



St Aloysius' RC Infant School

Argyle Street, Hebburn, Tyne and Wear, NE31 1RZ

School Unique Reference Number: **108720**

Inspection dates: 07 – 08 March 2019

Lead inspector: Miss Mary Tate

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

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

St Aloysius' RC Infant School is an outstanding Catholic school because:

- It is a warm and welcoming school community where everyone works together as an extended family. Staff, parents and governors are united in their vision for the school. The mission statement, 'Striving for excellence, inspired by Gospel values', is central to the life of the school.
- The quality of teaching and learning in Religious Education is outstanding. Staff know their pupils well and consistently teach high quality lessons which enthuse and engage pupils. Pupils enjoy their learning and concentrate very well. Behaviour is exemplary.
- The Catholic Life of St Aloysius is outstanding because the spiritual well-being and personal development of pupils and staff underpin all that the school does. The mission statement and inclusive ethos is at the heart of all its work.
- The quality of Collective Worship is outstanding. Worship is central to the life of the school. Staff and leaders model quality acts of worship and pupils are guided to deliver high quality acts of worship.

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- The school is an average sized school serving the parishes of St Aloysius and St James in Hebburn.
- It is federated with St Aloysius Junior School, on the same site, and shares the same headteacher and governing body.
- The headteacher, a national leader of education, has been providing support as executive headteacher to a partner school in Newcastle since March 2017. The deputy headteacher carries out additional responsibilities as head of school.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is below average.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is average.
- The vast majority of pupils are of white British heritage and speak English as their first language.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- Further develop the Catholic Life of the school by:
 - building on the strong programme of community events and activities so that the school is seen as the heart of the community.

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.

- The mission statement, 'Striving for excellence, inspired by Gospel values', is central to the life of St Aloysius and is fully embraced by all pupils. The Catholic ethos is tangible throughout the school.
- Pupils share a deep sense of belonging to their vibrant school family of two schools but one community. As a result, positive relationships are evident with every interaction.
- The school is committed to supporting the more vulnerable members of their own community and those who are less fortunate than themselves. Pupils speak proudly about their charitable work such as supporting the local foodbank, organising community events in school and supporting charities at Christmas with shoebox gifts.
- Pupils are happy, confident and secure in their own stage of spiritual development. They are proud of the religious identity of their school. They show a very good understanding of the Church's liturgical year and its key celebrations, which they enjoy being part of, both in school and in the parish.
- Pupils benefit from close liaison between school and church. The parish priest maintains strong links through regular visits to school. He plays a central role in driving this community of faith.
- Parents speak about the school with wholehearted support and see it as an extension to the family.
- Pupils demonstrate high standards of behaviour and care, they show kindness towards each other and enjoy celebrating the successes of their friends.

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

- The provision for the Catholic Life of the school has the highest priority at St Aloysius. Leaders, staff, pupils, parents and governors are fully committed to developing and delivering the school mission across the extended community with energy and enthusiasm.
- The vibrant and engaging learning environment clearly reflects the school's Catholic identity. Signs of the school's Catholic character are evident in the range of focal and prayer points and displays.

- The school prayer room provides a place for quiet prayer and reflection. The school chaplain provides a range of prayer opportunities for pupils across the week.
- Excellent and supportive relationships exist within the school community and all stakeholders are fully committed to ensuring the school is the best it can be.
- The level of pastoral care within school is outstanding. Pupils and families are well supported by a dedicated and skilled team of staff who act as mentors, counsellors and offer therapies to support a range of needs. Early identification of these needs is the key to this success.
- Governors, parents and staff talked about the high level of respect and care given to the pupils, particularly the most vulnerable. Pupils expressed the view that they feel extremely safe and well cared for in school.
- The relationships and sex education programme is well established and delivered effectively at age appropriate levels following the diocesan model 'Journey in Love'.

