



St Aloysius' RC Junior School

Argyle Street, Hebburn, NE31 1BQ

School Unique Reference Number: **108719**

Inspection dates:	27 – 28 January 2014
Lead inspector:	Mrs Denise Kendall

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

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

St Aloysius RC Junior School is an outstanding Catholic school because:

- The school is a welcoming, nurturing community where the message of the Gospel is central to the life of the school. The vision and commitment of the headteacher and governors to the faith journey and spirituality of each pupil underpins the work of the school and ensures that each one is valued as a child of God.
- The Catholic Life of the school is outstanding because leaders and managers have ensured that the development of this has been given the highest priority. Pupils are enthusiastic about participating in the many and varied opportunities which are available to them and benefit greatly from them. Effective monitoring is in place and this ensures that there is a continued focus on improvement.
- The quality of prayer and Collective Worship is outstanding because pupils are reverent and respectful. They are keen to plan and lead both class prayers and Collective Worship and are able to contribute enthusiastically to a range and variety of prayer opportunities.
- The quality of Religious Education is good. Learning and progress is good overall, however there are some inconsistencies in the teaching and learning opportunities provided. Marking and feedback does not always give the pupils sufficient guidance on how their work can be improved or provide targets for the next steps in their learning.

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- St Aloysius is an average size school which was federated with the adjacent infant school in September 2009
- The school has experienced some turbulence in senior leadership since the last inspection; the current executive headteacher appointed in September 2013 is now leading both schools.
- The vast majority of pupils are of white British background.
- The percentage of pupils supported through pupil premium is average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action, school action plus or with a statement of educational need is average.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- Raise standards in Religious Education by:
 - Ensuring that effective marking is consistent throughout the school and that it is sufficiently focused on pupil progress and achievement in Religious Education
 - Ensuring marking clearly identifies for pupils how to improve their work and the next steps in their learning
 - Providing more opportunities for the moderation of work across the federation in order to ensure consistency in approach and accurate levelling of work

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.

- Pupils take advantage of the many opportunities the school provides for them to contribute to the Catholic Life of the school and talk enthusiastically about these. It is evident that they follow the school's mission based on Christ's Gospel message: 'I have come that they may have life and have it to the full'. Pupils are fully immersed in a wide variety of opportunities to promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They speak proudly of their fund raising events which support Cafod and the St Cuthbert's Care 5p Bus.
- Pupils respect the Catholic tradition of the school and its links with the parish community and are active participants in parish celebrations. Shared activities include: parish Masses at St Aloysius Church; celebrating an annual carol service with the parish community; leading the May procession each year; and inviting parishioners to share in the Stations of the Cross.
- The behaviour of pupils is excellent. They show great care and respect for one another. It is clearly evident that they understand what it means to live by Gospel values and belong to a Catholic school by the way in which they play and work together.
- Relationships throughout the school are good. Pupils demonstrate both in the classroom and the playground, that they are fully aware of the needs of others. They quietly and respectfully support one another thus enabling each pupil to benefit from the warm and nurturing environment.
- Pupils contribute regularly to the monitoring and evaluation of the school through the school council. They genuinely feel they are listened to and can suggest ways of changing and improving their school.

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

- There is a strong family ethos which is welcoming and caring which enables both pupils and adults to flourish in a nurturing community, where each person is valued as a member of God's family.
- The pastoral support that is given to both pupils and staff is outstanding. The school

provides specialist counselling support for pupils and families who are experiencing particular difficulties at various times. This support, together with the strong commitment to developing the 'whole child', ensures the needs of all are met, resulting in a happy nurturing community where witness to Jesus Christ is at the heart of the school.

- The school's behaviour policy reflects Gospel values. It is clear that pupils are supported well in making right choices and that they understand personal responsibility. Pupils are encouraged to grow and develop responsibly and are aware of the needs of others both within and beyond the school. Pupils show an understanding of forgiveness and appreciate the difference between right and wrong.
- 'A Journey in Love' is used as part of the Sex and Relationships Education curriculum across the federation, developing pupils' understanding of their physical, emotional, intellectual and social growth.
- The school's mission statement is clear and is used throughout the school, ensuring that it is an integral part of daily life.
- Displays throughout the school contribute to the stimulating learning environment which reflects the school's mission and Catholic character.

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

- The headteacher, together with all leaders and managers, has a very clear understanding and vision of Catholic education and of the role of the Catholic school in the mission of the church.
- The leadership team and the governing body have the highest expectations for the promotion and continuing development of the Catholic Life of the school. They lead by example and ensure that opportunities are in place to support staff in promoting the Catholic Life of the school. This is exemplified in the well written targeted action plan and the desire to appoint a school chaplain
- Governors are fully informed of the school's strengths and areas for development. This results in targeted planning and actions which ensure continuous improvement in all aspects of the Catholic Life of the school. They monitor the Catholic Life of the school, both formally and informally, during their frequent visits and attendance at school and parish activities. A number of new governors have been appointed since September 2013, consequently an action plan is in place to further develop the contribution made by the governing body.
- Parents are fully supportive of the school and value the impact that the Catholic Life of the school has on their children. This is evident through the attendance at school Masses, parents' evening and special events, as well as the overwhelming support given to fundraising activities.

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.

