



St Charles' RC Primary School

Durham Road, Spennymoor, Durham, DL16 6SL

School Unique Reference Number: **114260**

Inspection dates:	15 – 16 March 2018
Lead inspector:	Mrs C Ingle

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	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 Charles' RC Primary School is an outstanding Catholic school because:

- It is a welcoming and inclusive school where all are valued, respected and cared for. Pupils are proud of their school and have a deep sense of belonging. The school mission statement and vision are understood and lived out by the whole community. The work of the school is highly valued by all who have contact with it. The school has very strong parish and community links and works in partnership with them to seek justice for all. The school bears witness to its Catholic values and principles joyfully and monitors them well: thus the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.
- Collective Worship is outstanding. Acts of worship are engaging and pupils are inspired to think deeply about their beliefs and to plan and lead worship. The school provides a wide variety of opportunities for pupils to develop spiritually and morally and this area of school life is given the highest priority. Leaders and managers have well established systems to monitor and evaluate Collective Worship.
- The quality of teaching and learning in Religious Education is good and pupils make good progress across the school. Pupils talk positively about their lessons and the variety of activities they engage in. They demonstrate their knowledge of Religious Education topics in conversation and can often refer to scripture to back up their views. However the tasks given to more able pupils do not always allow them to stretch their skills in Religious Education and opportunities for teacher and peer feedback are not fully utilised to bring about further learning.

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- St Charles' is an average sized primary school serving the parishes of St Charles', Tudhoe, All Saints, Ferryhill and Sacred Heart, Chilton.
- The majority of children are from white British heritage, with very few from minority ethnic groups.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is average.
- There are strong parish school links and the school is very much part of the community.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- Improve the quality of teaching and standards in Religious Education by:
 - ensuring more able pupils are given challenging learning tasks in Religious Education.
 - ensuring teacher feedback and peer assessment are used to improve pupil learning in Religious Education.
 - ensuring the Religious Education Improvement plan explains clearly how teaching and learning in Religious Education is to be improved.

CATHOLIC LIFE

THE QUALITY OF THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

1

- 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 know that everyone is respected and cared for in their school. It is a very inclusive community where all feel they matter and belong. There are very strong parish links which were described by a variety of people in interviews.
- Pupils are regularly involved in evaluating the Catholic Life of the school by completing questionnaires and comment books following events they have experienced. They feel able to make suggestions about future events.
- Pupils behave extremely well around school and show they can listen, say sorry and forgive each other. They can relate this to stories about Jesus' life and talk about following his example.
- Pupils are eager to take part in events related to the development of their Roman Catholic community. They talk with enthusiasm about the recent mission and they can give examples about how they have made decisions about fund raising in school.
- They are happy to use their gifts to help others and know it is important to do so. This is demonstrated in the 'adopt a grandparent' programme where pupils regularly make contributions to school community members who may need companionship or support.
- Pupils are proud of their own religious identity and beliefs and talk respectfully about the beliefs of others.
- They demonstrate good knowledge of Catholic traditions and talk enthusiastically about the Church's year and celebrations they have been involved in.

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

- The vision and mission of the school is clearly articulated by all who work and learn in the school.
- The staff commitment to the Roman Catholic ethos is high and the school's Roman Catholic character is clearly demonstrated in the learning environment through displays, posters, prayer areas and quotes from scripture.
- Relationships are strong and supportive which lead to a joyful community feeling being evident and described clearly by all in interviews.
- Governors, parents and staff talked about the high level of respect and care given to the

pupils. Children expressed the view that they feel safe and cared for in school.

- Personal, health and social education (PHSE)and sex and relationship education (SRE) are carefully planned and taught across the school. The staff regularly pray together and the headteacher and governors are attentive to the needs of staff as well as pupils.
- The school has high expectations of moral and ethical behaviour which are clearly articulated to all. There is evidence in classrooms that the whole school behaviour policy is based on the Gospel values of respect, justice and reconciliation.

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

- The school's leadership is deeply committed to the Church's mission and is a source of inspiration to the whole community, as evidenced in the comments made after the community visits to the Lenten prayer stations in school.
- All leaders promote the school's Catholic Life very well and see it as their most important job.
- The provision for the Catholic Life of the school is given a high priority and is carefully monitored by regular questionnaires to staff, parents, and pupils. All community members are also given opportunities to leave comments in school after all visits.
- The analysis of the questionnaires and the comments are used to plan improvements and inform the school's self-evaluation.
- The school's work with parents is regular and parents were keen to express the view that the Catholic ethos and parish links were important to them and something they wished their children to benefit from.
- Governor meeting minutes showed examples of when governors challenged the headteacher and influenced decision making.
- Governors discharge their statutory and canonical duties very well.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