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

- The outstanding leadership of the Catholic Life at St Aloysius ensures that all pupils are extremely well nurtured in a caring, safe and supportive community. A range of monitoring exercises are undertaken to inform further steps in the school's development.
- School leaders are instrumental in ensuring that the Church's mission in education is lived and breathed by all connected with the school. Leaders are highly ambitious for all children. The leadership team are excellent role models for all staff and are motivated and excited about the journey the school is on.
- The school engages extremely well with parents and carers to the great benefit of all its pupils and families. Parents have a good understanding of the school's mission and are supportive of it. One parent commented that the school truly puts the needs of pupils first.
- Governors are fully committed to promoting the school mission and ethos. Through first hand experiences, governors accurately evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school. One governor commented that they see the role of the school as a faith community, creating foundations for pupils in later life.
- Staff are very well supported and feel valued as their on-going training and development is seen as a high priority. They share a common purpose and one member of staff described the strengths of the school as being that of an inclusive community which is committed to doing the very best for its pupils.
- The school's self-evaluation has clear links to the school development plan which is focused on the Catholic Life of the school.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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- 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 enter school with knowledge and skills that are in line with what is expected for their age and they make good progress throughout key stage 1.
- Behaviour in lessons is exemplary. Pupils concentrate very well and display very positive attitudes to their learning. Pupils talk about their enjoyment of Religious Education and learning about Jesus.
- Outcomes for pupils are very good overall. All groups of pupils, including the most vulnerable, and those with special educational needs, make comparable progress. Support staff are deployed effectively to support individuals and groups of children.
- Teachers demonstrate high expectations in the planning and teaching of Religious Education and this promotes pupils' good progress as they develop their knowledge and understanding. Tasks for pupils are finely differentiated to ensure appropriate challenge for all pupils.
- The creative approach to Religious Education is a strength of the school. Pupil books are very well presented and reflect the pupils' desire to do their best at all times.
- Teachers' marking and annotations in pupil books impacts positively upon progress, and pupils are clear about how well they are achieving in Religious Education.
- Parents speak positively about their child's progress in Religious Education and comment that they enjoy talking about their learning at home.

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

- Teachers have a high level of confidence and expertise and use a wide range of resources creatively, ensuring that children are engaged and motivated in their learning. They are committed to achieving the best possible outcomes for their pupils.
- Almost all pupils make rapid and sustained progress. Pupils, and pupil groups, are achieving very well over time.
- The school has an effective assessment and tracking system to monitor pupils' progress and achievement in Religious Education which informs planning and ensures that pupils are continually challenged. Teachers and other adults have an excellent awareness of their pupils' prior learning and capabilities.

- Staff work together and support each other in moderating standards of work in school and within in the local cluster of schools. This impacts positively on the accuracy of levelling pupils' work. Staff can articulate the learning journey for their pupils with confidence.
- The standard of marking and feedback is very good and there are some excellent examples of focused marking. Written comments by teachers on steps to improve learning are used consistently throughout the school. Pupils respond to feedback and share in their own learning journey.
- Teaching assistants are highly skilled and make a very positive contribution to pupils' learning.

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

- Leadership of Religious Education is outstanding. Monitoring and evaluation of the provision for Religious Education is rigorous and robust. It enables leaders to plan effectively and ensures excellent outcomes.
- All leaders, including the newly appointed Religious Education coordinator, are committed to improve both teaching and learning across the school and in inspiring staff, pupils and parents to share in their vision.
- The school's self-evaluation is accurate, clear and informed by a range of monitoring exercises. Clear steps for improvement are detailed in the school improvement plan.
- Leaders make very good use of professional development opportunities to support all staff.
- Governors are proactive in their roles. They have a wealth of different experience which they bring to the governing body; offering both support and challenge. They are regular visitors to school and are actively involved in the monitoring and evaluation of all aspects of the school's work.
- Sacramental preparation is given a high priority and is fully embedded in the Religious Education curriculum; it is of high quality and in line with diocesan guidelines. It is highly valued by parents and pupils.
- The Religious Education curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference; it is well resourced and contributes very effectively to the pupils' spiritual and moral development.

