



St Vincent's RC Primary School

Monkchester Road, Walker, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE6 2TX

School Unique Reference Number: **108514**

Inspection dates:	26 - 27 June 2018
Lead inspector:	Elizabeth Seagrove

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

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

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

- St Vincent's is a welcoming community where everyone shares the headteacher's clear vision and where everyone feels valued and accepted. The mission and ethos of Catholic education is at the centre of the school community.
- The quality of Collective Worship is outstanding. It is at the heart of the school. From an early age pupils are encouraged and supported to plan and lead worship, and are confident when praying with the school community.
- The Catholic Life is outstanding because the well-being, spiritual and personal development of pupils and staff underpin all that the school does. Pupils are actively involved in a range of activities which contribute significantly to their moral, social and emotional development.
- The quality of Religious Education is outstanding. The areas for improvement from the last inspection have all been addressed. Lessons are focused and engaging allowing pupils to make good or better-than-good progress over time. Pupils enjoy their learning. Behaviour is exemplary.

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- St Vincent's is an average sized primary school catering for pupils aged 4 – 11 years. It is situated in the east of Newcastle, in the Walker ward.
- 78% of pupils are Catholic.
- The school serves the parish of Our Lady and St Vincent's which is located next to the school.
- The percentage of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is above the national average.
- The school has an increasing number of pupils from ethnic groups.
- 28% of pupils have special needs.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- Improve the quality of Collective Worship by:
 - continuing to offer opportunities for members of the community to join liturgical services.
- Improve the quality of Religious Education by:
 - continuing to develop teachers' confidence and expertise in specialist knowledge 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 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 make an outstanding contribution to the Catholic Life of the school and benefit greatly from it. They have a strong sense of belonging. Pupils embrace opportunities offered to them enthusiastically.
- Pupils wholeheartedly appreciate and participate in the Catholic Life of the school. The mission statement, reviewed in 2014, is central to daily routines and is viewed as a living document. The Catholic ethos is tangible throughout the school.
- Pupils contribute in a planned and systematic way to the school's evaluation of its Catholic Life and take a lead in initiating improvements. The school council formally reviews the Catholic Life of the school every year.
- Pupils participate enthusiastically in the Mini Vinnies group and carry out their work with pride.
- Pupils demonstrate a very good understanding of the importance of how they live their lives and how they treat others. They are happy, confident and secure in their own stage of spiritual development.
- Pupils identify strongly with their school, parish and the wider community. This is evidenced by their engagement in the school council, eco club and fundraising for various charities.
- There is a calm atmosphere around the school which is reflected in the pupils' excellent behaviour and consideration for each other.

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

- Excellent relationships exist within the school. School is a harmonious place with a real sense of community at all levels. All colleagues and pupils demonstrate positivity and enthusiasm. Mutual respect and support are evident in all relationships.
- St Vincent's is a school committed to Catholic tradition and ethos. The Catholic character of the school is evident in the creative displays and sacred spaces prominently featured around the school.
- Clear policies and procedures are in place which are carefully planned to reflect the Catholic Life of the school and the needs of all pupils. These provide high levels of support

for pupils, staff and the wider community.

- Staff also enjoy a high level of support. They are engaged in quality professional development and have a bespoke performance management target related to the Catholic Life of the school. A member of staff is trained as a life coach to support colleagues.
- Behaviour policies reflect the mission statement of the school. Behaviour is exemplary.
- Pupils are very well supported throughout the school by a range of pastoral opportunities provided by caring adults. All staff play their part and everyone is valued for their contribution.

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

- The leaders of St Vincent's are instrumental in ensuring that the Catholic Life of the school is lived out by all who are connected with the school. They have a very clear understanding of the vision of Catholic education and the role of the school in that mission. This is reflected in the increasing percentage of pupils who are transferring to Catholic secondary education.
- Leaders are highly ambitious for all the children. The headteacher, Religious Education coordinator and governors have high expectations and aspirations and are excellent role models. They are very clear about the journey that the school is on.
- The Catholic Life of the school is monitored by all stakeholders on a regular basis to inform priorities and evaluate success. Governors are confident in holding the leadership team to account whilst being actively involved in supporting its mission. They have an excellent grasp of the challenges faced by the school and work effectively with the headteacher.
- The school's self-evaluation is rigorous and accurate, gathered from a range of sources. It is reviewed regularly. It has clear links to the school improvement plan and is focused on improvements for pupils' outcomes.
- The spirituality of staff is a priority and opportunities for spiritual development are provided through staff prayer, attendance on courses and an annual spirituality experience.
- Each class has an assigned governor which allows them to have first-hand experience of life within the school.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

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- 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.

- St Vincent's is a prayerful community. Pupils' involvement in Collective Worship is a central part of their experience. They sing with enthusiasm and enjoyment.
- From the earliest age pupils act reverently when participating in acts of worship. They are confident in planning and carrying out Collective Worship using a variety of styles and resources reflecting the liturgical year. They are able to talk knowledgeably about the variety of prayers and liturgies that take place.
- Pupils are comfortable with spontaneous prayer and it is evident that this is a regular and valued feature of Collective Worship at St Vincent's. One pupil said that praying, 'makes our bonding with God stronger'.
- Pupils recognise the special nature of liturgical symbols and show respect. They are aware that religious beliefs are important, demonstrating respect for their own faith and the faith of others. They have an excellent understanding of the Church's liturgical year, its seasons and feasts.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship is outstanding.

