



St Oswald's Catholic Primary School

Hartford Road, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE3 5LE

School Unique Reference Number: **108497**

Inspection dates:	01 – 02 May 2019
Lead inspector:	Mary Frain

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

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

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

- St Oswald's is a very welcoming family community. The mission statement, 'Living, learning and loving together with Christ', is the cornerstone of the school ethos and it permeates every aspect of school life.
- The Catholic Life of the school is outstanding because the well-being, spiritual and personal development of pupils and staff underpin all that the school does. Pupils enthusiastically and confidently embrace all the many opportunities provided to contribute to the Catholic Life of the school and benefit greatly from them.
- The quality of Collective Worship is outstanding. Worship is central to the life of the school for all pupils and is at the heart of every school celebration. Pupils, guided by expert staff, demonstrate the skills necessary to deliver high quality acts of worship.
- The quality of Religious Education is outstanding. Teachers' excellent subject knowledge, consistently high expectations and carefully planned and creative tasks ensure that almost all pupils make outstanding progress.

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- St Oswald's is a one form entry primary school serving the parish of Sacred Heart, North Gosforth.
- 12% of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is below average.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- To further develop the provision for Catholic Life by:
 - embedding the use of interventions such as Rainbows to enhance the support of vulnerable pupils.
- To further develop the teaching and assessment of Religious Education by:
 - continuing to refine the new assessment framework in line with the standards framework recently introduced by the Diocese.

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.

- Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the Catholic Life of the school from their time in reception, as Special Friends to year 5, through to year 6. They appreciate and value the outstanding personal support and care shown by the staff and they are given a superb foundation of knowing who they are in Christ.
- Pupils contribute in a planned and systematic way to the school's evaluation of its Catholic Life and mission. They evaluate the provision regularly and year 6 Faith Leaders and Mini Vinnies in particular, take a lead in planning improvements to it. Recent developments such as early morning prayer opportunities for pupils and families during Advent and Lent have been very well received by the whole community.
- Pupil behaviour is exemplary. Older pupils are excellent role models and are quick to support and congratulate others.
- Pupils enthusiastically and confidently embrace the opportunities the school offers them to become active members of the school and parish community. Many pupils are committed and involved through a range of initiatives, for example weekly house group liturgies, Mini-Vinnies meeting after school, year 6 Faith Leaders and the liturgical dance lunchtime club. They have a strong sense of responsibility towards both the local and wider community as well as more globally and are keen to communicate this to their families.
- All pupils are given opportunities to become actively involved in the parish through class masses and liturgies, the first sacraments programme and through excellent communication between school, home and parish. A significant proportion of pupils read and serve at the Sunday morning parish Mass, where pupils say they are welcomed and appreciated.

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

- The mission statement, 'Living, learning and loving together with Christ' is lived out every day at St Oswald's. Expectations are made explicitly clear by leaders who encourage high aspirations and a weekly headteacher's award is directly linked to the school mission statement. All members of the school community emphasise the importance of the school, church, family connection.

- The school environment reflects its mission and identity. This begins with a prayer space at the school entrance which is maintained by parishioners and the beautiful prayer room which is used by pupils for voluntary prayer. The learning environment is calm, prayerful and structured with each individual at the heart of the vision.
- There is an exceptional sense of community at all levels which is evident in the high quality of relationships that exist between colleagues, parents, governors and pupils. All members of the community express a deep sense of pride in belonging to the school. Staff pray together daily and along with governors, are attending a day of reflection and fellowship at Lindisfarne later this term. Staff clearly value and appreciate these opportunities which strengthens the already very strong team spirit. The school is very attentive to the pastoral needs of staff and staff morale is very high.
- The behaviour policy is very clear and consistently applied. When pupils need guidance, it is given in a spirit of forgiveness with personalised support for emotional needs.
- Clear policies and structures are in place for the teaching of personal, social and health education and for the teaching of relationships and sex education. Programmes are taught very effectively and are carefully designed to ensure breadth and to reflect the school mission. The school has recently introduced the Rainbows programme as an intervention for pupils to further enhance the pastoral support offered by the school as they recognise a growing need in their pupils.

