



St Cuthbert's RC Primary School

Grindon Lane, Grindon, Sunderland , SR4 8HP

School Unique Reference Number: **108838**

Inspection dates:	01 – 02 May 2019
Lead inspector:	Miss Maria Elliott
Team inspector:	Mrs Clare Swales

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 RC Primary School is an outstanding Catholic school because:

- St Cuthbert's is an extremely warm and welcoming, fully inclusive school with a Catholic ethos that is tangible and at the heart of the school. The school mission statement is a lived experience which all strive to achieve. Very strong relationships are a strength of the school and all staff know pupils and their families very well. There is a true sense of family at every level.
- The Catholic Life of the school is outstanding because the Catholic mission and ethos are given the highest priority and shared by senior leaders, staff and governors alike.
- Religious Education is outstanding because pupils thoroughly enjoy their learning in Religious Education and understand its importance to their everyday life. Teachers know their pupils exceptionally well and plan lessons which consolidate and extend pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- St Cuthbert's is a prayerful, faithful worshipping community deeply rooted in Catholic traditions and practice. This is central to the life of the school and as a result the quality of Collective Worship is outstanding.

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- St Cuthbert's is an average sized primary school which serves the parish of St Jeanne Jugan, Sunderland. The parish encompasses the churches of Immaculate Heart and Holy Rosary.
- St Cuthbert's has been designated a National Teaching School.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is lower than the national average but the school is situated in an area of high deprivation.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is slightly above the national average.
- The majority of pupils are of white British heritage.
- Very few pupils are from minority ethnic groups.
- St Cuthbert's has been awarded the Anti- Bullying Silver Award, Eco Schools Green Flag Award; I-CAN enhanced accreditation and renewed the Basic Skills Award for the third time.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- To further develop the quality of Religious Education by:
 - continuing to develop a more consistent approach to assessment with regard to accuracy, expertise and use of assessment procedures.
 - ensuring the consistent use of driver words to frame both learning objectives and success criteria.
- To further develop the Catholic Life of the School by:
 - enhancing the opportunities to reflect and celebrate the Catholic Mission and ethos of the school to include the school website.

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.

- The pupils of St Cuthbert's are happy and well-mannered; they have a deep sense of belonging to the school family of St Cuthbert's. This sense of family is nurtured from their earliest days in school. One heartfelt response by a pupil summed this up saying, 'We may be different ages, different classes, different genders or different religions – but we are part of one big family'.
- The pupils, through involvement in the school council, Mini Vinnies, buddies and worship team, are central to shaping the school's mission and ethos. They take full advantage of the opportunities the school provides and speak with enthusiasm about them.
- There are very high expectations of pupils' behaviour and these are fully understood by all pupils. Staff strive to lead by example and as a result pupils' behaviour is exemplary; they are polite and courteous. They treat everyone with respect and know they are loved by God and try to follow the example of His son, Jesus.
- Pupils are sensitive to the feelings and needs of others both within the school community and beyond. They seize the many opportunities to live out their faith such as using the harvest festival to support the work of the local foodbank.
- The pupils deeply value and respect the Catholic traditions and have an excellent relationship with the parish community who share a commitment to the faith development of all.

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

- The school mission statement - 'Educate; Create; Witness: Christ at the Centre' permeates all elements of the school. It is understood and lived out by all and sits at the heart of St Cuthbert's.
- Exceptional relationships are a strength of the school and are evident at all levels, a very caring staff have a deep sense of being an integral part of the school family. As a result, they are fully committed to the implementation of the school mission, work in harmony and humour as a committed team and have a deep sense of being valued.
- The school environment, which is very calm and orderly, is used to great effect through beautiful displays to reflect the school's mission. As a former two form entry school building the school benefits from additional rooms not needed as teaching rooms; the

sensitive use of these rooms to include a Rainbow room, sensory and nurture rooms further enhances the pastoral provision within school.

- The highest level of support is offered to the pupils and their families through effective policies and procedures which refer explicitly to Catholic teaching and principles, along with an explicit commitment to the most vulnerable. As a result all are able to access support and advice when needed which is greatly appreciated by families.
- The very effective parish priest, supported by the parish deacon, is fundamental in supporting and promoting the Catholic Life of the school.

