

The Diocese of Hallam
Section 48 Inspection Report

**The Catholic Life of the School, Religious Education and
Collective Worship**

**St Michael and All Angels' Catholic Primary School
(Corpus Christi Federation)
Stonyford Road
Barnsley
South Yorkshire
S73 8AF**

School URN	106641
Overall Effectiveness grade	GOOD (2)
Date of inspection	24th June 2022
Name of Chair of Governors	Mrs Sheila Marren
Name of Executive Head Teacher	Mr Damien Thorpe
Name of Head of School	Mrs Jane Holcroft
Name of RE Subject Leader	Miss Emma Connell
Date of previous inspection	4th November 2015
Previous inspection grade	GOOD (2)
Section 48 Inspectors	Mr John Cape Mrs Lindsay Gamble

INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection Grades: 1 is Outstanding, 2 is Good,
3 requires improvement in order to be good, 4 is Inadequate

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS: how effective the school is in providing Catholic Education.

2

The above judgement on overall effectiveness is based on all the available evidence following the evaluation of the following three sections:

CATHOLIC LIFE

2

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

2

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

2

OUTSTANDING (1)	To be judged OUTSTANDING for overall effectiveness: The three Section judgements must all be OUTSTANDING
GOOD (2)	To be judged GOOD for overall effectiveness: The three Section judgements must all be at least GOOD
REQUIRES IMPROVEMENT (3)	To be judged REQUIRES IMPROVEMENT for overall effectiveness: One or more sections will be judged to REQUIRE IMPROVEMENT with no sections judged inadequate.
INADEQUATE (4)	To be judged INADEQUATE for overall effectiveness: At least one Section will be judged inadequate.

Summary of key findings:

This is a GOOD Catholic Primary School

The quality of the Catholic Life of the school is Good. St Michael and All Angels' School is a happy, colourful and welcoming school where the Catholic mission is well lived out throughout the school. There is a true sense of family at every level and the school motto, *'One family growing together in love and faith flourishing in an ever-changing world. We love, we believe, we shine, we achieve'*, is a living part of school life. Relationships throughout school are outstanding.

The quality of Religious Education is good because pupils enjoy, and are influenced by, their Religious Education lessons. They are keen to do well and improve their knowledge and understanding and make good progress. Religious Education is not yet outstanding as pupils experience of this subject differs. Where it is taught best, teachers plan using creative ideas and engaging activities and pupils enjoy their learning.

The quality of Collective Worship is good because it is central to the life of the school and forms the rhythm of daily life. Pupils from a very young age are reverent and respectful during worship and respond well in prayer and song.

What the school needs to do to improve further:

- Evaluate the impact of the recently introduced Relationships and Sex Education programme to check pupils have a good understanding of loving relationships and development.

Improve the quality of learning and teaching in Religious Education by:-

- Ensuring that marking provides clear guidance to pupils on how to improve their work and that they are given the time they need to respond to feedback in order to move their learning forward.
- Developing quality professional opportunities and experiences for the newly appointed leader of Religious Education to strengthen her leading role so as to model best practice, support staff development and drive quality learning across the school and federation.
- Carefully deploying teaching assistants so their support can focus on maximising learning opportunities for all pupils so they can make good progress.

Improve the quality of Collective Worship by:-

- Developing more opportunities for pupil involvement in planning, preparing and leading Collective Worship independently across the whole school by formulating a whole school approach which details skills, progression and expectations.

Information about this inspection

The inspection of St Michael and All Angels' School was carried out under the requirements of the Education Act 2005, and in accordance with the Diocesan Framework and Schedule for Section 48 Inspections approved by the Bishop of Hallam. The inspection reviews and evaluates how effective the school is in providing Catholic education. This process begins with the school's own self-evaluation and the inspection schedule follows the criteria set by the National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers (NBRIA 2017). While following the inspection schedule as published, inspectors acknowledged the significant impact of the Coronavirus pandemic on schools over a sustained period and took this into consideration when reaching their judgements.