- Pupils are deeply reverent and respectful during Collective Worship. They are reflective and focused during prayer.
- Pupils understand the purpose of worship and the wide variety of forms it can take including Mass, year group liturgies, class Collective Worship, praying the rosary and private prayer.
- All pupils sing with enthusiasm and this contributes significantly to the spiritual atmosphere which is experienced by all those gathered together in prayer.
- Pupils speak highly of the different ways they pray in school and are able to outline the ways in which they plan, lead and contribute to Collective Worship and prayer in their different class groups.
- The pupils reach out in collaboration with other schools in worship and prayer. For example they participate in Diocesan events such as the Good Shepherd Mass and Faith 13; they took part in the school mission recently with the local Catholic high school. Pupils also recalled with pride a wonderful celebration with other schools for a visiting priest from Nigeria.
- Pupils have a good understanding of religious seasons and festivals and of the church's liturgical year. They are able to apply their knowledge and understanding to class discussions and Religious Education.
- Pupils respect the different beliefs of others. A member of the Jewish faith visits the school each year sharing her faith and religion with the school community. Pupils also learn about other faiths including Islam and a visit to a mosque is planned to take place later in the year in Newcastle

The quality of provision for Collective Worship is outstanding.

- Collective Worship has a significant impact on the spiritual and moral development of pupils.
- A range and variety of prayer opportunities is provided thus ensuring that prayer is at the heart of the school community.

- Collective Worship and prayer is inclusive and reflective. It is evident that all pupils are encouraged to have a special relationship with God through prayer.
- Focal points are evident throughout the school with well thought out resources. These all contribute to the quality of prayer and provide good support and stimulus for reflection.
- Staff clearly demonstrate an understanding of the liturgical year and ensure that there are many opportunities for pupils to share in this. As a consequence pupils respond well to all that is provided for them.

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

- The headteacher and Religious Education coordinator have a clear vision for the further development of Collective Worship.
- All staff model best practice when leading and supporting pupils in Collective Worship thus ensuring that this has an outstanding impact.
- Very good strategies are in place to monitor many aspects of school life including Collective Worship and, as a result, the quality of Collective Worship continues to improve.
- Professional development in leading and supporting pupils in the planning of prayer and liturgy has been given high priority and, as a result, the confidence and reflectiveness of staff is outstanding.
- Opportunities are provided for the staff to pray and reflect together and the response to this is excellent.

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.

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

- The majority of pupils enjoy their learning in Religious Education. They have positive attitudes and generally work well in lessons, applying themselves to the tasks and work at a good pace. Evidence from work scrutiny and lesson observations show that most pupils and groups of pupils, including disabled and those with special educational needs, make good progress over time.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of the value of Religious Education as this is communicated very well to them by their teachers. They are active in their learning because of the way the curriculum is adapted and interesting resources used. This was evident when some year four pupils worked in 'Executive Teams' finding out about items that are used by a priest during a funeral.
- Pupils take pride in their work and show interest and enthusiasm in their learning. They acquire knowledge, understanding and skills appropriate to their age as well as developing their ability to reflect on meaning.
- Due to the state of transition in level expectations across all diocesan school, the current averages for attainment and progress are not reliable benchmarks. Therefore no judgement will be made in this report against diocesan averages for either attainment or progress.

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

- Teaching and assessment is good with evidence of outstanding features in some lessons. For example in a year five lesson pupils were challenged to use different readings from the Gospels and evaluate how these influenced their daily lives. Teachers plan effective, interactive activities which stimulate learning and capture pupils' interest and enthusiasm.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is good, expectations are high and assessment of prior learning is used well to support pupils in moving on in their learning.
- Questioning is used effectively to assess understanding, to monitor progress, to build on previous learning and to reinforce the learning objective. Consequently, pupils demonstrate good levels of engagement and positive attitudes to their learning.
- Work in Religious Education is always marked, however written feedback does not always

respond to the learning objective and it does not consistently provide sufficient guidance to help the pupils know how to move on in their learning in Religious Education.

- Some moderation of work has taken place within the school, however the moderation process across the federation is not developed enough to ensure consistency in approach and accurate levelling of work.

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

- Religious Education is given high priority by all leaders and managers. It is clearly evident that this is a core subject within the school.
- Professional development is important and leaders have ensured that all staff have been given the opportunity to participate in appropriate courses thus ensuring the continuing raising of standards. Because of this most teachers plan Religious Education lessons thoroughly and ensure continuity across most year groups using an appropriate range of teaching strategies and resources.
- The Religious Education curriculum meets the needs of all pupils and the requirements of the Bishops' Conference.
- The sacramental preparation of pupils is recognised as both a parish and school responsibility. Catechists and teachers work together with the parish priest to ensure that pupils are well prepared for this part of their journey in faith.
- Governors have a good knowledge of the school and have been instrumental in making decisions which have enabled the school to improve. They monitor the strengths and weaknesses of the school through regular visits and governing body meetings and have an action plan in place to support new governors in developing their expertise. Governors are supportive but also confident in providing challenge and discharge their canonical and statutory duties well.

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.

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 Aloysius RC Junior School
Unique reference number	108719
Local authority	South 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	Mr Eddie Watson
Executive head teacher	Mr Nick Conway
Date of previous school inspection	September 2008
Telephone number	0191 483 2274
Email address	info@st-aloysius-jun.st-tyneside.sch.uk