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 a source of inspiration for the whole community. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and Religious Education coordinator work as a very effective team to ensure that Catholic Life has the utmost priority in school. They are visible, exemplary role models in the school and the parish and deeply respected by the staff, pupils and parents. Their energy and enthusiasm are infectious, resulting in a relentless drive for improvement that is evident in the passion and commitment of the staff.
- The school's self-evaluation is rigorous and probing, resulting in well-targeted and planned improvements. The knowledgeable and skilful governors take a full part in this process. They are highly ambitious for the Catholic Life of the school and consistently emphasise Catholic Life as a school improvement priority. Governors have a high profile within the school and are confident in holding the leadership team to account, whilst being actively involved in providing support and challenge.
- Professional development for staff occurs frequently and is highly effective. All staff are keen to actively shape and support the mission statement.
- The school has highly successful strategies for engaging with parents and parishioners. The blog on the website is used very effectively to share liturgies and events. A significant number of parishioners who attend school liturgies and masses say they feel very much part of the school community.
- The parish priest is a very regular visitor to the school and knows many of the pupils and parents by name. He provides invaluable pastoral support to staff.

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 outstanding.

- The quality of learning and progress in Religious Education is outstanding. Almost all pupils, from their varied starting points, make good progress in each key stage with many achieving outstanding progress.
- Pupils' attainment is outstanding. Almost all pupils achieve above average attainment when compared with diocesan data. This has been sustained over a number of years and reflects the outstanding quality of teaching and assessment throughout the school.
- Pupils are articulate and confident when talking about their learning. They take great pride in their work and they see Religious Education as one of their most important lessons. Pupils in years 5 and 6, and increasingly in years 3 and 4, can confidently talk about scripture and link it to how we live our lives today. They enjoy debate, participating in role play, music, art and creative activities to support their learning. Due to all teachers having strong and confident subject knowledge, they are able to enhance learning through using many different strategies, which the pupils respond to with enthusiasm and commitment.
- Almost all pupils concentrate exceptionally well. They have a clear understanding of how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. The embedded use of 'talk partners' ensures that all pupils are active learners. Some pupils have access to personalised resources and equipment to help them to engage with their learning.

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

- The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education is outstanding, resulting in many pupils achieving outstanding progress.
- All teachers have very high expectations and excellent subject knowledge. Due to the strong base of subject knowledge, teachers have the confidence to be creative in their teaching strategies, regularly using group discussions, drama, hot seating and art work as part of their teaching. Teachers are highly effective in consistently planning high quality lessons linked to the pupils' current assessment. They are skilled at consolidating and extending pupils' knowledge, particularly through recalling previous learning and developing religious vocabulary. The parish priest is a regular visitor to classrooms and is a very valuable support in the teaching, particularly in years 5 and 6 where pupils debate the 'big questions', analyse scripture and themes at a deep level.

- Work in books is tracked and annotated to clearly show the progress made. The school has embraced the new standards framework and created a clear and effective system of assessment which all staff are using consistently. Data is analysed closely each term for all pupil groups and any areas of concern are quickly addressed.
- Success criteria are tailored to groups or individuals to ensure that all pupils can meet their full potential. Tasks are carefully differentiated to match pupil ability and tailored to individual needs where appropriate. Teachers plan time into lessons for pupils to respond to marking and feedback which extends, clarifies and consolidates learning. A key feature of the teaching is to recall previous learning, which is used to very good effect and is evident in work in books over time.
- Time is used very effectively to maximise learning opportunities and high quality resources, including skilled teaching assistants, are used very effectively to optimise learning for each pupil.