The inspectors reviewed in detail the following aspects:

- Life at St Michael's post Covid
- Monitoring role of the Governing Body
- The quality of learning and teaching in Religious Education
- Collective Worship

The inspection was carried out by 2 inspectors over one day:

- Reviewed information posted on the school website which provided specific information about the importance of the Catholic faith and tradition and the teaching of Religious Education.
- Discussed the work of the school with several key stakeholders including teaching and support staff, Religious Education Link Governor, parents and pupils.
- Detailed discussion of the Catholic life and Religious Education with the Executive Headteacher, Head of School and Religious Education Coordinator.
- Discussions with pupils about the school and how they enjoy their learning and being part of the school community.
- Progress reports, portfolios of work, photographic evidence, focal points and displays in and around school all provided valuable evidence and essential information during the inspection.
- Observed Religious Education lessons in classes across the school.
- Scrutinised a range of pupils' Religious Education work, Big Books and work samples.
- Observed acts of Collective Worship including a whole school assembly and a pupil led Class 5 worship.

Information about this school

St Michael and All Angels is one of three Catholic schools in the Federation of Corpus Christi serving families in the Dearne Valley. There are 142 pupils currently on role split into five mixed age classes. The school serves a diverse catchment area both economically and socially. Currently 19% of pupils are on the Special Educational Needs (SEND) register and 5 pupils

have an Education and Health Care Plan, 33% of pupils are eligible for the Pupil Premium, 22% of pupils have English as an additional language. The school has a long-established history with the travelling community, including 9.6% of the pupils currently on roll.

Since the last Section 48 inspection the school has undergone significant changes. An Executive Headteacher was appointed in April 2016 who leads the three Corpus Christi Federation schools. The current Head of school was appointed in September 2016 and most of the staff are new to school since the last Section 48 Inspection.

During the pandemic, Barnsley had some of the highest infections rates nationally with Wombwell in particular suffering from exceedingly high rates of infection. COVID has impacted significantly on St Michael’s. Some normality returned in March 2022 when the community was welcomed back into school and whole class assemblies resumed, the first for two years.

Full Report – Inspection Judgements

CATHOLIC LIFE

The quality of the Catholic Life of the school is Good

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school	2
The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school	2
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision of the Catholic Life of the school	2

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

- The Catholic Life of the school is Good.
- The whole community make a commitment to the mission of the school as expressed in the very positive comments by pupils and parents and beautifully presented in the entrance hall display.
- Some Year 6 children have completed their ‘Faith In Action’ program, demonstrating an understanding of the ways they live and act out their faith in everyday life.
- It is a most welcoming place where everyone is valued and respected and enjoy school life to the full. Pupils are proud of their happy and safe school.
- Parental support for the school is outstanding as evidenced in their responses to the school mission statement.
- Pupils say their school is like a family and that they thoroughly enjoy being part of that family. They passionately articulate their appreciation of teachers and assistants, the

excellent relationships that exist and the confidence they have in asking for help and support.

- Pupils described how the school supports them to be the best they can be and how it teaches them about virtues for life. These virtues have helped to deepen their understanding and appreciation and helped them to show respect and care for each other.
- Behaviour of all pupils is exemplary, and pupils talk easily about how they deal with any issues or problems which may arise. There is a strong sense of personal responsibility about choices made and how staff support pupils in managing difficult situations that may occur.
- Rewards are bestowed upon pupils on a weekly basis during golden time assembly and they are affirmed for a range of positive achievements.
- Pupils are able to express their own beliefs and have a good grasp of how their faith impacts upon their lives and others.
- Pupils value the Catholic tradition of their school and have established links with the parish. This is an area the school have identified as a future focus for development.
- Pupils are conscious of the needs of those beyond the school and have actively organised fund-raising opportunities e.g., Caritas, Rudolf run and Macmillan. Some pupils attended the annual Good Shepherd presentation at the Cathedral.
- Pupils have experienced a range of opportunities to learn about other faiths e.g., Islam day.
- There is a great sense of community at all levels which is evident in the quality of relationships that exist between everyone, staff, governors, pupils and parents. One parent commented, 'Even though we are moving house to another area, I will continue to bring my children back to St Michael's. It is a fabulous school.'
- Pastoral care for all pupils is outstanding as a result of the commitment from all stakeholders. Clear policies and procedures are in place, which are rooted in Gospel values, ensuring all pupils feel safe and secure in school.

