

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



**S48 Report**  
**St Bede's RC Primary School**  
**South Shields**

Claypath Lane  
South Shields  
Tyne and Wear  
NE33 4PG

URN: 108715

**DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION  
REPORT (Section 48)**

**on**

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

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

**Address:** Claypath Lane  
South Shields  
Tyne and Wear  
NE33 4PG

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**School URN:** 108715

**Headteacher:** Mrs Nicole Park

**Chair of Governors:** Mrs Margaret Meling

**Lead Inspector:** Mrs Angela Boyle

**Date of Inspection:** 18 -19 June 2013

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Bede's is an average sized primary school with a part time nursery serving the parish of St Bede's in South Shields. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium is average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. Most pupils are from white British backgrounds. The number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and the number of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average. The school extends its services by providing a breakfast club.

### Pupil Catchment

Number of pupils on roll:	232 inc nursery
Planned Admission Number of Pupils:	30
Percentage of pupils baptised RC:	66%
Percentage of pupils from other Christian denominations:	17%
Percentage of pupils from other World Faiths:	10%
Percentage of pupils with no religious affiliation:	7%
Percentage of pupils from ethnic groups:	17%
Percentage of pupils with special needs:	9%

### Staffing

Full time teachers:	8
Part time teachers:	1
Percentage of Catholic teachers:	90%
Percentage of teachers with CCRS:	75%

### 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 Bede's, South Shields

# INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

## OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

1

## CATHOLIC LIFE

1

## COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

1

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

2

## KEY FINDINGS

- St Bede's is an outstanding Catholic school. The school is a welcoming, friendly community with a strong family ethos. Inclusion of all has a high priority. Relationships are excellent and the hard working, dedicated staff work very well as a team supporting each other in many aspects of school life and beyond. Pupils are confident, articulate, happy and responsive. The Catholic Life of the school is outstanding; Collective Worship is outstanding and the overall provision for Religious Education is good. The spiritual, moral and cultural development of pupils is exceptional.
- 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 pastoral care. Excellent relationships at all levels are a strength of the school. Pupils are very keen to participate in the varied opportunities provided to contribute to the Catholic Life of the school and benefit greatly from them.
- The quality of Collective Worship is outstanding and pupils' response to and participation in Collective Worship is outstanding. Collective Worship is central to the life of the school and is given the highest priority. Acts of worship are well planned and reflective with active participation by pupils. Leaders and managers' promotion, monitoring and evaluation of the provision of Collective Worship are outstanding.
- The quality of Religious Education is good overall. Pupils make very good progress across the school. Teaching is consistently good or better, lessons are lively and creative. It is not yet outstanding because work in some classes is differentiated mainly by outcome and activities are not always sufficiently challenging to enable the more able pupils to attain the higher levels. There are also inconsistencies across the school in the quality of marking and feedback.

## WHAT THE SCHOOL NEEDS TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER

To improve further the school needs to:

- Ensure high quality assessment, marking and feedback is adhered to in all year groups by:
  - Reviewing practice
  - Ensuring that marking consistently provides information to pupils about how to improve their work
  - Ensure pupils are consistently given time to respond to feedback.
- Ensure planning consistently incorporates differentiated tasks to challenge all ability groups, especially the more able, to enable them to achieve higher levels of attainment.

# 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 have an excellent grasp of what it means to belong to a Catholic school community and take full advantage of the many opportunities offered to them. They have a secure understanding of the school's mission and are actively involved in shaping activities with a religious character in the school and the wider community. Pupils are proud of their school, their religious backgrounds and beliefs. They respect the Catholic tradition of the school and its links with the parish community and are active participants in many parish celebrations and activities. They are able to discuss their own faith and spirituality with confidence and demonstrate religious tolerance and a deep respect for beliefs different to their own, especially those of pupils within their own school community. Pupils are able to clearly articulate gospel values, explaining that 'we follow in the footsteps of Jesus, we are all disciples, we need to act like them and spread the news of God'. They are conscious of the needs of people beyond the school and have a well developed sense of justice and concern for others. Pupil behaviour is exemplary at St. Bede's; 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 priority. All staff are involved in living out the school's mission statement and are fully committed to implementing it across the whole curriculum. The high quality of the headteacher's leadership together with support from the deputy headteacher and governors are instrumental in the continuing development of the Catholic Life of the school. There is a very strong team spirit amongst all staff, teaching, support and office staff, they act as excellent role models for pupils. The school's Catholic character is effectively reflected through displays and artefacts in the learning environment and the creation of sacred spaces around the school. High quality whole staff training and induction supports staff commitment to Catholic principles and values which underpin behaviour and relationship policies rooted in Gospel values. The physical resources of the school are used very well to help achieve priorities set.

The leadership and management of the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding. The headteacher communicates a very strong sense of purpose and deep commitment to the Catholic mission of the school which underpins all aspects of school life. Personal development of pupils and high quality care are paramount, all pupils are well cared for and nurtured in a happy, caring and supportive environment. Accurate and regular self-evaluation is a reflection of comprehensive monitoring, analysis and self-challenge. There is a clear focus on the Catholic Life of the school leading to well targeted improvement. The school has very successful strategies for engaging with parents and carers, they have a thorough understanding of the school's mission and are highly supportive of it and were consulted in the recent review of the school mission statement. The pastoral meeting held with the parish priest supports the review of provision and outcomes. School recognises the need to further formalise systems for the monitoring of the Catholic Life of the school. Governors make a significant contribution to the Catholic Life of the school, committed to the school's mission, 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. 