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

- Leaders and governors are passionately committed to the mission of the Church. They have a very strong sense of the mission of the church, the school's role in expressing it and a relentless focus on ensuring all reach their full potential. The headteacher provides outstanding, very focused leadership in a very calm, understated, gentle manner.
- The promotion of an authentic Catholic ethos is seen as a fundamental role of both leaders and governors alike and is shared by the whole community who demonstrate great pride in their school. However, greater use of the school website would further reflect and celebrate the Catholic Life of the school.
- The school's self-evaluation demonstrates evidence of robust planned monitoring, analysis and challenge. This leads to clearly focused plans for the school to continually evolve even further.
- The school makes every effort to engage with parents and carers who have a very good understanding of the school's mission and are very supportive of it. They are very proud of the school and hold it in very high regard. The sense of family is a strength of the school. As one parent commented, 'Each child is seen as an individual, nurtured and encouraged to be the best they can be'.
- Staff work very closely with parish catechists to ensure the sacramental preparation is of a very high quality.
- The governors make a significant contribution to the Catholic Life of the school and are highly ambitious for its future. They are visible in school, actively involved in the evaluation of the Catholic Life of the school and provide challenge and support where necessary. The Religious Education governor is an integral part of the school community.

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.

- The quality of learning and progress in Religious Education is outstanding. Data shows that the majority of pupils enter nursery at below age-related expectations but make rapid progress throughout the early years foundation stage. The vast majority of pupils continue to make good to outstanding progress throughout key stages 1 and 2. Pupil attainment is in line with, or slightly above, diocesan averages.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy their learning in Religious Education. They understand its importance to their every-day life and demonstrate huge enjoyment and interest in their learning, particularly when links are skillfully made to learning in other subjects. In year 6 for example, the novel 'The Boy in the Striped Pajamas' is used to reflect on Gospel Values.
- Pupils respond very well to marking in their books and they understand how to use the carefully chosen resources and religious artefacts in their classrooms, which help them to achieve their very best in Religious Education.
- Pupils take great pride in their written work, which is detailed and very well presented. They are also offered opportunities to extend their learning through drama. For example, after a recent celebration of the Stations of the Cross by year 6, pupils were able to empathise deeply with the suffering of others.
- Displays continue to enhance pupils' learning as they move around school. Particularly prominent and effective is information about other faiths.
- Pupils identified as having a special educational need make good progress. Staff are highly effective at meeting their needs by ensuring that work is closely matched to their ability. Highly skilled teaching assistants ensure excellent support is given to those pupils to ensure learning and progress is similar to that of other pupils.

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

- Staff are highly aspirational for their pupils in all subjects, including Religious Education, and this is very evident in the high quality lessons throughout the early years, key stage 1 and generally in key stage 2. Teachers know their pupils exceptionally well and plan lessons which consolidate and extend pupils' knowledge and understanding. Teaching is never less than consistently good, with some which is outstanding.
- Where teaching is not yet outstanding, this is because assessment is undertaken less effectively which slows the rate of progress for some pupils.

- Teachers have a high level of confidence because of their subject expertise. They are well supported by leadership and highly effective teamwork. As a result, pupils are inspired to learn and most make good to outstanding progress.
- Pupils are highly motivated by the wide range of appropriate teaching strategies employed which include drama and role play. Religious art is used very effectively throughout all key stages to promote empathy and understanding.
- Most teachers use questioning effectively, checking pupils learning and addressing misconceptions. High quality resources, including other adults, are effectively used to maximize learning for every pupil.
- Good quality marking leads to the interest, achievement and progress of most pupils. Most pupils are given the opportunity to respond which helps their understanding of what they need to do to improve.
- Clear assessment procedures including the use of 'I Can' statements and levels of attainment grids are used across the school with varying degrees of success. However, there are some inconsistencies in the quality and accuracy of assessment throughout the school.
- Driver words are used to frame both learning objectives and success criteria by most teachers. This is not consistent in all year groups.
- In preparation for the introduction for assessment without levels in September 2019, staff have attended Diocesan training and are working alongside a school in their deanery alliance already using assessment without levels.