The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school is Good

- The mission statement is central to school life and is owned, celebrated and lived by all pupils and staff. Its relevance in everyday life is manifest from the point of entry to St Michael and All Angels' school and has an impact on pupils' active participation in the Catholic Life of the school.
- Consideration had been given to the leadership structure to ensure it is fit for purpose. On a day-to-day basis the Head of School, in partnership with the Religious Education Coordinator, has the responsibility for leading the Catholic Life of the school and Religious Education. They are held to account by the Executive Headteacher and Governing Body.
- The Head of School is highly committed to her faith and leads by example, demonstrating a strong sense of purpose and commitment to the Catholic ethos and mission of the school.
- The Religious Education Coordinator has recently been tasked with coordinating the teaching of Religious Education and the Catholic Life of the three Federation schools. She is passionate about her work and is ready to take on this new challenge. Additional

professional development and observation of best practice will further help her in fulfilling her responsibilities.

- Staff are encouraged and given opportunities to develop their own faith by participating in morning prayers, liturgies, reflections and sometimes the celebration of Mass. A high quality of care permeates throughout the school and as a result, there is a real sense of team spirit and positive working relationships.
- Recently, the relationships and sex education programme has been through consultation with governors and parents and is now being taught, age appropriately, to pupils. The Ten: Ten resources support the teaching of the programme. The school has yet to evaluate the impact of the programme.
- St Michael's is a family centred school and support for families during the pandemic has been paramount. Excellent communication, online provision and high-quality communication were appreciated and welcomed by parents who are proud to be part of this family. Food, clothing and toys were donated to the needy during lockdown.
- The school behaviour policy expects high standards and identifies the importance of reconciliation, reparation and atonement as fundamental aspects. Virtues to live by feed into pupils' understanding of how their actions affect others.

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision of the Catholic Life of the school is Good

- Leaders have very clear expectations about attitude and conduct and consistently model Christian values on a daily basis.
- Governors discharge their statutory and canonical duties well and with passion. They work effectively with the Head of School and Religious Education co-ordinator and are committed to upholding the strong caring ethos that exists.
- They are committed to the school's mission, are involved in its evaluation and are ready to challenge as well as support where necessary. Some governors act as an effective catalyst between school and the parish promoting good communication and sharing quality information.
- The Religious Education Link Governor knows the school intimately and is highly committed to the role. A recent visit focused on the observation of collective worship since the relaxation of Covid restrictions and a more formal report was produced for governors which highlighted strengths and areas for further development. A late summer term visit is also planned.
- The Head of School ably supported by the Religious Education Coordinator, staff and governors, give strong witness to the school's ethos and Catholic character. Together they have strong aspirations for the future development of the school.
- The Coordinator works across the three Federation schools and is driven to improving the quality of Religious Education. She has attended training sessions and meetings and is allocated release time to further improve provision.
- Some training events and staff meetings have taken place at school and across the Federation to further promote this valuable area of school life.
- Parents are extremely supportive and value the impact that the Catholic Life of the school has on their own children. This is evident from their involvement in the spiritual

and liturgical life of the school, the strong support given to school activities and the overwhelming support outlined in their responses to the school mission statement.

