

# DIOCESE OF MIDDLESBROUGH

Inspection of Religious Education  
Collective Worship  
and  
The Catholic Life of the School



**School:** All Saints Catholic Primary School

**Address:** Green Lane East  
Sowerby  
Thirsk  
YO7 1NB

**URN:** 121657  
**Head of School:** Mrs Mary Cobbold  
(Interim Executive Headteacher)

**Chair:** Dr Charles Barton

**Date:** 27 June 2018  
**Inspector:** Alan Dewhurst

**Date & Grade of Last Inspection:** 21 March 2013    **Grade:** Good (2)

**Overall Grade for this Inspection:** Requires Improvement (3)

## INTRODUCTION

This inspection was carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005.

The report of the inspection is produced for the Bishop of Middlesbrough (Code of Canon Law 804 and 806) and for the governors of the school. The Inspection reviews, evaluates and plans further improvements in the school's witness to the Catholic faith and Curriculum Religious Education. This process begins with the school's own self-evaluation. The Inspection schedule follows criteria set by the National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers.

## What Inspection Grades mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding Catholic school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a Catholic school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Requires Improvement	These features, though of adequate quality, require improvement to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate Catholic school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils.

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

All Saints is a smaller than average Catholic Voluntary Aided primary school, serving the parish of All Saints, Thirsk, and the wider surrounding area. There are currently 86 pupils on roll, including 7 nursery pupils, organised into 4 mixed age classes. The school has a planned admission number each year of 14 pupils. Approximately two thirds of the pupils are baptised Catholics, with a quarter having affiliation to another Christian denomination. Most pupils are of White British heritage, although the proportion of pupils from other ethnic origins is increasing, as is the proportion for whom English is their second language.

The school has been undergoing a period of significant change in leadership and staffing in the present academic year, with the resignation of the head teacher and another experienced teacher in December 2017, and with the majority of the rest of the teaching staff fairly new to the school, some on supply terms. In consultation with the local authority and Middlesbrough Diocese, an interim leadership team was put in place at the beginning of the Spring term, comprising a part time executive head teacher for 2 days per week and an interim head of school with part time teaching responsibilities. The governors have been successful in securing the appointment of a permanent executive head teacher, in partnership with Sacred Heart School, Northallerton, for September 2018, as well as a new deputy head and other permanent appointments.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The inspection was carried out by one inspector over one day, with the newly appointed executive head teacher in attendance and a diocesan officer quality assuring the process. The inspection involved these activities:

- Teaching and learning was observed in 3 classes.
- 2 Acts of Collective Worship were observed: a whole school gathering, led by the executive head teacher, and a Collective Worship for Class 3 led by Class 2 pupils.
- Discussions were held with the executive head teacher and the head of school who is also the Religious Education (RE) subject leader.
- There were also meetings held with the chair of the governors' teaching and learning committee, the RE link governor and the parish priest.
- Discussions were also held with a group of pupils and a group of parents.
- A sample of pupils' RE workbooks from every class was scrutinised, along with pupil assessments; other records and resources relating to Catholic Life and Collective Worship were also viewed, including items posted on the school's website.
- A range of documents was made available and scrutinised including the Diocesan Self Evaluation Form (DSEF), the RE action plan, the School Development Plan (SDP), attainment and progress data, school policies and minutes of governing body meetings.
- Displays and sacred spaces around the school and in classrooms were also noted.

### **Pupil Catchment:**

Number of pupils on roll: 79

Planned Admission Number of Pupils: 14

Percentage of pupils baptised RC: 63%

Percentage of pupils from other Christian Denominations: 25%

Percentage of pupils from other World Faiths: 1%

Percentage of pupils with no religious affiliation: 11%

Percentage of pupils with special needs: 9%

### **Teaching Staff:**

Full-time Teachers: 3 (1 supply)

Part-time Teachers: 3 (1 supply, 1 interim)

Percentage of Catholic Teachers: 33%

**Support Staff:**

Full-time Classroom Support Staff: 0  
Part-time Classroom Support Staff: 4  
Percentage of Catholic Classroom Support Staff: 25%

**Percentage of learning time given to R.E:** 10%

**Parishes served by the School:** All Saints, Thirsk

# 1. OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

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## MAIN FINDINGS

All Saints Catholic Primary School is a warm and welcoming community, marked by a strong sense of commitment to providing a caring and inclusive atmosphere for all its pupils. It is held in high regard by parents, who value the close relationships between all pupils, and the care and dedication of staff in nurturing and caring for their children. Pupils feel a sense of belonging, and acknowledge the significance of the Catholic ethos of the school and the commitment to respecting and looking after each other, as well as those in need in the wider world.

The school has undergone a period of turbulence with regard to its leadership and staffing that has had a significant impact on efforts to provide a high quality Catholic education for its pupils. Governors and interim leaders have had to prioritise the stability of staffing, in order to bring about consistency in provision for pupils, and the planning for and recruitment to a new permanent leadership structure as their main areas of focus. These things they have accomplished successfully, thanks to the commitment and dedication of all concerned. Pupils have enjoyed consistency of teachers through the last two terms; and new appointments have been made for the posts of executive head teacher and deputy head, as well as another permanent teaching post for September, indicating increased capacity for future development and improvement.

However, this prioritisation has meant that systems for monitoring, analysing and evaluating standards in Religious Education, the progress of pupils, and the quality of the school's Catholic Life and Collective Worship have been set aside. This has meant that necessary steps to address improvement to standards that have declined over time have not been taken; expectations have not kept up with those currently seen in other Catholic schools; and both outcomes and opportunities for pupils have decreased.

As a result, the effectiveness of the school in providing a Catholic education for its pupils requires improvement. With a new leadership structure in place, the school will be well placed to address this situation effectively and rapidly.

