



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



## **S48 Inspection Report**

**Blessed John Duckett RC Primary School,  
Tow Law, Bishop Auckland**

**DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION  
REPORT (Section 48)**

on

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

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<b>School:</b>	Blessed John Duckett RC Primary School
<b>Address:</b>	Smith Street Tow Law Durham DL13 4AU
<b>Telephone Number:</b>	01388731082
<b>Email address:</b>	blessedjohnduckett@durhamlearning.net
<b>School URN:</b>	114283
<b>Headteacher:</b>	Mrs Sharon McQuiggin
<b>Chair of Governors:</b>	Mr John Flynn
<b>Inspector:</b>	Dr Peter Mackie
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	29 and 30 May 2012

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 reviews, evaluates and plans further improvements in the school's witness to the Catholic faith and Curriculum Religious Education. This process begins with the school's own self-evaluation.

The inspection schedule follows criteria set by the National Board of Advisers and Inspectors.

## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Blessed John Duckett is a smaller than average primary school. It is situated in a small town in an area of significant economic deprivation on the northern edge of the Wear valley. The proportion of children receiving free school meals is higher than the national average; there *are no children from ethnic minorities and the number of pupils with special educational needs is below average.*

## **FACTUAL INFORMATION**

### **Pupil Catchment:**

Number of pupils on roll: 89

Percentage of pupils baptised RC: 43%

Percentage of pupils from other Christian denominations: 46%

Percentage of pupils from other World Faiths: 0%

Percentage of pupils with no religious affiliation: 11%

Percentage of pupils from ethnic groups: 0%

Percentage of pupils with special needs: 12%

### **Staffing**

Number of full time teachers: 4

Number of part time teachers: 0

Percentage of Catholic teachers: 50%

Percentage of teachers with CCRS: 50%

### **Percentage of learning time given to Religious Education:**

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

### **Parishes served by the school:**

St Joseph's, Tow Law, Bishop Auckland

## OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

How effective the school is in providing Catholic education

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

### MAIN FINDINGS

Blessed John Duckett is a good Catholic primary school. Caring relationships and the principles of Catholic education underpin the school's work as a community of faith and learning. Pupils are well cared for and respected by staff and each other. The school is appreciated by pupils, strongly supported by parents and plays a very important place in the life of the parish and the town of Tow Law. The school's capacity for sustained improvement in all areas is good because there is accurate self-evaluation leading to clear, challenging targets and appropriate priorities. The areas for improvement from the last inspection have been addressed and the school is continuing to strive to improve the progress and achievement of pupils in Religious Education (RE) and in the Catholic life of the school.

Pupils are happy to come to school which results in them having a very positive attitude to learning. Although pupils enter the school with achievements below or well below those expected for their age, they make good progress throughout the school so that standards attained in RE are above average by the time they leave the school. However, sometimes tasks set are not enabling more able pupils to attain higher levels of attainment and progress. Pupils benefit positively from the range of opportunities offered to contribute to the Catholic life of the school. Their levels of participation in the prayer and liturgical life of the school are good but they do not have the skills to enable them to prepare and lead prayer and collective worship independently.

The school provides a good Catholic education. Teaching is good and the pupils enjoy lessons and have positive attitudes towards learning. Detailed and effective assessment and academic guidance procedures are in place and impact positively on standards although pupils are not aware of their targets in RE. The curriculum provided is focused on maintaining and raising standards for all pupils, including those with additional needs. The quality of collective worship provided by the school is good. The staff, the parish priest and governing body are good role models and offer pupils a range of opportunities for prayer and worship.

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher and deputy headteacher (who is also RE coordinator) show solid good judgement in leading the development of RE and the Catholic life of the school. Leaders are committed to raising standards in RE and to the continuing development of the Catholic life of the school. Improvements are clearly outlined in the school improvement plan. Strong and effective links exist with the parish and the wider community and opportunities taken to work together in partnerships in a variety of ways have a positive impact on standards in RE and the Catholic life of the school. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities well. Contribution to community cohesion is good although there are not enough links with other faith communities.

**What the school needs to do to improve further**

Improve the design of pupil tasks aimed at the higher levels of attainment expected at the end of key stage two (KS2) so as to assist them to achieve high standards more securely.