- Opportunities for Collective Worship are central to the life of the school. There is a planned overview of themes for worship to reflect the liturgical year and any particular focus such as the Year of Mary. Weekly 'Statements to Live By' are shared as a whole school as well as within each class. All staff are actively involved in promoting and participating in Collective Worship.
- There is a rich variety of different forms of Collective Worship evident throughout the school. In all classrooms there is a focal point for prayer and outside there is a prayer garden which is used to provide opportunities for reflection. Pupils value these opportunities for prayer and contemplation.
- Parents and carers are invited to Masses and services. There are initiatives in place to increase attendance. Parents spoke positively about how they felt included. Prayer at home is encouraged through the travelling cribs, 'Wednesday Word' and 'Mary bags'. The parish priest is a regular visitor to school.
- Class teachers are skilled in helping pupils to plan and deliver quality worship. They are supported in developing their skills through training both in school and through the

diocese. Staff prayer is also prominent in the school, uniting the staff.

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

- The leadership team has set a very high standard for Collective Worship throughout the school. They lead by example ensuring that the pupils and staff develop a deepening appreciation of the Church's traditions, seasons, rites and symbols. Prayerful and reflective opportunities contribute to pupils' spiritual formation.
- Leaders regularly review Collective Worship. There is evidence of it being monitored and evaluated. They seek the views of the pupils and parents through the use of questionnaires.
- The senior leadership team are passionate about liturgical and spiritual developments being key priorities. Time has been devoted to enhance a number of opportunities such as a retreat to Holy Island for the year six pupils.
- The leadership team readily embrace opportunities to enhance the prayer life of the pupils and families. Parents and carers are encouraged to participate in 'Stay and Pray', and in end of 'Come and See' topic liturgies. The school recognises that this is still an area to develop further.
- The governors are actively involved in school and the parish and have an accurate understanding of the strengths and areas for development in Collective Worship. They provide very effective challenge and support.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

1

- 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.

- Pupils enjoy and understand the value of Religious Education, demonstrating passion and commitment in their learning. One pupil commented that Religious Education lessons helped them, 'to follow in God's way and to be more selfless and kind to others'. Behaviour in lessons is exemplary with pupils concentrating very well and displaying very positive attitudes to their learning.
- Pupils make impressive progress across a range of skills and are developing well in their knowledge and understanding. They work at a good pace and are able to offer articulate, relevant responses. They demonstrate excellent prior knowledge and are able to use this well in their new learning.
- Pupils know the level they are working at. They are familiar with driver words and what they need to do in order to improve.
- Outcomes for pupils are outstanding and are significantly above the diocesan averages. Pupils make at least good progress from their starting points with an increasing percentage that make better than expected progress across the key stages. The tracking system in place allows for the effective monitoring of the progress of different groups of learners. Inspection findings and evidence provided by the school show no noticeable differences between groups of learners.

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

- Teaching is mainly good with some examples of outstanding teaching. In the best lessons pupils are set challenging tasks which are well matched to their learning needs and which engage all pupils.
- Effective use of information and communications technology and music in lessons inspires, motivates and engages pupils.
- Most teachers have a confident level of specialist expertise which they use well in planning and teaching Religious Education. This is more developed in some staff members than others and the school recognises this is an area to further develop.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are very positive and are a real strength of the school. Support staff are used effectively to reinforce learning and to support pupils of different abilities and needs.

- Assessments are regular and the school has developed a rigorous tracking system. The levelling of pupils' work is consistently accurate as teachers are confident with the levels of attainment in Religious Education.
- The school has a clear marking and feedback policy that all staff follow. The pupils understand this system and are able to explain how it works. Time is allocated for pupils to respond to teachers' written comments.

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

- The headteacher, Religious Education coordinator and other senior staff demonstrate a highly ambitious vision for the school and for what every pupil and teacher can achieve. They inspire and support the whole school community.
- Leaders use a range of detailed monitoring activities to routinely check the quality of teaching and learning. As a result of this scrutiny, standards have improved over the last three years and are now above diocesan averages. Both internal and external moderation shows accurate assessments across year groups.
- All aspects of Religious Education are evaluated regularly and all staff are kept very well informed about the priorities in Religious Education. The leadership team use their findings effectively to promote sustained improvement.
- The Religious Education curriculum is rich and varied, providing a range of interesting activities and imaginative teaching to foster engagement, and to enable all pupils to make at least good progress in their learning. The Religious Education curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference.
- Sacramental preparation is developing. There are clear plans in place to further parish links in the delivery of this programme.
- Governors are regular visitors to the school and are routinely involved in a range of monitoring and evaluation activities. They are extremely supportive but also confident in their ability to challenge.

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

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

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:**1**

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

1

The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education.

2

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

1

SCHOOL DETAILS

School name	St Vincent's RC Primary School
Unique reference number	108514
Local authority	Newcastle
This Inspection Report is produced for the Rt. Reverend Séamus Cunningham the Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle Diocese under canon 806 of Canon Law. For voluntary aided schools it also fulfils the responsibility the Governing Body has to inspect the school under s48 of the Education Act 2005.	
Chair of governors	Mr Michael Willcock
Head teacher	Ms Angela Ness
Date of previous school inspection	February 2013
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