



St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School

Balmain Road, Kenton, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE3 3QR

School Unique Reference Number: **108506**

Inspection dates:	13 – 14 March 2019
Lead inspector:	Angela Boyle
Team inspector:	Dominic Curran

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

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School is an outstanding Catholic school because:

- St Cuthbert's is a warm and welcoming school where everyone shares the clear vision of the headteacher. The wellbeing and personal development of all pupils and staff is at the heart of this community, where pupils are helped to develop their faith and their understanding of God's love for them.
- The Catholic Life of the school is outstanding because the mission and ethos of Catholic education is evident in every aspect of school life. The work of the school is highly valued by all who have contact with it.
- The quality of Religious Education is outstanding because staff know their pupils well and teach lessons that engage and enthuse them. Leaders and managers ensure that monitoring and evaluation is accurate, timely and embedded in the work of the school.
- The quality of Collective Worship is outstanding because it is central to the life of the school. Staff and pupils, led by inspirational leaders, plan and lead high quality acts of worship where all pupils act with deep reverence and respect.

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- St Cuthbert's is an average size primary school serving the parish of St Cuthbert's, Kenton.
- There are currently 76% of pupils who are baptised Catholic.
- The proportion of pupils supported by pupil premium funding is in line with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is in line with the national average.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- Improve the quality of Religious Education by:
 - ensuring that the systems the school has in place for feedback for learning and assessment are embedded and consistently applied 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 St Cuthbert's; they have a deep sense of belonging and pride in their school and parish family. Pupils eagerly take on positions of responsibility, promoting the school's ethos within school, parish and the wider community.
- Pupils have a very strong voice which enables them to take an active part in shaping activities with a religious character. They contribute in a planned and systematic way to the evaluation of the school's Catholic Life and mission and take a lead in planning improvements to it. The pupil self-evaluation form completed by the school council is innovative and an example of excellent practice as pupils confidently express their views and say they feel valued.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary; they demonstrate care and compassion and have a very strong sense of justice. Older pupils describe how they are role models for younger children, how they reflect on what they have done and change their behaviour.
- Pupils confidently speak of the wide range of charities they support, recently supporting, the Peoples Kitchen, the West End Foodbank and Tiny Lives. They have a strong sense of social justice and concern for others and a willingness to play a central role in charity work within school.
- Pupils are proud of their religious identity and there is enthusiastic and regular involvement in parish and diocesan celebrations.

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

- Catholic values are given the highest priority and there is a total commitment to the school's mission statement, 'To be the very best that we can be, showing Christ's love in all we do'. This underpins all aspects of school life and is prominently displayed throughout the school.
- Excellent relationships are evident within the school, the wider school community and parish community. Everyone is mutually supportive and goes about their work happily. Staff are excellent role models and enthusiastically live out their role as members of this faith community.

- St Cuthbert's is a joyful, supportive and prayerful community. The Catholic character is celebrated through the many vibrant and creative displays, artefacts and sacred spaces around the school, including the beautiful chapel which is treasured by all. The chapel is often used by pupils and staff who value the time they are able to spend there.
- Personal, social and health education and relationship and sex education are well planned and consistently well taught. They reflect Catholic teaching and principles and follow Diocesan policy and guidelines.
- The school attends to the pastoral needs of all pupils and staff. Pupils are supported throughout school by a range of pastoral opportunities provided by the chaplain and all school staff. There is clear commitment to the most vulnerable pupils and their families who are well supported.

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

- The headteacher and leaders have a very clear understanding of the vision of Catholic education and the role of the Catholic school in the mission of the Church. They effectively communicate their deep commitment to the Catholic Life of the school. They are determined, ambitious and aspirational for all of their pupils and are excellent role models.
- School self-evaluation is rigorous and accurate, staff work together to monitor and evaluate the strengths of the school and analyse the impact of provision. This has clear links to the school development plan that is focused upon improving outcomes.
- The school has very successful strategies to engage with parents and carers. Parents and carers are fully supportive of the school and the many opportunities it offers their children. They said, 'it provides a welcoming, nurturing environment where everyone puts their love into action'. Furthermore, 'our children are privileged to attend this school and we know it'.
- Governors are active within the school community and have an excellent grasp of the schools strengths and areas for development. They know the school well and are skilful and effective in holding leaders to account whilst supporting its mission.
- Staff are very well supported and feel valued. Induction procedures for new staff are thorough and supportive. High quality performance management alongside well matched continuing professional development opportunities are provided for all staff.

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 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 outstanding.

- Pupils enjoy and understand the value of Religious Education and always aim to do their best. All pupils are actively engaged, enthusiastic and enjoy their lessons. They particularly enjoy the varied activities such as drama, role play and art.
- Evidence from lesson observations highlights that behaviour for learning is excellent throughout the school; pupils concentrate well and remain on task.
- Outcomes for pupils are very good overall. Attainment at the end of each key stage is above the diocesan average. Pupils make excellent progress in Religious Education over time. The books show clear evidence of progression in knowledge, skills and understanding as the children progress through the school. They also evidence pupils' ability to reflect on meaning and consider the impact of religious ideas on their lives.
- Pupils identified as having a special educational need or disability make good progress because their needs are quickly and accurately identified and they receive high levels of additional targeted support from skilled staff.
- Systems are in place to evaluate the progress of different groups of learners. Inspection findings and evidence provided by the school show some differences between groups of learners. These are cohort specific and are being addressed.

