



St Chad's RC Primary School

The Baltic, Witton Park, Bishop Auckland, DL14 0EP

School Unique Reference Number: **114263**

Inspection dates: 25 – 26 November 2015
Lead inspector: Mrs Liz O'Hehir

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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 Chad's RC Primary School is an outstanding Catholic school because:

- Catholic Life is outstanding. Governors, leaders and staff have high expectations and a shared vision with regard to the Catholic mission and ethos of the school. Caring relationships and strong teamwork underpin all aspects of the school's work.
- The quality of Catholic Life is outstanding because it is central to the life of the school. Staff and pupils plan and lead high quality acts of worship where all pupils act with deep reverence and respect.
- Religious Education is good. Good teaching and subject knowledge ensure that most pupils make good progress over time. Pupils enjoy their learning and concentrate very well. Behaviour is exemplary.

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- St Chad's is a small Catholic primary school in rural Bishop Auckland, serving the parishes of St Mary's and St Wilfrid's.
- There are 84 pupils on roll, arranged into four classes. Class one (early years foundation stage), class two (years one and two), class three (years three and four) and class four (years five and six).
- Almost all pupils are from a White British background.
- The headteacher is also headteacher at Ramshaw primary school, spending two and a half days in each school. The headteacher is a local leader of education and also an Ofsted inspector.
- There have been a number of teaching staff changes over the last eighteen months including the appointment of the deputy headteacher and Religious Education subject leader. With the exception of the headteacher, all of the teaching staff have joined the school in the last two and a half years.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- Develop Leadership capacity for Religious Education by:
 - Ensuring the subject leader for Religious Education has opportunities to gain experience of outstanding leadership practice in other Catholic schools.
 - Ensuring rigorous and robust monitoring and evaluation systems are in place so that timely intervention brings about the highest possible outcomes for all classes and groups of pupils.
- Raise standards in Religious Education by:
 - Building on the good practice that exists to ensure marking and feedback consistently provides pupils with information on how to improve their work and gives them time to respond.
- Further develop the Catholic Life of the school by:
 - Reviewing and developing the sex and relationships policy so that teaching and learning programmes are fully in line with diocesan guidance.

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.

1

1

2

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.

- The mission statement is central to the daily life of the school and embraced by all. Pupils' well-being and personal development together with respect for others is at the heart of the school's vision. Pupils feel valued and confidently express their views. Their behaviour is exemplary.
- Pupils have a deep sense of belonging to their school family and are very proud of it. They take full advantage of the opportunities the school provides for their personal and spiritual growth. They take pride in their various roles and responsibilities such as Mini-Vinnies, pupil councillors, Rights Respecting representatives and buddies. They have a strong sense of caring, ensuring all are made welcome.
- Pupils enthusiastically and regularly plan and support charitable works, for example, Cafod, St Cuthbert's Care and the Christmas shoebox appeal. They also take a lead direction in how money is distributed, for instance, choosing items from Cafod's World Gifts range. Mini-Vinnies suggest their own fundraising and acts of giving, such as making prayer cards for sick people, selling toys and crafts to fundraise for Butterwick hospice and singing Christmas carols at a local care home.
- Pupils are regularly involved in parish, community and diocesan celebrations, irrespective of their own faith commitment. They have a strong sense of social justice and older pupils are very aware of the impact religious conflict can have. The school works hard through its programme of visitors and visits to address the lack of religious diversity and through its curriculum planning ensures pupils recognise the validity of the feelings of others who do not share their religious convictions.

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

- There is a palpable sense of the school's mission statement, 'Come as you are and walk with us,' in this welcoming and nurturing community. Faith is modelled and each person is valued as a member of God's family.
- There is a deep sense of belonging at all levels that is evident in the quality of relationships that exist. Pastoral care for pupils is outstanding because of the commitment of all stakeholders and the knowledge and understanding they have of their pupils and families.

- Parents report that all children feel loved and secure. They leave the school in year six confident to face the challenges of secondary school.
- This is a prayerful community. Parents comment on the opportunities they have to pray with their children and the positive impact it has on their children's spiritual growth.
- Creative and vibrant displays and religious artefacts permeate the school providing a stimulating environment that reflects the school's Catholic character. The school's mission statement is on every classroom door. Inspirational Gospel texts are ever present. Many displays are interactive and challenge pupils thinking leading to a deeper understanding. For instance, a display entitled 'God's World' invited pupils to interpret images and why they were chosen from an ecumenical poster.

