



St Cuthbert's RC First School

Prince Edward Road, Tweedmouth, Berwick-upon-Tweed, TD15 2EX

School Unique Reference Number: **122309**

Inspection dates:	05 – 06 February 2020
Lead inspector:	Mr Shaun Dillon

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 Cuthbert's RC First School is an outstanding Catholic school because:

- It is a warm, welcoming and prayerful school with a strong ethos that underpins all the school strives to achieve. The mission of Catholic education is at the heart of this faith community.
- Religious Education is good. The pupils make good progress and make thoughtful contributions in lessons. Pupils enjoy Religious Education and are keen to develop and use a widening religious vocabulary.
- The Catholic Life of St Cuthbert's is outstanding. The headteacher, staff, governors and families share a clear vision for the school. The school is growing a positive presence in the town of Berwick-upon-Tweed.
- The quality of Collective Worship is outstanding because prayer and worship are central to the life of the school. From a very young age pupils are deeply reverent and respectful during prayer. Pupils plan and lead Collective Worship with reverence and enthusiasm and families are welcome to join them in regular prayer.

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- St Cuthbert's is a smaller than average first school in Berwick upon Tweed with 92 pupils on roll. The school serves the parish of Our Lady & St Cuthbert's, Berwick Upon Tweed.
- The proportion of pupils from ethnic groups is in line with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium is slightly below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils baptised Roman Catholic is below average.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- Improve the progress of all children in curriculum Religious Education by:
 - ensuring that high quality feedback extends pupils' learning, especially for the most able, leading to higher standards and achievement for all pupils.
 - ensuring that all teachers use time effectively to maximise learning opportunities for all pupils.

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.

- All pupils show a deep respect for themselves and others as made in the image and likeness of God.
- The behaviour of all pupils is exemplary because they recognise that they belong to a community where they are respected, cared for and nurtured. In proportion to their years they show an ability to listen, to give thanks, to forgive and be forgiven.
- All pupils appreciate, value and actively participate in the Catholic Life and mission of the school. They play an increasingly important role in planning the Catholic Life of the school through the Mini Vinnies group and spiritual councillors as well as through events like Mary's Meals.
- Pupils attend services in church regularly and invite parents and members of the community to celebrations and services. As a result, all pupils are confident in expressing pride in their own religious and cultural identity and beliefs, irrespective of their own faith commitments.
- Pupils talk confidently and enthusiastically about the role they play in developing the Catholic Life of St Cuthbert's. They are proud to work closely with CAFOD, making a positive difference to the lives of others around the world. They are also proud to work in partnership with other local organisations and schools in their area.

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

- The school mission statement is a clear expression of the educational mission of the Church which is summed up for the children in the words, 'In God's family, we love, we grow, we learn.' This is relevant, understood and lived by all who make up the school community.
- All staff are fully committed to its implementation across the curriculum and the whole of school life. They enthusiastically participate in school and extra-curricular activities including supporting sacramental preparation.
- Parents and extended families feel valued and part of the St. Cuthbert's family. They are included in all worship and prayer at school and they have welcomed the many changes to school life and curriculum introduced by the headteacher.
- There is a strong sense of community at all levels, which is evident in the high quality of

relationships and the centrality of prayer in the whole community. The school is a very supportive and joyful community.

- Clear policies and structures are in place, which provide the highest levels of pastoral care to all pupils.

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

- St Cuthbert's is a very well led school. The headteacher and deputy headteacher are deeply committed to the mission of the Church. Their vision is one that is communicated to all members of St Cuthbert's community. They are outstanding role models, providing very clear direction for improvement.
- The provision for the Catholic Life of the school is given the highest possible priority by leaders. This is reflected in the school's self-evaluation which is an accurate and coherent reflection of rigorous monitoring, searching analysis and self-challenge. It is clearly and explicitly focused on the Catholic Life of the school. This leads to well targeted and planned improvements, often creatively conceived with key partners to further enhance the Catholic Life of the school.
- The school environment reflects its mission and identity through concrete and effective signs of the school's Catholic character. There are very high quality displays which include work completed in Come and See. Focus tables and the various artefacts are very tasteful throughout school.
- Leaders and Governors are outstanding in promoting, monitoring and evaluating the provision for the Catholic Life of the school.
- Governors make a highly significant contribution to the Catholic Life of the school. They are passionate about the school's mission, are actively involved in its evaluation and are ready to challenge as well as support where necessary. They give freely of their wealth of experience.
- The parish priest is fully supportive of the school. He speaks very highly of the Mini Vinnies and the strength of the links between school and parish, highlighting the effectiveness of sacramental preparation as a positive example.

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.

- Work scrutinies provide evidence of pupils attaining appropriate levels for their age and stage of development in each key stage. Their good achievement is consistently evident in assessed work, individual exercise books and class portfolios.
- Pupils make good progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities and are enthusiastic learners.
- Pupils are becoming increasingly more religiously literate. Their knowledge, understanding and skills are developing according to their age or capacity. They are developing the skills that enable them to reflect spiritually, think ethically and theologically and are becoming aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life.
- Most pupils are actively engaged in lessons. They enjoy working collaboratively together. They have positive attitudes and excellent behaviour for learning in lessons. They take great pride in their work and interact well with their peers in group work and paired activities.
- Both when working independently and in their contributions to whole class discussions, pupils are highly motivated and committed to doing their very best. In discussion they reported that they enjoyed their lessons very much, especially the challenge of learning something new.

