

DIOCESE OF **Hexham & Newcastle**  
— DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION —



## **S48 Report**

# **St Catherine's RC Primary School Sandyford**

Greystoke Gardens  
Sandyford  
Newcastle upon Tyne  
NE2 1PS

URN: 108507

**DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION  
REPORT (Section 48)**

**on**

**THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE  
SCHOOL AND RELIGIOUS  
EDUCATION**

**School:** St Catherine's RC Primary School

**Address:** Greystoke Gardens  
Sandyford  
Newcastle upon Tyne  
NE2 1PS

**Telephone Number:** 0191 232 6803

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**School URN:** 108507

**Headteacher:** Mr Michael Ewing

**Chair of Governors:** Fr Colin Carr

**Lead Inspector:** Miss Mary Tate

**Date of Inspection** 4 - 5 June 2013

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is an average sized primary school. Half the pupils are of White British heritage. The other half is made up of pupils from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds, most of whom speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children looked after by the local authority and those from military service families) is well above average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action is below average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average. There is a breakfast club as well as many lunch-time and after-school clubs which are managed by the headteacher and run voluntarily by staff.

### Pupil Catchment

Number of pupils on roll:	231
Planned Admission Number of Pupils:	30
Percentage of pupils baptised RC:	41.5%
Percentage of pupils from other Christian denominations:	21.5%
Percentage of pupils from other World Faiths:	18%
Percentage of pupils with no religious affiliation:	19%
Percentage of pupils from ethnic groups:	47%
Percentage of pupils with special needs:	17.5%

### Staffing

Full time teachers:	8
Part time teachers:	2
Percentage of Catholic teachers:	80%
Percentage of teachers with CCRS:	50%

### Percentage of learning time given to Religious Education

FS	10%
Year 1	10%
Year 2	10%
Year 3	10%
Year 4	10%
Year 5	10%
Year 6	10%

### Parishes served by the school

St Dominic's, Shieldfield  
The Holy Name, Jesmond

# INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

**OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS**

**2**

**CATHOLIC LIFE**

**1**

**COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

**1**

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

**3**

## KEY FINDINGS

- St Catherine's is a good school with outstanding features. The school is a very inclusive and welcoming community with prayer and worship at its heart. The headteacher is supported by a dedicated staff and the committed governing body ensure that the pupils reach their full potential. The school is held in high regard by the pupils and parents. Areas from the last inspection have been addressed and the school continues to ensure that the Catholic Life of the school is given high priority. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is outstanding.
- The Catholic Life of the school is outstanding. The well-being and personal development of each pupil is at the heart of the school's vision and is reflected in the strong sense of pastoral care. Excellent relationships at all levels are a strength of the school. Pupils are keen to participate in the varied opportunities provided to contribute to the Catholic Life of the school and benefit greatly from them. Effective monitoring and evaluation systems are in place and result in continuing improvement to outcomes for pupils.
- The quality of Collective Worship in the school is outstanding. Pupils are at ease in the planning and leadership of worship, staff provide strong guidance and the spiritual and liturgical formation of staff is given a high priority by leaders.
- The quality of Religious Education requires improvement as school performance at key stage two (KS2) has not met Diocesan averages for two successive years.

To improve further the school needs to:

- **Improve children's attainment and progress by summer 2014 by:**
  - Ensuring the number of children achieving level four at KS2 is in line with the average of the Diocese.
  - Further embedding the monitoring procedures so that children's progress is tracked closely and subsequent findings feed into classroom practice.
  
- **Increase teacher confidence with levelling work by:**
  - Developing a sample/exemplar of moderated work within school.
  - Sharing expertise among staff in annotating levelled work and through discussion, identifying next steps for improvement.
  
- **Further embed feedback for learning so that children are guided to make improvements to their work by:**
  - Sharing good practice and ensuring consistency.
  - Giving children time to respond to feedback points effectively.

# 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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Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the Catholic Life of the school and benefit greatly from it. They take advantage of the many opportunities offered to them and can articulate how the school is helping them to become better people. They talk with confidence about the various charity work they support such as Fairtrade and Harvest Baskets for the community. They are well aware of the needs of others and seek to support others through awareness raising assemblies led by year six. Children decide how to support charities each year and what events will be held. Older children take part in various Diocesan events such as the annual Justice and Peace conference. Follow up work this year involved children researching and supporting the campaign for peace led by the Mizen family for an end to knife crime. Children say they feel valued and are able to confidently express their own views and feelings. They are proud of their varied religious backgrounds and beliefs; they are reflective, can talk about their own faith and are respectful of those with beliefs different to their own. An effective programme for Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) allows pupils to develop and foster excellent understanding, appropriate to their age and understanding. Pupil behaviour is exemplary at St Catherine's and this is underpinned by outstanding moral, social and cultural development.

The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding and has the highest possible priority with the school's mission statement permeating throughout the school. One parent said they chose St Catherine's for their mission statement which gives children the opportunity to take part in areas which they enjoy as well as have a talent for. There is a tangible sense of family and community at all levels as evidenced by the excellent relationships that exist among and between staff, pupils, governors and parents. All staff and governors have high expectations and a shared vision with regard to the Catholic mission and ethos of the school; together with pupils they live out the vision statement, 'Let your light shine'. The school is a vibrant, cheerful and prayerful community and its Catholic character is effectively reflected through displays and artefacts in the learning environment and the creation of many prayer areas around the school. Clear policies and procedures are in place, which provide a high level of pastoral support to all pupils across the school. Pupils appreciate the time teachers take to discuss issues with children and say they feel safe and reassured by regular 'check ins' to see how they are feeling. This restorative approach to conflict resolution contributes to the high standards of behaviour at St Catherine's.