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

- Leadership is deeply committed to the Church's mission in education. They have a clear understanding of the vision of Catholic education, are highly respected and a source of inspiration for the school community. All teaching staff are currently studying for the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies.
- Staff and pupils' understanding of the school mission is outstanding because of the leadership of the highly respected headteacher. Consequently, all share its purpose and are actively involved in supporting it. They are exemplary role models. As a result, parental response and engagement is strong, regardless of prior faith commitment.
- Governors and parish priest make a significant contribution to the Catholic Life of the school. They are highly visible in the school community and passionate about the school's mission. They consistently communicate high expectations, providing appropriate challenge and support. They, together with the headteacher, have ensured that staff and leadership teams have the ability and confidence to continue seamless and high quality provision in the headteacher's absence.
- Leaders and managers, including governors know their school well and conduct a range of monitoring activities relating to the provision and outcomes that inform school self-evaluation and feed into the school improvement plan. However, monitoring is not rigorous enough and is not systematically planned.

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.

1

1

2

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

- St Chad's is a very prayerful community where pupils and staff engage in a variety of high quality prayer, liturgy and reflections throughout the day and the week. Collective Worship is a central part of their experience of school and inspires pupils of all ages to reflect and respond with enthusiasm and joyful singing as well as reverence and respect. Parents report how enthusiastically pupils speak about their prayer experience and a recent photograph sent to school showed a very young pupil role-playing Collective Worship with her dolls.
- Pupils, from a young age, are reflective and focused during prayer and know how to contribute and lead appropriately. They have a very good understanding of religious seasons and feasts and the implication this has for planning Collective Worship. For some pupils, this is outstanding. They have a love for special devotions such as the Stations of the Cross which they celebrate with staff during Holy Week. Six children are very active in the parish and contribute regularly by greeting the congregation and taking part in the readings and the processions of the gifts at Mass. Year six pupils support the youngest children during school masses and are exemplary role models.
- Whole school Collective Worship explores weekly gospel messages and events in the liturgical calendar. They invite pupils' response and 'Wonder Questions.'
- Older pupils plan and lead Collective Worship independently, creating an atmosphere conducive to prayer. Pupils' prayers thoughts and feelings are a consistent feature of class discussion and displays.
- Pupils have a deep sense of social justice and a well-developed understanding of other faiths which contributes positively to their outstanding spiritual and moral development.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship is outstanding.

- Worship and prayer are central to the life of the school and form the heart of every school celebration. Praying together is part of the daily experience for all pupils and staff. Collective Worship has a clear purpose to support each pupil on their own journey of faith.
- There is a well-planned programme of Masses, liturgies, assemblies and other liturgical celebrations, matched to pupils' stage of development. Parental engagement is a strength and is encouraged. Attendance of parents at celebrations is very good. During Lent and

Advent children enjoy taking 'Prayer Bags' home to share with their families.

- Collective Worship is given a high priority in terms of planning and resourcing. Experiences are of high quality and are universally cherished by staff and pupils. Parents comment on how much they value the school's Collective Worship, which is threaded throughout the school.
- Staff are skilled at guiding pupils so that they can have a deeper experience of prayer and worship. They ensure there is progression of skills from early years foundation stage to year six. As a result pupils have been taught to plan and effectively deliver worship using a range of high quality resources.
- Older pupils regularly choose their own themes, each having strong views on what they would like to base their Collective Worship, reflecting their personal spiritual aspirations.
- School leaders have an excellent understanding of the church's liturgical heritage, its rites and seasons and are passionate about ensuring pupils experience is of the highest quality. As a result, provision for Collective Worship is outstanding.

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

- School leaders have a well-developed knowledge of Collective Worship and set a high standard in school with well-planned liturgical experiences. They lead by example ensuring that pupils and staff develop a thorough appreciation of the rites, symbols, traditions and seasons of the church's year and this is reflected in the Collective Worship delivered on a day to day basis. Pupils are encouraged to think about how the word of God has relevance in their own lives.
- The dedication and commitment of leaders and managers is instrumental in the drive for continued development. The parish priest and key governors are highly visible in school, contributing to monitoring strategies.
- Training and induction of new staff has a high profile in school development plans and staff respond enthusiastically. As a result of this and the focused drive to enhance Collective Worship, improvements have been made over time. This has led to enrichment in liturgies and worship.
- Leaders have a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses in respect of Collective Worship and are keen to continue to improve the quality of provision and the spiritual development of staff.
- Parents are well informed and praise the excellent communication that exists between school and home. Leaders have sought the views of pupils, parents and carers responding to these findings appropriately.

