



DIOCESE OF Arundel and Brighton

DENOMINATIONAL (S48) INSPECTION REPORT

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School

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School Unique Reference Number: 114575

Headteacher:	Mr J. Hellett
Chair of Governors:	Ms M. Georgiou
Lead Inspector:	Ms A. Oddy
Inspection date:	21 st November 2018

Overall Effectiveness	Previous inspection: 2
	This inspection: 1

Catholic Life:	1
Collective Worship:	1
Religious Education:	1

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

Sacred Heart Primary is an outstanding Catholic school because:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sacred Heart School offers a high standard of Catholic education within a happy and welcoming Christian community. The mission statement and motto are at the heart of school life and are known and lived by all at the school. The headteacher has a clear vision of excellence in Catholic education. He is supported by a strong team of staff and governors who share his vision and commitment. Leadership at all levels provides strategic direction for the school and care and support for all members of its community. Parents are welcomed as partners in their children's education. They appreciate and value the education, opportunities and pastoral care the school offers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The school has a rich Catholic life. A wealth of activities take place throughout the school year. These include events reflecting the liturgical year as well as school events and celebrations. Pupils, staff, governors and parishioners are all included in the school's Catholic life and are happy to be part of this inclusive community. Beautiful displays and artefacts in a well kept and attractive learning environment reflect the school's Catholic identity and make it immediately evident to all visitors. Pupil behaviour is exemplary. Pupils are exceptionally polite and helpful. They are kind and considerate to each other in class and around the school. Good systems of pastoral care help to ensure a harmonious and supportive community. Links with the parish are strong and valued by both the parish and the school. The parish priest is a regular visitor to the school and plays a key role in the school community. The school's Catholic life supports pupils academically and spiritually and fosters their sense of vocation.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school's collective worship and prayer life offer a wide range of prayer and worship opportunities. These reflect the liturgical year and the traditions of the Catholic Church and encourage pupils to develop their relationship with God. Pupils are familiar with the traditional prayers of the Church and readily compose and contribute their own prayers. Beautiful prayer focus tables in every classroom offer pupils the opportunity to contribute their own prayers and prayer intentions and inspire them to reflection and prayer. Staff, governors and parents are all included in the school's collective worship and prayer life and are active participants in this prayerful worshipping community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The school offers a high standard of Religious Education. All groups of pupils make good progress and achieve well. High quality teaching and learning inspires and motivates pupils who respond with enthusiasm. Pupils enjoy their lessons and appreciate the importance of Religious Education to their own lives. They demonstrate a high degree of religious literacy. Work in pupils' books is of a high standard both in presentation and content. Leaders and governors provide comprehensive monitoring of Religious Education to maintain and develop standards and plan for further improvement.

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Sacred Heart Primary is a voluntary aided school in the Local Authority of East Sussex. It is situated in the St Leonard's-on-Sea Deanery of the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton. The principal parish which the school serves is St Mary's Star of the Sea, Hastings. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholics is 83%. The average weekly proportion of curriculum time given to Religious Education is 10% in Key Stage 1 and 10% in Key Stage 2.

The school takes pupils from 4 to 11 years. The number of pupils currently on roll is 240. The proportion of pupils for whom pupil premium funding is received is 19%. 9.6% of pupils are on the school's register of Special Educational Need (SEND). Of these, 5 pupils have a statement of SEND or an Education or Health Care Plan (EHCP). The proportion of pupils from homes where English is an additional language is 28%. The majority of pupils are of White British or Other White heritage.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO DEVELOP FURTHER?

- Further develop the role of pupils in preparing and leading collective worship.
- Establish and embed the new systems of assessment in Religious Education.

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 of 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 because:

- The rich and multi-faceted Catholic life of the school embraces and enriches pupils' lives and they in turn are proud to be active participants in all aspects of this. They know they are part of their school family and that they have a part to play in ensuring everyone is welcome and included.
- Pupils are familiar with the mission statement and know that it is at the heart of school life. It is referred to regularly and the children's version is on display in every classroom. At the start of each year it is explored in Religious Education lessons and the pupils are invited to make a personal response. Pupils interviewed as part of this inspection were able to relate the mission statement to daily life at school and in particular to their interaction with others. They were also able to illustrate the motto with actions which help them remember it.
- The school's strong Catholic ethos is demonstrated by the pupils' attitudes and behaviour towards each other and the wider community. They know it is important to care for others in school and in the wider community. They are aware of the importance of forgiveness and can relate this to the teachings of Jesus. A pupil spontaneously referred to the parable of the Prodigal Son as an example of forgiveness and unconditional love.
- Pupils describe their school as a caring community in which 'we all help and look after each other'. They are given many opportunities to take responsibility and fulfil these duties joyfully and conscientiously, seeing them as an opportunity to serve others and their school. Examples include Prefects, School Council, Best Buddies, Ambassadors and Sports Leaders. The school has an annual award for pupils who have provided exceptional help or support for others.
- They know they have a responsibility to care for others less fortunate than themselves and are active in fundraising for a range of charities, local, national and international. Examples include NSPCC, Missio, CAFOD, St Michael's Hospice and the local Winter Night Shelter.

