teaching is never less than consistently good with some examples of outstanding teaching.
- Children respond extremely positively to the high expectations of teachers and engage well. In the best lessons, pupils are set challenging tasks that provide opportunities to think deeply.
- Teachers skilfully adapt their teaching in reaction to the responses of pupils and verbal and written feedback is effective in promoting progress. Pupils are inspired to learn and are eager to progress well because their success is celebrated.

- Teachers regularly assess the progress of pupils. As a consequence, tasks are well planned to match the learning objective, to challenge and to enable pupils to work with independence. Little time is wasted.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and competently implement a range of teaching styles.
- Individual and collaborative tasks are a feature of lessons and as a result pupils are highly motivated and remain engaged.
- Relationships between pupils and staff are a strength of the school and all staff intervene purposefully to improve learning. Support staff make very positive contributions to pupil progress.
- Teachers use Diocesan planning templates and an extensive range of resources to plan creative lessons. Children are encouraged to foster a sense of curiosity and wonder, and they respond enthusiastically.

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

- Leaders share a highly ambitious vision for Religious Education and have extremely high expectations of staff as well as pupils. They ensure that the Religious Education curriculum fully meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference and that the required time is identified for Religious Education.
- Because leaders have analysed performance and challenged inconsistencies in teaching and learning, outcomes have improved for identified groups of pupils. At a time of significant change in staffing in the school this model of analysis should be used to ensure that standards of teaching and learning are maintained.
- Senior leaders regularly visit lessons and consequently they ensure that teaching is at least good and that outcomes for pupils are high. Their team teaching approach promotes professional development and staff report that this is effective in improving teaching.
- In response to concerns previously raised by pupils regarding enjoyment and attainment in Religious Education, senior leaders prioritised a new school approach using novels to promote engagement. As a consequence, Religious Education lessons are varied and rich. Imaginative teaching across the school fosters curiosity and enthusiasm.
- Leaders, including governors, evaluate Religious Education using evidence gathered during work scrutinies, 'typicality' walks and discussions with pupils. They sensitively take strategic action to improve outcomes in Religious Education.
- Summative assessments are conducted termly, and progress is tracked by leaders to ensure that groups of learners make consistent progress over time. Leaders ensure that actions are taken to address differing rates of progress between groups of learners.
- Sacramental preparation is delivered well and supported effectively by parish catechists, in accordance with Diocesan policy.
- Governors are highly supportive but also recognise the need to challenge. They regularly visit the school in order to discharge their statutory and canonical duties effectively. They identify themselves as guardians of the parish school and recognise their duty to challenge in order to sustain standards over time.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

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- 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 outstanding.

- Prayer is central to school life at St Cuthbert's and pupils enthusiastically participate in collective acts of worship which are relevant and reflective. Pupils sing well and make prayerful responses during acts of worship.
- Pupils demonstrate high levels of respect for religious symbols and artefacts and reverence pervades when praying. They are aware that religious beliefs are important, and they are courteous towards their own faith and to the faith of others.
- Adults model the leadership of Collective Worship exceptionally well and this is evident when pupils lead their own acts of worship.
- Pupils confidently lead Collective Worship with high levels of enthusiasm. They plan acts of worship with degrees of independence appropriate to their age and stage of development. They are competent in planning and leading the four parts of liturgy, using a variety of traditional and contemporary approaches. As a result, pupils participate prayerfully and enthusiastically in acts of Collective Worship.
- Pupils value the opportunity to lead Collective Worship and they speak with understanding about the variety of prayer and liturgies they experience. Opportunities to plan Collective Worship are well embedded across the school and resources and artefacts to support this are readily available.
- Pupils demonstrate an understanding of the liturgical year in their planning of worship.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship is outstanding.

- Collective Worship is a valuable, daily experience for all pupils and staff at St Cuthbert's. The contribution of all is celebrated regardless of the faith heritage or prayer experience of individuals.
- Collective Worship has a clear structure and purpose and is modelled exceptionally well by the headteacher. It is given high priority in the Catholic Life of the school
- The liturgical year, seasons, feasts and the Catholic mission of the school are reflected in the themes of Collective Worship.

- Resources are carefully selected and are made readily accessible to pupils when planning Collective Worship and this reflects the priority that is placed on worship across the school.
- Because Collective Worship is given high priority and is resourced well, pupils greatly value their worship experiences. Staff skilfully prepare pupils to plan and lead Collective Worship and as a result their experiences of liturgy are of high quality.
- A rich variety of forms of worship is evident and pupils proudly prepare rich experiences for the wider community. For example, Mini-Vinnies prepared Lenten prayer stations which were well supported by the school families.
- At times of challenge pupils instigate the planning of Collective Worship as a direct response to concerns as they perceive them. The spoke enthusiastically about the freedom to just pray together when we think we need to.

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

- The headteacher expertly plans and leads high quality Collective Worship based on themes linked to the liturgical year or to Gospel values. This outstanding practice is a model for staff and pupils to follow.
- The school community engages exceptionally well in the prayer life of the school as a consequence of the range of prayer styles adopted by leaders to promote inclusion; both contemporary and traditional prayers are valued. Pupils are familiar with traditional rites and symbols and opportunities for reflection impact positively on the spiritual formation of all.
- As a result of self-evaluation, leaders have given priority to the professional development of staff so that they are well positioned to prepare pupils to plan and lead Collective Worship. Pupils are now consistently equipped with the knowledge and skills to develop their own acts of worship with confidence, competency and independence.
- Leaders seek opportunities for pupils to worship with the wider parish and with local Anglican and Catholic schools. Pupils treasured these experiences, saying that they were some of their fondest memories from school.
- The clergy of the parish are highly valued, and they support school leaders to promote a partnership of school and parish Collective Worship.

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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

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

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

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RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:**1**

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

1

The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education.

1

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

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COLLECTIVE WORSHIP:**1**

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

1

The quality of provision for Collective Worship.

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

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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 Robert Byrne CO the Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle under canon 806 of Canon Law. For voluntary aided schools it also fulfils the responsibility the governing body has to inspect the school under s48 of the Education Act 2005.	
Chair of governors	Sarah Graham
Headteacher	Shaun Dillon
Date of previous school inspection	March 2015
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