



St Aloysius RC Infant School

Sharpendon Street, Hebburn, Tyne and Wear, NE31 1RZ

School Unique Reference Number: **288166**

Inspection dates:	22 – 23 January 2014
Lead inspector:	Jill Burgess

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

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

St Aloysius RC Infant School is a good Catholic school because:

- The impact of the school's Catholic ethos can be clearly seen in the positive relationships which exist throughout the school community.
- Pupils produce work to a good standard overall and make good progress in Religious Education over time.
- Collective Worship is valued by all and contributes strongly to the spiritual and moral development of pupils.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- The governors' role in actively evaluating the Catholic Life of the school is not yet firmly established.
- The quality of Religious Education is inconsistent across the school. Some lessons are not sufficiently differentiated to meet the needs of all children.
- In Collective Worship, there are not enough opportunities to allow pupils to plan and lead worship independently.

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- The school has been federated with a nearby junior school since September 2009 and shares the same governing body and headteacher. The headteacher took up post in September 2013.
- There have been significant changes in the school in recent years.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage, and there are very few pupils that speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in the care of the local authority, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, and pupils whose parents are serving in the armed forces, is average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is slightly below average but the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by:
 - ensuring teachers consistently plan differentiated tasks across and within levels of attainment;
 - employing a wider range of creative teaching strategies to fully engage pupils throughout the lesson.
- Improve Collective Worship by:
 - ensuring that children's skills in leading worship are extended.
- Improve the quality of Catholic Life by:
 - providing systematic opportunities for the governing body to become actively involved in the monitoring and evaluating process.

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 good.

- Children are keen to get involved in the life of the school reflecting their mission statement 'no-one should sit back and take'. They participate joyfully in a variety of events in school and in the parish.
- Children speak positively about their school and appreciate the benefits and responsibilities being part of a community brings. They speak with enthusiasm of their desire to 'help other people', and they are proud of recent fundraising efforts e.g. buying a bee and providing water for a family, through the Cafod gift scheme.
- Pupils are considerate to others and reconciliation is important. Demonstrating an understanding of the need to forgive and be forgiven, children have a clear sense of right and wrong, a point emphasised during discussions with parents.
- Pupils feel safe and supported and they are fully aware of the systems in place to promote good behaviour. The school council talk with confidence about how school rules are reviewed and how 'Golden time' helps encourage everyone to try their best. As a result pupils are happy and confident, secure in their own stage of spiritual and emotional growth.
- Pupils benefit from opportunities to explore the religious life of others.

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

- The quality of Catholic Life provided by the school is good, ensuring the spiritual needs of pupils are well met. The learning environment strongly reflects the school's Catholic character and liturgical displays are presented with great care and attention. The school's mission statement is referred to regularly.
- Children pray often and there are examples throughout the school of pupils including their own intentions in prayer corners and focal points within classrooms.
- Good relationships exist between members of the school community. School is mindful of its responsibility to staff, pupils and their families and there seems to be a readiness to work through change together, to ensure children's learning and progress remains unaffected.

- Teachers and additional staff work sensitively with children with specific needs to provide high quality pastoral care. There is a good level of support available in all classes.
- The school is working towards effectively integrating personal, social and health education (PSHE) programmes, such as Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL), into the curriculum and has adopted the diocesan Journey in Love syllabus for Relationships and Sex Education (RSE).
- High expectations of behaviour are frequently communicated to pupils.

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

- Leaders and managers strive to make certain the Catholic ethos underpins all activities and they demonstrate a public commitment to the mission of the church. The headteacher has a clear vision and high aspirations for future developments and is well supported by the parish priest and governors who are regular visitors to school. Their strong promotion of Catholic values is clearly shared by the whole community who demonstrate a sense of pride in their school.
- There is growing evidence to illustrate the range of monitoring activities led by school leaders relating to provision and outcomes for the Catholic Life of the school. The school recognises the value of gaining the views of key partners to ensure self-evaluation provides an accurate picture of strengths and areas for development. As a result, all members of the school community hold Catholic Life in high regard and are able to articulate the distinctive ethos apparent within the school.
- Positively relationships are evident between home and school. Parents speak positively of the impact school has on their children; they show a good understanding of the school's mission and are supportive of it.
- Governors, many of whom are recent appointments, show a high level of enthusiasm and they appreciate the need to challenge as well as support. In terms of collective worship, their monitoring role is not yet firmly established.

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.