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

- Teachers plan very well and display very good subject knowledge. All staff members have the opportunity to attend training sessions and are very well supported by the headteacher and governing body.
- Within lessons, teachers offer a range of teaching styles to motivate pupils and encourage their enjoyment of and enthusiasm for Religious Education. They take opportunities to make cross-curricular links where appropriate and lesson tasks are well matched to the learning objective to promote good learning.
- Teachers and support staff work hard and are good role models for the children to emulate. They lead by example, modelling mutual respect and encouraging the best from others. They communicate high expectations about Religious Education to their pupils, most of whom respond positively.

- Teachers track individual progress and enter data onto school tracking system which is used effectively to identify areas of development for individuals and groups of pupils. They are able to identify how well pupils are performing and tackle any underachievement.
- A wide range of extra-curricular activities and educational visits enhance and support learning. These promote respect for the gifts and talents of each individual and help to develop self-esteem. Year 4 pupils spoke about their visit to Holy Island and how it helped them reflect on the importance of their Religious Education at St Cuthbert's.

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

- The headteacher and governors are outstanding in promoting, monitoring and evaluating the provision for Religious Education. Monitoring of Religious Education is focused and accurate and outcomes are used to identify further development needs for staff, as well as contributing to the school development plan.
- Leaders and governors ensure that the Religious Education curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference.
- Since the last inspection, new approaches to the teaching of Religious Education have been introduced. These approaches included introducing a new marking and feedback policy which has sharpened assessment of pupil attainment and progress across the school.
- Leaders and governors' self-evaluation of Religious Education is very good. It is an accurate reflection of assessment, tracking, monitoring, analysis and self-challenge.
- Governors are kept well informed by the headteacher through the curriculum committee and headteacher reports. They are interested and proactively involved in a range of monitoring and evaluation activities. The governors are extremely supportive but also confident in their ability to challenge. They discharge their statutory and canonical duties well.
- Regular newsletters are provided for parents and carers. These outline the curriculum and indicate how they can help to support their children's Religious Education at home. Their views and opinions are sought regularly and they appreciate how approachable all school staff are and how they are listened to.

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 act with reverence and are keen to participate in Collective Worship. They sing joyfully, reflect in extended periods of silence and join in community prayer appropriately and with confidence.
- Pupils are involved in planning, preparing and leading worship with confidence and enthusiasm. Pupils commented that they really enjoy leading Collective Worship. They enjoy the independence of planning and leading all aspects of Collective Worship and they gain even more confidence knowing that they can ask any adult in school for guidance when needed.
- Pupils routinely join in liturgy and make appropriate responses. These skills are well honed across the school.
- Pupils use a variety of approaches to prayer which include scripture, religious artefacts, liturgical music and other forms of prayer. They value and participate voluntarily in liturgy and worship using the newly created prayer room during playtime to pray and reflect together. They say that they really enjoy the opportunity to share these experiences.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of the Church's liturgical year, its seasons and feasts. They regularly celebrate together in school and at Mass as part of the wider parish community.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship is outstanding.

- Collective Worship is a central part of the life of the school and prayer is included in all school gatherings. Praying together is part of the daily experience for pupils and staff. Prayer experiences and worship is given a high priority in the school and is timetabled accordingly.
- Collective Worship has a clear purpose, message and direction. The themes chosen for worship reflect a deep understanding of the liturgical season and the Church's mission in education. The Baptism of Jesus was celebrated by the whole school and led by class two while class three shared the mission question: 'How can we promote peace?'

- All classes keep Collective Worship record books and individual prayer journals. Both are beautifully presented and provide evidence of a range of prayerful experiences, focuses and missions.
- Staff meet regularly for prayer and liturgy, acting as good role models for all pupils.
- Families are fully involved in the prayer life of the school. They spoke appreciatively about how welcome they are at school and how they feel included in the prayer life of St Cuthbert's, by the use of the travelling cribs, travelling crosses and bible bags.

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

- The headteacher has expert knowledge in how to provide accurate policies and guidelines to ensure quality planning and delivery of Collective Worship.
- Staff have an extensive understanding of the Church's liturgical year, seasons and feasts. They are very visible as leaders of Collective Worship within the school and are models of outstanding practice for colleagues and pupils.
- Staff promote pupils planning and leading Collective Worship in a variety of contexts both within the school building and in the developing school grounds. Particularly impressive was the prayer room where child led prayer took place on the day of inspection.
- Leaders and governors place the highest priority on the school's self-evaluation of Collective Worship with regular reviews of school performance and reports from classes and the headteacher. They have an accurate understanding of the many strengths and areas for further development in Collective Worship.

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.

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

SCHOOL DETAILS

School name	St Cuthbert's RC First School
Unique reference number	122309
Local authority	Northumberland
This Inspection Report is produced for the Rt Reverend Robert Byrne CO 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	Barbara Simpson
Head teacher	Mrs Clare McGregor
Date of previous school inspection	June 2015
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