



# St Cuthbert's RC Primary School

Grindon Lane, Sunderland, SR4 8HP

URN: 108838

<b>Inspection dates:</b>	24-25 September 2013
<b>Lead inspector:</b>	Elaine White

<b>OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS</b>	PREVIOUS INSPECTION:	Good	2
	THIS INSPECTION:	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
	<b>CATHOLIC LIFE:</b>	Outstanding	1
	<b>COLLECTIVE WORSHIP:</b>	Outstanding	1
	<b>RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:</b>	Outstanding	1

## SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

### St Cuthbert's Primary School is an outstanding school:

- St Cuthbert's is an outstanding Catholic 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 school and wider community.
- The provision for Collective Worship is outstanding, is central to the life of the school and a key part of every school celebration.
- The quality of Religious Education is outstanding. The areas for improvement from the last inspection have all been addressed and the school is continuing to ensure that all pupils make outstanding progress. A vibrant learning atmosphere is apparent throughout the school and because of this pupils enjoy their learning

# FULL REPORT

## INFORMATION ABOUT THIS SCHOOL

- St Cuthbert's is an average sized primary school which serves the parishes of St Cuthbert's, Immaculate Heart of Mary and Holy Rosary.
- The majority of pupils come from a white British background.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average as is the proportion of pupils supported at school action.

## WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

### ■ **Improve the quality of teaching and learning by:**

- The school should continue with the identified plans and actions taken that are already in place and leading to improvement

### ■ **Improv the quality of Collective Worship by:**

- Continuing to enhance the prayer life of the school by developing the prayer garden to support the spiritual development across the school.

## 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 and gain considerable benefit from it. They are able to express their own beliefs with confidence and have a good understanding of how their faith impacts on their own lives and others.
- Relationships within the school are very positive and pupils value the many opportunities that they are given. Pupils are at the centre of shaping the school's mission and ethos and are actively involved and take on responsibilities very enthusiastically such as Rosary leaders and school councillors.
- They respond fully to the needs of those beyond school and can articulate their views with confidence explaining the purpose of fundraising for charities such as CAFOD and the Sunderland Food Bank.
- Pupils work well together demonstrating very positive and enthusiastic attitudes to all aspects of school life. Behaviour management is very effective: pupils are extremely polite and considerate of others demonstrating good emotional awareness. They value the Catholic tradition of their school and are proud of it. Pupils throughout the school demonstrate a very good understanding and importance of key celebrations throughout the liturgical year.

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

- Provision for the Catholic Life of the school has the highest priority with the school's mission statement permeating throughout school ensuring that Christ is truly at the centre of all that takes place at St Cuthbert's.
- Pupils have many opportunities to participate fully in a number of key events and celebrations throughout the liturgical year in the school and within the parish. Thoughtful liturgies and assemblies provide time for pupils to reflect and share thoughts linked to Gospel values. Themed worship provides good opportunities to enhance pupils' spiritual and moral development.
- There is a strong team spirit amongst all staff and sharing knowledge and good practice is commonplace.
- From the moment you enter St Cuthbert's it is apparent that this is a school truly

committed to the Catholic tradition and ethos.

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

- The headteacher is a very positive presence around the school and together with the senior leadership team has a very clear understanding of Catholic education and the role of the Catholic school. They very effectively promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school. Staff and pupils work together to live the mission of the school with understanding and appreciation, consequently pupils are able to articulate the distinctive mission of the school well.
- The headteacher and senior leadership team have a deep commitment to the Church's mission in education; personal development and high quality care are paramount. They are outstanding role models providing very clear direction for improvement and ensure that opportunities for pupils' spiritual and moral development are frequent and have significant impact.
- Governors involve themselves wholeheartedly, as appropriate in the life of the school and are fully committed to promoting the religious and spiritual life of the school. Together with the headteacher they have a clear vision and high aspirations for future developments. Their strong promotion of Catholic values is clearly shared by the whole community who demonstrate great pride in their school.
- The school's mission statement is a living document which underpins all policies throughout the school and has a very high profile.
- Governors discharge their statutory and canonical duties well. They work effectively with the staff and headteacher, committed to upholding the strong caring ethos that exists throughout.