- The school has effective strategies for engaging with parents and carers and operates an open-door policy. Parents feel communication is very good, their concerns are listened to, and action taken if required.
- Monitoring of provision for the Catholic Life is developing and this needs to be formalised and more regular checks made to ensure all staff are adhering to agreed protocols.
- The Executive Head Teacher and Senior Leaders continue to take an active part in discussions and presentations regarding joining the Catholic Multi Academy Trust. They work in close partnership with St Pius High School as well as the local family of schools.
- Online provision during lockdown provided valuable links with parents, promoted online learning, shared key information and ensured effective communication between school and home. Parents valued this link.
- Pupils in Classes 3, 4 and 5 shared their honest thoughts about the current Catholic church in the Synod questionnaire return in response to Pope Francis' request.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The quality of Religious Education is GOOD

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education	2
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education	2
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education	2

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

- The quality of Religious Education is Good. Pupils enjoy and understand the value of Religious Education lessons and work steadily on the tasks set in lessons. They concentrate well, work effectively, both individually and in pairs or small groups, when provided with a range of tasks.
- Behaviour for learning throughout the school is exemplary.
- Pupils demonstrated good subject knowledge, could articulate their views with confidence and are proud of their Christian identity e.g., a discussion with pupils, about their learning and their journey and experiences at St Michael's, confirmed they had cherished the opportunities offered and had grown and developed as children of God.
- Through evidence in workbooks and from conversation, most pupils are able to demonstrate effective use of prior knowledge when making links between religious ideas and using scriptural references accurately.

- Most pupils identified as having special educational needs are well supported by support staff and make good progress.
- Books generally evidence a good standard of work but there are inconsistencies in quantity and quality between classes. Tasks do not always challenge more able pupils to achieve greater depth.
- Pupils value and appreciate the support they receive from their teachers. They are making connections between their learning and how this knowledge can influence how they live their lives.
- Pupils acquire knowledge, understanding and skills appropriate to their age, as well as developing their ability to reflect on meaning. Many pupils are articulate and reflective in their responses, showing signs of them becoming increasingly religiously literate.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education is Good

- Teachers have a clear understanding of the values of Religious Education; they use the 'Come and See' materials with confidence. Although already discussed by school, careful consideration now needs to be given as to how the school manages the programme in relation to planning for mixed age classes.
- All teachers started lessons with an effective recall of previous learning which pupils responded to favourably. The use of questioning throughout school is good.
- As a result of teaching that is mainly good, most pupils are achieving well over time. Teachers demonstrate a clear understanding of the value of Religious Education, which most communicate effectively to their pupils.
- In some lessons the level of challenge does not always deepen or extend learning because the tasks are not sufficiently differentiated to meet the needs of all pupils, especially for the more able.
- The standard of marking and feedback in books is variable. Opportunities for pupils to develop their responses to feedback are not consistent across school and questioning to extend pupils' knowledge is sometimes missed.
- Pupils in Class 1 were using drama to learn about the story of Zacchaeus, and Class 2 were very engaged in discussion about the unforgiving debtor. Pupils were able to understand and explain why it was important to forgive.
- Class 3 were learning about how God forgives us using the story of the prodigal son. Key words were explained carefully, excellent questioning elicited a good response from pupils, so all made good progress. Class 4 were accessing scripture and discussing the Torah in an attempt to find out which was the greatest commandment of all. Pupils worked independently, talked about their learning and made good progress. Pupils in Class 5 were learning about anointing of the sick and were able to freely share their personal experiences.
- Classroom assistants provide some valuable support for pupils. However, this support could be more actively targeted to strengthen learning from the start of the session through a range of independent activities.
- The Religious Education Coordinator evaluates standards through work and book scrutinies and staff discussions. Information about good practice is shared with all staff and areas identified for development are acted upon. Progress data is monitored by senior leaders in line with other subjects.

- Leaders are currently embedding assessment and developing a system to track pupil progress so that gaps can be eliminated, and support provided if necessary.
- The marking and feedback policy is having some impact but is not applied consistently across the whole school. Where it is used well, pupils experience success and understand what they need to do to improve.