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

2

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

- Pupils enjoy and understand the value of Religious Education and are keen to do well. They concentrate well, display positive attitudes and work diligently because 'teachers make learning fun.' This was very evident in a highly engaging outdoor learning experience for the youngest pupils. Through skilled teaching, the Christmas story was brought alive for the pupils as they journeyed with the characters in the story.
- Behaviour for learning is outstanding. As a result the vast majority of learners make good progress over time. Data analysis and work scrutiny indicate standards of attainment are at least in line with diocesan averages.
- Opportunities exist for pupils to experience their own traditions as well as those of other faiths in an interesting way. Pupils were able to describe their enjoyment and improved understanding of both Islam and Judaism through their studies, their visit to a mosque and through discussions they had with a Jewish visitor.
- Pupils are very secure in their understanding and are developing a range of enquiry skills that encourage reflection and challenge their thinking. They speak confidently about what they have been taught and how this has had an impact on their lives.
- Older pupils understand how to improve their work through explicit marking and performance review conferences.

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

- Teaching is good with some outstanding elements. Pupils report their enjoyment of the subject so that over time, the vast majority of groups including those with special educational needs make good progress.
- Teachers plan using the diocesan programme, 'Come and See,' to good effect and teacher knowledge is at least good and often outstanding. As a result they use an appropriate range of resources and strategies to promote learning and engagement. Teachers have high expectations and encourage pupils to be reflective. In one lesson during the inspection, pupils explored contemporary ideas and styles of Advent calendars exploring commercial versus religious motives.
- Time is managed well within lessons and additional adults are well informed and used effectively in both the teaching and assessment processes. This effectively supports accuracy in measuring pupil progress and setting pupil targets. Class teachers in key year

groups can identify movement within levels giving an increasingly accurate picture of whole school attainment.

- Work in books and observed lessons are usually differentiated by adapting the text or task to meet individual or group needs, by targeted questioning and the level of support given. Peer support is also commonly used. During observed lessons, teachers systematically checked pupils' understanding throughout lessons and took appropriate steps to intervene in order to maximise the impact on the quality of learning.
- Pupils do not always respond to constructive marking and feedback. There is inconsistency in using 'I can' statements across the school.

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

- The school improvement plan identifies the development of Religious Education as a high priority. There is a shared common purpose amongst all teaching staff. Religious Education has a very high profile and makes a very positive contribution to pupils' moral and spiritual development.
- Leadership at all levels is focused on raising standards and improving the quality of teaching and learning.
- Staff training and continued professional development, including that of the subject leader, has a high priority. All teaching staff have been trained to use the diocesan education programme, 'Come and See' and join with cluster schools to moderate assessment judgements. In addition, the subject leader for Religious Education attends diocesan moderation sessions. Staff now consistently assess pupils' work accurately.
- The commitment and ambition of the leadership team, who are very knowledgeable and enthusiastic, together with accurate tracking systems has had a significant impact in raising the standards of higher attaining pupils. All leaders, including governors, have high expectations and confidence in the staff team, inspiring them to continually improve.
- Strategies to monitor teaching and learning are not rigorous and embedded into practice. However, leaders are fully aware of this and what the school needs to do to move from good to outstanding.
- The school has good links with a variety of agencies, the wider community and local schools. This, together with global links, provide an enriched curriculum and activities promoting pupils' learning and engagement.
- Sacramental preparation is very successfully embedded and in line with diocesan policy. It is a joyful and shared experience across the two parishes.

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.

2

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.

2

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.

2

SCHOOL DETAILS

School name	St Chad's RC Primary School
Unique reference number	114263
Local authority	Durham
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	Mr Brian Jones
Choose School Leadership Type	Mr Dominic Brown
Date of previous school inspection	October 2010
Telephone number	01388 603632
Email address	stchads@durhamlearning.net