



St Mary's RC Primary School

Great Lime Road, Forest Hall, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE12 7AB

School Unique Reference Number: **108620**

Inspection dates: 26 – 27 September 2017
Lead inspector: Elaine White

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

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

St Mary's RC Primary is a good school

- St Mary's is a good 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 quality of Collective Worship is good. It is central to the life of the school, is well planned and pupils confidently use a variety of forms of prayer. It is not yet outstanding as pupils' skills need to be further developed in order to plan, prepare and lead Collective Worship independently.
- The quality of Religious Education is good. It is not yet outstanding due to inconsistencies across the school in the quality of assessment, marking and feedback.

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- St Mary's is a smaller than average sized primary school, with a rising number of pupils on roll, which serves the parish of St Mary's, Forest Hall.
- The majority of pupils are white British and there are a low number of pupils with English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils with a special educational need/disability is average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through pupil premium funding is below national average.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- Improve the quality of teaching and pupils' progress so that it is consistently good by:
 - Ensuring that marking consistently provides information to pupils about how to improve their work and that they are given the time they need to respond to feedback in order to move their learning forward.
 - Ensuring teachers consistently differentiate tasks effectively to meet the needs of all pupils, particularly those who are more able.
 - Ensuring all teachers have a secure subject knowledge of attainment in each level.
- Further develop Collective Worship by;
 - Providing more opportunities for pupils to gain confidence whilst improving their skills in taking the initiative to lead quality and meaningful prayer through creative and resourceful planning.

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 which has a very high priority across the school. They are at the centre of shaping the school's mission and ethos and are actively involved and take on responsibilities very enthusiastically, such as buddies. They take full advantage of the many opportunities offered to them and take a leading role in those activities which promote the school's ethos, both within the school and the wider community. They are alert and respond willingly to the needs of those beyond the school and can articulate their views with confidence, explaining the purpose of fundraising for various charities such as Cafod and the Good Shepherd Appeal.
- Pupils express their own beliefs with confidence and have a good understanding of how their faith impacts on their own lives and others.
- Throughout the school 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.

- The provision for the Catholic Life of the school has the highest possible priority with the school's mission statement permeating throughout the school, ensuring that Christ is at the centre of all that takes place at St Mary's.
- From the moment you enter St Mary's it is apparent that this is a school committed to the Catholic tradition and ethos. A strong team spirit amongst all staff, and sharing knowledge and good practice, is common place.
- 'Statements to Live By' are used throughout the school and these help pupils to understand how to live in the way Jesus wants them to.
- St Mary's has a vibrant and engaging learning environment where focal points and displays,

linked to the church's seasons, provide opportunities to reflect, pray and celebrate its Catholic character.

- Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is taught throughout the school at age appropriate levels and it is in line with the teachings of the Catholic faith.
- Pastoral care provision is outstanding, reflecting concern for the welfare of all and is central to the success of the school.

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

- The leadership of the school in promoting the Catholic Life is outstanding.
- The Catholic Life of the school is given the highest possible priority by leaders which is reflected in the school's self-evaluation and is a coherent reflection of rigorous monitoring and explicit focus.
- The school's mission statement is a living document which underpins all policies throughout the school and has a very high profile.
- 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. Together 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 in the life of the school and are fully committed to promoting the religious and spiritual life. 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. They discharge their statutory and canonical duties well working very effectively with the staff and headteacher, committed to upholding the strong caring ethos that exists throughout.

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.

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

- Pupils demonstrate interest and engagement in Collective Worship in response to age appropriate stimuli; their singing and participation in whole school and class worship is thoughtful and reflective. The pupils are able to articulate extremely well what Collective Worship means to them.
- Pupils throughout the school are able to articulate what being part of a prayerful community means to them and enthusiastically and respectfully talk about other world faiths that they have learned about in their Religious Education lessons.
- Pupils prepare, and are beginning to lead, the prayer life at St Mary's School. They do so with enthusiasm and with increasing independence as observed during class liturgies about trust.
- Pupils are becoming more skilled in planning and leading acts of Collective Worship at age appropriate levels. They have a good knowledge of the liturgical year, religious seasons and festivals. Their developing knowledge, understanding and confidence in liturgical themes show that they are able to make links between Gospel messages and daily life.
- Pupils are confident and at ease in sharing their prayers with others.
- There is a calm and peaceful ethos which pervades the school and this is reflected in the pupils' outstanding behaviour and consideration for others.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship is good.

