



St Bede's Catholic Academy

Green Lane, Stockton on Tees, Cleveland, TS19 0DW

School Unique Reference Number: **111688**

Inspection dates: 27 Feb & 14 March 2018
Lead inspector: Miss Maria Elliott

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

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

St Bede's Catholic Academy is an outstanding Catholic school because:

- St Bede's is a vibrant, warm and welcoming school where the Catholic mission is extensively displayed throughout the school. This is a fully inclusive school with a strong family ethos and this enables children, staff and parents to flourish in a nurturing and caring community.
- 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.
- The quality of Collective Worship is outstanding because prayer is at the heart of the school and from a young age pupils are deeply reverent and respectful during prayer and class worship.
- The quality of Religious Education is good. Pupils enjoy the subject, can explain its value and are keen to do well. This leads to good progress in most lessons. The areas for improvement from the last inspection have been addressed. Religious Education is not yet outstanding due to inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment procedures.

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- This is an average sized primary school in Stockton, serving the parish of St Bede's, Stockton.
- St Bede's is part of Carmel Education Trust.
- The majority of pupils are baptised Roman Catholic.
- The large majority of pupils are from white British backgrounds.
- A small minority of pupils are from minority ethnic groups.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is in line with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium government funding is higher than the national average.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- Improve the quality of Collective Worship by:
 - simplifying whole school Collective Worship to mirror the very effective class worship structure.
 - providing more opportunities for pupil involvement in planning and leading whole school Collective Worship.
- Improve the quality of Religious Education by:
 - ensuring all learners have a clear focus of what they need to learn and how to be successful in order to improve outcomes further.
 - ensuring that best practice in assessment is implemented across 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 have a deep sense of belonging and see their school as a family. They embrace the demands that membership of St Bede's community entails with joy and enthusiasm.
- The pupils, through their involvement with the school council and Mini Vinnies, are central to shaping the mission and ethos and take full advantage of the opportunities the school provides and as a result they are happy and confident.
- The pupils speak with passion about the many opportunities they are offered to promote the school ethos, both within school and beyond. The school's commitment to Cafod, a school in Uganda, the local foodbank, and the neighbouring care home enables the pupils to have a deep understanding of the roles and responsibilities within school and wider community and relish the opportunities to meet the demands. A pupil spoke of the excitement and anticipation when waiting for the final total following a fundraising venture as it made her feel as if she was actually making a difference.
- There are very high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Staff strive to lead by example and as a result pupils' behaviour is excellent; they are polite and courteous. They show respect for adults and each other and trust the staff.
- The pupils are extremely well supported throughout school by a range of pastoral opportunities provided by very caring and deeply committed staff. All staff work as a very effective team, and everyone is valued for their contribution.
- The pupils are very proud of their own religious identity and beliefs and have a strong sense of personal worth. They deeply value and respect the Catholic traditions of the school and its links with the parish and the diocese.

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

- The school mission statement, 'Together with Christ we grow in faith and knowledge', is a clear and motivating expression of the educational mission of the Church. It is understood and lived out by all.
- Excellent relationships were evident at all levels and all 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 statement.

- The learning environment is vibrant and colourful with many thought provoking quotes displayed extensively throughout school, as well as beautifully created focal areas and displays reflecting the mission and identity of a Catholic school. St Bede's is a school extremely committed to Catholic traditions and ethos.
- The highest level of support is offered to the pupils through effective policies and procedures, along with an explicit commitment to the most vulnerable. Through effective pastoral support pupils and parents are able to access help and advice when needed; this is greatly appreciated by families.
- The school is equally attentive to the needs of the staff supporting them to modify roles within school to enable them to reach their full potential, resulting in high morale, very positive relationships and a deep sense of belonging.
- School expectations and ethos are clearly and consistently communicated by staff and governors resulting in high standards of moral and ethical behaviour.
- St Bede's behaviour policy is rooted in Gospel values. It embodies the need for justice and forgiveness, is fully understood and lived out by all. As one pupil stated, 'each day we have the opportunity to start again'.