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- 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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St Bede's is a prayerful community where pupils' response to and participation in Collective Worship is outstanding. Pupils take part in, lead and prepare Collective Worship with enthusiasm and confidence. They know what constitutes the various elements of worship and are becoming increasingly skilled in using a variety of ways of praying, and in the use of scripture, religious artefacts and hymns. Pupils understand that there are different forms of liturgies and have a very good understanding of the Church's seasons and liturgical year. Many older pupils are acquiring a range of skills, which enable them to lead liturgy and prayer independently. In both small and large gatherings, pupils are respectful, reverent, reflective and prayerful. They know many traditional prayers appropriate to their age. Pupils participate actively and with great enthusiasm in the school's sacramental preparation programme and this contributes very positively to their ongoing spiritual and moral development.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is outstanding and ensures that the spiritual needs of the pupils are well met. Worship is central to the life of the school and is regularly shared with parents. Through a well planned programme of Masses, liturgies, reflections and assemblies, pupils are offered a range of opportunities to engage in good quality worship. Parents, parishioners and governors appreciate the opportunity to attend liturgies and acts of worship and comment with enthusiasm. Skilled staff enable pupils to confidently plan, prepare and lead Collective Worship. 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; in reception class a liturgy using friendship chains was well planned and delivered high quality worship engaging all pupils spiritually and prayerfully. Staff plan carefully for the liturgical formation of their pupils, they ensure there is progression of skills from foundation stage through to year six. Acts of worship are responsive to the religious diversity of the pupils. Sacramental Preparation is well embedded and staff work effectively with the parish to deliver the school's half of the programme. School has recognised the need to further develop staff prayer.

Leaders and managers' promotion, monitoring and evaluation of the provision for Collective Worship is outstanding. Leaders have expert knowledge of planning and delivering Collective Worship. They have a very clear vision for its development, which is shared with and understood by the whole school community. They have a thorough understanding of the Church's liturgical year, its seasons, rites and symbols and are able to lead the school into an appreciation of these traditions in a way that engages pupils. They use a range of artefacts, symbols and information and communications technology to deepen pupils' appreciation, knowledge and understanding. Leaders model high quality worship in school. As a result of staff training in liturgical formation and spiritual development and a focused drive to enhance the prayer and liturgical life of the school, improvements have been made so that staff and pupils know what constitutes a good variety of worship. Staff response to these opportunities is excellent. Leaders regularly seek the views of pupils and staff regarding the quality and significance of Collective Worship in school. Informal arrangements are in place to seek parents' views and school plan to formalise this process.

# 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 monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education

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Pupils demonstrate passion and commitment in their learning and have very positive attitudes. Pupils in all lessons across the school concentrate exceptionally well and are rarely off task, therefore behaviour for learning is outstanding. Pupils apply a range of skills across the school, are developing well in their knowledge and understanding as well as their ability to reflect on meaning and are able to consider the impact of religious ideas on their daily lives. Pupils enter the early years foundation stage with knowledge and skills which are below average, by the end of key stage one standards in Religious Education are above diocesan averages and by the end of key stage two are also above average in both attainment targets. The school has identified that pupils are not as yet achieving higher levels at the end of key stage two and are not always sufficiently challenged to enable them to do so. Progress is consistent and sustained across all key stages. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make outstanding progress because their needs are accurately identified and they are well supported by very effective teaching assistants. Systems are in place to evaluate the progress of different groups of learners. Inspection findings show that there is no significant variation between groups.

Teaching and assessment is good overall. Teaching is consistently good with outstanding teaching observed during the inspection. Teachers have excellent subject knowledge which inspires and promotes confident learners and contributes to their good progress, especially in upper key stage two. Teachers plan interesting and imaginative lessons which build upon prior learning; however tasks are not sufficiently differentiated to allow more able pupils achieve higher levels of attainment. The recent focus on differentiation by outcome should be maintained. A wide range of teaching styles, good questioning skills and creative use of activities such as role-play, conscience alley and drama make learning exciting and engages and motivate pupils. Other faiths are taught well and opportunities are provided to visit places of worship of other faiths which enriches the curriculum. Assessments are regular and systematic and both internal and external moderation shows levelling is mostly accurate. Pupil progress is tracked and as a result of sharing targets and success criteria, pupils understand how well they are doing and what is expected of them. Teachers mark work regularly, mostly using Religious Education level descriptors although in some classes marking has a literacy focus rather than Religious Education. Comments are positive and support learning, however, guidance, feedback and marking doesn't always inform pupils of the next steps in their learning. Systems to allow pupils to respond are not effective in all classes. The use of targets and 'I can' statements is exemplary and well embedded in practice across the whole school. Skills in self assessment are well developed enabling pupils to assess and discuss their own work and progress.

The monitoring and evaluation of the provision for Religious Education is good. The experienced subject coordinator is conscientious and effective and ensures staff are well informed of priorities identified from a range of monitoring activities undertaken to evaluate provision and outcomes for pupils. The coordinator attends all diocesan training and acts upon advice offered. There is a strong sense of commitment towards improvement. Leaders and managers have identified the school's main priorities and put in place actions to bring about

improvement. The robust tracking systems are a key feature of continuous improvement and have had a significant impact on achievement and progress. Professional development for all staff is a high priority. Governors make regular visits to the school. They are actively involved in the school community and have positive relationships with staff, pupils and their families. Governors understand the school's performance in Religious Education and know what needs to be done to raise standards. They are extremely supportive of leaders and staff but also confident and questioning in their approach. The Religious Education curriculum is thoughtfully designed to meet pupils' needs. It is enriched through links with a variety of agencies, the wider community and local schools. It meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference fully.

## 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.

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

2

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

1

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	1	2	2	2
	1	1	1	1