- The school makes good use of pupil surveys and feedback, using this to plan for improvement. Pupils know their views are listened to and will make a difference. Members of the School Council related how they had asked for more music and musical instruments and that this had happened.
- All pupils and their families are welcomed into the school's Catholic life. Although the great majority of pupils are baptised Catholics, the school has a number of pupils from other Christian denominations or with no faith background. All are included. Pupils know it is important to respect the beliefs and faith practices of others. A pupil said, 'We are all part of God's family and He wants us to love each other'.
- The school has very good links with the parish. The parish priest is a regular visitor to the school and part of school life. The Home / School / Parish partnership is strengthened by Open Days, Grandparents' events, shared liturgy and church services and social events. Participation in deanery and diocesan events such as the Good Shepherd Celebration helps pupils to be aware that they are members of the wider Catholic family.
- The behaviour of pupils is exemplary. During this inspection they were polite, courteous and thoughtful in lessons and around the school. They are kind and considerate to each other and pleased to praise others and celebrate their success. The school behaviour policy is firmly based on Christian values. It is well structured and consistently implemented throughout the school.
- Pupils are proud of their school and its Catholic traditions. They are able to speak confidently of the Church's feasts and seasons and how these are celebrated in school.
- Pupils' spiritual and moral development is fostered and enhanced by the strong Catholic ethos of the school. They enjoy taking part in activities such as Year 6 Retreat days, deanery events at St Richard's Catholic College and a wealth of community events.
- The supportive and inclusive nature of the school ensures that every individual is valued, encouraged and enabled to achieve their full potential both academically and spiritually. All groups of pupils including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs make very good progress and achieve well. Academic standards are high.
- Parents are very appreciative of the school and of the Catholic education it offers. They described the school as open and approachable and felt very much part of the school community. A parent wrote, 'Sacred Heart School offers high standards in all aspects of education in keeping with the Catholic teaching that makes the children responsible members of school and society'. Parents commented that school staff and governors would always listen to any concerns.
- Parents of children with medical conditions spoke of how well their children were looked after and how confident they felt that the school cared for the child and the family. Parents valued the strong link with the parish, with one commenting, 'Every child has a special bond with the parish priest due to his wonderful child-centred approach.'

The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding because:

- All members of the school community appreciate the importance of the mission statement as central to the life of the school. It informs all policy and practice. A regular 'Mission Inset Day' for staff and governors allows them to review and explore the school's mission and to ensure it is reflected in all aspects of school life.
- Staff form a strong committed team. They support each other and provide guidance and support for pupils. Effective induction of new staff and in-school, deanery and diocesan training ensure a cohesive team dedicated to the ethos of the school. The parish priest provides both spiritual and curriculum support to enable all staff, including those who are not Catholic, to play a full part in the Catholic life of the school.
- The school's attractive learning environment reflects its Catholic identity. High quality displays feature themes in Religious Education, the liturgical year and school events and celebrations. An example is the excellent and informative display featuring the vestments used at different times.
- Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is well established in the school and is in line with the teachings of the Church. Pupils are encouraged to explore and discuss moral and ethical issues and the importance of these in our world. The school uses the 'Journey in Love' programme. Parents are invited to meetings to view the materials and discuss any concerns.
- The school engages with the local community in a wide variety of ways. These include fund raising to support local charities and participating in local events and initiatives such as the local Heritage Arts / History Project, Hastings Story Telling Festival, the Jerwood Gallery and 'Ambassadors' projects. Cultural diversity is recognised and celebrated through events such as Mother Tongue Day and Black History Month.
- Pastoral care is a strength of the school. The school works closely with parents, carers and a range of outside agencies to support pupils and their families. It is part of the Hastings 'Opportunity Area' project to improve pupils' emotional health and wellbeing. Pupils have access to senior leaders at break times and lunch times as well as teachers and support staff. They feel safe and happy. They know that adults will help them if they have any anxieties. The school's keyworker offers 1:1 THRIVE sessions and counselling support where appropriate. A local 'Dragonflies' charity provides help to those experiencing loss or bereavement; this has been very positively received.
- Staff wellbeing is also accorded priority by school leaders. School leaders are active in reducing workload and offering flexibility where possible.
- A range of prayer and worship opportunities are central to the school's Catholic life and to the school as a worshipping community.
- The Catholic identity of the school is clear on the school website. The school communicates very well with parents, with regular newsletters and Facebook postings keeping them informed and inviting them to join in events and celebrations.

