



Star of the Sea RC Primary School

Seatonville Road, Whitley Bay, Tyne and Wear, NE25 9EG

School Unique Reference Number: **108622**

Inspection dates:	17 – 18 January 2019
Lead inspector:	Elaine White
Team inspector:	Clare Swales

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Good	2
Catholic Life:		Outstanding	1
Religious Education:		Requires Improvement	3
Collective Worship:		Outstanding	1

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

Star of the Sea RC Primary School is a good Catholic school because:

- The Catholic ethos and faith are central to the school. As soon as you enter the school it is very clear that the prime purpose is Catholic education, helping children to develop their faith to understand that God loves them. It is a welcoming place where everyone is loved and respected and the love of learning is evident in all aspects of the school.
- The Catholic Life of the school 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 and take a leading role in activities which promote the school's ethos within the wider community.
- The quality of Collective Worship is outstanding. Prayer and worship is central to the life of the school and a key part of every school celebration. Pupils act with reverence and respect.
- Religious Education requires improvement due to inconsistencies across the school in the quality of assessment and level of challenge for pupils. Pupils express and demonstrate an enjoyment of Religious Education lessons and their behaviour is exemplary.

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- Star of the Sea is a larger than average sized primary school serving the parish of Our Lady Star of the Sea, Whitley Bay.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average.
- The majority of pupils are from white British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning and assessment so that all pupils make good or better progress by:
 - using assessment information more effectively to match learning tasks and activities to pupils' needs and provide information to pupils about how to improve their work.
 - challenging all pupils, but particularly the more able, so that they make consistently good progress and achieve to the best of their ability.
 - further develop assessment systems and ensure leaders analyse the progress of different groups of pupils to target intervention where necessary.

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 Catholicity of Star of the Sea is evident from the moment one enters the school. The environment is welcoming and there is a deep sense of community amongst staff, pupils, parents and governors.
- Pupils contributed to the formation of the mission statement which is prominently displayed around the school.
- Pupils wholeheartedly embrace the Catholic ethos of the school and take full advantage of the opportunities this offers. They take a leading role in activities which promote the Catholic Life of the school.
- Pupils are very aware of their personal spirituality and eloquently express what it means and how it shapes their relationships with others in school, in their families and in the wider community.
- Pupils are very aware of the needs of others. They see it as their responsibility to help those in need. A year 4 pupil spoke with compassion about raising money throughout the school year for CAFOD, Children in Need, Comic Relief, St Cuthbert's Care, the homeless and refugees. The school also supports local food banks as well as the Samaritan's Purse Shoebox Appeal.
- The newly formed Mini Vinnie group, led by the deputy headteacher, is looking forward to further developing the work of the school in the community.
- Pupils are enthusiastic about the opportunities to work with the Youth Ministry Team; pupils in year 4 look forward to their overnight stay at the Emmaus Youth Village, whilst pupils in year 6 enjoy the annual festival held there.
- Each classroom has a prominent focal prayer area. The area is well resourced and pupils use these areas with reverence and respect. Artefacts are high quality and pupils enjoy using them to prepare thoughtful and inspiring focal points. One pupil in nursery commented 'I can play with Jesus here'.

- The prayer garden is at the heart of the school building. Pupils see it as a place of quiet and a place for them to enjoy prayerful reflection.

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

- The provision for the Catholic Life of the school is a very high priority.
- Staff are excellent role models and they value opportunities to deepen their own spirituality in order to further support their pupils. They are eager to take advantage of Diocesan training in spirituality and formation, as well as working with other schools in the Catholic cluster. They appreciate the opportunity for retreat, with one member of staff commenting that this 'strengthens us as a team'.
- Displays reflecting the Catholicity of the school are of a very high quality. Beautiful stained glass windows designed and made by pupils reflect the school's devotion to Our Lady. A display of the aspects of Catholic Life in school shows the charity work that pupils are involved in. Displays evolve with the liturgical year, during Advent a learning walk depicted the story of Christmas and each Lent the Stations of the Cross are dramatised.
- The leadership team has a firm awareness of the changing social context of some of their pupils. In order to offer further support to pupils in school the deputy headteacher has very skilfully developed the existing Rainbows bereavement programme to address other issues pupils experience within a wider social context. This is a huge strength of the school, and the support is very much welcomed and appreciated by pupils and their families. One pupil made a gift of a rainbow logo to the group in thanks for the support received.
- Pupils are supported in their physical, social and emotional needs through nurture groups, friendship groups, Lego club and the buddy system which operates between year 6 and reception class. The school has an annual friendship week as well as transition programmes for year 6 pupils when transferring to secondary school.
- The school has a clear behaviour policy which is embedded into the daily life of the school. This is evident in pupils' exemplary behaviour around school, the respect they show to one another, to adults and to their learning environment.
- The behaviour policy is underpinned by the Statements of Belief, which are shared with the whole school community. Parents appreciate that the statements are shared with them via newsletters and the website, with one parent commenting that she 'talks about them with her children at home'.
- School and parish work closely together on sacramental preparation. Two members of staff and members of the governing body help to run the programme which is greatly valued and supported by parents.
- The parish priest and deacon are regular visitors to school; pupils and staff enjoy their visits and their support.

