



St Mary's RC Primary School

Welfare Park, Wingate, Co. Durham, TS28 5AN

School Unique Reference Number: **114279**

Inspection dates: 21 – 22 November 2018

Lead inspector: Mary Frain

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

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

St Mary's RC Primary School is a good Catholic school because:

- St Mary's is a very warm, welcoming school where everyone shares the leadership's clear vision. The mission and ethos of Catholic education radiates throughout the whole school community.
- 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 embrace all of the many opportunities provided to contribute to the Catholic Life of the school and benefit greatly from them.
- The quality of Collective Worship is good. Prayer is an important part of every day. Pupils act with reverence and are keen to participate.
- Religious Education provided at St Mary's is good. Lessons are well planned and well resourced and as a result children make good progress.

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- St Mary's is a very small primary school with 59 pupils and is federated with St Godric's RC Primary School in Thornley.
- St Mary's has three classes of mixed age groups: Class 1 (Reception and Year One), Class 2 (Year Two and Year Three), and Class 3, (Year Four, Five and Six).
- St Mary's serves the Parish of Ss Peter and Paul, Hutton Henry.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is well-above average.
- Almost all pupils are white British.
- Since 2017, numbers have increased from 44 pupils to 59 pupils. The majority of new pupils who join the school during the school year are not baptised Catholics.
- The headteacher is currently on secondment with Durham Local Authority. The deputy headteacher is acting headteacher, with an acting deputy headteacher in post.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- To improve the quality of Collective Worship by:
 - continuing to develop pupil skills in planning and delivering acts of Collective Worship.

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.

- The new mission statement, which was developed in 2017, is central to the life of the school and is lived out by the whole school community. The acting headteacher has recently composed a tune to create a mission song and the reception and year 1 pupils are teaching it to the rest of the school.
- Pupils' enthusiasm for school projects to help others is palpable. There are numerous opportunities and activities across the school year for pupils to get involved with, such as food bank collections and selling broth after the Harvest Mass. They are regularly involved in parish and diocesan celebrations.
- The proportion of Catholic pupils in the school is very small. There are increasing numbers of pupils entering the school within a key stage with no previous experience of Catholic education. These pupils are warmly welcomed and quickly embrace the ethos with enthusiasm. They appreciate the inclusive family approach to everyday life at St Mary's.
- Many of the pupils take on roles of responsibility which promote the school's Catholic Life and mission, both within the school and in the wider community. There are numerous examples of pupils supporting each other at breaktimes and lunchtimes. Pupils from reception through to year 6 regularly play together.

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

- The school mission is lived out and cherished by all; staff, governors, pupils and parents. All support each other to achieve, with God's love at the centre through their words and actions. The whole community have a deep sense of belonging to their school 'family'.
- The learning environment reflects the school's mission. Focal points within classrooms are reflective of the liturgical season, used by the pupils, and resourced with artefacts of a high quality.
- Pastoral care is outstanding. The school funds a counsellor for one afternoon a week and access is provided to a parent support adviser. The breakfast club and recently introduced wrap around care is used by more than a third of the pupils and greatly appreciated by parents.
- The Rights Respecting School Award (RRSA) is fully embedded in school life, and pupils are very familiar with the rights included with the programme. As a result of the carefully

structured programme, provision for personal and social education is outstanding.

- An effective programme for relationships and sex education (RSE) allows pupils to develop and foster understanding appropriate to their age.
- Staff care for one another and clearly work together as a supportive team. Governors and the parish priest are very much a part of the cohesive unit and give regular and dedicated support to staff and pupils.

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

- The acting headteacher has a clear and passionate vision for the pupils and staff in the school. She is dedicated to ensuring that all pupils know their worth, achieve their full potential and are filled with a sense of compassion and justice. The governors and Religious Education coordinator share this vision and show outstanding leadership of the Catholic Life of the school.
- The Religious Education coordinator has been in post for eighteen months and her work in promoting, monitoring and evaluating the provision for Catholic Life is outstanding. The Mini Vinnies group is very active with pupils given opportunities to lead prayer for others in the school.
- The provision for Catholic Life is given the highest possible priority by leaders. Key governors are passionate about the link between school and parish, and the work that they do means the support from the parish community is unwavering and enthusiastic. The governing body provide support but also challenge, they are given termly updates and regularly visit school focusing on the Catholic life.
- The school engages very well with parents and carers to the great benefit of all of its pupils and families. Parents have a good understanding of the school's mission and are very supportive of it.

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

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2

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

- Pupils enjoy Religious Education, especially when Art can be included; there were some beautifully illustrated beatitudes on display in the year 4, year 5 and year 6 class. Pupils enjoy gaining new knowledge. Most pupils observed were on task throughout the lessons, and pupils with additional learning needs were skilfully supported by staff.
- Pupils make good progress in their learning as they journey through school, including those who join the school within the school year or key stage. This is through careful planning which meets the needs of individual pupils.
- Pupils are clear as to how well they have done and what they need to do to improve through careful marking and feedback, and effective use of self-evaluation.
- Outcomes for pupils are good. Results in 2017 were above diocesan averages in year 2, year 4 and year 6. In 2018 they were in line with diocesan averages at year 2 and above in year 4. In year 6 they were below the diocesan average. This was due to 3 pupils, which was one third of the cohort, joining the school at the beginning of year 6 from non-Catholic schools.

