

DIOCESE OF **Hexham & Newcastle**
SPIRITUALITY, FORMATION & EDUCATION SERVICE



S48 Inspection Report
Holy Family RC Primary School

**DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION
REPORT (Section 48)**

on

**THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE
SCHOOL AND RELIGIOUS
EDUCATION**

School: Holy Family RC Primary School
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Darlington
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School URN: 114239

Headteacher: Mr Christopher Peacock

Chair of Governors: Mr Malcolm Frank

Inspector: Mrs Angela Boyle

Date of Inspection: 24 and 25 January 2012

This Inspection Report is produced for the Rt. Reverend Séamus Cunningham, the Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle Diocese, (c.f. Code Canon Law, 804, 806), and for the Governing Body of the school (Education Act 2005, Section 48). The inspection reviews, evaluates and plans further improvements in the school's witness to the Catholic faith and Curriculum RE. This process begins with the school's own self-evaluation.

The inspection schedule follows criteria set by the National Board of Advisers and Inspectors.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Holy Family Primary School is an average sized primary school serving the parish of Holy Family, Darlington. A large majority of the pupils in the school are baptised Catholic; others come from other Christian denominations and a small proportion of the pupils come from ethnic minorities. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well below average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is very small.

FACTUAL INFORMATION

Pupil Catchment:

Number of pupils on roll: 208

Percentage of pupils baptised RC: 86%

Percentage of pupils from other Christian denominations: 14%

Percentage of pupils from other World Faiths: 0

Percentage of pupils with no religious affiliation: 0

Percentage of pupils from ethnic groups: 7%

Percentage of pupils with special needs: 6%

Staffing

Number of full time teachers: 8

Number of part time teachers: 2

Percentage of Catholic teachers: 70%

Percentage of teachers with CCRS: 10%

Percentage of learning time given to RE:

FS	10%	Yr 4	10%
Yr 1	10%	Yr 5	10%
Yr 2	10%	Yr 6	10%
Yr 3	10%		

Parishes served by the school:

Holy Family, Darlington

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

How effective the school is in providing Catholic education

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

MAIN FINDINGS

Holy Family is a good Catholic school with a number of outstanding features. The mission of Catholic education underpins all that the school does and is lived out by staff and pupils. Holy Family is a welcoming friendly community with a strong family ethos, there is a strong sense of belonging, all are respected and pupils flourish. Excellent relationships and close co-operation of the whole school team are key strengths of the school. Parents believe Holy Family is a very good school where their children are safe, happy and reach their potential. They are highly appreciative of its family atmosphere and the Catholic values and attitudes it promotes.

The school's capacity for sustained improvement is good because leaders and governors ensure that strengths and areas for development are well identified. There is a clear vision and plan in place for the future direction of Religious Education (RE). Action to improve has been effective and standards continue to rise. Areas for improvement from the last inspection have been addressed. Strong links with the parish community are well established and the school has an important place in the life of the parish.

Pupils are proud of their school and have a positive attitude to learning. They clearly articulate their enjoyment of and interest in RE lessons. Standards attained in RE are above average. Pupils benefit greatly from the range of opportunities offered to contribute to the Catholic life of the school. Pupils' levels of participation in the prayer and liturgical life of the school is very good and they are developing independent skills in preparing and leading prayer and collective worship. They value and respect the Catholic tradition of the school and benefit greatly from the chaplaincy provision offered by the priest.

The provision for Catholic education is good. Teaching and learning are good overall with some outstanding teaching observed. However, activities are not always sufficiently differentiated to allow more able pupils to make the progress they are capable of achieving. Feedback given to pupils impacts on their awareness of their current learning but is not consistently used to enable pupils to improve their work further. The monitoring and tracking systems are a key feature of continuous improvement and have a significant impact on achievement and progress. The quality of collective worship offered to pupils is good.

The leadership and management of the school are outstanding. Leaders have a clear sense of direction and purpose, the vision is shared by committed staff and a well informed governing body. Co-ordination of RE is extremely efficient and central to the continuing development of the subject, securing improvement in standards. Governors demonstrate a strong sense of commitment and as a result are very well informed and make an outstanding contribution to the school. Very good links exist with parents, parish and external agencies to reinforce the high standard of care, guidance and support the school provides to ensure its pupils' safety and general well-being. The school's promotion of community cohesion is good.

