



St Mary's RC Primary School

Farrington Road, Cullercoats, North Shields, NE30 3EY

School Unique Reference Number: **108618**

Inspection dates:	22 – 23 January 2014
Lead inspector:	Mr Martin Humble
Team inspector:	Mrs Liz O'Hehir

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

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

St Mary's RC Primary School is an outstanding Catholic school because:

- St Mary's is an outstanding Catholic School. It is a very welcoming family community, helping pupils to develop their faith.
- The 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 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 Mary's is good with elements that are outstanding. It is central to the life of the school and a key part of school celebrations.
- Religious Education at St Mary's is outstanding. The teaching is outstanding and enables highly motivated pupils to make very good progress.

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- St Mary's is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is well below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is well below average.
- Most pupils are from White British background and there are no pupils learning English as an additional language.
- There is before-school and after-school provision on the school site.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- The school needs to raise the standards of pupil participation in collective worship by:
 - Providing more opportunities for pupils to improve their skills in planning, preparing and leading Collective Worship.

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.

- 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, during Religious Education lessons and 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 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.
- An effective programme for Relationships 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 links to the parish communities. 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 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.

- 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 and 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.
- 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 understand the importance of prayer and worship and engage readily in small and larger gatherings. They reflect and respond reverently and join in community prayers. Praying and singing joyfully together is an integral part of pupils' experience.
- Pupils have a good understanding of religious seasons and feasts and the implication this has for collective worship. For some pupils, this knowledge is outstanding.
- Older pupils independently prepare and lead worship based on the Ethos Statements from "Nurturing Human Wholeness" using scripture, liturgical music, artefacts and other forms of prayer that engages their peers. Younger pupils speak about their increased opportunity and confidence in leading acts of worship. Pupils' prayers, thoughts and feelings are a consistent feature of class displays.
- Pupils express their understanding of the centrality that prayer has on their lives. They understand that other faiths have different traditions and these are respected.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship is good.

- Collective Worship at St Mary's has a clear sense of purpose and message that reflects the catholic character of the school. Staff and pupils praying together is part of all school celebrations.
- There is a well-planned programme of liturgies and Masses to include opportunities for pupils, parents, staff, governors and the parish community to pray together. All speak positively of their, and their children's, enjoyment and involvement in these occasions. Governors and parents have expressed how "moved" they have felt witnessing the children's growth in spirituality. Consequently, it has a significant impact on the school's sense of community.
- Staff have a good understanding of Collective Worship and the forms it can take. As a result, children are being supported in planning and delivering quality worship, however pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to plan, prepare and lead collective worship.

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

- The headteacher is a source of inspiration to the school community. She is ably supported by the RE leader in planning and delivering high quality collective worship. They, and other managers, have a thorough understanding of the church's liturgical year, its seasons, rites and symbols. As a result Collective Worship is delivered in a way that is relevant to pupils in a contemporary context. This was evidenced in a whole school assembly where the leader used a range of skills and resources, including drama, to effectively ensure pupils of all ages could access and understand the theme of Evangelisation using the story of "Matthew, the Tax Collector".
- Leaders have a clear vision that Collective Worship is seen as a priority for continued professional development. Staff are highly receptive and enthusiastic to move forward together.
- Leaders view the school's prayer and liturgical life at the heart of its curriculum. They have a shared sense of direction and understanding of what is required to bring about further improvement. This is based on regular monitoring and review of practice. They are keen to discuss the views of parents and pupils and respond to this in a thorough and systematic way.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

1

- 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 outstanding.

- Pupils are passionate and very committed in their learning in Religious Education and view it as one of the most important lessons in the curriculum. Pupils concentrate very well and are rarely off-task.
- Behaviour for learning is outstanding. Pupils make rapid progress in their learning as they journey through school. There are no specific differences in the progress made by specific pupil groups.
- Pupils acquire knowledge very quickly and are very secure in their understanding. Pupils are developing and applying a wide range of skills to great effect including, independence, imagination, originality, the ability to interpret sources and symbols, 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.
- 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 outstanding.

- The majority of teaching is outstanding and never less than consistently good. Teaching is highly effective in enthusing pupils and ensures that they learn extremely well. Almost all pupils make rapid and sustained progress. Pupils and pupil groups are achieving very well over time.
- Teachers have a high level of confidence and expertise which is evident in the way they have embraced the 'Come and See' Programme into their teaching. This understanding of the value and importance of Religious Education is communicated very effectively to their pupils.
- Teachers use a wide range of resources and teaching strategies to promote outstanding learning. Good progress has been made in challenging more able pupils.
- 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.
- As a result of very good assessment procedures teachers and other adults have an excellent awareness of their pupils' prior learning and capabilities. This is reflected in very good planning to meet the needs of all pupils.

- The quality of marking and constructive feedback is very good and in some cases outstanding. This enables pupils to fully understand what their next steps for development are.

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

- Leaders and managers have conducted a wide range of monitoring activities relating to provision and outcomes in Religious Education. They are very well 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 therefore 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 well aware of what the school needs to do in Religious Education to maintain and enhance the current outstanding provision.
- There is a shared common purpose amongst staff to gain that higher level of consistency in assessment, marking and feedback so that they are all consistently operating at an outstanding level.
- The Religious Education curriculum is very well planned by teachers to meet the needs of all their pupils to ensure effective continuity and progression for all learners.
- The school has good links with a variety of agencies, the wider community, 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 very well resourced. Religious Education meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference fully.
- Leaders have ensured that pupils have access to outstanding sacramental preparation in accordance with diocesan policy.

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:	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.	1
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:	1
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.	1
The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education	1
How well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education	1

SCHOOL DETAILS

School name	St Mary's RC Primary School
Unique reference number	108618
Local authority	North Tyneside
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.	
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