The leadership and management of the Catholic Life of the school are outstanding. The school's mission statement is a living document which has a very high profile throughout the school and underpins all policies. Pastoral care provision is outstanding and behaviour around the school is excellent. All leaders and managers, including the governing body, have high expectations for the promotion and continuing development of the Catholic Life of the school. Effective systems are in place to monitor and evaluate the Catholic Life of the school which are clearly linked to school improvement and subsequently outcomes for pupils. The school's self-evaluation has a clear focus on the Catholic Life of the school leading to well-targeted improvements. Leaders provide a clear direction for the Catholic Life of the school which is a priority, along with the spiritual and moral development of pupils. Leaders promote many opportunities for children to enrich the curriculum at St Catherine's. The school has very successful strategies for engaging with parents and carers; they have a clear understanding of the school's mission and are highly supportive of it. Governors make a significant contribution to the Catholic Life of the school, they are involved in self-evaluation and are prepared to challenge where necessary as well as support.

# 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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St Catherine's is a prayerful community where pupils' response to and participation in Collective Worship is outstanding. Pupils have a good grasp of what worship is about and are at ease when praying with their school community in large and small gatherings. Pupils take part in, lead and prepare prayer and liturgy with enthusiasm and increasing ease and confidence. They know what constitutes the various elements of worship and are skilled in using a variety of ways of praying. Class liturgy files are used to record and evaluate pupil led worship well. Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of the statements to live by and are able to reflect with reverence and a good understanding upon these through the school 'Be Spirited' book. A prayer area in each classroom impacts positively on the quality of prayer and provides pupils with stimuli for thought and reflection. It is here that the weekly 'statement to live by' is displayed as a reminder and focus for children. Pupils participate in the parish sacramental preparation programme and this has a positive impact upon their on-going spiritual development. Collective Worship contributes extremely positively to the spiritual, moral and personal development of pupils.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is outstanding and ensures that the spiritual needs of the pupils are well met. There is a clear policy for Collective Worship and the school uses a good range of strategies to ensure that Collective Worship is inclusive. The prayer life of the school is an important and central aspect of community life for staff and pupils. Staff are skilled in planning worship and pupils lead with increasing confidence, skill and enthusiasm. They have the confidence to plan, prepare and lead good quality Collective Worship and evaluate liturgies in their individual class liturgy files. Acts of worship are appropriate to the age and needs of the pupils with themes based upon the scheme of work topic and the liturgical calendar and are responsive to the diversity of the pupils. Sacramental preparation is well embedded and staff work effectively with the parish catechist and parish priest to deliver the programme.

The way leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship is outstanding. Leaders have a clear vision for its development, which is shared with and understood by the whole school community. They provide opportunities for pupils to reflect upon the Church's liturgical year, seasons, rites and symbols through the provision of quality worship experiences. Leaders model high quality worship in school. They provide opportunities for staff and governors to worship together and ensure staff training in liturgical formation and spiritual development is a priority. Leaders ensure that the pupils have the best possible sacramental preparation in accordance with diocesan policy. The monitoring and evaluation of Collective Worship is a priority in the regular review of school performance and is informed by feedback from pupils, staff, parents and governors.

# RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

## THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

3
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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 monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education

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How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education requires improvement because the school has not met Diocesan averages for KS2 attainment in 2012 and predict performance will be below again in 2013. Leaders have worked hard to address this dip in performance and have implemented new tracking and monitoring procedures. Pupils enjoy their Religious Education lessons, have good attitudes and want to do their best. They are able to talk about their work in Religious Education and say they enjoy the challenge of hard work. There are no notable differences between groups of learners and arrangements are in place to ensure that whenever necessary, pupils are supported in order to make progress according to their needs and capabilities. While pupils are very interested and enthusiastic about their learning, the presentation of their work in their books does not always accurately reflect the quality of the work they do.

The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education is good. This was evident both in the lessons observed during inspection and the school's own records of lesson observations. Relationships between children and teachers are warm and constructive and contribute successfully to their obvious keenness to learn. Teachers have a sound subject knowledge, which they use in planning and teaching Religious Education, providing learning activities that are well matched to the needs of pupils. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and as a result of sharing learning objectives and success criteria, pupils are beginning to understand how well they are doing, but are not always sufficiently guided to know what is expected of them in order to improve their work. Assessment and tracking procedures are evident but as yet are not fully embedded into the teaching practice across the school. Assessments are regular and systematic although some examples of levelling seen during the inspection were not always accurate. Marking and feedback is good, however pupils are not always consistently given time to respond to questions in order to further enhance their learning.

The leadership and management of Religious Education is good. Leaders have accurately identified the school's main strengths and put in place action to bring about improvement. The Religious Education curriculum is thoughtfully designed to meet pupils' needs and fulfils the requirements of the Bishops' Conference well. A range of enrichment activities are offered to promote pupils' learning. Teaching across the school contributes effectively to the pupils' spiritual and moral development. The school improvement plan provides direction for the work and future developments in Religious Education. Both the headteacher and the subject leader give good leadership. Pupil tracking systems are developing and indicate children's attainment and progress, though in-school moderation and portfolios of evidence are in their earliest stages of development. The governing body fulfils its role well with regard to Religious Education and offers both challenge and support. They ensure that all statutory and canonical responsibilities are very well met.

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**

**1**

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

1

**The quality of provision for Collective Worship**

1

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

1

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

**3**

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

3

**The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education**

2

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

2

	Pupil Outcomes	Provision	Leadership and Management	
Catholic Life	1	1	1	1
Collective Worship	1	1	1	1
Religious Education	3	2	2	3
	2	1	1	2