



DENOMINATIONAL (S48) INSPECTION REPORT

St Mary's RC Primary School

Welfare Park, Wingate, Co. Durham, TS28 5AN

School Unique Reference Number: **114279**

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| Inspection dates: | 19– 20 November 2013 |
| Lead inspector: | Mr Martin Humble |

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| 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 Mary's RC Primary School is a good Catholic school because:

- Catholic Life of St Mary'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 taking a lead role in activities that promote the school's ethos within school, parish and the wider community.
- Collective Worship at St Mary's is good, is central to the life of the school and is a key part of school celebrations.
- St Mary's is a good Catholic school. It is a welcoming family community helping pupils to develop their faith and spirituality.
- Religious Education provided at St Mary's is good. The pupils are enthusiastic about their lessons.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Teaching is not always planned to cater for the individual needs of pupils.
- The work provided for more able pupils lacks challenge.
- Marking and feedback for pupils does not always provide information on how they can improve.
- Pupils are not consistently involved in self-evaluation and target setting.
- Pupils need to be given more opportunities to plan, prepare and lead Collective Worship.

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- St Mary's is set in the heart of an ex-mining community.
- St Mary's is a very small primary school with 59 pupils and is federated with St Godric's in Thornley.
- St Mary's has three classes of mixed age groups;
Class 1 (reception, year one and year two) Class 2 (year three and year four) and Class 3 (year five and year six)
- St Mary's serves the parish of St Peter and Paul, Hutton Henry.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is well-above average.
- The proportions of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are well-above average.
- Almost all pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is well-above average.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- The school needs to raise the standards of some of the aspects in the teaching of Religious Education by:
 - Improving the quality of feedback to pupils in relation to the learning objectives.
 - Improving the planning of work to support and challenge the more able pupils across the range of abilities in each class.
- The school needs to raise the achievement of all pupils by:
 - Improving the target setting process to include self-evaluation by pupils.
 - Improving pupil understanding of how they can improve their work.
- The school needs to develop aspects of Collective Worship by:
 - Improving pupil involvement in the preparation of a variety of Collective Worship opportunities throughout school.

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.

- The mission statement is central to the life of the school and is understood and 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, by the school chaplain, during Religious Education lessons and resulting from the responses in pupil questionnaires.
- 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, the 'Mini Vinnies' organised through the local cluster of Catholic schools and regular fundraising activities.
- Pupils take full advantage of the opportunities provided by school for their personal support and development. Pupils are very happy, confident and secure in their own stage of spiritual and emotional growth.
- An effective programme for relationship and sex education (RSE) allows pupils to develop and foster understanding appropriate to their age.
- 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 that 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 RSE refer to Catholic teachings

and principles. These programmes cater for the needs of all pupils with skilled staff playing an active part in its delivery to ensure the best possible outcomes for pupils.

- 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 that embraces the importance of personal responsibility, the need for justice whilst also facilitating reconciliation.
- The school employs a part-time chaplain, counsellor and parent support adviser to enhance the commitment to the pastoral care and Catholic Life of the school.
- The parish priest regularly supports the Catholic Life of the school and the pastoral care of pupils and staff.
- The school is committed to the Rights Respecting Schools Award (RRSA) which recognises success in putting the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child at the heart of the school.

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 parish and pastoral partners 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 good understanding of the school's mission and are very supportive of it.
- 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 act with reverence and are very keen to participate in the school's Collective Worship. They sing very joyfully, reflect in reverent silence and join in the community prayers appropriately and with confidence.
- Pupils prepare and lead worship with increasing confidence, enthusiasm and independence. Pupils have evaluated their input and planned for continuing development. Pupils are not yet given opportunities to plan, prepare and lead all aspects of collective worship in a variety of contexts.
- Pupils are confident in using a variety of approaches to prayer which include scripture, religious artefacts, liturgical music and other forms of prayer.
- Pupils benefit greatly from the activities available through the school chaplaincy including the time for prayer made available once a week before the start of the school day.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship is good.

- Collective Worship is central to the life of the school and is shared with parents on a regular basis.
- The prayer life of the school is an important and central aspect of community life for staff and pupils.
- All staff prepare good quality Collective Worship and are mindful of the Church's liturgical heritage, rites and seasons when developing quality experiences for all pupils. This was evident in a Class 1 Collective Worship 'I think before I make choices that affect my health'.
- Class 2 pupils planned, prepared and led collective worship for their class with the theme 'Remembering those who have died.' This was a well-planned, good quality Collective Worship, engaging pupils spiritually and prayerfully.
- Staff plan carefully for the liturgical formation of their pupils. Age appropriate planning that encompasses the religious beliefs and backgrounds of all pupils, shows progression as pupils journey from foundation stage to year six.
- Pupils have increasing confidence to plan, prepare and lead good quality collective worship having participated in good quality worship led by the school chaplain and teaching staff.
- Staff make good use of the 'Statements to Live By' to Nurture Human Wholeness.

