



Star of the Sea RC Primary School

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

School Unique Reference Number: **108622**

Inspection dates: 24 – 25 June 2014

Lead inspector: Mary Tate

Team inspector: Lisa Stokoe

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

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

Star of the Sea RC Primary School is an outstanding Catholic school because:

- The Catholic Life of the school is outstanding because the mission and ethos of Catholic education underpins all that the school does. The well-being and personal development of all pupils and staff is at the heart of this faith community.
- The quality of Religious Education is good. It is not yet outstanding due to inconsistencies across the school in the quality of assessment, marking and feedback. Planning of differentiated tasks for all ability groups is also inconsistent across the school.
- The quality of Collective Worship is outstanding because it is central to the life of the school. Staff and pupils plan and lead high quality acts of worship and all pupils act with the deepest reverence and respect.

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- This is a larger than average sized primary school serving the newly amalgamated 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 assessment in Religious Education by:
 - Ensuring that all teachers have a secure knowledge of attainment in each level in Religious Education.
 - Ensuring that marking consistently provides information to pupils about how to improve their work and that they are given the time they need to respond to feedback in order to move their learning on.
 - Ensuring teachers consistently differentiate tasks effectively to meet the needs of all pupils.

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 have been instrumental in creating not only the school mission statement, but also a mission for the Year of Faith and for the recently opened prayer garden. These are displayed prominently around the school and in all classes.
- Pupils have a deep sense of belonging to the school community and are indeed, as a central display claims, 'Stars of the Sea'.
- Pupils are happy, confident and secure in their own stage of spiritual growth, demonstrating exemplary behaviour towards adults and each other. The school's 'Golden Rules' also support and encourage this.
- Pupils are fully aware of the needs of others within their own community and beyond. They can confidently talk about the various causes they support, effectively promoting the Catholic character of the school when they sing carols for Macmillan Cancer, hold their summer fair to support CAFOD and complete charity runs 'to buy chickens for families in other less developed countries'.
- Pupils have a strong sense of Catholic identity and understand the importance of their own beliefs and those of others within the school community.
- There are excellent links between school and parish which are greatly supported by the parish priest, governors, parents and parish members. It is through these strong parish links that pupils are able to extend their relationship with the local community, using the nearby Immaculate Heart Church for weekly Mass.

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

- The Catholic values of the school are given the highest priority and are embedded in the daily life of the school. The mission statement is a vital part of school life at Star of the Sea which all parts of the community have played a part in shaping.
- Excellent relationships exist within the school community with all stakeholders fully committed to making the school the best that it can be. Staff, governors, parents and pupils are all encouraged to be involved in school life and communication is seen as a strength of the school. There is a tangible sense of community which parents express as a family atmosphere, where all are welcomed and valued.
- Star of the Sea is a school committed to Catholic tradition and ethos. The Catholic character of the school is evident in the creative displays and sacred spaces prominently featured around the school.

- Clear policies and procedures are in place which are carefully planned to reflect the Catholic Life of the school for both pupils and staff. They provide high levels of support for pupils, staff and the wider community. There is an explicit commitment to the most vulnerable and needy with regular fundraising.
- Policies for Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) are carefully planned in conjunction with the North Tyneside family of schools cluster and taught well across the age ranges.
- Pupils' achievements are recognised at weekly celebration assemblies, through displays throughout the school, weekly newsletters and on the school website.
- Behaviour expectations are extremely high across all key stages with explicit rewards and sanctions being clearly understood by all. These systems and the policies in place to support them are firmly rooted in Gospel values.

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 deeply committed to the church's mission in education. Leaders, including governors, are energised by the task and are a source of inspiration to the whole community, leading to effective monitoring of the Catholic Life of the school.
- The development and sustenance of an authentic Catholic ethos is seen as a core leadership responsibility. The provision for the Catholic Life of the school is given the highest possible priority by leaders. This is reflected in the school's audits and action plans and leads to well planned improvements.
- Quality performance management and support systems, as well as well-matched continuing professional development opportunities are provided. The spirituality of staff is a priority and opportunities for the spiritual development of all staff are provided through regular prayer together and retreats.
- Parents are kept well informed about the Catholic Life of the school and are engaged through a weekly newsletter, and the school website, of relevant issues such as the weekly 'statements to live by' and an explanation of how parents can support this at home.
- The governing body is highly ambitious for the Catholic Life of the school and leads by example in emphasising it as a development priority. They are passionate about the school's mission, are actively involved in its evaluation and are ready to challenge as well as support where necessary.

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.