1

- 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 show engagement and deep thought during acts of Collective Worship. They are respectful of silence and eagerly join in community prayers.
- Pupils demonstrate their leadership skills by creatively planning and leading acts of worship, often as homework tasks.
- They can confidently talk about what to include in acts of worship and know that using a variety of approaches and responses engages other people. They can talk confidently about linking parts of the liturgy to themes or music and about different prayer styles. They were knowledgeable about the church's liturgical year.
- Pupils express the opinion that they enjoy worship opportunities planned by peers and enjoy taking part themselves. They demonstrated their skills in a Lenten worship opportunity led by year six.
- Pupils are comfortable with reflection and silence, regardless of their faith commitment. An example of this was the Lenten prayer stations held in school. It was a moving experience with a profoundly prayerful and still atmosphere, in which members of the community also took part. Children demonstrated respect when talking about other faiths.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship is outstanding.

- Collective Worship is central to the life of the school. Praying together is a daily experience for children and staff; as classes and in family groups as well as in whole school or key stage larger groups.
- Staff prayer is a regular event and the prayer stations developed are an inspiration to staff and the whole community.
- Collective Worship has a clear message and purpose. It is planned around themes in the church's year and used to encourage children to develop understanding and empathy for others. All engage fully, as demonstrated by family group sessions on the theme of the Stations of the Cross.
- Prayer opportunities are offered to the whole community as well as to the children and their parents.
- All staff take part in planning and leading Collective Worship. They are skilled at supporting

pupils to plan and lead worship.

- Staff have excellent teacher knowledge about the church, its rites and seasons. They use this knowledge to ensure pupils have high quality opportunities to pray.

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

- Leaders and managers model outstanding practice when leading Collective Worship for staff and pupils. They have expert knowledge of the church, its rites and seasons which they use in promoting and monitoring the pupils' experiences.
- Collective Worship is given a high priority. Leaders' monitoring ensures that pupils have a deepening understanding of the Church's traditions and liturgical year.
- Staff are trained through high quality professional development courses which they are keen to use to bring about improvements in their practice when necessary.
- There is evidence that Collective Worship is monitored and evaluated carefully as part of school self-evaluation. Leaders regularly use questionnaires, feedback books, email responses, and cards to evaluate their provision.
- During the creative 'messy church' afternoons, which are well attended, parents are often asked for their views on Collective Worship.
- The school uses all the feedback it collects to continually improve Collective Worship experiences for the whole community. An example of this was shown when the recent Mission Mass was changed to meet the wishes of pupils and parents.
- Monitoring and evaluation are regular, systematic and thorough.

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.

2

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2

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

- Pupils report that they enjoy their Religious Education lessons; they claim they like the variety of experiences they are offered.
- During lesson time pupils are on task and engaged in their learning. They answer questions thoughtfully and demonstrate their knowledge well.
- Behaviour is good and lessons proceed without interruption.
- Pupils understand how well they are achieving in Religious Education. Teachers' annotations in pupil books show that there is good progress across the school for most pupils.
- Books show some differentiated activities for less able pupils but the work given to more able pupils is not always challenging them to further improve their learning.
- Standards of attainment have fluctuated but in 2017 are in line with Diocesan expectations at years two, four and six. Less able pupils are well supported in their learning but more able pupils are not challenged enough to make faster progress.

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

- Lesson observations show teaching is good and sometimes has outstanding features. This results in good pupil progress.
- Teachers place high value on Religious Education and have good subject knowledge. Books show a range of resources are used to make learning fun.
- Staff use the Come and See programme material to plan well-structured lessons. However, these do not always challenge the most able group of pupils.
- Teachers use assessment strategies systematically and pupils are involved in self-assessment using 'I Can' statements from Come and See. There is no evidence of peer assessment strategies as outlined in the school's marking policy.
- The feedback from teachers does not always demonstrate to pupils how to improve their learning.
- Achievement and effort are celebrated in assemblies and displays around the school.

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

- The school monitoring files show that a range of systematic monitoring activities, focused on provision and outcomes in Religious Education, regularly occur. These are accurate and identify improvement areas. However they are not included in the school's Religious Education improvement plan.
- All staff regularly attend Diocesan training and this keeps them well informed and up to date about current developments in Religious Education. This, and the sharing of good practice, is improving the quality of teaching across the school.
- Leaders and managers in school ensure that Religious Education has the high profile of a core subject. This ensures that pupils can develop spiritually and have enough time to discuss moral dilemmas.
- The Religious Education curriculum is planned to meet pupil needs. It fulfils the requirements of the Bishops' Conference and contributes effectively to the pupils' spiritual and moral development.
- Good links within the wider community ensure pupils have enrichment activities which engage pupils and foster a positive attitude to Religious Education.
- There is a strong sacramental programme delivered in cooperation with the parish.

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 Charles' RC Primary School
Unique reference number	114260
Local authority	Durham
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.	
Chair of governors	Mr Christopher Butler
Head teacher	Mr John Burke
Date of previous school inspection	June 2013
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