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

- Leaders are highly aspirational for pupils, which is reflected in strong, motivational and highly effective leadership in Religious Education that ensures all pupils achieve well.
- Leaders and governors' self-evaluation of Religious Education is coherent and a reflection of rigorous monitoring and challenge. The strategic direction of the school is well informed, well planned and shared with staff.
- The Religious Education coordinator is relatively new to the role, but has been very well mentored and supported by leaders. The coordinator is deeply committed to the role and has an inspiring vision of outstanding teaching and learning which is shared and supported by a highly dedicated team of staff.
- A well-established range of monitoring activities relating to provision and outcomes in Religious Education is in place. Leaders have begun to implement training so that staff are skilled and well placed to assess using Age Related Standards.
- The Religious Education curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference and is given a high profile throughout the school, contributing very effectively to pupils' spiritual and moral development.
- The governing body discharge their statutory and canonical duties well. The link governor for Religious Education shares the aspirational vision of leaders and staff, is well informed and knowledgeable about the school's strengths and areas for development. Governors are regular visitors to school and provide appropriate challenge to the headteacher and senior leadership team.

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.

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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. Acts of worship engage all pupils' interests and inspire deep thought and heartfelt responses. Pupils demonstrate great enthusiasm for Collective Worship and pupils act with reverence, sing with joy and great gusto and reflect in silence.
- Pupils are encouraged to create an atmosphere for prayer and reflection and readily take the initiative in leading worship, displaying confidence and reverence. For example, a group of year 6 pupils supported by two parishioners led the weekly Rosary Club enabling younger pupils to learn about ways to pray.
- The parish Mass, led by pupils, is celebrated weekly in school giving pupils the experience of living and working in a faithful, praying community.
- 'Little Liturgies' celebrated in classes, which parents are encouraged to join, enable the pupils to take responsibility to plan, prepare and lead Collective Worship dependent upon their age. As a result they have a well-developed understanding of what constitutes worship.
- Pupils show great respect for and interest in other faiths. The school's high quality of provision ensures that the spiritual needs of all the pupils are met extremely well.
- Pupils have a very good understanding of the religious seasons, feast and Saints' days and the difference this makes to worship.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship is outstanding.

- St Cuthbert's is a prayerful, faithful worshipping community deeply rooted in Catholic traditions and practice central to the life of the school. Collective Worship plays a key part in supporting the spiritual journey of both staff and pupils.
- Each day is punctuated by prayer and reflection, with staff and pupils praying together as part of the daily routine and in response to pupils' needs, local or global events.
- There is a clear policy for worship with a well-structured programme of whole school liturgies, 'little liturgies', Masses and assemblies which are well resourced. Staff support pupils very well, modelling good practice which enables them to plan, prepare and lead

worship.

- Themes chosen for worship are very well planned with a clear purpose, consistently reflecting the mission of the school.
- Staff are very effective role models for the pupils and contribute significantly to the spiritual and moral development of the pupils.
- Parents speak very positively about the opportunities offered to them to join their children for worship, commenting how the recent stations of the cross liturgy led by Year 6 had moved them to tears.
- The school works hand in hand with the parish community to deliver the sacramental guidance following diocesan guidelines with governors acting as parish catechists.
- Leaders are aspirational for the spiritual development of all pupils and as a result worship is relevant, reflective and fully inclusive.

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

- The headteacher and the senior leadership team display expert knowledge of how to plan and deliver high quality experiences of Collective Worship. They have a thorough understanding of the Church's liturgical year, rites and symbols which is reflected in the varied and relevant experiences provided by pupils, staff, parents and parishioners throughout the year.
- Leaders have a very visible presence in school worship and a very clear understanding of the strengths and areas for development through a variety of monitoring activities. Leaders seek the views of pupils, parents and staff and these responses are highly valued and lead to further actions.
- The highest priority is placed by leaders to support staff to continually develop their skills in leading worship through effective professional development, key staff modelling and sharing of good practice. As a result staff are well placed to support the on-going development of pupils' leadership of worship.
- The school's life of prayer and worship is given the highest priority by the headteacher, staff and governors and is seen as the very heart and soul of the school. They constantly seek to develop it through the school and parish community. Parents value this and speak very highly of its impact on their children.

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

HOW EFFECTIVE THE SCHOOL IS IN PROVIDING CATHOLIC EDUCATION:

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CATHOLIC LIFE:

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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.

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.

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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 RC Primary School
Unique reference number	108838
Local authority	Sunderland
This Inspection Report is produced for the Rt Reverend Robert Byrne 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 Len Stule
Head teacher	Mrs Jane Ward
Date of previous school inspection	September 2013
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