



St Paul's RC Primary School

Wolviston Mill Lane, Billingham, Stockton, TS22 5LU

School Unique Reference Number: **111677**

Inspection dates: 31 January – 01 February 2019
Lead inspector: Lisa Stokoe

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

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

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

- St Paul's is an inclusive school where everyone is valued and welcomed. Within the community all members share the headteacher's clear vision for the school.
- The Catholic Life of the school is outstanding because the ethos of Catholic education underpins everything the school does. The well-being and personal development of the pupils is the heart and soul of the school's mission.
- The quality of Religious Education is good. It is not yet outstanding due to inconsistencies in the quality of assessment, variations in the attainment and progress of boys and lack of challenge, particularly for the most able.
- The Collective Worship of the school is outstanding because it is central to the everyday life of the school. Pupils confidently plan and lead worship acting with reverence and respect from the earliest years onwards.

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- St Paul's is an average sized primary school, which is part of the St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Multi Academy Trust, formed in 2016, serving the parish of St Thomas of Canterbury, Billingham.
- There are approximately 66% of baptised Catholics in the school, with 29.5% of pupils from other Christian denominations and approximately 1% of pupils from other world faiths.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is in line with national average but the percentage of those with an education health and care plan is below national average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through pupil premium funding is below national average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below national average.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- Improve the quality of teaching and assessment within Religious Education by:
 - ensuring that assessment procedures are fully embedded and all staff consistently follow the school policy.
 - making sure that all pupils respond to any 'next steps' comments to enhance their knowledge and understanding.
 - providing more challenge to able pupils.
 - addressing the variation in attainment and progress of boys.

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 at St Paul's are proud of their religious identity and make an excellent contribution to the Catholic Life which has a high priority across the school.
- Pupils fully appreciate the community to which they belong. They understand the school's high expectations of behaviour and can clearly articulate how they are encouraged by all members of staff; as a result their behaviour is excellent. This view is endorsed by pupils themselves as well as staff, governors and parents.
- There is a powerful sense of belonging and involvement from the pupils. They take responsibility for many roles such as school councillors, fair achievers, Mini Vinnies and prayer leaders. Pupils take full advantage of the opportunities offered to them and are happy to take a leading role in those activities which promote the school's ethos both within the school and the wider community.
- Pupils are aware of the needs of others and respond willingly to those beyond the school. They articulate their views with confidence explaining the purpose of fundraising for various charities including CAFOD through World Gifts, Macmillan Cancer Research, Seafarers' shoeboxes and the local food bank.

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

- The school mission statement, 'In Him we live and move and have our being', is highly visible around the school and is respected by and responded to by all members of the school community.
- Excellent relationships exist within the school community and all stakeholders are fully committed to ensuring the school is the very best it can be. As one parent said, 'the school empowers our children to know they can be whatever they want to be'.
- Pupils are also very responsive to the opportunities they are given to support their personal development, such as the I Heart resilience programme. As a result, they are also happy and secure in their emotional and spiritual development. Pupils are happy in school and say they feel safe and cared for when there.
- The recommended relationships and sex education (RSE) programme Journey in Love is used throughout the school from early years through to year 6 and this is also linked to the school's own personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum.

- St Paul's vibrant and engaging learning environment is apparent in both the classrooms and around the school, where focal areas and displays provide opportunities to reflect, pray and celebrate its Catholic character.

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

- The headteacher, who is also the Religious Education coordinator, is a very positive presence around the school and has a very clear understanding of Catholic education and the role of the Catholic school. She is embedding this effectively throughout the school so that it is supported and recognised by pupils, staff and parents alike.
- The school's self-evaluation is given high priority and there are a range of monitoring activities which are used to successfully keep moving the school forward. The headteacher attends diocesan training which is then cascaded to the staff in regular staff meetings throughout the year.
- Parents are kept well informed about the Catholic Life of the school through a combination of regular newsletters and the school website. Parents all speak highly of the school calling it the heart and soul of the community. They have a clear understanding of the school's purpose and are extremely supportive of this.
- Governors know the school extremely well and are fundamental in shaping both policy and practice. They are regular visitors and as such are highly visible within the school community. Governors are involved in the school at many levels and are instrumental to the school's success.

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.

- Pupils enjoy and understand the value of Religious Education and are keen to do well. They have positive attitudes and speak enthusiastically about their learning, 'it helps me to understand Christian values and how to use them to be a better person'. Behaviour for learning is extremely good and disruptions to lessons are unusual.
- Pupils generally make good progress in their learning as they journey through school. There are variations in the attainment and progress of boys as opposed to girls, but leaders are aware of this and plans are in place to address this issue throughout the year.
- Through evidence in work and from conversations pupils are able to demonstrate effective use of prior knowledge when making links between religious ideas and using scriptural references.
- Pupils identified as having special educational needs are well supported by highly skilled teaching assistants.
- The standards of attainment for the majority of pupils in each year group is on track to be in line with diocesan averages and where this is not the case, the difference is diminishing.