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

- Leaders and managers are extremely committed to the mission of the Church. They have a very strong sense of the mission of the Church and the school's role in expressing it.
- The headteacher, who has been appointed since the last inspection, is very passionate about developing and sustaining an authentic Catholic ethos and sees this as a core leadership responsibility. She has developed a strong sense of purpose, and has a relentless focus on ensuring the fullest personal development of all pupils and staff.
- The headteacher, Religious Education coordinator and school chaplain are the driving force within school and are highly effective role models for the whole community.
- The school self-evaluation is aspirational and is a reflection of rigorous monitoring and self-challenge which leads to a focused plan for further improvement.
- The school engages extremely well with parents and carers to the great benefit of all pupils and families. Parents have a very good understanding of the school's mission and are very supportive of it. They are very proud of their school, they state they 'never feel alone', and appreciate greatly the fact that the school 'goes above and beyond'.
- Governors and the trust make a significant contribution to the Catholic Life of the school, they are passionate about the school's mission, ambitious for its future developments and their role in ensuring it has the highest priority.
- Governors discharge their statutory and canonical duties extremely well. They are actively involved in the evaluation of the Catholic Life of the school and provide challenge and support where necessary.

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.

- Pupils at St Bede's respond very respectfully and thoughtfully when participating in Collective Worship in small and large gatherings. Pupils act with reverence, sing joyfully and join in community prayers appropriately and with confidence.
- Through very effective class worship pupils are encouraged to create an atmosphere for reflection and prayer. However opportunities to plan and lead whole school Collective Worship are limited.
- Dependent upon their age, pupils take on responsibility to plan and prepare class Collective Worship, under the guidance of the class teacher and by the end of key stage two (KS2) they lead with confidence and independence. They have a well-developed understanding of what constitutes effective class worship.
- From an early age pupils have a strong sense of what worship is about. Foundation stage staff are very skilled at initiating class worship that demonstrates the building blocks on which to further develop liturgical development. Foundation pupils confidently created a lovely calm atmosphere for class worship and were very reverent when praying a simple thank you litany.
- Pupils have a very good understanding of the religious seasons and feasts and the different demands this makes on worship. They demonstrate respect for, and interest in, other faiths.
- Adults are effective role models for the pupils and contribute significantly to their spiritual and moral development.
- The experience of living and working in a worshipping community has a profound effect on the development of all pupils. One pupil stated that 'even outside school I can try to be a better person – I saw someone in the street who was homeless so I went and got him some lunch'.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship is outstanding.

- Collective Worship is central to the life of the school and forms the heart of daily practice. There is a clear policy for Collective Worship with a structured programme of liturgies, worship and Masses. At times whole school gatherings take on an assembly dimension focusing on imparting knowledge and facts in conjunction with the conventions of liturgical structure. This can lead to confusion in some pupils' understanding of what constitutes effective liturgy.
- Staff support the pupils to enable them to plan, prepare and lead class worship with regard to their developmental age.
- Prayer is central to the life of the school. Staff ensure that class Collective Worship opportunities include a variety of prayer styles and that the pupils are engaged in them. In their class worship for parents and pupils, celebrating their topic of memorial sacrifice year five used multimedia, drama and song to share the message of the Last Supper which they seamlessly dovetailed into the Gospel reading.
- Themes used for Collective Worship are linked to the school values, topical events and the liturgical year.
- Acts of Collective Worship are well resourced and fully inclusive. There are a variety of resource boxes and appropriate artefacts which are available for adults and pupils to use. All classes have a focal point with well thought out resources which provide pupils with stimuli for thought and reflection.
- The school's high quality provision ensures that the spiritual needs of the pupils are met extremely well.
- Parents speak very positively about the opportunities offered for them to join their children for worship. They spoke with enthusiasm about the travelling cribs that came home during Advent and the Wednesday Word that encourages family prayer and worship.

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

- The senior leadership team, school and trust chaplains display expert knowledge of how to plan and deliver high quality experiences of Collective Worship. They have a very clear understanding of the Church's liturgical year and use this to very good effect in leading the school in its knowledge and understanding of Catholic rites and symbols.
- The Religious Education coordinator has modelled Collective Worship and carried out staff training to ensure it has the highest possible quality throughout the school.
- Through a variety of monitoring activities leaders have a very clear understanding of the strengths and areas of further development within Collective Worship.
- The liturgical and spiritual development of the staff is given high priority, and all receive appropriate formation and training to enhance their practice.
- The school life of worship and prayer is given the highest priority by the headteacher, staff, governors and the trust and seen as the heart of the school. They continuously seek to develop it through the school and parish community.
- Parents appreciate the voice they are given to respond to and evaluate Collective Worship.