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

- Leaders and managers have developed their knowledge of how to plan and deliver quality experiences of Collective Worship. They provide opportunities for pupils to reflect upon the Church's liturgical year, seasons, rites and symbols through the provision of quality worship experiences in a contemporary context.
- Liturgical and spiritual development is seen as a priority in ongoing professional development and staff access training opportunities wholeheartedly.
- Senior leaders, the Religious Education coordinator and the school chaplain are visible leaders of Collective Worship within school. They lead good quality collective worship experiences for both staff and pupils and are models of good practice.
- Leaders also ensure that the pupils have the best possible sacramental preparation in accordance with diocesan policy.
- Leaders and managers review the quality of Collective Worship and this informs the development process and possible training requirements.
- Planning the school's prayer and liturgical life is given high priority each year by school leaders as it is the heart of the school's ethos and character.
- The views of pupils, staff and parents are valued and acted upon to ensure good quality Collective Worship continues to evolve throughout the school and parish community.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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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 enjoy and are committed to their learning in Religious Education and view it as one of the important lessons in the curriculum.
- Pupils concentrate well and are rarely off-task. Behaviour for learning is very good.
- Pupils make good progress in their learning as they journey through school. There are no specific differences in the progress made by pupil groups.
- Pupils acquire knowledge at a good pace and are secure in their understanding.
- Pupils are developing and applying a range of skills to good effect including, independence, imagination, originality, the ability to interpret sources and symbol, the ability to ask deeper questions, the ability to engage with religious ideas and integrate them into their lives and apply all of these skills across the curriculum.
- Pupils do not have sufficient involvement in the evaluation of their work, as a consequence they do not fully understand how they can improve their work.
- Due to the state of transition in level expectations across all diocesan schools, 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 is consistently good.
- Teaching is effective in enthusing pupils and ensures that they learn well. Almost all pupils make good and sustained progress.
- Pupils and pupil groups are achieving well over time.
- Teachers have effectively integrated the Come and See Programme into their teaching. They have a good understanding of the value and importance of Religious Education which is communicated effectively to their pupils.
- Teachers use a good range of resources and teaching strategies to promote good learning.
- Whilst some progress has been made in challenging the more able pupils this is not always consistent throughout school.
- Time is managed well to ensure the coverage of the Religious Education programme and

that pupils forge links between their study of religion and belief and their exploration of more personal reflections on issues of meaning and purpose.

- Where there are effective assessment procedures, teachers and other adults have a good awareness of their pupils' prior learning and capabilities, which is reflected in effective planning to meet the needs of pupils. However, this is not consistent throughout school.
- The quality of marking and constructive feedback is generally good but is not consistent across classes. This does not allow all pupils the opportunity to fully understand what their next steps for development are.
- Feedback to pupils, in all classes, does not refer frequently enough to the lesson objectives which inhibits pupils in their evaluation of their learning and understanding of their future targets.
- The use of the 'I Can Statements' for the evaluation of pupil progress and for pupil target-setting is inconsistent between classes.

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

- Leaders and managers have conducted a range of monitoring activities relating to provision and outcomes in Religious Education. They are aware of the areas for development in the teaching of Religious Education and see this as a high priority within the school improvement plan.
- Planning is founded on sound evidence and data. Leadership is well-informed by current developments in Religious Education and continues to monitor and evaluate to further improve and support teaching.
- The Religious Education leader in school is very knowledgeable, enthusiastic and aware of what the school needs to do in Religious Education to enhance the current good provision.
- There is a shared common purpose amongst staff to gain a higher level of consistency in assessment, marking and feedback so that they are all consistently operating at a good to outstanding level.
- The Religious Education curriculum is planned by teachers using the Come and See programme. Planning doesn't always provide challenge to meet the needs of more able pupils.
- The school has good links with a variety of agencies, the wider community and local schools and parishes to provide an enriched curriculum and activities promoting learning and engagement.
- The curriculum enables pupils to gain first hand and quality experiences of the liturgical life of the Catholic Church and of a diversity of religious and belief communities.
- Religious Education is well resourced. Religious Education meets the requirements of the Bishops Conference fully.
- Leaders have ensured that pupils have access to good quality sacramental preparation in accordance with diocesan policy.

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 schools' 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

2

SCHOOL DETAILS

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| School name | St Mary's RC Primary School |
| Unique reference number | 114279 |
| Local authority | Durham |
| 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 | Mrs Margaret Greener |
| Head teacher | Mrs Jane Lewin |
| Date of previous school inspection | September 2010 |
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