



St Pius X RCVA Primary School

Thornfield Road, Consett, County Durham, DH8 8AX

School Unique Reference Number: **114249**

Inspection dates: 04 – 05 May 2017
Lead inspector: Elizabeth Seagrove

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

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

is an outstanding Catholic school because:

- St Pius X school is a fully inclusive school where everyone is welcomed, valued and affirmed with prayer and worship at the heart of the life of the school. St Pius X is a school which the pupils, staff, parents and governors are proud of.
- The quality of Collective Worship is outstanding. Worship is central to the life of the school. Staff and pupils plan and lead prayer opportunities with reverence and joy.
- The Catholic Life of the school is outstanding because the well-being, spiritual and personal development of all its pupils and staff underpin all that the school does. Pupils are keen to participate in the varied opportunities provided and benefit greatly from them.
- The quality of Religious Education is good. Learning and progress are at least good in each key stage. It is not yet outstanding as marking and feedback do not always give children the guidance on how their work can be improved. The quality of Religious Education is good but requires more rigorous tracking, monitoring and moderation of levelled work to be outstanding.

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- St Pius X RC Primary school is a smaller than average primary school serving the parish of St Pius X in the Moorside suburb of Consett.
- Most of the pupils are baptised Roman Catholics.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is significantly above the national average.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- To improve the quality of teaching and learning by:
 - Ensuring that marking and feedback is consistent across the school and that pointers made provide pupils with information about how to improve their work and pupils are given time to respond.
- To improve the monitoring by:
 - Developing a more systematic approach to the monitoring of lessons to ensure there is more rigour in the development points given to staff in order to move learning forward.
- To improve accuracy of assessments by:
 - Further developing the whole school monitoring systems of Religious Education to increase the understanding of what is expected for each of the levels of attainment.

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.

- Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the Catholic Life of the school and benefit greatly from it. Pupils have a deep sense of belonging to their school and the respect and nurturing attitude towards all pupils is exemplary. There is a caring atmosphere that pervades all aspects of school life. One parent commented that, ‘St Pius X has a strong faith and Catholic values which are reflected in the children’s work, friendships and attitudes.’
- Pupils are at the heart of school celebrations and, through strong parish links, pupils are able to extend their relationship with the local community.
- Pupils willingly take on positions of responsibility and leadership within the school. They confidently talk about the various causes they support, effectively promoting the Catholic character of the school when they collect for the local food bank, for example, or take part in fundraising activities. The pupils demonstrate exemplary behaviour towards adults and each other. They are alert to the needs of the more vulnerable members of the school community.
- Pupils are clearly supported throughout school by a range of pastoral opportunities provided by caring adults. All staff play their part and everyone is valued for their contribution.

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 daily life. The mission statement, renewed in 2015, is a vital part of school life at St Pius X which all members of the community have played a part in shaping.
- Excellent relationships exist within the school community working together to make the school the best place it can be. Staff, governors, parents and pupils are all encouraged to be involved in school life. Parents talk about a strength of the school being its focus on family and community.
- The school is a very prayerful community where all members of the community feel welcomed. One parent commented that, ‘it is a holy, prayerful school’.

- St Pius X School is committed to its Catholic character and ethos. This is evident in the displays and sacred spaces prominently featured around the school and in particular the sculpture in the school entrance representing the school mission statement: 'To renew all things in Christ.'
- Clear policies and procedures are in place which are carefully planned to reflect the Catholic Life of the school for both pupils and staff. Procedures are in place for developing the whole staff and in sharing the best practice within school.

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

- The leadership and management of the Catholic Life of the school are outstanding. All leaders, including the governing body, have high expectations for the promotion and continuing development of the Catholic Life.
- Staff and governors are committed to the role of the Catholic school. Governors involve themselves wholeheartedly, as appropriate, in the life of the school and are fully committed to promoting its religious and spiritual life.
- The provision for the Catholic Life of the school is given the highest priority by leaders. This is reflected in the schools self-evaluation and performance management. Governors are actively involved in the schools self-evaluation and are ready to challenge as well as support where necessary. Effective systems are in place to monitor and evaluate the Catholic Life of the school. These are clearly linked to school improvement and performance management.
- Through regular parent and carer questionnaires, newsletters, attendance at class liturgies and daily contact, the headteacher has successful strategies for engaging with parents and carers.
- Pastoral care provision is outstanding and behaviour around the school is excellent.

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.

1

1

2

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

- St Pius X school is a prayerful community. There is a calm and peaceful atmosphere around the school. This is reflected in the pupils' excellent behaviour and consideration for each other. Pupils' involvement in Collective Worship is a central part of their experience.
- From the earliest age pupils act reverently when participating in acts of worship. Pupils are confident in planning and carrying out Collective Worship using a variety of styles and resources. They are able to talk knowledgeably about the variety of prayers and liturgies that take place. They have an excellent understanding of the Church's liturgical year.
- Pupils participate comfortably and reverently in both spontaneous and traditional prayer. Their enthusiasm is reflected in the standard of communal singing and their participation in community prayer and in their silence.
- Pupils recognise the special nature of liturgical symbols and show respect. They are aware that religious beliefs are important, demonstrating respect for their own faith and the faith of others.
- Adults provide excellent role models for the pupils in their response and participation in liturgy.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship is outstanding.