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

- Teaching in Religious Education is consistently good. Teaching is very well planned and resourced with tasks adapted to meet the needs of individual pupils, which in one class also means adapting across three year groups. Teachers recognise that there needs to be careful planning over the next two years of the cycle to ensure that the current year 4 pupils access different content whilst developing key skills. There is evidence of sufficient challenge for more able pupils.
- Teachers are skilled at managing the 'Come and See' units across mixed classes. They are mindful of the need to avoid repetition for some year groups, including managing the sacramental preparation. They work diligently to achieve the best entitlement for the pupils.
- Time is managed well to ensure the coverage of the RE curriculum.
- Marking and feedback are frequent and of a high quality. Pupils are given the opportunity to respond to feedback and are using this to very good effect. They use the 'I Can Statements' to reflect on their learning and understanding. These are used to inform

future targets and are consistently applied across the school.

- Assessment is increasingly accurate due to moderation exercises within the federation, with the cluster of Catholic schools and at Diocesan level. Samples of work are kept to support new staff and to aid accurate assessment.

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

- The school's self-evaluation is accurate and clear and informed by an effective monitoring cycle. Leaders have developed an effective action plan which is targeted appropriately on the next steps for the school's development. The actions are leading to good outcomes.
- The leadership of Religious Education is good. The RE coordinator should be very proud of how she has led the subject during the past eighteen months. She has worked systematically and conscientiously on key points for action, in particular the accuracy of assessment. This is now ensuring most children make good progress and that outcomes are good at the end of each key stage.
- Professional development in Religious Education is given a high priority. The coordinator has attended all relevant training and disseminated key messages to staff and governors. The newly qualified teacher is also well supported through training and by the coordinator.
- Leaders ensure that pupils have access to sacramental preparation. Diocesan guidelines are followed closely and it is fully embedded in the RE curriculum. The teaching is also supported by a Sacred Heart sister who is a regular and valued visitor to the school.
- Governors give the same importance to outcomes in RE as they do for English and mathematics. They offer good support and challenge in their questioning during school visits and in governing body meetings.

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.

2

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2

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

- Pupils act with reverence and are keen to participate in acts of Collective Worship. The themes chosen for Collective Worship show a good understanding of the liturgical season. There are a range of worship opportunities, such as communal singing, singing with movement and prayerful silences. Pupils from all age groups are encouraged to contribute ideas during discussion and reflection.
- Groups of pupils, mostly from key stage 2, regularly prepare and lead worship with growing independence. This is continuing to develop, and pupils need further opportunities to use a range of creative strategies. There is a growing understanding of seasons and feasts, but this can be variable due to the number of pupils joining within key stage 2.
- Worship is inclusive of other faiths. Statements from the Rights Respecting School Award are integrated very well into the school's mission and linked with scripture and hymns.
- Pupils' response to voluntary acts of worship, such as rosary prayer group organised by the Mini Vinnies is enthusiastic and heartfelt.
- Parents are invited to join in acts of worship at key points throughout the year. Events such as Harvest Mass and a Mass at the beginning of Advent are celebrated within school. On holy days and other special occasions the whole school travels by bus to the parish church at Hutton Henry. Masses and liturgies are well supported by parents and the wider parish community.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship is good.

- Praying is central to the life of the school and is part of the daily experience for pupils and staff. Staff prayer is responded to with authenticity.
- There is a well-established programme for Collective Worship that places the Sunday Gospel readings, the liturgical year, and feast days at its centre. Statements to live by are used on Fridays when pupils take the lead. Rights from the Rights Respecting School Award are also linked where appropriate.
- Resourcing Collective Worship with high quality artefacts is a priority of the school. Each classroom has age appropriate resources to create focal points and displays.
- Staff have a very good understanding of how to plan and lead acts of worship and are

skilled in supporting the pupils. All teaching staff have opportunities to lead acts of worship, and so can observe each other's practice and share ideas and resources to good effect.

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

- The acting headteacher and the RE coordinator know how to plan and deliver quality Collective Worship and are excellent role models for the whole community.
- Leaders have a good understanding of the Church's liturgical year, seasons and feasts.
- Leaders make liturgical celebrations accessible to pupils through appropriate gathering music, hymns, scripture and links to the pupils' lives.
- Leaders promote pupils' planning and leading Collective Worship, encouraging participation wherever possible, including voluntary opportunities such as the Rosary prayer group.
- Leaders and governors regularly review Collective Worship as part of their self-evaluation process. This identifies training needs and opportunities, which they act upon.
- Leaders and governors seek the views of parents and visitors regarding the quality and significance of Collective Worship in school, by asking for feedback and through the completion of questionnaires. The responses show a deep appreciation of the quality of worship that creates a strong feeling of a welcoming and inclusive community.

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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

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

SCHOOL DETAILS

School name	St Mary's RC Primary School
Unique reference number	114279
Local authority	Durham
This Inspection Report is produced for the Rt Reverend Seamus Cunningham 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.	
Chair of governors	Mr Michael Facchini
Acting head teacher	Mrs Joanne Walton
Date of previous school inspection	November 2013
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