What the school needs to do to improve further

- To continue to raise standards in RE by:
 - ensuring that differentiation and appropriate levels of challenge are integral to teaching and learning;
 - ensuring staff have shared and accurate expectations of what is required to achieve higher levels of attainment

PUPILS

How good outcomes are for pupils, taking particular account of variations between different groups

2

Pupils are delighted to come to school, have very positive attitudes and speak enthusiastically about their learning. They work with concentration and want to do well. They enjoy their RE lessons, are interested and enthusiastic and produce work of a high standard. Pupils' religious literacy as well as their knowledge, understanding and skills are developing extremely well as they move through the school. Pupil targets are displayed in each class, as well as in books, pupils are aware of these and are able to articulate their challenging targets.

Pupils enter the early years foundation stage with abilities and skills which are broadly average, by the end of key stage one (KS1) standards in RE are above average and by the end of key stage two (KS2) are also above average in both attainment targets. The school has identified that pupils are not as yet achieving higher levels at the end of key stage two. Progress is consistent and sustained across all key stages. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make outstanding progress because their needs are accurately identified and support is adapted to meet them. Systems are in place to evaluate the progress of all different groups of learners. Inspection findings show little variation between boys and girls, and Catholics and those other than Catholic.

Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the Catholic life of the school and benefit greatly from it. The strong Catholic ethos enables them to take an active part in shaping activities with a religious character in the school and the wider community. They are reflective, can discuss their own faith and spirituality with confidence and are respectful of those with beliefs different to their own. They are conscious of the needs of people beyond the school and have a well developed sense of justice and concern for others. Pupil behaviour is exemplary at Holy Family; pupils say they feel valued and are able to articulate the importance of gospel values within their school community.

Pupils' response to and participation in collective worship is good. They are at ease when praying with their school and parish community and eagerly and confidently lead prayers in class, school liturgies and Eucharistic celebrations in Church. They act with reverence and respect and are keen to take part in, plan and lead prayer and worship. They have a good understanding of the Church's liturgical year. With support they are becoming skilled in the use of scripture, religious artefacts, hymns and other forms of prayer. Collective worship contributes positively to the spiritual and moral development of the pupils. They show respect for everyone in their school community and understand that some people have different beliefs and attitudes to spirituality.

PROVISION

2

How effective the provision is in promoting Catholic education

The quality of teaching and learning in RE is good overall with some outstanding teaching observed during the inspection. A range of teaching styles, good questioning skills, clear explanations and well paced lessons ensure that pupils are consistently interested in their learning and make good progress. Teachers have strong subject knowledge which inspires and promotes confident learners. However, tasks are not sufficiently differentiated nor challenging enough to ensure more able pupils achieve higher levels of attainment and teachers' expectations of what is required vary. Religious vocabulary displayed in classrooms enables all pupils to use and understand age appropriate language. Support staff are effectively deployed and less able pupils are supported well in their learning.

The school has detailed and accurate assessment information which is used well to inform learning and teaching. It provides teachers with a clear picture of how well pupils are achieving and what progress they are making. Tracking systems for RE have been successfully incorporated into the whole school assessment system which enables the school to focus on ensuring that different groups of pupils achieve equally well. Pupils are provided with feedback both orally and through quality marking which informs how well they have done and what they need to do to improve. However, pupils are not always given enough time to effectively respond to the feedback, the school recognises that, pupils skills in self-assessment need to be developed further.

The RE curriculum is creatively adapted to meet the needs of all pupils and fulfils the requirements of the Bishops' Conference well. It is enriched through a variety of imaginative and well planned strategies and relevant resources which engage and motivate the pupils. Planning ensures full coverage of the curriculum and identifies pupils' prior learning. The RE curriculum makes a significant contribution to the spiritual and moral development of pupils which enables them to become reflective learners.