- There is a range and variety of prayer opportunities provided, thus ensuring that prayer is at the heart of the school community.
- Pupils' involvement in Collective Worship is a central part of their experience from their earliest years. Pupils are skilled in using a variety of methods to support their prayer.
- From a young age pupils are deeply reverent and respectful during Collective Worship. They are reflective and focused during prayer and know how to lead and contribute appropriately from their earliest days in school.
- Pupils speak highly of the different ways they pray in school and are able to outline the ways in which they plan Collective Worship and prayer together in their different class groups.
- Pupils have a good understanding of religious seasons and festivals and of the Church's liturgical year and are able to apply their knowledge and understanding to class discussions and Religious Education lessons.
- Adults provide good role models for the children and contribute significantly to the spiritual and moral development of the pupils. Pupils show respect for different faiths and are aware that religious beliefs are important.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship is outstanding.

- Collective Worship is at the heart of every school celebration and is inclusive and reflective. Praying together is a natural part of the school day for all staff and pupils.
- There is a rich variety of different forms of worship, which are enthusiastically embraced by the whole school community. Pupils are given many opportunities to take responsibility for leading worship in the school in a variety of ways.
- Pupils, governors and parents commented on how much they value the school's Collective Worship, in all its forms.
- Focal points are evident in each class with well thought out resources. High quality displays around the school promote an ethos of prayer and provide good support for reflection.
- The school is justifiably proud of its recently developed prayer garden which is used well by pupils in lessons and at break times.
- Each class has their own prayer journal which helps them grow in understanding of their Catholic identity.

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

- Leaders and managers have an excellent understanding and expert knowledge of how to plan and deliver high quality experiences of Collective Worship.
- Leaders have a deeply rooted understanding of the Church's liturgical year, its seasons, rites and symbols. A range of artefacts, symbols and Information and Communications Technology (ICT) are used to deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- Leaders and managers regularly monitor the quality of Collective Worship, it is under constant review. Findings inform future developments and training needs.
- All staff have attended and benefitted greatly from worship and prayer training. Their enthusiasm and focused drive for improvement has led to enrichment of liturgies and worship.
- The views of parents and governors are regularly sought. The responses are highly valued and lead to further developments.
- Sacramental preparation is well embedded and in line with diocesan policy. The parish is currently training new catechists and this year has postponed the sacramental preparation programme as they raise the age of children to year four.

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.

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2

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

- Pupils enjoy and understand the value of Religious Education and are keen to do well, they have very positive attitudes and speak enthusiastically about their learning.
- Pupils in all lessons observed across the school concentrate exceptionally well and are rarely off task, therefore behaviour for learning is outstanding.
- Pupils enter school with knowledge and skills that are below what is expected for their age. They make good or better progress through early years, foundation stage and key stage one. This continues throughout key stage two.
- Inspection findings and evidence presented by the school show no notable differences between groups of learners.
- Pupils identified as having special educational needs make very good progress because of well-targeted support from highly skilled staff.
- Across the school, pupils are developing well in their knowledge and understanding as well as in their ability to reflect on meaning and consider the impact of religious ideas on their daily lives.
- 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 attainment or progress.

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

- Teaching is mainly good with some examples of outstanding teaching. In the best lessons pupils are set challenging tasks which are well matched to their learning needs and which successfully engage all pupils. Teachers demonstrate high expectations of behaviour and engagement and, as a result, pupils concentrate well.
- Relationships between teachers and pupils are positive and additional adult support in the classroom is used well. As a result most pupils and groups of pupils including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress.
- 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.
- Whilst some books show work of a very high standard, there are inconsistencies in differentiation across classes.
- There is a lack of consistency in the guidance given by teachers in marking; consequently

pupils are not always clear about what is expected of them in order to improve their work or given sufficient time to respond to feedback.

- Effective assessment procedures are embedded into Religious Education which inform the teacher of the level at which pupils are working.

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

- The role of Religious Education coordinator is given very high priority within the school which ensures that Religious Education has a high profile. She provides valuable support for staff to ensure that they feel well equipped to deliver quality experiences for pupils.
- Leaders have conducted a wide range of activities related to monitoring outcomes and provision and the school is well placed to further improve and support teaching.
- It is not yet outstanding because the targeted planning and strategic action taken by the school has not yet led to outstanding teaching and outcomes in Religious Education.
- Leaders have a clear picture of the school's strengths and areas for development, founded on sound observations, and have drawn up action plans to ensure that the school is continually improving. An effective tracking system is in place and pupils are monitored to ensure they make progress.
- The curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference well.
- Diocesan guidelines for Sacramental preparation are followed enthusiastically by all and the parish priest works very effectively with catechists, parents and pupils.
- Members of the governing body are frequent visitors to school offering both challenge and support. They ensure that all statutory and canonical responsibilities are very well met.

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:**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

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:**2**

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

1

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

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, (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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