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

- The provision for the Catholic Life of the school is given the highest priority by leaders. This is complimented by the high priority given to Collective Worship in school. Staff, pupils and families benefit from the deep commitment of school leaders to the Church's mission in education.
- The Catholic Life of the school is carefully monitored and analysed; leaders take into account the views of staff, pupils and parents, which leads to well targeted and planned improvements.
- Continuing professional development (CPD) focusing on the Catholic Life of the school occurs frequently and effectively. As a result, staff have a keen understanding of the school's mission and are actively involved in shaping and supporting it.
- The school engages very successfully with parents and carers, they are very well informed about the Catholic Life of the school through weekly newsletters and website items. Parents are highly supportive of the school's mission and appreciate the benefits of it for their children.
- The governing body is highly ambitious for the Catholic Life of the school and makes a very significant contribution to it. Governors have high expectations of staff and pupils with regard to spiritual development. They are kept up to date with all aspects of Catholic Life by the deputy headteacher and the Religious Education coordinator. Governors are very proactive, attending liturgies, Collective Worship, school Masses and various fundraising initiatives. A number of governors and staff are catechists supporting the programme for sacramental preparation.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

3

- 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 requires improvement.

- Most pupils say they enjoy Religious Education lessons. They display positive attitudes to learning, demonstrate interest and enthusiasm and want to do their best. Behaviour for learning is good.
- Pupils start school with knowledge and skills that are in line with what is expected for their age. They make good progress across early years foundation stage and by the end of reception year the percentage of pupils achieving a good level of development is above average. However, progress slows down in key stage 1 (KS1) and key stage 2 (KS2) with some pupils not making the expected progress.
- Outcomes at the end of KS1 and the end of year 4 require some improvement because attainment has been below the diocesan average for the last few years. Current progress across the school is not consistent.
- Evidence from book scrutinies shows a varied range of written activities, however progress is hindered as tasks are not always appropriately pitched to meet the needs of all pupils. Pupils are not sufficiently challenged to achieve higher levels.
- The most able pupils do not make consistently good progress in their learning because work and tasks are not challenging.
- The small group of pupils identified as having a special educational need make good progress because of targeted support.
- Differentiation is mainly by outcome. Tasks in Religious Education are not always consistently differentiated effectively to meet the needs of all pupils.

The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education requires improvement.

- Planning in some year groups lacks clarity and the learning outcomes are not clear. Some lessons are well paced but this is not consistent across the school. Expectations of what pupils can achieve are not always high enough and at times tasks are not matched closely enough to pupils' skills and understanding and therefore do not challenge and extend learning for all

groups of pupils.

- Where teaching is good, teachers use assessment skilfully to inform planning of future learning, however this is not consistent across school.
- Anomalies with teacher assessment indicate that not all staff are confident in assessing and levelling work accurately.
- The standard of marking and feedback is variable and does not always refer to key Religious Education skills. Marking is usually supportive but in some classes teachers do not provide sufficient improvement prompts and guidance to outline and support the next steps in learning.
- Relationships between pupils and teachers are warm and constructive and contribute to the pupils' eagerness to learn.
- Teaching assistants provide a good contribution to pupils' learning. They have positive relationships with pupils and support them well in their learning.