- Parents commented on the excellent provision for the school's Catholic life and how this nurtured pupils' social, spiritual and academic development. One wrote, 'We are very pleased to see how the spiritual aspect of our son's school life is developing him into a conscientious, thoughtful and caring little boy. The way he has been taught Religious Education and the way the Church has been integrated into his education has undoubtedly impacted on him in a very positive way. We are very happy.' Parents spoke of how the school's Catholic life had inspired them to return to regular Mass attendance and in one case, to join the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) programme.

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

- School leaders and governors are wholeheartedly committed to the Church's mission in education and to ensuring that Sacred Heart school is the embodiment of this. Their clear aim is 'Excellence through faith and learning', providing a firm foundation in faith to support pupils' academic, moral and spiritual development. Leaders are excellent role models. The headteacher leads by example and communicates his vision of excellence in Catholic education to a cohesive and supportive team.
- Governors show personal commitment to the Catholic life of the school. They attend Masses, school events and celebrations as part of their monitoring role. Governor visit reports, minutes of meetings and fortnightly Chair / Headteacher meetings monitor and evaluate all aspects of school life. Together with the newly established Spiritual Life Committee, they ensure that the Catholic life of the school is seen as a high priority.
- Monitoring informs school self evaluation, which is comprehensive and accurate. It feeds into the School Improvement Plan (SIP) which is a working document that is regularly reviewed. This features clear objectives, timescales and responsibilities. As a result, school improvement is well targeted and the impact of planned actions is monitored and evaluated.
- The school provides effective training and induction for school staff. It works with the Diocese and St Richard's College Teaching School Alliance as well as providing in school staff development. Good practice is shared.
- There are very good links with the parish. The parish priest is chair of the Spiritual Life Committee. He regularly visits the school. Staff attend key events in the parish and support the sacramental programmes. Several staff are catechists for the First Holy Communion programme. Parishioners are kept informed of school events and often invited to the school. They feel the school is very much linked to the parish and enjoy this partnership.
- Parents and carers are welcomed into the school's Catholic life and as partners in their children's education. Extra time and support are dedicated to those who might find working with the school difficult. Parent and pupil voice and surveys ensure that stakeholder's views are sought, listened to and can have an impact on school improvement.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP AND PRAYER LIFE

- How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship and Prayer Life.
- The quality of provision for Collective Worship and Prayer Life.
- How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship and Prayer Life.

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How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship and Prayer Life is outstanding because:

- Sacred Heart School provides a wide range of collective worship opportunities. Pupils value these and respond very positively. They know collective worship is integral to school life. They welcome the opportunity to come together as a worshipping community and play their part with enthusiasm.
- The act of collective worship observed as part of this inspection was a whole school assembly. Pupils came in quietly and respectfully; each class contributed a candle to the focal area. These were taken back to class at the end of the assembly, illustrating taking the message of the assembly out into their lives. Prayers and a Gospel reading followed the theme of Christ the King. Questioning enabled pupils to explore their understanding and contribute their own ideas. Joyful singing concluded the assembly. Pupils were involved in the readings and prayers.
- Pupils are active and enthusiastic participants in the school's collective worship and prayer life. They enjoy role playing Gospel stories to illustrate worship themes and are increasingly involved in choosing hymns and readings. A Reconciliation service in Lent was led by pupils. Individual opportunities for reconciliation were offered by priests. Pupils who were not Catholic were fully included by being offered the opportunity to reflect and say sorry when they met with the priest.
- Pupils recognise the importance of prayer in their lives. They are aware that prayer and collective worship enable them to deepen their relationship with God. They know that prayer can help them and others that need our prayers. They are familiar with the traditional prayers of the Church and are at ease with composing their own prayers and offering spontaneous prayer.