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

- The school's self-evaluation is accurate, clear and informed by a rigorous monitoring cycle. There is a highly effective action plan developed in partnership between the senior leadership team and the governing body.
- Leadership of Religious Education is outstanding. The Religious Education coordinator is exceptional. She is passionate about the subject and is highly motivated to ensure that her vision for outstanding teaching and learning is delivered across the school. She skilfully delivers training and careful monitoring and support.
- Staff new to the school are given thorough and specialist support which is ensuring that teaching and outcomes are consistently outstanding.
- Leaders ensure that pupils have access to outstanding sacramental preparation. Diocesan guidelines are followed closely. It is fully embedded in the Religious Education curriculum.
- Governors give the same importance to outcomes in Religious Education as they do to English and Mathematics. They are extremely knowledgeable about practice and standards in school. They offer outstanding support and challenge in all aspects of Religious Education and discharge their statutory and canonical duties well.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

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- 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.

- The quality of Collective Worship is outstanding. There is a genuine enthusiasm for Collective Worship reflected in the prayerful silence, the quality of responses to prayer and joyous singing.
- Appropriate to their age, all pupils regularly plan and lead their own class Collective Worship linked to the liturgical cycle or the week's 'statement to live by'. House group weekly liturgies, which are a new development this year, have been enthusiastically embraced by staff and pupils. Pupils eagerly look forward to activities that are planned to celebrate St Oswald's day, which involve the whole school reflecting upon the mission statement.
- There are many opportunities for voluntary prayer, including use at breaktimes of the prayer room, where ideas and themes are changed regularly. There are regular opportunities for Mass in school and for classes to travel to church for Mass in the day chapel. There are class liturgies where families and parishioners are invited every half term for each class.
- Pupils are encouraged to pray in a range of ways and they are able to use a variety of resources in their prayer linking scripture, liturgical music and other forms of reflection. They have many opportunities to write and share their own prayers.
- The confidence of many pupils in planning, leading and participating in worship is very striking and commented on by visitors, parishioners, parents and governors.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship is outstanding.

- Collective Worship is central to the life of the school. Prayer opportunities are built into the school day for both staff and pupils, starting with the daily briefing for staff. Prayer opportunities are well planned by the leadership to ensure that the liturgical year or current world and local events as appropriate are reflected.
- A range of regular opportunities are provided for families and members of the parish community. This is through class liturgies, Masses and celebrations of key parts of the Church's year. Parishioners are warmly welcomed into school, and many appreciate the opportunities offered.

- Each class has access to high quality resources to support class Collective Worship. The 'Travelling Crib' and 'Easter Mystery' resources are very well used, with opportunities for pupils and families to respond in the corresponding class journal with prayers and art work. Parents describe how pupils are able to plan and lead liturgies at home using these resources due to their experience of leading in school. Short daily reflections are used very effectively to enhance moments of quiet and to embed the use of scripture.
- A very successful development this year has been the introduction of a liturgical dance group that meets at lunchtime. Pupils who attend on a voluntary basis, are encouraged to engage with the scripture and themes to create movements and build a dance to reflect the discussion. The work is heartfelt and powerful, and the pupils are keen to develop the work further and share their work in a liturgy as appropriate.

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

- School leaders have expert knowledge of how to plan and deliver quality experiences of Collective Worship. They lead the school in a deepening appreciation of the Church's liturgical year in a way that is relevant to pupils in a contemporary context. As a result, pupil response to this provision is outstanding.
- Quality time is devoted to liturgical and spiritual development for the senior leaders. Leaders also ensure that all staff in the school receive formation to develop their spiritual and liturgical understanding. Leaders are highly visible as leaders of Collective Worship and are models of outstanding practice.
- The quality of Collective Worship is closely monitored by the Religious Education coordinator and headteacher through observations and scrutiny of evidence. This ensures that provision is consistently outstanding.
- Governors regularly attend Collective Worship in school and have completed monitoring forms identifying areas of strength and improvement, ensuring they have an accurate understanding of Collective Worship throughout the school.

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.

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

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

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RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:**1**

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

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The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education.

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

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COLLECTIVE WORSHIP:**1**

How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship.

1

The quality of provision for Collective Worship.

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

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SCHOOL DETAILS

School name	St Oswald's Catholic Primary School
Unique reference number	108497
Local authority	Newcastle
This Inspection Report is produced for the Rt Reverend Robert Byrne the Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle 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.	
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Head teacher	Mr Paul Marley
Date of previous school inspection	May 2014
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