



# St Bega's RC Primary School

Thorpe Street, Hartlepool, TS24 0DX

School Unique Reference Number: **111697**

**Inspection dates:** 27 – 28 June 2017

**Lead inspector:** Jane Weatherall

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

## SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

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

- It is a very welcoming community, helping pupils to develop their faith.
- The Catholic Life of the school is outstanding because the mission statement is at the heart of the work of the school and is lived out each day by both staff and pupils.
- The quality of Collective Worship is good. From entry to the school pupils are encouraged and supported in their ability to plan and lead worship. Leaders and managers are excellent role models and have a clear vision for how the provision of Collective Worship can improve.
- Religious Education is good because it is given such high importance within school and enables pupils to make good progress.

**It is not yet outstanding because:**

- Collective Worship is not yet outstanding because pupils across the whole school need to develop further their independence in planning preparing and leading Collective Worship for their school community.
- Religious Education is not yet outstanding as pupils experience of this subject differs. Where it is taught best teachers plan using creative ideas and engaging activities and pupils enjoy their learning.

## FULL REPORT

### INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- The school is a slightly smaller school than those nationally but has increased significantly in recent years.
- An overwhelming majority of pupils are of White British heritage, with almost no pupils speaking English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is well above average.
- The school serves the parishes of Holy Family and St Mary's, Hartlepool.
- 52% of pupils are baptised Catholic.
- The school operates a co-headship arrangement.

### WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- Improve the quality of Collective Worship by:
  - Offering further opportunities for pupil involvement in planning, preparing and fully leading Collective Worship independently throughout the school.
  - Developing further links with parents and parish to invite all stakeholders to share in the spiritual life of the school.
- Improve the quality of Religious Education by:
  - Ensuring that teachers plan imaginative and creative lessons which inspire and engage all pupils across the school.

## 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 make an outstanding contribution to the Catholic Life of the school and benefit greatly from it.
- Pupils chose the school's mission statement which is central to the life of the school and are able to say not only what it is, but how it is lived out in their school. One pupil confidently told me that because pupils "Love one another, as I have loved you"; their school is different to any she has been to before.
- They, staff and governors, are rightly proud of their school and have a deep sense of belonging to their school family. Pupils, staff, parents and governors all speak about the importance of this nurturing environment where pupils make a contribution to the Catholic Life of the school from a very early age.
- Strong relationships between staff and pupils are a key feature of this setting.
- Pupils are alert to and respond willingly to the needs of those who are less fortunate than themselves. Even very young pupils in early years foundation stage are aware of the needs of others both locally and globally. They not only show empathy towards them but crucially begin to think of ways in which they could help them. Older pupils seek to support others through their Mini Vinnies work, their Fairtrade tuck shop and breakfasts and intergenerational work done at local care homes. They speak fondly of taking part in community events such as the Remembrance Ceremony and singing at Hartlepool Town Hall Theatre.
- Behaviour of pupils is outstanding. The school's mission and ethos is clearly reflected in the behaviour and attitude of pupils. They are fully aware of the need to work together in a community. They know how to treat others and are aware that respect is earned through actions and is to be valued.
- Opportunities for pupils to participate in the evaluation of the Catholic Life of the school are provided through Mini Vinnies, class reflections, school council and Religious Education lessons.

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

- The Catholic character of the school permeates all aspects of school life and parents spoke of the strong sense of the school being a 'family'.
- Pastoral care for pupils is outstanding as a result of the commitment of all stakeholders. There is a tangible sense of a family community in all aspects of school life. Throughout the learning environment stimulating and interactive displays and prayer stations celebrate the school's Catholic identity.
- Personal, social and health education is delivered effectively through the use of the weekly 'Statements to Live By' and sex and relationships education is delivered at age appropriate levels following diocesan guidelines.
- The school's pastoral care of staff is excellent and demonstrates a firm belief that staff should also benefit from the Catholic Life of the school. The staff are supported with quality professional development delivered both by the Religious Education coordinator and senior leadership team and by the local Catholic partnership of schools and diocese.
- The staff demonstrate an outstanding level of commitment to the school community and work hard to ensure that this is a Christ centred school and to maintain excellent relationships at all levels.
- Ideas such as the 'travelling star' and the Mission Together responses, inviting parents to comment on how their child is living out their school mission, have begun to involve parents more in the Catholic Life of the school and an increasing number of families are now attending the school assemblies and Masses.