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 Aloysius is a prayerful community where worship is a regular and meaningful part of each day. There is a warm, welcoming ethos which permeates the school and is reflected in the pupils' excellent behaviour and consideration for others.
- Collective Worship engages the interest of all pupils, even the very youngest, and inspires them to reflect and respond reverently and with joy.
- During the acts of worship observed, children were respectful and prayerful, showing that they were skilled in the use of scripture and understanding the need for reflection. Pupils in nursery enjoyed sharing their Lenten promises and pupils in year 2 led class worship on the theme of books.
- Pupil leadership of Collective Worship is a central part of their experience at St Aloysius. With guidance, they plan and lead worship for each 'Come and See' topic at an age appropriate level, and also plan worship around themes and feasts.
- Pupils have a very good understanding of the Church's liturgical year, seasons and feasts. They have a love for special devotions such as the Rosary and Advent and they enjoy visiting the prayer room at lunchtimes.
- Even at this young age, children can talk about other faiths and demonstrate respect for different cultures. This is also promoted through high quality Collective Worship.
- Pupils' experience of Collective Worship contributes very positively to their spiritual and moral development which is outstanding.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship is outstanding.

- Collective Worship is central to the everyday life of St Aloysius and makes a significant contribution to the moral and spiritual needs of the pupils.
- Acts of Collective Worship have a clear message and purpose. They are planned around themes in the Church's year and used to encourage children to develop their understanding and care for others.
- The school chaplain coordinates a comprehensive timetable for Collective Worship across the year. Parents, parishioners and governors are invited to share in various acts of

Collective Worship and they regularly attend Masses or liturgies and other timetabled services.

- Families are fully involved in the prayer life of the school and practices such as travelling cribs and prayer journals are embedded throughout the school.
- Senior leaders model high quality acts of Collective Worship to the benefit of staff and pupils. Staff demonstrate excellent knowledge about the Church, its rites and seasons and use this knowledge to ensure pupils have high quality opportunities to pray.
- Each class has access to high quality resources to support class Collective Worship and pupils are guided to choose appropriate artefacts, symbols and music to support their worship.
- Prayer areas in classes, and displays throughout the school, are well resourced and provide a central focus for prayer and reflection.

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

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher are highly visible leaders of Collective Worship within the school. They are positive role models for both staff and pupils and have expert knowledge of how to plan and deliver high quality Collective Worship.
- The quality of Collective Worship is monitored and evaluated carefully as part of school self-evaluation. Leaders review Collective Worship throughout the school on a regular basis. They seek the views of staff, pupils and parents and have a very good understanding of the strengths and areas for even further development. The school uses all the feedback it collects to continually improve Collective Worship experiences for the whole community.
- Leaders recognise the importance of nurturing staff as well as pupils; consequently, staff say they feel valued and included. They ensure that all staff take part in diocesan, cluster, and in-house training to support them in their spiritual and liturgical understanding.
- Effective partnership and involvement by a link governor for Religious Education, ensures that all governors have an accurate understanding of the strengths and areas for further development in Collective Worship.
- Leaders ensure that pupils have excellent sacramental preparation, working closely with the parish priest and catechists.

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.

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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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RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:**1**

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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COLLECTIVE WORSHIP:**1**

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

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The quality of provision for Collective Worship.

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

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SCHOOL DETAILS

School name	St Aloysius' RC Infant School
Unique reference number	108720
Local authority	South Tyneside
This Inspection Report is produced for the Rt Reverend Séamus Cunningham the Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle under canon 806 of Canon Law. For voluntary aided schools it also fulfils the responsibility the governing body has to inspect the school under s48 of the Education Act 2005.	
Chair of governors	Mr E. Watson
Executive head teacher	Mr N. Conway
Date of previous school inspection	January 2014
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