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

- Teaching is consistently good with some outstanding teaching observed during the inspection. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour and are effective in planning a range of challenging activities which engage and enthuse pupils.
- There is a whole school focus on using more difficult vocabulary in all lessons including Religious Education; this was particularly evidenced in years five and six. The children can clearly articulate why they enjoy discussions in lessons, as there are 'sometimes no right or wrong answers'.
- Teachers have very good subject knowledge and have a high level of confidence and clear areas of expertise. The Religious Education coordinator works closely with members of staff who are not Catholic, to help develop their knowledge.

- Relationships between staff and pupils are very positive and a real strength of the school. Teaching assistants are confident in their knowledge and ability; they are effectively deployed to efficiently support and extend the learning of pupils across the range of abilities.
- The school has invested time in reviewing mastery curriculum principles across all subjects including Religious Education. This aims to ensure that expectations are not limited by the tasks set by the teacher. The quality of work in pupils' books is beginning to evidence the success of this and is particularly strong in upper key stage two.
- Achievement and effort are regularly celebrated. Feedback for learning and assessment is regular and highly effective in some classes, however this is not yet embedded or consistently applied across the school.

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

- Leaders and governors clearly demonstrate rigorous monitoring, searching analysis and self-challenge. This results in well-planned, aspirational targets to continue improving teaching and learning across school and improve outcomes for all pupils.
- Pupil voice is a particularly strong aspect of the self-evaluation process and the pupils' contribution is highly valued and acted upon by leaders.
- The headteacher, leadership team and governors have an inspiring vision of outstanding teaching and learning and they have a high level of expertise to draw upon and secure this vision. This inspires confidence and commitment from pupils and colleagues.
- The Religious Education curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference.
- Staff wellbeing and their professional development is given a high priority by leaders and governors alike.
- Governors are regular visitors to the school and as a result they are knowledgeable about all aspects of school life and have a very good understanding of the quality of teaching and the standards across school. They provide appropriate challenge and support to the headteacher and Religious Education coordinator.
- Religious Education has a very high profile around the school and is demonstrated in the high quality learning environment which is loved and respected by all members of the school community.

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.

- St Cuthbert's is a very prayerful community where there is a genuine enthusiasm for Collective Worship in all its forms; it is a regular and meaningful part of each day.
- From the earliest age pupils are deeply reverent and respectful during Collective Worship, they are reflective and focused during prayer times. They sing with great enthusiasm and joy and confidently share their love of liturgical dance.
- Pupils plan and lead worship at an age appropriate level. The school has a wide range of resources and artefacts which the children use to add to the worship experience. Pupils' skills in planning, preparing and leading Collective Worship are developed incrementally and systematically. There is clear progression of skills from nursery to year six.
- Pupils participate in voluntary prayer on a regular basis. The 'Footsteps in Faith' lunch time prayer group, planned and led by the chaplaincy team, is well attended and valued by the pupils. The 'Wednesday Word' group in key stage 2 is a further opportunity for pupils to be involved and they speak knowledgeably about the variety of liturgies that take place.
- Pupils enjoy using the prayer garden as a quiet space for prayer and reflection. One pupil said, 'it's a peaceful quiet time and if I feel worried I feel a weight is lifted off me when I pray with my friends'.
- There is a deep sense of respect and excellent understanding of faiths other than their own. A pupil directed the inspectors to the 'Leap of Faith' interactive display which has a wide range of books about world faiths and states that 'all roads lead to God'.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship is outstanding.

- Collective Worship is central to the life of the school, there is a clear policy for worship, and it is carefully planned and well resourced.
- Pupils are introduced to a wide variety of forms and style of prayer appropriate to their age and stage of development. A rich variety of prayer forms were observed during the inspection including traditional prayer, hymns, music, liturgical dance, stillness and contemplation.
- Staff have become increasingly skilled in enabling pupils to plan, prepare and lead worship. The chaplaincy team, consisting of pupils from key stage 2, work with the school chaplain to

provide high quality worship opportunities across the school. They share their knowledge and draw upon the skills of other pupils, contributing to the outstanding provision.

- The Collective Worship progression of skills document sets out clear expectations of what children should be able to demonstrate in planning, preparing and leading worship. This is a key document which impacts positively on provision across the school.
- The chapel is used in conjunction with the parish community. It is an excellent resource, providing many spiritual development opportunities; both staff and pupils spoke highly of the opportunities they have to spend quiet time there.
- Parents, parishioners and governors regularly take the opportunity to be present in Mass, liturgies and acts of worship and comment with enthusiasm about the consistently high quality of Collective Worship.

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

- Leaders have excellent knowledge of how to plan and deliver high quality acts of Collective Worship. They model this in school and share it with staff.
- Leaders and managers have a deeply rooted understanding of the church's liturgical year, its seasons, rites and symbols and ensure pupils and staff develop a deepening appreciation and understanding of them. They are excellent role models and inspirational leaders.
- A range of artefacts, symbols and information technology are used to deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding. Therefore worship is delivered in a way that is relevant to pupils using a range of skills and quality resources.
- Leaders are attentive to staff needs and ensure staff receive formation in the development of spiritual and liturgical understanding. They have access to diocesan and in-house training and implement what they have learned. New members of staff are mentored in leading worship and this is valued by all staff.
- Leaders and governors regularly review Collective Worship. They seek the views of parents, pupils and staff through the use of questionnaires and feedback collated following school events. Responses are very positive and highly valued. When asked 'What could we do to make Collective Worship better' a pupil responded 'Nothing - I love it!'.

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.

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

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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.

2

How well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.

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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.

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SCHOOL DETAILS

School name	St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School
Unique reference number	108506
Local authority	Newcastle
This Inspection Report is produced for the Rt Reverend Séamus 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	David Hastie
Head teacher	Anne Bullerwell
Date of previous school inspection	June 2014
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