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.

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

- Most pupils say they enjoy Religious Education, they have positive attitudes and older pupils speak enthusiastically about their learning. They are keen to do well and work at a good pace.
- Behaviour throughout school is excellent enabling good learning to take place. Most pupils concentrate well in lessons, creating an atmosphere conducive to learning.
- Pupils develop and apply a range of skills well, and as they reach upper KS2 are able to interpret sources, reflect and evaluate, engage with religious ideas and integrate them into their lives. Year six pupils, when exploring 'What is the Greatest Week?' used scriptures, and post it notes to demonstrate a deepening understanding. This was facilitated by very effective teacher questioning.
- Outcomes for pupils are very good. Pupils make very good progress in Religious Education within lessons and over time. Pupils starting points are low but by the end of KS2 standards are above diocesan averages. The school continues to focus on the accuracy of its assessment procedures.
- Evidence from books and lesson observations show some variety and range of learning activities and progress is evident. Where learning and progress is more rapid, imaginative learning is planned incorporating driver words, clear learning objective and success criteria which are shared with the pupils.
- Pupils identified as having a special educational need make good progress because their needs are accurately identified and they are well supported by skilled teaching assistants.

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

- The quality of teaching is good with some outstanding practice therefore the majority of pupils and groups of pupils make at least good progress. However, there are inconsistencies in practice across the school. Where teaching was most effective pupils were fully engaged in their learning journey, understood what they were learning and why, as well as understanding how they would be successful.
- Most teachers have a clear understanding of the values of Religious Education; they use Come and See materials with growing confidence to plan interesting and imaginative lessons and use a good range of resources. Some teachers use very effective questioning to extend pupils learning.

- Teachers manage their time very well and deploy support staff effectively; the school chaplain is an integral part of the learning process supporting year two pupils with a role play of Ash Wednesday and as a result, good learning is secured.
- Teachers mark work regularly and feedback given is positive and celebratory but does not always inform pupils as to how to improve their work further.
- 'I Can' statements are shared with pupils, but inconsistencies of practice don't always allow pupils to be fully involved in assessment practices.
- The school has very effective tracking systems to monitor pupils' progress and achievement in Religious Education. Staff are becoming more confident and accurate in their assessments.

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

- The headteacher is enthusiastic and highly effective in promoting the high profile of Religious Education amongst staff. Leaders and managers are highly ambitious for rapid improvement in Religious Education and are relentless in striving to deliver the best possible outcomes for all pupils.
- The subject leader for Religious Education is deeply committed, extremely knowledgeable and enthusiastic. She is extremely well informed and has very high expectations which she communicates very well to staff, enthusing confidence in them. She is well respected by her colleagues and seen as a source of support and guidance for all staff.
- Leaders ensure that the school's vision is shared through staff meetings, briefings and training both within the trust and at diocesan level. As a result Religious Education has a high profile in school and is well planned to meet the needs of all the pupils.
- The strong leadership and commitment of the headteacher and the Religious Education coordinator as well as the significant contribution made by the school chaplain, has had a significant impact on raising standards. Consequently, teaching and learning is improving rapidly.
- Through a range of systematic and rigorous monitoring activities leaders have an accurate picture of achievement. They clearly understand the school's strengths and areas of development. There are systematic plans in place to bring about further improvements.
- The curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' conference and contributes very effectively to the pupils' moral and spiritual development. Leaders ensure pupils have access to high quality sacramental preparation in accordance with diocesan policy.
- Governors are extremely supportive and confident in their ability to challenge. They have great confidence in both the headteacher and the Religious Education coordinator and are extremely proud of the school.

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.

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:**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.

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 Bede's Catholic Academy
Unique reference number	111688
Local authority	Stockton
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	Ms Kate Ellis
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