



St Teresa's RC Primary School

Harris Street, Darlington, Co Durham, DL1 4NL

School Unique Reference Number: **114241**

Inspection dates:	13 – 14 October 2015
Lead inspector:	Mr Martin Humble
Team inspector:	Mrs Christine Ingle

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

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

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

- It is a very welcoming family community, helping pupils to develop their faith.
- The Catholic Life of St Teresa's is outstanding. Governors, senior leaders and staff have high expectations and a shared vision with regard to the Catholic mission and ethos of the school. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the Catholic Life of the school taking a lead role in activities which promote the school's ethos within school, parish and wider community.
- Collective Worship at St Teresa's is good. It is central to the life of the school on a daily basis and a key part of school celebrations.
- Religious Education at St Teresa's is good. The teaching is good and enables pupils to make good progress.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Collective Worship planned by teachers from a set range of themes, limits opportunities for pupils to plan, prepare and lead worship.
- Religious Education writing in key stage two is often very rigidly modelled and 'scaffolded' through teaching, slowing down independent working and thinking.

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- St Teresa's is a larger than average primary school serving the parishes of St Teresa and St William in Darlington.
- St Teresa's serves an area with higher than average levels of deprivation but has a lower than average number of children eligible for free school meals and pupil premium.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs/disabilities is average.
- St Teresa's is a diverse community with a higher than average number of children who have English as an additional language and a higher than average travelling community.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- The participation of pupils in Collective Worship by:
 - Developing age appropriate themes for pupils to plan, prepare and lead Collective Worship throughout the school.
- The quality of pupils independent writing in Religious Education by:
 - Providing writing opportunities in Religious Education that allow independence in style, creativity and thought.
- The planning of learning experiences in Religious Education by:
 - Providing differentiated activities to challenge pupils, particularly the more able pupils.
- The written feedback to pupils in Religious Education by:
 - Ensuring a consistency of approach throughout school to focused feedback and ensuring that written comments focus on how to improve and enhance learning.

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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1

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.

- The mission statement is central to the life of the school and is understood and fully embraced by all pupils in their daily school life.
- Opportunities to participate in the evaluation of the Catholic Life of the school are provided through the school council, during Religious Education lessons and Mini Vinnies.
- Pupils have a deep sense of belonging to their 'school family' and they all strive to do their best to promote the strong ethos within their school family and in the wider community. They are well aware of the needs of others, both locally and globally, seeking to support others through awareness raising assemblies and fundraising activities.
- Pupils take full advantage of the opportunities provided by school for their personal support and development. Pupils are happy, confident and secure in their own stage of spiritual and emotional growth.
- Pupils are very proud of their religious identity, deeply valuing the Catholic tradition of their school and its strong links to the parish community. They are regularly involved with parish and diocesan celebrations, benefitting from staff involvement in school and parish activities.

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

- The provision for the Catholic Life of the school is a high priority which is reflected in the mission statement and in the way the mission of the school is 'lived out' by all in this family community. There is a very tangible sense of family and community in all aspects of school life which is evident in the quality of relationships that exist between all stakeholders.
- The school is a prayerful community which provides a stimulating environment to reflect the school's mission and its Catholic character.
- Pastoral care for pupils is outstanding as a result of the commitment of all stakeholders, and through having clear policies and structures in place. Pastoral programmes working alongside Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) refer to catholic teachings and principles. These programmes cater for the needs of all pupils with staff playing an active part in its delivery to ensure the best possible outcomes for pupils.
- An effective programme for RSE allows pupils to develop and foster understanding appropriate to their age.

- The school attends to the pastoral needs of staff to ensure the needs of all are understood and well catered for.
- The behaviour of pupils in and around school is exemplary. Where conflict arises parents are very satisfied that the school sets out to resolve issues in a way which embraces the importance of personal responsibility, the need for justice whilst also facilitating 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 committed to the Church's mission in education. The senior leaders in school embrace the task and provide inspiration within the school community.
- All leaders and managers, including the governing body, have high expectations for the promotion and continuing development of the Catholic Life of the school. Senior leaders share the responsibility for the development of the Catholic ethos very effectively.
- The school's self-evaluation is a reflection of planned monitoring, analysis and self-challenge. The very effective work of the link governor for Religious Education embraces Catholic Life too.
- There is a clear focus on the Catholic Life of the school leading to well-targeted improvements utilising parishioners and parents to enhance the ethos of the school.
- There is an outstanding understanding of the school's mission as staff and pupils share its purpose and actively participate in developing and supporting it.
- The school engages very well with parents and carers to the great benefit of all its pupils and families. Parents have a very good understanding of the school's mission and are very supportive of it. The school gets very positive feedback via parental questionnaires and parent voice books.
- Governors make a significant contribution to the Catholic Life of the school and they are passionate about the school's mission and their participatory role in 'living out' the mission. Governors are actively involved in the evaluation of the Catholic Life of the school and provide challenge and support where necessary.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

2

- 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. The children understand the need for reverence and join in hymns and prayers with enthusiasm.
- Pupils are able to prepare and lead worship following guidance. They know the elements to include and are able to lead worship opportunities that are inclusive, appropriate and prayerful. They still rely heavily on structures and formats provided by adults and need to develop more independence and confidence in using their own ideas.
- Most pupils can confidently talk about the seasons in the Church year and special feast days. They know these themes can be used for Collective Worship opportunities.
- Pupils are knowledgeable about other faiths and understand that everyone's faith needs to be respected and valued during Collective Worship.
- Collective Worship opportunities make a good contribution to pupils' spiritual and moral development. Pupils are able to articulate clearly that stories they hear about Jesus show them how they need to live their life, how they should treat everyone they meet and how they need to do the little things well.
- Pupils talk about the special family feeling that Collective Worship experiences engender and state that they make them feel like they belong to the community of St Teresa's.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship is good.