- Pupils respond to invitations to spontaneous prayer during class liturgies and write prayers to be shared with the class. Class prayer focus tables have baskets inviting pupils to contribute prayers. Prayer monitors choose prayers and prayer intentions to be shared with the class and help change the prayer table display.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the Church's liturgical year and enjoy describing events in school linked to its feasts and seasons.
- Pupils who are not Catholic are included in the school's collective worship and prayer life. Examples include the Lenten Reconciliation service and the distribution of ashes on Ash Wednesday, where all are able to participate in ways appropriate to their own beliefs.
- The school has identified the greater involvement of pupils in preparing and leading prayer and worship as an area for development. This is in line with the recommendations of this inspection.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship and Prayer Life is outstanding because:

- The school provides a rich and varied provision for collective worship and prayer. This is linked to the liturgical year, themes and topics in Religious Education and events in the life of the school and the wider world.
- Collective worship is an important part of school life. Liturgies are carefully prepared to help pupils to explore and deepen their faith and their relationship with God. Collective worship is woven into the school day and the school calendar. Pupils and staff pray together during the school day and a wealth of school celebrations mark and celebrate events in the Church Year.
- Collective worship is well planned and well resourced. Beautiful prayer focus areas enhance classroom prayer opportunities. High quality classroom displays and artefacts remind pupils of the school's Catholic identity and encourage them to be reflective and prayerful.
- Pupils know that prayer can take many forms. A wide range of prayer and worship styles provide for the needs and preferences of all pupils. These include joyful participation, moments of stillness and quiet reflection. Prayer monitors help to lead class worship.
- Parents value the school's collective worship and prayer life, with many feeling that it deepens their own faith. They are often invited to celebrate with the school and high levels of attendance indicate their appreciation. The liturgical life of the school is featured in the home / school partnership, Open Days, Intake Meetings and conversations with new parents, so that all can be aware of the school's prayer and worship and a warm invitation can be extended. Parents interviewed as part of this inspection commented on how much they enjoyed joining the school in worship.
- A recent initiative by the governors' Spirituality Committee featured pupils receiving a bottle of holy water blessed by the parish priest in school. Pupils were encouraged to bless themselves and to use the holy water to bless their homes and families. This was very positively received by pupils and parents.

How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship and Prayer Life is outstanding because:

- Leaders and governors are deeply committed to ensuring high quality provision for collective worship and prayer. Worship is carefully planned so that style and content offer a range of provision to all pupils and members of the school community.
- Senior leaders act as models of good practice in leading worship. Supported by the parish priest, they provide encouragement and expertise to other staff. As a result, staff at all levels have a good level of confidence.
- New staff attend diocesan training and attend peer coaching sessions in order to extend their knowledge and understanding of approaches to liturgy.
- Governors participate fully in the collective worship and prayer life of the school. They attend events and celebrations and ensure that their own meetings always include an opportunity for prayer.
- The school website and Facebook page publicise events in the Catholic life of the school, invite parents to join the school in worship and offer the opportunity for views and comments. This feedback is used to evaluate provision. Responses from Parentview are very positive.
- Pupil voice and class discussions indicate that pupils value and enjoy the collective worship provided by the school. This forms part of school monitoring and informs development planning.
- The Religious Education Action Plan includes provision for the school's liturgical programme for the year. The Spiritual Life committee is responsible for reviewing and developing collective worship. This committee reports to the governing body as part of school self evaluation and planning for improvement.
- Parent questionnaires distributed as part of this inspection showed a high rate of return. Responses were overwhelmingly positive, with many expressing their appreciation of being welcomed into the school's Catholic life and worship.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 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 outstanding because:

- Pupils enjoy their Religious Education lessons and are keen to do their best. In the lessons observed as part of this inspection, pupils were interested and engaged. Pupils know that Religious Education is an important lesson and that it relates to their own lives. A pupil related it to the school mission to 'try to live as Jesus teaches us'.
- Pupils were happy to talk about their work in Religious Education and spoke appreciatively of their lessons. They greatly enjoy the cross curricular links such as art, drama, music and ICT which enrich their learning.
- Behaviour for learning was excellent in the lessons observed. Pupils were attentive and responsive. They showed the capacity to think reflectively in order to deepen and explore their understanding.
- All groups of pupils achieve well. Attainment is high, with most pupils achieving or exceeding age related expectations by the end of Key Stage 2. A significant number of pupils were working at greater depth. Standards of attainment in Religious Education are similar to those in other core subjects. Differentiation and appropriate support ensure that all are challenged and enabled to achieve their full potential.
- Pupils show a high standard of religious literacy. They are able to apply a range of skills to their learning, in particular the use of reflection and questioning. In the lessons observed, pupils were thinking carefully about religious topics, asking and answering questions to deepen their understanding. They were able to show religious literacy in their answers. In response to a question asking about Advent, a pupil replied, 'It is when we prepare to celebrate the incarnation of Jesus in human form'.
- Pupils enjoy learning about the beliefs and practices of others. They know it is important to show respect and tolerance towards other faiths. The study of other faiths is well established.