Ensure that all pupils are aware of their own targets and are involved in self-assessment.

Further develop the Catholic life of the school by providing guidance and support to enable the older children to plan and lead collective worship themselves.

Build links with other faith communities, to broaden pupils' experiences and understanding of non-Christian faiths.

## PUPILS

**How good outcomes are for pupils, taking particular account of variations between different groups**

2

Pupils throughout the school enjoy RE. They can speak about what they have learned and are becoming religiously literate. Based on their low standard of religious literacy on entry, pupils make good progress overall throughout the school. There is no significant variation in the amount of progress made by Catholics and those other than Catholic. This school makes good use of its special education needs systems to identify and support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities so that they make the same good progress as other pupils. At the end of key stage one (KS1) standards of attainment for all pupils are at the level expected. At the end of KS2 a very large majority of pupils achieve level four (L4) which is the expected level of attainment, and a small minority achieve the higher level five (L5). Standards have risen slightly over the last two years and data indicates they are set to maintain current levels in 2012. The school makes good use of pupil tracking and moderation of work to maintain standards and identify targets to assist pupils to enhance their progress and achieve higher standards, but children are not generally able to say what their targets are in RE.

Pupils make a good contribution to the Catholic life of the school and gain much benefit from it. They are able to express their own beliefs with some confidence, can say how their faith impacts on their lives and the life of the school and understand that some people have different beliefs and attitudes to spirituality. They take on responsibilities enthusiastically and participate in activities within and beyond the classroom, which they recognise help them to become better people. They show respect for Catholic and other religious objects in the school and understand the importance of key celebrations in school and in the parish community throughout the liturgical year. They are considerate to others, respond to the needs of people beyond the school and understand the need for forgiveness.

Pupils' response to and participation in collective worship is good. They listen well, act reverently and are happy to take part in collective worship, liturgies, assemblies and Masses though they are not yet able to plan and lead them. They know what constitutes good worship. They can reflect silently and know a variety of ways of praying. They have a good understanding of the religious seasons, liturgical colours and feasts and are becoming skilled in the use of scripture. Collective worship contributes positively to the spiritual and moral development of the pupils.

## PROVISION

2

### How effective the provision is in promoting Catholic education

Teaching and learning in RE is good. Teachers plan carefully, differentiating work to meet group and individual needs. However, tasks set do not enable the more able pupils to attain higher levels of attainment and progress. Teachers have good subject knowledge which inspires and promotes confident learners and contributes to their good progress. They make good use of ICT to maximise learning for all pupils. Teaching assistants are effectively deployed and support pupils well. Pupils are provided with good feedback, both orally and through quality marking, which tells them they have done well and what they need to do to improve.

Regular and systematic assessment ensures the school has a clear and accurate picture of pupils' progress and achievement in RE. Assessment procedures are in line with diocesan requirements. The school uses its tracking systems to monitor pupils' achievement in RE and to ensure that all groups of pupils achieve equally well. 'I Can' statements are used to help identify next steps in learning, but this has not yet resulted in pupils being able to say specifically what their targets for improvement are so they are unsure of their next steps in learning. Although moderation of pupils' work is well embedded, staff are continuing to develop their skills and confidence in moderating work using sub-levels of attainment in order to ensure continuous improvement in standards.

The RE curriculum is good and does much to engage, motivate and meet the needs of all pupils. The school has invested greatly in new good quality additional resources over the last three years and these are having a positive impact on learning for all pupils. Long and short term planning ensures full coverage of the RE curriculum and plans are in place to enrich the RE curriculum with more creative lessons. The opportunities the curriculum offers impact positively on pupils' spiritual and moral development and it meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference.

The quality of collective worship provided by the school is good and ensures that the spiritual needs of the pupils are met. Prayer is central to the life of the school. It is inclusive, reflective and well planned enabling all pupils to take an active part. Teachers work well with the parish priest and the RE coordinator to ensure that pupils are becoming more skilled in understanding and participating in a range of liturgies and celebrations in school and in church. However pupils are not yet encouraged to plan and lead independently. Acts of collective worship are well attended by parents, governors and the parish community. Good use is made of the opportunities these offer to assist pupils' families to join in the life of the parish to a greater extent.