- The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is outstanding and ensures that the spiritual needs of the pupils are well met.
- There is a clear policy for Collective Worship. It is carefully planned and resourced.
- There is a rich variety of different forms of worship evident throughout the school. In all classrooms there are attractive and imaginative focus areas reflecting the liturgical season. These are used by the pupils when preparing a space for prayer. Outside there is more than one area used for Collective Worship, the use of which further enhances the provision.
- There is a timetable for Collective Worship. Parents, parishioners and governors are invited to share with the school community. Parents and governors appreciate the opportunity to attend liturgies and acts of worship and comment with enthusiasm.

- Families are involved through the seasonal artefacts such as the travelling cribs, Lenten bags and Oscar Romero resources. Parents talk positively about the impact this has had on prayer opportunities at home with their children.
- Sacramental preparation is well embedded and staff work effectively with the parish to deliver the programme.

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

- The leaders' promotion, monitoring and evaluation of the provision for Collective Worship are good.
- The headteacher and Religious Education coordinator, who is relatively new to the role, have a well-developed knowledge of Collective Worship and set a high standard in school with well-planned liturgical experiences. They lead by example ensuring that pupils and staff develop a thorough understanding of the rites, symbols, traditions and seasons of the liturgical year.
- The headteacher and Religious Education coordinator have a clear view of the strengths and areas for development which is understood and supported by the entire school community. Plans are in place for improvement which allocates time, resources and training to develop the spiritual and liturgical development of all staff.
- Leaders seek the views of pupils and parents regarding the quality of worship in school. These responses are valued and have been used to inform developments such as the changing of Mass times on a Friday so as to allow pupils to attend church for the service.

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.

2

2

2

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

- The quality of learning and progress in Religious Education is good. Most pupils enjoy their learning in Religious Education, have positive attitudes and work well in lessons, applying themselves to the tasks and working at a good pace. They are able to say why they enjoy it and what they learn from it. The Religious Education curriculum impacts positively upon the pupils' spiritual and moral development.
- Good behaviour has a positive impact on learning across the school. Pupils are thoughtful and articulate in their responses.
- The pupils identified as having special educational needs are making progress similar to that of other pupils. The school is effective at meeting their needs by ensuring work is well matched to their ability. Very good support from skilled teaching assistants ensures pupils' engagement in lessons.
- Opportunities exist for pupils to experience their own traditions as well as those of other faiths. For example, some pupils visited a synagogue when studying Judaism.
- The annual diocesan data return (ADDR) shows that the standards of attainment of the large majority of pupils are in line or slightly above Diocesan averages.
- Excellent relationships between staff and pupils exist.

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

- Teaching and assessment is good overall. As a result of teaching which is good with some examples of outstanding teaching, pupils achieve well over time.
- Teachers show good subject knowledge and use diocesan plans when planning and teaching Religious Education. Providing learning activities that are varied with an appropriate range of resources, staff ensure tasks are well matched to the needs of pupils including those with additional needs.
- All staff have a clear understanding of the value and importance of Religious Education and communicate this effectively to their pupils.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils and as a result of sharing learning objectives and success criteria, pupils are developing their understanding of how well they are doing. However, marking does not always sufficiently guide them to know what is expected of them in order to improve their work.

- Assessment and tracking procedures are evident but as yet not fully embedded into teaching practice across the school. Monitoring of lessons does take place. However, feedback from it is not specific in providing staff with pointers on how to further improve learning and teaching.

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

- There are activities in place for the monitoring and assessment of Religious Education which gives a picture of pupil progress and attainment including an electronic tracking system introduced since the last inspection. However, there are some inconsistencies of how assessment is being used to move pupils learning forward.
- The headteacher and Religious Education coordinator have a clear vision and sense of direction for what is required to move the school forward. They are effective in promoting the high profile of this subject amongst staff.
- Good use is made of Diocesan training by the headteacher and Religious Education coordinator which is cascaded to staff. The leadership team have been proactive in using the expertise of teachers and support staff to mentor and develop colleagues.
- Governors are well informed of the priorities which have been identified to improve outcomes for pupils. They are well informed and knowledgeable about the school's strength and further areas for development.
- Diocesan guidelines for sacramental preparation are followed enthusiastically further forging strong links with the parish community.
- The Religious Education curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference and contributes very effectively to the pupils' spiritual and moral development.

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.

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 Pius X RCVA Primary School
Unique reference number	114249
Local authority	Durham
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	Louise Renwick
Head teacher	Joanne Cruise
Date of previous school inspection	April 2012
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