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

- Leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school highly effectively. They have a clear understanding and vision of Catholic Education and the role of the Catholic school in the mission of the church and are highly ambitious for the Catholic Life of school.
- The school's self-evaluation is a reflection of planned monitoring and analysis and charts the journey the school has been on since its last inspection. Effective systems ensure that governors, senior leadership team and staff all contribute to the school's self-evaluation and use it to strategically plan for further improvement.
- Senior leaders and indeed all staff are witnesses to the school's ethos in their everyday dealings with each other, the support they offer each other and in the way that they have embraced changes.
- Governors make a significant contribution to the school and are passionate about the school's mission and the part they play in living out that mission. They speak of leaving their meetings feeling energised about the plans for the Catholic Life of this school.
- The Religious Education coordinator is supported by both a link governor and a link teaching assistant who work closely to oversee all aspects of the Catholic Life of the school and plan their next areas for development.
- The school does not stay still; it is always seeking ways to further enhance the Catholic Life of the school and has identified key areas for further future development improving links with parents and the parish.

## 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 good.**

- Pupils response to, and participation in Collective Worship is good. They join in with prayers confidently and some pupils are able to lead these confidently in their class and key stage worship times. Pupils explore a variety of prayer styles, including traditional prayers and join in with community singing happily. The calm and positive atmosphere which is evident all around school is particularly evident during Collective Worship where pupils listen attentively to each other as they read or act in dramatisations.
- Pupils have some experience of being able to prepare and lead worship with support and are becoming increasingly confident in doing so. Planning and leading worship independently in whole school contexts is not fully established but due to accurate self-evaluation and improvement planning the school have identified this as an area for further development.
- From a very young age the pupils understand the need for reverence and know what this means. They enthusiastically make suggestions for prayer intentions.
- Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of the Church's religious seasons and feasts and confidently dress their class prayer stations ready for Collective Worship.
- There is a deep sense of respect for different faiths; pupils are well informed and have enjoyed their learning in this area, being keen to visit other places of worship as well as their own.
- Collective Worship contributes very positively to the spiritual and moral development of all pupils.

#### **The quality of provision for Collective Worship is good.**

- Prayer is central to the life of the school and prayer stations around school and in classrooms mean that pupils can pray freely at any time and provide encouragement for independent prayer and reflection.
- All school staff skilfully lead Collective Worship and assist children in preparing and leading it at age appropriate levels. They ensure that worship experiences are carefully planned and are committed to ensuring that pupils have meaningful and relevant experiences of liturgy. Acts of worship are well resourced and age appropriate and are centred on themes

and messages which are easily accessible to pupils as well as following the Church's liturgical year and 'Statements to live by'.

- Staff prayerfully reflect together and these experiences inspire their work. They share liturgies they have experienced through their cluster or at Diocesan training or events.
- The school invests in the 'Wednesday Word' and children are encouraged to share it with their parents and are then invited to share a response in school.
- Prayer journals are used to very good effect throughout school providing pupils with a means of recording their thoughts and reflections. They show a great level of care and thought from pupils.
- The school has a vision to invite the parents and parishioners to more fully share in the spiritual life of the school and this is beginning to happen. A school prayer group led by the parish priest has engaged pupils and provided a strong link to build upon between parish and school.