## LEADERS AND MANAGERS

### How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic life of the School

Leaders and managers promote and develop the Catholic life of the school well. The Catholic mission of the school is at the heart of all school life and pupils' spiritual and moral development. The headteacher, staff, governors and parish priest have a clear shared understanding of the school's role in the mission of the Church. The strong promotion of Catholic values is clearly shared by the whole community and this, coupled with high quality support from the leadership, ensures pupil involvement and participation. A complete range of informal and formal monitoring activities ensures that all aspects of the Catholic life of the school are continuously improving and are impacting positively on pupil progress.

Good, clear systems are in place for the monitoring and evaluation of the provision for RE and leaders and managers use the data to identify areas for improvement in provision and to ensure continuous improvement in pupils' outcomes. The coordinator is knowledgeable, efficient and conscientious and working closely with the headteacher; both are highly committed to raising standards. She takes a positive lead, keeping staff well informed, supporting them confidently and has high expectations. Development needs are identified through the school's own monitoring, tracking and self-evaluation processes and clear steps for on-going improvement are detailed in the school improvement plan.

Governors discharge their statutory and canonical duties well. They are very committed to the Catholic life of the school and make a significant contribution to the work of the school. They are well informed and put the improvement and development of the school at the centre of their work. They have a well-established role as 'critical friends' and engage in careful consideration about priorities for the future. Governors understand the school's performance in RE and know what needs to be done to raise standards further. The link governor for RE is heavily involved in school life. Governors are actively involved in the school community and have positive relationships with staff, pupils and their families.

Leaders effectively develop partnerships with other providers and organisations, especially in the local Catholic Primary Schools' Cluster and the Weardale Primary Schools' cluster. A wide range of partnership activities make a good contribution to school improvement, staff professional development and to the Catholic life of the school. The headteacher ensures that links are well established with their partner secondary school, other primary and secondary schools in the area, the Diocese, the parish, and other partners to provide opportunities which enable pupils and staff to enjoy, achieve and develop well in areas which the school alone could not provide.

Leaders and managers' promotion of community cohesion is good. The school is an inclusive community with a strong sense of belonging. Pupils learn to work together enabling them to respect and celebrate difference. They are developing an understanding of the common good and a commitment to their global responsibilities. Pupils work well in communication with the school's international partners, including a priest in Pakistan and a school in France along with national and local organisations and the town community. Leaders are currently developing relationships with the Anglican parish church and the diocese of Durham. Acts of collective worship are inclusive and each one's spiritual identity is respected. The RE curriculum promotes attitudes of respect and tolerance for all faiths and those who do not belong to any particular religion, though the school does not have enough relevant links with

non-Christian religious communities to enable pupils to improve their understanding of other faiths.

## SUMMARY OF INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

### Key for inspection grades:

Grade 1 **Outstanding**    Grade 2 **Good**    Grade 3 **Satisfactory**    Grade 4 **Unsatisfactory**

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The school's capacity for sustained improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>How good outcomes are for pupils, taking particular account of variations between different groups</b>	<b>2</b>
• how well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education	<b>2</b>
❖ the quality of pupils' learning and their progress	<b>2</b>
❖ the quality of learning for pupils with particular learning needs and/or disabilities and their progress	<b>2</b>
❖ pupils' standards of attainment in Religious Education	<b>2</b>
• the extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school	<b>2</b>
• how well pupils respond to and participate in the school's collective worship	<b>2</b>
<b>How effective the provision is in promoting Catholic education</b>	<b>2</b>
• the quality of teaching and purposeful learning in Religious Education	<b>2</b>
• the effectiveness of assessment and academic guidance in Religious Education	<b>2</b>
• the extent to which Religious Education curriculum meets pupils' needs	<b>2</b>
• the quality of collective worship provided by the school	<b>2</b>
<b>How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic life of the School</b>	<b>2</b>
• how well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life of the school and plan improvement to outcomes for pupils	<b>2</b>
• how well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan for improvement to outcomes for pupils	<b>2</b>
• the extent to which the governing body provides effective challenge and support for the Catholic dimension of the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory and canonical responsibilities met	<b>2</b>
• how well leaders and managers develop partnerships with other providers, organisations and services in order to promote Catholic learning and well being	<b>2</b>
• how effectively leaders and managers promote community cohesion.	<b>2</b>