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

- The quality of teaching in the school is good overall. Teachers demonstrate high expectations of behaviour and engagement and as a result, pupils across the school concentrate well.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are very positive and are a real strength of the school. This was commented upon by staff, pupils and parents alike, 'we genuinely care for each pupil' and 'all children are valued and included'. Additional staff are used well within the classroom and as result the majority of pupils make progress over time. However this is not the case for the more able pupils who require more challenge to enable them to achieve to the best of their ability.
- Teachers use diocesan plans and guidance to deliver well planned activities through a range of teaching strategies which help pupils to develop and improve their knowledge and foster enthusiasm for the subject.
- Teachers mark work regularly and feedback is often positive and supportive. However, improvement prompts and guidance as to the next steps in learning are not provided consistently across the school. Pupils are not always given further opportunities to respond to feedback and to improve their work.

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

- Religious Education has a high profile in the life of the school. Governors are regular visitors to the school and are actively involved in the school community. They have a good understanding of the school's performance in Religious Education and offer both challenge and support.
- Leaders and governors ensure that the Religious Education curriculum meets the Bishops' conference requirements in every respect.
- Leaders carry out monitoring and analysis of teaching and learning through observation, pupil voice, data analysis and parental and staff questionnaires with the findings used to plan for improvements. The school improvement plan identifies clear steps taken from this monitoring and these are used for on-going development.
- A tracking system is in place and pupils are monitored to ensure that they make progress both throughout the year and annually. Leaders are working hard to ensure that assessment is used consistently and accurately across the school.
- Resources for Religious Education across the school are varied allowing pupils to experience Religious Education in different ways. Leaders have ensured that Religious Education has been resourced appropriately at every level and that this subject compares favourably with other core subjects within the school.
- Diocesan guidelines for sacramental preparation are followed by all. The parish priest works well supporting the school, catechists, parents and pupils.

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.

- All pupils participate with enthusiasm and respect in acts of Collective Worship. Pupils are at ease when praying in school. Their response in both large and small gatherings is reverent and spiritual. As one pupil said, 'I like praying here as we get to spend time with God, it makes me feel calmer inside'.
- All pupils readily take the initiative in leading acts of Collective Worship. Adults are excellent role models, which significantly contributes to pupils' spiritual and moral development. Almost all pupils have a good understanding of the Church's liturgical year, seasons and feasts.
- Appropriate to their age and ability pupils can confidently choose significant artefacts to furnish the focal point, including relevant scripture and liturgical music to enhance the worship itself.
- From the earliest stages pupils recognise the special nature of prayer and show respect. They are aware that religious beliefs are important, demonstrating respect for their own faith and the faith of others.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship is outstanding.

- Collective Worship is central to the life of the school and is shared with parents and the wider community at key points throughout the year. Each class leads an act of Collective Worship each term to which parents are invited. Parents say these pupil led events are highly inclusive and 'help our children thrive'.
- The school day is punctuated by prayer and as a result pupils are confident in the common prayers of the Church. Staff have become increasingly skilled in enabling pupils to confidently plan, prepare and lead Collective Worship.
- Each class setting has a well-resourced area set aside and is clearly focused on the appropriate season of the Church.
- Families are becoming more involved in the pupils' religious development through weekly circulation of the Wednesday Word, Travelling Cribs, Jesse Tree and Advent Angels and resources for the Years of Oscar Romero and the Year of Mary. The school improvement plan and parental questionnaires both indicate that school and parents would both like to

continue to increase these opportunities. The school is developing plans to involve parents further throughout the year.

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

- The headteacher and other staff 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.
- Leaders prioritise the liturgical development for all in school and ensure that time is devoted to it. This is evidenced in staff prayers, in-service training days, a retreat for staff and the opportunity for the oldest pupils to visit the Emmaus Village.
- Collective Worship is promoted throughout school with colourful displays in classrooms and shared spaces which help pupils understand the essential elements that are found in outstanding Collective Worship.
- Diocesan, cluster and in-house training has been accessed by all staff to support formation in the development of their spiritual and liturgical understanding and development of skills.
- Collective Worship has been reviewed as part of the self-evaluation process. Leaders have sought the views of pupils, staff and parents. All responses are highly valued and used to inform the continual improvement in driving the school forward.

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

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

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

SCHOOL DETAILS

School name	St Paul's RC Primary School
Unique reference number	111677
Local authority	Stockton
This Inspection Report is produced for the Rt Reverend Séamus Cunningham 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	Mrs Michelle Henderson
Head teacher	Mrs Sheena Sinclair
Date of previous school inspection	September 2013
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