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

- Through the commitment and drive of the deputy headteacher and Religious Education coordinator, Religious Education is beginning to have a high profile in the life of the school. Together they have a clear vision and an understanding of the direction the school needs to take to ensure whole school improvement in Religious Education.
- The Religious Education coordinator has attended regular training and worked conscientiously, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, to implement all advice and guidance from the Diocese which is then disseminated to all staff.
- A systematic range of processes are in place for the monitoring and assessment of Religious Education which gives a clear picture of pupil progress and attainment, however not all assessment across the school is accurate. The deputy headteacher and Religious Education coordinator are aware of the areas for further development and are working hard to ensure that assessment is used consistently and accurately across the whole school to improve progress and attainment.
- The deputy headteacher is driven in her desire to improve both teaching and learning across the school and in inspiring the staff and pupils to share their vision. As a result, she has identified clear steps for improvement which are detailed in the school improvement plan and are beginning to impact on standards.
- The Religious Education curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference and contributes very effectively to the pupils' spiritual and moral development.
- The school works very effectively with the parish to ensure that sacramental preparation is in accordance with Diocesan policy.
- Governors are kept well informed about Religious Education and are knowledgeable about the school's strengths. They now need to provide appropriate challenge to senior leaders to ensure that Religious Education continues to improve.
- The deeply committed deputy headteacher and Religious Education coordinator have the professional drive and religious conviction to ensure that Religious Education continues to move forward.

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.

- There are a wide range of acts of Collective Worship at Star of the Sea. They engage the interest of all pupils and inspire them in deep thought and heartfelt response.
- From the earliest age, in nursery and reception class, children are encouraged to set up their prayer table for Collective Worship. This is built upon throughout the school as pupils develop skills in preparing and leading liturgy and Collective Worship, choosing appropriate prayers, readings and hymns, whilst incorporating dance and drama to deepen the experience. During the inspection, year 2 pupils were observed re-enacting the baptism of Jesus during a liturgy for parents, whilst children in KS2 performed a dance to emphasise the message of community.
- Pupils lead worship readily, displaying confidence and enthusiasm. They are creative and resourceful in their planning, using a highly effective combination of scripture, artefacts, liturgical music and art. To them, it is a natural part of being a faithful, praying community.
- The vast majority of pupils are naturally at ease with their expressions of faith; there is a genuine enthusiasm for Collective Worship which is reflected in the quality of communal singing, the quality of prayerful silence and in the depth of reverent participation in communal prayer.
- Almost all pupils have an excellent understanding of the Church's liturgical year, seasons and feasts, with one year 2 pupil speaking confidently about the Triduum.
- The experience of living and working in a faithful, praying community has a tangible effect on the spiritual and moral development of all pupils and is witnessed in all areas of school life.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship is outstanding.

- Collective Worship is central to the life of the school for all pupils. Praying together is part of the daily experience for all pupils and staff.
- Collective Worship is well planned. It has a clear purpose and message. Themes may be based on the Church's liturgical year or the Come and See topic, many incorporate social issues such as homelessness or the refugee crisis.
- Staff have an excellent understanding of the Church's liturgical year, seasons and feasts and are highly skilled in helping pupils to plan and deliver Collective Worship of a high quality.

- Staff and pupils work very effectively together to enhance worship through a wide variety of methods and styles of prayer.
- Opportunities are planned in a manner that attracts and facilitates attendance by families, governors and the clergy and response to this invitation is outstanding. These opportunities are very much appreciated by the school community and the response to pupil led worship is joyful.
- Responses to questionnaires demonstrate how greatly pupils and adults appreciate the varying forms of worship throughout school.

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

- Leaders and governors place the highest priority on the provision for Collective Worship. This is demonstrated in their own expert knowledge, that of the staff, the quality of resources and artefacts used and the wide range of worship opportunities offered to the whole school community.
- Leaders have an extensive understanding of the Church's liturgical year, seasons and feasts and are skilled in making these accessible to staff and pupils, enabling staff, in turn, to extensively promote pupils planning and leading Collective Worship in a variety of contexts.
- The provision for Collective Worship is rigorously monitored; the views of pupils and parents are regularly sought; the evaluation of Collective Worship is skilfully incorporated into the worship itself. Findings are incorporated into the school improvement plan and used to inform training needs.

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

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:**3**

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

3

The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education.

3

How well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.

2

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

SCHOOL DETAILS

School name	Star of the Sea RC Primary School
Unique reference number	108622
Local authority	North Tyneside
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	Mrs Julia Brachtvogel
Head teacher	Mr James Hannah
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