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education is Good

- Religious Education has a high profile in the life of St Michael and All Angels' school.
- The school complies with the requirements of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales and at least 10% of taught time in each week is allocated to the teaching of Religious Education.
- The newly appointed Federation coordinator is already beginning to have an impact in some enhancements to the quality of provision. The coordinator, in partnership with senior leaders and link governor, should continue to monitor progress to ensure all agreed protocols are being adhered to.
- Staff and governors have an ownership of the Diocesan Self Evaluation Document and were involved in its compilation. They have an awareness of the school priorities and how they can drive continued improvement.
- There are good links with other schools and with the parish community who are supportive of the school.
- Sacramental preparation is led by parish catechists and supported by school.
- Governors are immensely proud and supportive of the school and discharge their statutory and canonical duties. The appointment of a link governor has further strengthened their monitoring role. She visits school regularly, reports on her observations and this has further improved provision.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

The quality of Collective Worship is GOOD

How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship	2
The quality of provision for Collective Worship	2
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship	2

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

- Collective Worship engages the interest of pupils and inspires them to reflect and respond and all pupils engage in weekly worship.
- Worship and prayer is central to the life of the school and valued by all. Prayer is a regular part of the daily experience of all pupils and staff.
- From a young age, pupils are reverent and respectful during Collective Worship. They respond well during the celebration of worship and sing with enthusiasm e.g., at Lenten services, Advent and Christingle.
- Pupils in Classes 3 and 4 have participated in Guided Meditation. They thought and prayed about what they would say to Jesus if they had the opportunity to speak with him.
- Pupils are beginning to take an increasing lead in planning, preparing and leading liturgies in class and larger groups throughout the school. This good practice of child led worship now needs to be embedded so all pupils have an ownership in leading worship.
- Class 5 pupils planned and led worship focusing on why it was important to tell the truth. It followed the correct structure, was interactive, age appropriate and provided a prayerful opportunity and celebration. Pupils now need to be enabled to lead worship more independently in order to develop the necessary skills.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the church's liturgical year, seasons and feasts and describe how they are celebrated in the school.
- There is a deep sense of respect for faiths other than their own, pupils are well informed and have a good understanding of some world faiths e.g., Islam, Judaism.
- Each class has two nominated prayer leaders who lead prayer with great enthusiasm and pride e.g., Class 1.
- Some of the older pupils have completed their 'Faith in Action' program which has shaped their understanding of their faith and how they can live it out on a daily basis.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is Good

- There is a Collective Worship policy which is central to the life of the school and makes a contribution to the moral and spiritual needs of the pupils.
- The school Chaplain is a familiar face in school and a valuable resource. She provides additional support, guidance and direction particularly in preparing for the celebration of Mass, services and worship.
- Praying together is part of the daily experience for all pupils and staff which has a very positive impact on the school's sense of community.
- Acts of worship are age appropriate, centred on themes and messages which are accessible to all pupils. There is a planned programme of liturgies, Masses and other liturgical celebrations such as the 'Welcome Mass'. Unfortunately, due to Covid restrictions, opportunities for participation from the wider school and parish communities has not been possible for some time.
- Developing spirituality is seen as central in supporting the Catholic ethos of the school and this ensures the needs of all pupils are met.
- Key seasons of the Church's year are celebrated, such as Lent and Advent and religious festivals of other faiths are also acknowledged. Pupils' celebration of Easter and the passion story is rooted in high quality drama, music and prayer.

- Themes chosen for worship reflect a good understanding of the liturgical year as well as the Catholic character of the school. Pupils say they enjoy worship and are able to talk about what they have learnt. This is strongly evidenced on the school website.
- Parents, parishioners and governors are welcomed to share in the spiritual life of the school through various acts of Collective Worship, celebrations, assemblies and Mass. Momentum will be fully regained from September when the wider community will be welcomed into school again.

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship is Good

- The school leaders have expert knowledge of how to plan and deliver high quality liturgy and worship. They understand the Church's liturgical year and traditions and are role models to both staff and pupils. Their passion and expertise now needs to be shared across school and the Federation.
- Leaders and governors are now developing an effective monitoring and evaluation system for Collective Worship. Pupils and parents are consulted about the quality of worship through questionnaires and the link governor effectively monitors and evaluates provision.
- Leaders have an understanding of the strengths and areas for further development in Collective Worship through both formal and informal monitoring.
- The views of pupils, parents, staff and governors are sought through informal meetings and questionnaires. Leaders and managers take these into account when moving forward.