



# St Lawrence's RC Primary School

Headlam Street, Byker, Newcastle on Tyne, NE6 2JX

School Unique Reference Number: **108509**

**Inspection dates:** 19 – 20 March 2018  
**Lead inspector:** Miss Elaine White

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

## SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

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

- St Lawrence's is a very inclusive and welcoming community with a strong family ethos. It is very clear as soon as you enter the school that the prime purpose is Catholic education, helping children to develop their faith and to understand that God loves them.
- The Catholic Life of the school is outstanding. Governors 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. They take leading roles in activities which promote the school's ethos within the school and wider community.
- The quality of Collective Worship is outstanding. It is at the heart of the school. From an early age pupils are encouraged and supported in their ability to plan and lead worship and are confident when praying with the school community.
- The quality of Religious Education is good. The areas for improvement from the last inspection have all been addressed and the school is continuing to ensure that all pupils make good progress.

## FULL REPORT

### INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- St Lawrence's is an average sized Catholic primary school situated in Byker, Newcastle upon Tyne serving the parish of St Lawrence's.
- The area in which the school is situated has high levels of social and economic disadvantage.
- Pupils enter school with skills well below those expected for their age.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above average as is the number of pupils with special educational needs.
- The majority of pupils are of white British heritage but the number of pupils from minority ethnic groups is rising.

### WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

Improve the quality of teaching and learning by:

- ensuring that all teachers use assessment information to extend pupils' learning, especially the more able pupils.
- ensure that feedback consistently provides information to pupils on how to improve their work.

## 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 the school and gain much benefit from it. They are at the centre of shaping the school's mission and are able to express their own beliefs with confidence having a good understanding of how their faith impacts on their own lives and others.
- Pupils and staff have a deep sense of belonging to a family, they are very proud of their school and the strong links with the parish community.
- Relationships within the school are very positive and pupils value the many opportunities that they are given. They are actively involved throughout the school taking on responsibilities very conscientiously and enthusiastically such as buddies, school councillors and Mini Vinnies. Pupils say they feel valued.
- They are very conscious of the needs of those beyond school and have a strong sense of justice and concern for others. They can articulate their views with confidence, explaining the purpose of fundraising for charities such as CAFOD, Muhoroni water appeal and Mary's meals. Most pupils have a strong sense of morals and justice which helps them to understand their place in the world and the influence they can have to make the world a better place. Each year a class of children take an active part in the Newcastle Justice and Peace celebrations.
- Pupils work well together demonstrating very positive and enthusiastic attitudes to all aspects of school life. Behaviour is exemplary: pupils are very polite and considerate of others demonstrating good emotional awareness.
- Pupils throughout the school demonstrate a very good understanding of the importance of key celebrations throughout the liturgical year and understand that religious belief and spiritual values are important for many people.

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

- The quality of provision for Catholic Life has the highest priority.
- All staff have high expectations and a shared vision with regards to the school's ethos and to the church's mission in education. They are involved in living out the school's mission statement and are fully committed to provide every opportunity to enable all pupils to know that Christ is at the centre of everything they do.

- There is a strong sense of family in all areas of school life evidenced in the quality of relationships that exist throughout the school.
- The school displays a clear commitment to its most vulnerable pupils and their families. Parents and members of the community speak very highly of the care and concern shown to each pupil and family and feel privileged to be part of the family of St Lawrence's.
- School places a very high value on pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development, providing many opportunities where pupils are able to reflect on their friendships and their personal and spiritual development.
- Clear policies and procedures are in place, which provide the highest level of pastoral support to all.
- The Statements to Live by programme is well used throughout the school and pupils are very clear about how these can help them to live by Gospel values.

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

- The headteacher, Religious Education coordinator and link governor have a deep commitment to the Church's mission in education; personal development and high quality care are paramount. They give very clear direction for improvement and ensure that opportunities for all pupils' spiritual and moral development are frequent and have significant impact. Together they very effectively promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school.
- The senior leadership team have a clear vision and high aspirations. Their strong promotion of Catholic values is clearly shared by the whole school community who demonstrate great pride in their school.
- The school engages extremely well with parents and carers to the great benefit of all its pupils and families. Parents have a good understanding of the school's mission and are supportive of it.
- Governors involve themselves wholeheartedly in the life of the school and are fully committed to promoting religious and spiritual life. Together with the headteacher they have a very clear vision and high aspirations for future developments.
- The school's mission statement is a truly living document which underpins all policies throughout the school and has a very high profile.
- High quality staff training and the importance placed upon relationships and the care and concern each member of the school community show one another, are great strengths of the school.

## 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.**

- Pupils demonstrate a great 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 are skilled in planning and leading acts of Collective Worship at age appropriate levels. During the acts of worship observed children were respectful and prayerful, showing that they were skilled in the use of scripture and understanding the need for reflection.
- Pupils have an outstanding knowledge of the liturgical year, seasons and festivals which they contribute to across the key stages. This was very evident in the articulate and heartfelt responses they were able to give.
- Parents commented that they regularly witness their children being able to take gospel messages and relate them to their own life.
- There is a deep sense of respect for different faiths and cultures which is promoted through high quality Collective Worship.
- All of these contribute very positively to children's spiritual and moral development which is outstanding.