- There is a clear policy for Collective Worship which is central to the life of the school and makes a significant contribution to the moral and spiritual needs of the pupils. Praying together is part of the daily experience for all pupils and staff which has a positive impact on the school's sense of community.
- Focal points are evident in all classrooms providing further encouragement for independent reflection and prayer. The pupils' mission statement, 'God our Father, walk with us in our learning and in our lives' is lived out by all throughout the school and as one child said, 'It reminds me to keep shining and share my love as Jesus did'.
- Acts of worship are well resourced and age appropriate, centred on themes and messages

which are easily accessible to pupils. A planned programme of liturgies, Masses and other liturgical celebrations such as the Harvest Liturgy provide many opportunities for participation from the wider school and parish community.

- Developing the spirituality of all is seen as central in supporting the Catholic ethos of the school and this ensures that the needs of all pupils are well met.
- The school welcomes families to participate in worship which is well received. Families are becoming increasingly more involved in the pupils' religious development through the seasonal travelling crib as well as the Wednesday Word Bag which goes home weekly.
- There is a great sense of community at all levels which is evident in the quality of relationships that exist between everyone; staff, governors, pupils and parents. One parent commented, 'St Mary's is a great school with a very caring staff who go beyond their duty to care for everyone'.
- Sacramental preparation is now well embedded and in line with diocesan policy. The school works effectively with the parish and together they are constantly seeking ways to increase family involvement.

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

- The school leaders have expert knowledge of how to plan and deliver quality liturgy and worship. They understand the Church's liturgical year and traditions and are outstanding role models to both staff and pupils. The headteacher, who is also the Religious Education coordinator, shows a real depth of passion and commitment and has a clear vision and sense of direction and understanding of what is required to bring about improvement which is shared with staff. They lead the school community to understand and appreciate these by making all forms of worship relevant to the children appropriate to their age, needs, experience and background.
- Good systems and structures are in place which allow quality Collective Worship to take place across the school.
- The headteacher ensures that all staff throughout the school receive the quality formation that they require in the development of spiritual and liturgical understanding.
- The views of pupils, staff and parents are sought through informal meetings and questionnaires and respond appropriately.
- The dedication and commitment of the senior leaders in the school are instrumental in the drive to provide high quality Collective Worship and quality prayer life throughout the school.
- Interviews with governors, the parish priest and headteacher, along with the scrutiny of both pupil, staff and parent questionnaires, reflect the importance of true partnership, evaluation and a mission to ensure the very best for all pupils at St Mary's school.

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

1

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

- Pupils start school with knowledge and skills that are in line with what is expected for their age. They make good progress across the early years foundation stage and continue to make good progress throughout key stage one, however this progress slows down in key stage two. The school is aware of the need to plan for accelerated progress for some underperforming groups.
- Outcomes for pupils are mostly good and broadly in line with diocesan averages. Evidence from book scrutiny and lesson observations show a good variety and range of learning activities with no notable differences between groups of learners.
- Most pupils enjoy Religious Education and can explain its value. They are keen to do well, apply themselves in lessons and work at a good pace. Behaviour for learning is good.
- Pupils are developing well in their knowledge and understanding. They demonstrate good prior knowledge and are able to use this well in their new learning.
- As a result of effective support staff, pupils with special educational needs and disabilities are well supported and achieve well according to their age and capacity.

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

- The quality of teaching and assessment throughout the school is mostly good. Most teachers demonstrate high expectations, plan interesting lessons and set appropriate targets for pupils to achieve in their work.
- The teaching of Religious Education across the school has a high profile, meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference and contributes very effectively to the pupils' spiritual and moral development.
- The school has an effective assessment and tracking system to monitor pupils' progress and achievement in Religious Education. Staff are becoming more confident and accurate in their assessments, however there are inconsistencies in practice.
- The quality of marking and feedback to pupils is generally good. Pupils are given clear points for improvement, however not all pupils are given the opportunities to respond to teacher comments in order to move learning forward.

- Additional adult support is used well, ensuring good progress for most pupils. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good.

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

- The leadership and management of Religious Education is outstanding. The newly appointed acting headteacher provides strong and highly effective leadership in Religious Education. She shares her ambitious vision for the school and for what every pupil and teacher can achieve, as well as inspiring and supporting the whole community. Alongside senior leaders she is working hard to ensure that assessment is used consistently and accurately across the whole school
- The deeply committed senior leadership team have the professional drive and religious conviction to ensure that Religious Education continues to move forward.
- Leaders carry out monitoring and analysis of teaching and learning and the school improvement plan identifies very clear steps for ongoing development.
- The link governor for Religious Education is very well informed and knowledgeable about the school's strengths and further areas for development providing appropriate challenge and support to senior leaders.

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

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.

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.

1

SCHOOL DETAILS

School name	St Mary's RC Primary School
Unique reference number	108620
Local authority	North Tyneside
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	Mrs Margaret Henderson
Acting Headteacher	Mrs Siobhan Foster
Date of previous school inspection	10–11 June 2013
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