The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education is outstanding because:

- Standards in teaching and learning are high. School monitoring indicates that teaching in Religious Education is securely good and sometimes outstanding across the school and that almost all good lessons have some outstanding features. This is in line with the findings of this inspection.
- Four lessons, across three key stages, were observed as part of this inspection. In addition, a number of lessons were sampled on a brief 'drop in' basis. All were of a high standard. Well planned lessons, good subject knowledge and a variety of teaching strategies maximised pupil involvement and participation. In all lessons observed Religious Education was clearly a special time. Candles, music and moments of stillness helped to create a special atmosphere. Pace was good and sustained pupils' interest. Teachers used questioning effectively to build on pupils' prior learning and check progress. Strategies such as the Gift Jar and Prayer Gems offered pupils the opportunity for personal involvement and response.
- Teachers have high expectations of their pupils, who respond very positively. They have good subject knowledge and use questioning very effectively to stimulate reflection and discussion, enabling pupils to explore and deepen their understanding.
- Religious Education lessons are well planned to include differentiation to suit the needs of all learners. Other adults in the classroom provide effective and sensitive support where it is needed. Assessment opportunities enable teachers and pupils to reflect on their learning and progress.
- Work in pupils' books is of a high standard in both presentation and content. It shows evidence of AT1 and AT2. Pupils clearly take a pride in their work.
- Marking is regular and affirmative. Developmental marking demonstrates the dialogue between teacher and pupil, enabling pupils to extend their learning.
- Pupils use success criteria to evaluate how well they have met the learning objectives and appreciate being able to contribute to their own learning in this way. The school should now consider extending this to include more peer assessment, which is currently on an informal and occasional basis.
- End of topic activities and planned assessments are part of monitoring and tracking pupil progress. A timetable of regular assessment is in place. Teachers' judgements are validated by moderation at school, deanery and diocesan level.
- The school is working to introduce the new system of assessment in Religious Education assessing pupils in terms of age related expectations. It has identified establishing and embedding this as a focus for development and this is in line with the recommendations of this inspection.

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

- The school follows the 'Come and See' programme of Religious Education, enriched by cross curricular links. Curriculum time allocated to Religious Education is 10% in Key Stage 1 and 10% in Key Stage 2 and is in line with the requirements of the Bishops' Conference.
- Leadership and management of Religious Education is excellent. High standards of teaching and learning together with effective systems of assessment and pupil tracking contribute to high standards of attainment.
- A comprehensive system of monitoring includes lesson observations, learning walks, book scrutiny and planning scrutiny. These are carried out by senior leaders and governors, with the results informing self evaluation and development planning. Results are reported to governors for discussion and suggestions for further improvement.
- Religious Education is well resourced and receives an appropriate budget share although this is less than in other core subjects.
- The headteacher also fulfils the role of Religious Education subject leader. He is committed to a constant drive towards improvement and to making Religious Education inspiring and exciting for teachers and pupils.
- Governors have a clear understanding of provision and standards in Religious Education. They are conversant with school data and conscientiously fulfil their monitoring role.
- The Religious Education curriculum is enhanced by links with the local parish, the deanery, the diocese, the community and wider agencies.
- The school takes care to gather evidence and feedback from parents; staff and pupils and uses this to monitor the impact of planned actions and to plan for improvement. Parental questionnaires distributed as part of this inspection were overwhelmingly supportive of the Catholic education the school provides.
- Sacramental preparation is supported in school and embedded in the Religious Education curriculum. Reconciliation forms part of Lenten preparation. The parish First Holy Communion programme catechists include members of school staff, further strengthening the link between school and parish.
- Parents are well informed regarding topics and activities in Religious Education and encouraged to support their children's learning.

Summary of Inspection Judgements

How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education.

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Catholic Life

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

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

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

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Collective Worship and Prayer Life

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How well pupils respond to and participate in the schools' Collective Worship and Prayer Life.

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The quality of provision for Collective Worship and Prayer Life.

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How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship and Prayer Life.

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

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The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education.

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How well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.

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