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

- Leaders and managers are good at promoting and evaluating the provision for Collective Worship in school. They understand the elements necessary and plan experiences carefully for different school audiences. There is a clear understanding of the rites, symbols, traditions and seasons of the Church's liturgical year and these are shared with pupils enthusiastically.
- Monitoring and evaluation systems are in place. The passionate and well organised Religious Education coordinator regularly provides support and feedback to staff and leads developmental ideas and training in this aspect of the school's life.
- Leaders recognise the importance of nurturing staff liturgical and spiritual development as well as pupils; consequently all feel valued.
- Leaders seek the views of pupils and staff regarding the quality and significance of worship in school. These responses inform future developments and training needs. The school has begun to seek the views of parents in this area but this process is not yet fully embedded.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

### THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

2
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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 good.**

- Pupils recognise the importance of Religious Education and are gaining knowledge and understanding of religion and an ability to reflect on meaning through the 'Come and See' diocesan programme.
- They are keen to do well and are able to talk confidently about topics covered such as the fruits of the spirit, times when they have been shown or show forgiveness and their gifts from God.
- Excellent behaviour has a positive impact on learning and lessons proceed without interruption with pupils working diligently and at a good pace.
- Pupils value and appreciate the support they receive from teachers and teaching assistants. In all lessons observed across the school pupils concentrate extremely well and are rarely off task ensuring that behaviour for learning is outstanding.
- Outcomes are good overall. Pupils enter school with knowledge and skills that are limited in terms of religious education and they rapidly become immersed in the rich language of the religion, making good progress over time.
- The school has done much work on ensuring the accuracy of levels in Religious Education and this has paid off with progress evident in the books of pupils.

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

- The teaching in St Bega's is consistently good with some outstanding teaching observed. As a consequence most pupils and groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well over time.
- Where it is at its most effective, pupils enjoy their learning through the provision of interesting, imaginative and engaging tasks which meet the needs of all learners in class; however this is not consistent across school.
- Teachers understand the importance of Religion Education and share this effectively with pupils. They have good subject knowledge which they use to skilfully question pupils to extend their learning. Pupils' work illustrates the high level of expectation within Religious Education.
- Through marking and feedback teachers provide pupils with comments which both celebrate success and moves their learning forward. Opportunities are often provided for

children to revisit work to expand ideas. The 'driver' words from the levels of attainment have become common language within lessons. Some pupils are involved in evaluating how well they have done however pupils' self-assessment is not fully embedded across the school.

- The school has been pro-active and addressed issues which led to low attainment in last year's data through rigorous moderation procedures.

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

- Due to high quality leadership from both the senior leadership team and the enthusiastic and knowledgeable Religious Education coordinator, Religious Education has a high priority in school. There have been significant improvements since the last inspection; particularly in the quality of marking and feedback given to pupils and the differentiation and appropriate levels of challenge provided.
- Leaders and managers systematically monitor provision and outcomes in Religious Education and they are accurate in their assessment of the school's strengths and areas for development. There is a clear vision and determination to be an outstanding school and plans are well underway to seeing this become a reality.
- The coordinator has attended training both at local and diocesan level and has worked conscientiously to share the messages with staff and implement all advice and guidance.
- The school works very effectively as part of a vibrant local cluster to share best practice.
- Effective systems are in place and the school now has an accurate picture of pupils' achievement.
- Sacramental preparation follows Diocesan Guidelines and school staff work effectively with the parish priest and catechists to ensure that pupils are well prepared.
- Religious Education has a high profile in the life of the school. Governors are regular visitors to the school and are actively involved. They have a good understanding of the schools performance in Religious Education and are often involved in monitoring and evaluation activities.

## 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.

2

**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.

1

## SCHOOL DETAILS

<b>School name</b>	St Bega's RC Primary School
<b>Unique reference number</b>	111697
<b>Local authority</b>	Hartlepool
This Inspection Report is produced for the Rt. Reverend Séamus Cunningham the Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle Diocese 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.	
<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mrs Pat Carroll
<b>Head teacher</b>	Mr Michael Cooney
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	May 2012
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