- From their earliest starting points in nursery, children are encouraged to respond to opportunities to pray collectively with reverence and respect. As a result, group, class and school gatherings are both thoughtful and thought provoking. Children are keen to participate in singing and signing with joy and enthusiasm, whilst also appreciating there are times for silence and personal reflection.
- By year two (Y2) children show increased levels of confidence and lead aspects of Collective Worship with the guidance of the class teacher. Given their developing skills pupils are not yet given sufficient opportunities to plan and deliver worship independently.
- Most pupils have a good understanding of the religious seasons at an age appropriate level and are able to articulate how Collective Worship makes them feel and how it helps them 'try to be a kind person'.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship is good.

- Collective Worship is an integral part of this school and many opportunities are evident for staff to pray together as well as staff and pupils. This has a beneficial effect, deepening the sense of community.
- Staff have a good level of skill when planning and delivering Collective Worship. Effective use of resources maintains interest and promotes reflection allowing key themes and messages to be explored creatively at an age appropriate level. Children concentrate and listen attentively during class and school gatherings and are able to talk about their impact. Religious diversity is celebrated.
- The provision for Collective Worship offers a thorough grounding for pupils in terms of the variety of forms prayer and reflection can take. Pupils are beginning to lead elements of worship with increasing confidence as they move through the school.
- Collective Worship is well attended by parents who speak positively about the range of experiences offered by the school.

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

- Senior leaders regularly lead Collective Worship providing good quality experiences. They are knowledgeable and enthusiastic in their approach which ensures pupils enjoy and engage with collective worship. Staff actively seek to involve children and this is evident throughout the school, from a group of nursery children releasing red balloons, to the year one (Y1) class thanking special people in their lives, to a cake making demonstration for the whole school to encourage peace and sharing. A good understanding of the Church's liturgical year, its seasons, rites and symbols is displayed by all staff.
- The Religious Education coordinator is committed to ensuring the training needs of staff are met and a spirituality day is planned this half term to offer opportunities to further explore their spiritual and liturgical understanding. Policies have recently been reviewed and this area is well resourced. The school is keen to constantly review provision; consequently targets for improvement have been identified through self-evaluation and are included in the school development plan. Within Collective Worship, teachers are given opportunities to observe one another and share good practice.
- School actively seeks the view of pupils, staff and parents regarding the quality of Collective Worship and responds appropriately.

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

- Children are able to talk about the work they do in class, for example, Y2 confidently described their topic on the Gospel writers and Y1 children talked about the Presentation at the Temple.
- Behaviour for learning is generally good, although there is some low level disruption evident.
- Children are encouraged to work collaboratively from an early age and it is impressive to see how well they work in teams, a skill highlighted during the reception class quiz on the Wedding Feast at Cana.
- Pupils identified as having a special educational need progress well as they are effectively and sensitively supported by teaching assistants.
- Due to the state of transition in level expectations across all of 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 mainly good and, as a result, pupils make good progress over time. It is clear that expectations have been raised and children are responding to this positively.
- Teachers value Religious Education; they plan well sharing specific learning objectives with pupils. Staff have a confident level of expertise, however, the range of activities provided for pupils can be limited and there is an insufficiently wide range of teaching strategies which means that pupils are not always fully engaged throughout lessons.
- Targets are included in books and are annotated by teachers. Marking and feedback are provided regularly. This is an area which has been reviewed recently and good progress is being made towards fully implementing a consistent approach. Examples in work books show children were given some opportunities to respond to teacher comments.
- Over time, there is evidence of some differentiated activities although this is not sufficiently well developed, both across and within levels of attainment, consequently work is not always appropriately matched to the needs of individual pupils.
- Achievement is celebrated and children understand their good efforts are rewarded.

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

- Outcomes in Religious Education are at least good.
- After much change and an extended period of transition, there is now a systematic and sustained approach to monitoring. The leadership team have a good knowledge of school strengths and areas for development. A range of data is used well to provide a firm basis for planning school improvement in this area. The governing body are not formally involved in the monitoring of Religious Education and the school has identified this as an area for improvement.
- The Religious Education coordinator is highly knowledgeable. She works effectively with colleagues in both the infant and junior school. Well informed of current developments, she is keen to keep the school moving forward. There is an enthusiasm and commitment to improve, however staff have not yet been given enough opportunities to share good practice especially to improve creativity and promote a higher level of engagement from pupils.
- Religious Education has a prominent profile in school, making a positive contribution to the moral and spiritual development of pupils.
- Good links have been forged within the wider community which enhances the Religious Education provision. Visitors to school help children develop a deeper understanding of the issues raised in the curriculum. First hand experiences are also provided through visits to church.
- The Curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference in all areas.

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

HOW EFFECTIVE THE SCHOOL IS IN PROVIDING CATHOLIC EDUCATION:**2****CATHOLIC LIFE:****2**

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.

2

The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school

2

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

2

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.

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

School name	St Aloysius RC Infant School
Unique reference number	288166
Local authority	South 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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