- The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is good. Prayer is central to the life of the school and important to everyone.
- Opportunities to take part in Collective Worship experiences are carefully planned for staff, pupils and parents. Staff try to ensure that Collective Worship opportunities include a variety of prayer styles and that pupils are engaged in them.
- Pupils, parents and staff speak positively about the experiences offered.
- Themes used for Collective Worship are linked to 'Statement to Live By' or weekly church readings. The themes could be widened to include everyday events and pupils' interests. The school needs to develop age appropriate themes for pupils to plan, prepare and lead Collective Worship throughout the school

- All school staff are skilled at helping the children prepare and lead Collective Worship. They have good knowledge of the church's customs, rites and heritage and use their knowledge to provide opportunities for the children to develop basic liturgies.
- The quality of Collective Worship is not consistent throughout school. Where pupils are fully involved in the planning, preparation and leading it is good but this was not evident in all year groups.

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 the school. They show deep understanding of the elements necessary for Collective Worship and plan experiences carefully for different school audiences.
- Monitoring systems are in place, leaders take their responsibility really seriously and regularly provide feedback on developmental ideas to all staff. Evidence of monitoring and evaluation is plentiful and shows leaders ensure that pupils and families are given opportunities to take part in different forms of Collective Worship.
- Collective Worship development is given high priority in the school improvement plan. Staff are keen to improve their skills by regularly reviewing practice and attendance at diocesan training.
- The leadership team are dedicated and enthusiastic about Collective Worship. They value its place as central to school life and are keen to continue to improve all aspects of their work in this area.
- Sacramental preparation follows diocesan guidelines and the school works closely with the parish to give pupils all the support they can.

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

2

1

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

- Pupils enjoy and understand the value of Religious Education demonstrating passion and commitment in their learning. Behaviour in lessons is good with the majority of pupils concentrating well and displaying very positive attitudes to their learning.
- Pupils make good progress across a range of skills and are developing well in their knowledge and understanding. They demonstrate good prior knowledge and are able to use this well in their new learning.
- Outcomes for pupils are good overall. From below average starting points in early years foundation stage pupils make good progress through key stage one. Good progress continues through key stage two. Pupils' books evidence a good standard of work.
- Inspection findings and evidence presented by the school shows no notable differences between groups of learners. Pupils identified as having special educational needs make good progress because of the quality of targeted support from skilled staff.
- Attainment is below diocesan averages at the end of key stage one but well above at the end of key stage two.

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

- Teaching is mainly good. In the best lessons pupils are set tasks which are well matched to their learning needs and which successfully engage all pupils. However this is not consistent throughout the school.
- Teachers demonstrate high expectations of behaviour and engagement, as a result, pupils concentrate well.
- In some lessons activities are not always sufficiently matched to pupils' abilities to engage all groups of learners or to enable them to work independently. There is an over-reliance on the scaffolding of writing activities in upper key stage two.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are very positive and are a real strength of the school. Support staff are used effectively to reinforce learning and to support and extend pupils of different abilities.
- Assessments are regular and the school has developed a rigorous tracking system. The levelling of pupils' work is accurate. Teachers moderate work on a regular basis in line with the levels of attainment in Religious Education.

- Teachers use diocesan plans and guidance to deliver well planned activities through a range of teaching strategies which help pupils to develop and extend their knowledge and foster curiosity and enthusiasm.
- Teachers make good use of time to maximise learning and develop a range of skills interpreting signs and symbols, asking significant questions and engaging with religious ideas.
- The standard of marking and feedback varies. There are some good examples of focused marking, however written comments by teachers on steps to improve learning are not used consistently throughout the school. Where they do exist, pupils require greater opportunities to respond to teacher comments in order to enhance learning.

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

- The headteacher demonstrates and shares a highly ambitious vision for the school and for what every pupil and teacher can achieve.
- The Religious Education coordinator is very knowledgeable and experienced. She is very proactive in the development of Religious Education throughout school.
- Leaders use a range of monitoring activities to regularly check on the quality of teaching and, as a result, have a very accurate picture of the strengths and areas for development. Clear steps for improvement are detailed in the school development plan.
- All aspects of Religious Education are evaluated regularly and all staff are kept very well informed about the priorities in Religious Education. Leaders, managers and governors use their findings effectively to promote improvement.
- The Religious Education curriculum is rich and varied providing a range of interesting activities and imaginative teaching to foster engagement and enable all pupils to make good progress in their learning. The Religious Education curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference.
- Governors are regular visitors to the school and are routinely involved in a range of monitoring and evaluation activities. They are extremely supportive but also confident in their ability to challenge. They discharge their statutory and canonical duties well.

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

School name	St Teresa's RC Primary School
Unique reference number	114241
Local authority	Darlington
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 Malcolm Frank
Head teacher	Mrs Paula Strachan
Date of previous school inspection	February 2011
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