The quality of collective worship provided by the school is good and ensures that the spiritual needs of the pupils are well met. Prayer is central to the life of the school and this is reflected in the way pupils are enabled, from a very early age, to become prayer leaders. Through a well planned programme of class Masses, non Eucharistic liturgies, reflections and assemblies, pupils are offered a range of opportunities to engage in good quality worship. Staff regularly review and plan improvements and ensure that pupils are becoming skilled in preparing and leading acts of worship. Acts of collective worship are well attended by parents, governors and the parish community.

LEADERS AND MANAGERS

1

How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic life of the School

The leadership and management of the Catholic life of the school are outstanding. The headteacher communicates a strong sense of spiritual purpose, with a focus on promoting high standards and the fullest, personal development of the pupils. Staff respond very positively to the high standards and high expectations set, they are highly motivated and committed to school improvement. Effective systems are in place to monitor and evaluate the Catholic life of the school which are clearly linked to the school improvement. A strong emphasis on pastoral care and the promotion of the school community as a family is supported by all staff, parents and Governors.

The monitoring and evaluation of RE by leaders and managers is good. The commitment and leadership of the headteacher, who is also the RE co-ordinator, has a significant impact on the raising of standards in RE. Self-evaluation at all levels within the school is a coherent reflection of rigorous monitoring, searching analysis and self-challenge. This leads on to well targeted planning and actions taken by the school. Leaders offer an effective level of support to ensure that staff implement these initiatives successfully. Resources are effectively used and facilitate the plans of the leadership to bring about higher standards. As a result outcomes in RE for most pupils are good.

The work of governors is outstanding. Governors discharge their statutory and canonical duties effectively. They are proactive, highly involved in the Catholic life of the school and also make a significant contribution to the work of the school. They are well informed and put the well-being and development of the whole child at the centre of their work. They play an active part in planning for continuous improvement, showing determination in challenging and supporting the school in order to address areas for development. They are actively involved in the school community and have positive relationships with staff, pupils and their families. Governors understand the school's performance in RE and know what needs to be done to raise standards.

The school is outstanding at developing partnerships with others to promote Catholic learning and pupil well-being. The headteacher is actively committed to Darlington Deanery Partnership which involves collaborative working with a local Church of England and other Catholic primary schools. The headteacher actively plans with these and other groups to offer varied and purposeful opportunities for the pupils which the school alone could not provide. Pupils are able to discuss these partnerships and the impact it has on them as individuals. Leaders ensure that strong partnerships exist with the parish. The parish and school community collaborate well together in a range of activities; both communities benefit positively from the effective partnership.

The school's contribution to promoting community cohesion is good. Pupils have a well developed understanding of the common good and a commitment to their global responsibilities, they are able to articulate and explain the impact of their many fundraising efforts including Cafod, Mary's Meals and St. Teresa's Hospice. This work also consolidates pupils' keen sense of their rights and responsibilities. The RE curriculum makes a positive contribution towards community cohesion. It develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of other faiths and cultures which helps to prepare them for life in a diverse society. Acts of collective worship are inclusive and each individual's spiritual identity is respected.

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Key for inspection grades:

Grade 1 **Outstanding** Grade 2 **Good** Grade 3 **Satisfactory** Grade 4 **Unsatisfactory**

Overall effectiveness	2
The school's capacity for sustained improvement	2
How good outcomes are for pupils, taking particular account of variations between different groups	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in RE 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ the quality of pupils' learning and their progress 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ the quality of learning for pupils with particular learning needs and/or disabilities and their progress 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ pupils' standards of attainment in RE 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how well pupils respond to and participate in the school's collective worship 	2
How effective the provision is in promoting Catholic education	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the quality of teaching and purposeful learning in RE 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the effectiveness of assessment and academic guidance in RE 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the extent to which RE curriculum meets pupils' needs 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the quality of collective worship provided by the school 	2
How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic life of the School	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life of the school and plan improvement to outcomes for pupils 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for RE and plan for improvement to outcomes for pupils 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the extent to which the governing body provides effective challenge and support for the Catholic dimension of the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory and canonical responsibilities met 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how well leaders and managers develop partnerships with other providers, organisations and services in order to promote Catholic learning and well-being 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how effectively leaders and managers promote community cohesion. 	2