#### **The quality of provision for Collective Worship is outstanding.**

- Collective Worship is central to the everyday life of the school and makes a significant contribution to the moral and spiritual needs of the pupils. It engages all pupils' interest and inspires them in deep thought.
- Collective Worship forms the heart of school celebrations; it has a clear purpose, message and direction. It is given a high priority and there is a well-established programme for weekly and daily worship.
- Focal points and displays in each classroom and throughout the school are thought provoking, well-resourced and provide very good support for reflection and prayer.
- Opportunities for worship, Masses, liturgies and other liturgical celebrations are well planned and resourced.

- Families are fully involved in pupils' religious development through travelling cribs and the travelling cross which is a practice well embedded throughout the school.
- Parents, parishioners and governors are regularly welcomed into school to share experiences of worship such as prayer space week and Godly play as well as assemblies and liturgies.

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

- Leaders at all levels have ensured there are systems and structures in place that allow outstanding Collective Worship to take place across the school. They have a deep understanding of the church's liturgical year, its seasons, rites and symbols. A range of artefacts, symbols and information and communications technology (ICT) are used extremely well to deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding. They are enthusiastic and display expert knowledge of how to plan and deliver high quality experiences of Collective Worship.
- Leaders review Collective Worship throughout the school on a regular basis. They seek the views of staff, pupils and parents and have a very good understanding of the strengths and areas for even further development.
- The Religious Education coordinator has a very visible presence in school and a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for development in Collective Worship through both formal and informal monitoring. Effective involvement by a link governor for Religious Education ensures that all governors have an accurate understanding of the strengths and areas for further development in Collective Worship.
- The senior leadership team ensure that all staff throughout the school receive ongoing formation in the development of spiritual and liturgical understanding as a staff training priority.
- Leaders are highly visible as leaders of Collective Worship within the school and are models of outstanding practice for both staff and pupils.

## 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 good.**

- Pupils enter school with skills and knowledge well below expectations but by the time they leave school, outcomes are broadly in line with Diocesan averages.
- 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 working at a good pace. They are able to say why they enjoy it and what they learn from it, "We learn how Jesus helped other people and that helps me to know how to help others". The Religious Education curriculum impacts very positively upon the pupils' spiritual and moral development.
- Exemplary behaviour has a positive impact on learning across the school. Pupils are thoughtful and articulate in their responses.
- Pupils identified as having a special educational need are very well catered for. Good support from skilled teaching assistants along with a differentiated programme of work ensures that these pupils make good progress.
- Excellent relationships exist in the school between pupils and staff.
- Inspection findings and evidence provided by the school show no noticeable differences between different groups of learners.

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

- Teaching is consistently good and as a result, pupils are achieving well over time. Where teaching is good or better, it is because teachers have a high level of expertise both in terms of their knowledge and understanding of effective learning in Religious Education. As a result, they use a range of quality resources and teaching strategies to stimulate pupils' active participation in their learning to secure good progress.
- The school's creative approach in delivering the Religious Education programme has actively engaged all pupils in their learning and has had a positive impact on the levels of attainment achieved by pupils and the good progress made.
- Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and plan lessons well building on prior learning however activities are not always consistently well matched to offer challenge to the more able children.
- Teachers mark work regularly and the quality of feedback given to pupils is generally

positive and supportive. This however is inconsistent across the school as pupils do not always know how to improve their work.

- The school has a very clear and accurate picture of pupils' achievement in Religious Education across all key stages and has a highly effective tracking system which effectively informs teachers' planning.
- All pupils are provided with rich experiences that make learning exciting, promoting their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well.

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

- The headteacher and senior leaders know their school very well and are accurate in their self-evaluation judgements. Together they have developed a robust system for self-evaluation, rigorous auditing of the curriculum which includes lesson observations, work scrutinies and discussions with pupils, that allows accurate analysis of performance and outcomes and promotes self-challenge.
- The Religious Education coordinator and other senior leaders have a great enthusiasm and drive for continually raising standards in the provision for religious education which is a great strength of the school.
- The headteacher and senior leadership team make very good use of professional development opportunities in-house as well as through the diocese to further enhance learning.
- Both staff and governors are kept well informed of the priorities which are identified through the strategies undertaken to evaluate the provision and outcomes for pupils. They are very well informed and knowledgeable about the schools' strengths and further areas for development.
- The governing body is closely involved in the daily work of the school. They make a significant contribution; giving their time generously, providing both support and challenge where necessary. They are extremely supportive and discharge their statutory duties effectively. The link governor for Religious Education works closely with the senior leadership team to monitor provision and assessment and her skilled contributions are appreciated by all staff.
- Diocesan guidelines for sacramental preparation are followed enthusiastically. The parish community works very effectively with pupils, parents and staff.
- Leaders and managers at all levels are committed to striving for the very best. This ensures that all pupils are well cared for and known and respected as individuals.
- 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.

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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.

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**COLLECTIVE WORSHIP:****1**

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

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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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**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.

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## SCHOOL DETAILS

<b>School name</b>	St Lawrence's RC Primary School
<b>Unique reference number</b>	108509
<b>Local authority</b>	Newcastle
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.	
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<b>Head teacher</b>	Mr Paul Brown
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