## 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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#### **Pupils' response to and participation in Collective Worship is outstanding.**

- St Cuthbert's is a prayerful community. There is a calm and peaceful ethos which pervades the school and is reflected in the pupils' excellent behaviour and consideration for others. From the earliest age pupils act reverently and show respect when participating in acts of worship. They listen well and are happy to take part in Collective Worship, liturgies, Masses and assemblies.
- Pupils are keen to participate and are at ease when praying in their school community. They can reflect silently and are developing a good awareness of a variety of styles and forms of prayer. They sing joyfully and respond positively to spontaneous prayer. Pupils participate in voluntary prayer sessions such as the lunchtime Rosary club and very often take the lead in preparing and delivering the rosary as well as liturgies and writing prayers in preparation for other acts of Collective Worship and Mass.
- 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.**

- Acts of Collective Worship are central to the life of the school and a key part of every school celebration. There is a clear policy for Collective Worship and the school uses a good range of strategies to ensure that it is both regular and inclusive. There are many opportunities for staff and pupils to pray together in a variety of forms of worship.
- Collective Worship is carefully planned and resourced to reflect the liturgical year. Praying together is a daily experience. Traditions such as the Rosary have a very high profile in the school and families are becoming more involved in the pupils' religious development through the seasonal travelling artefacts such as the travelling crib and Lenten bags.
- Parents, parishioners and governors are invited to share in various acts of Collective Worship, when appropriate and regularly attend the weekly class Masses which are timetabled throughout the year.

**Leaders and Managers' promotion, monitoring and evaluation of the provision for Collective Worship is outstanding.**

- The headteacher and senior leadership team are enthusiastic, energetic and display expert knowledge of how to plan and deliver high quality experiences of Collective Worship. They have a very clear understanding of the Church's liturgical year and use this to very good effect in leading the school in its knowledge and understanding of Catholic rites and symbols. Together they have a very good understanding of the strengths and areas for further development in Collective Worship through both formal and informal monitoring.
- The example the senior leadership team gives inspires all members of the staff in leading Collective Worship. Their dedication and commitment are instrumental in the drive to provide a high quality prayer life throughout the school.
- Sacramental preparation is well embedded and in line with diocesan policy.

## 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 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. All pupils enjoy their learning in Religious Education, have positive attitudes and work well in lessons, applying themselves to the tasks, working at a good pace.
- Pupils start school with knowledge and skills typically below those expected for their age. They make outstanding progress across the early years stage as their personal needs are very well met immediately as they enter school. They continue to make outstanding progress throughout key stage one and key stage two. They take pride in their work and show interest and enthusiasm in their learning. Pupils are religiously literate and very articulate and reflective in their oral responses.
- Those pupils identified as having a special educational need make good progress. The school is highly effective at meeting their needs by ensuring that work is closely matched to their ability. Excellent support from highly skilled teaching assistants ensures that their attainment and progress are similar to that of other pupils.
- 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**

- Teaching and assessment is outstanding. Teachers plan lessons very well and set challenging targets for pupils to achieve in their work, consequently, from their starting points all groups of pupils make rapid and sustained progress.
- Teachers are highly effective at meeting the needs of all groups of pupils. They thoroughly and regularly check pupils' learning, plan exciting activities that motivate pupils to want to learn and use focused and differentiated questioning to extend pupils understanding exceptionally well.
- Teachers intervene where necessary to deal with pupil misconceptions or to provide useful feedback so that learning is outstanding. All pupils are provided with rich experiences that make learning exciting, promoting their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development extremely well.

- The quality of marking is outstanding and teachers give clear points for further improvement which very effectively improves pupils' skills.
- The school has an accurate picture of pupils' achievement in Religious Education. It has a rigorous tracking system which effectively informs planning to ensure that all pupils are appropriately challenged.
- Experienced and skilled teaching assistants make a very positive contribution to pupils' learning and progress.

**How well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education is outstanding**

- The headteacher along with the deputy headteacher and Religious Education coordinator provide strong and highly effective leadership in Religious Education that ensures that all pupils achieve well. The hard working and deeply committed Religious Education coordinator has the professional drive and religious conviction to ensure that Religious Education continually moves forward. They are supported extremely well by a dedicated team of staff who are all ambitious for the school and pursue excellence.
- An established range of monitoring activities relating to provision and outcomes in Religious Education is well established and this has enabled the leadership team to have an accurate awareness of the areas for development. The analysis of data is grounded in a secure knowledge of the individual pupil.
- The Religious Education curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference and is given a high profile throughout the school contributing very effectively to the pupils' spiritual and moral development.
- The governing body discharge their statutory and canonical duties well. The link governor for Religious Education is very well informed and knowledgeable about the school's strengths and further areas for development. Governors are regular visitors into school and provide appropriate challenge to the headteacher and senior leadership team.



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

1

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

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**COLLECTIVE WORSHIP:**

**1**

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

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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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**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

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## SCHOOL DETAILS

**Unique reference number** 108838

**Local authority** Sunderland

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.

**Type of school** Primary

**Chair of governors** Mr Michael McNulty

**Head teacher** Mrs Jane Ward

**Date of previous school inspection** 12 – 13 July 2011

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