### What the school needs to do to improve further:

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning in Religious Education by
  - Ensuring high expectations of pupils' achievement
  - Ensuring whole school assessment for learning systems and a common approach to the RE curriculum are established
  - Providing high quality professional development of staff to increase subject knowledge and confidence in assessment
- Bring more rigour and accuracy to the effectiveness of promoting, monitoring and evaluating the Catholic Life and Religious Education.
- Re-establish a culture of high expectations and shared vision by
  - Renewing the school mission statement
  - Increasing opportunities for pupils to develop the Catholic Life
  - Further developing skills in pupils for preparing and leading Collective Worship
  - Ensuring high quality induction of staff

## 2. PUPILS

### How good outcomes are for pupils, taking into account variations between groups

Pupils are keen to participate in school activities, and like to take up responsibilities where there are opportunities to do so. This can be seen in their 'buddy' duties, where older pupils look after younger ones, in the elections to the school council and in the part played by the chaplaincy team, the 'Mustard Seeds'. Pupils enjoy each others' achievements, as seen in their response to 'star of the week' awards. They try hard to put the school's weekly 'Statement to Live by' into action. Pupils are also keen to be involved in the school's charity ventures, such as support for Mary's Meals, CAFOD and Mission Together. School leaders and staff have found it difficult, because of lack of capacity, to sustain opportunities for many pupils to involve themselves in responsibility groups, meaning that their impact on the school's Catholic Life has been lessened. Pupils do not have an understanding or ownership of the school's mission statement, nor the chance to evaluate how it is put into practice.

Pupil progress in Religious Education is inconsistent over time, through the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stages 1 & 2. This results in much attainment of pupils at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 being below average. Where given the opportunity to engage in challenging activities that deepen their understanding and allow them to express themselves in a variety of ways, pupils respond well. Recent improvements in the consistency of approach have enabled pupils to make better progress, and to understand how to improve the quality of their work. They can show good levels of enthusiasm, but many are also more passively involved in lessons.

Pupils enjoy the Collective Worship opportunities that are provided for them. They respond well in prayer, both formally and in suggesting their own prayers. They sing enthusiastically and tunefully. They have a good understanding of the key celebrations of the Church's year. Pupils' skills in preparing and leading Acts of Collective Worship are at an early stage of development. They understand the structure for planning worship, and can use scripture, artefacts, hymns and a variety of prayer within a liturgy, but have not received progressive guidance to develop their understanding.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school</li> </ul>	<b>3</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education</li> </ul>	<b>4</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How well do pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship</li> </ul>	<b>2</b>

### 3. PROVISION

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#### How effective the provision is for Catholic education

The quality of teaching and learning requires improvement. Generally, across the school, expectations of what pupils can achieve are not high enough, and there have been some gaps in RE provision at certain times of the year in some areas. Focus on assessing pupils' understanding and challenging them to move to the next level has been inconsistent. This is partly because of a lack of subject knowledge and experience among teachers. Leaders have sought to address this through professional development and improvements have been noticeable recently, particularly in the consistency of ensuring that learning objectives focus on what is to be achieved, as in the 'I Can' statements, on developing self assessment by pupils and in the new marking policy. These developments are promising but not yet embedded.

The school uses the 'Come and See' RE scheme, ensuring that each topic is covered in turn, and exploring the key question associated with each topic. Pupils' spiritual and moral development is positively influenced by the curriculum provision. Where innovative ideas are introduced to engage pupils' interest and make links to their own lives, these have a positive impact, enabling pupils to engage in deeper discussion. However, curriculum provision is not always extensive enough, or aspirational enough to meet pupils' needs.

A weekly cycle of Acts of Worship has been introduced, in order to bring stability and consistency to the prayer life of the school. This has included a whole school gathering based on a weekly theme from the 'Statements to Live By', classroom based Collective Worship, hymn singing and the leadership of a class, sharing their learning on a current RE topic. The school also goes to Mass at the parish church on important feasts, with pupils active in reading and serving on the altar. While familiar responses and well known prayers are being used regularly, there has been little chance to be innovative or to build pupils' skills in preparation and leadership. Class based liturgies tend to follow a script provided for pupils. Where pupils are introduced to the four part structure of a worship, they are able, on a routine level, to organise a liturgy, but have not been guided progressively over time to grow in confidence and skill. The parish priest supports the school through regular informal visits but is an under-used resource, in terms of developing subject knowledge in RE and in Collective Worship.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The quality of teaching and how purposeful learning is in Religious Education</li></ul>	<b>3</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum promotes pupils' learning</li></ul>	<b>3</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school</li></ul>	<b>3</b>

## 4. LEADERS, MANAGERS AND GOVERNORS

### How effective leaders, managers and governors are in developing the Catholic life of the school

Governors and leaders have made a commitment to developing the Catholic Life of the school as a priority. Governors are knowledgeable and dedicated. They appreciate the need for the school's Catholic Life to be central in its strategic development. Within the past year, because of unforeseen circumstances, governors have had to focus on immediate issues of interim leadership and long term recruitment, meaning that systems for monitoring and evaluation have ceased to be effective. Monitoring is not rigorous enough to have any impact. Leaders do not give the Catholic education of the pupils' sufficient priority in planning for future improvements.

Parents appreciate the part governors have played in making themselves available during this period of instability, and in keeping them informed on a regular basis.

Interim leaders have worked tirelessly to keep the school's Catholic Life and Religious Education at the forefront, in very difficult circumstances. From the outset, they recognised the need for professional development in RE teaching, due to the lack of experience of staff in working in Catholic education, and have organised input from the diocesan adviser, as well as ensuring involvement in diocesan courses or cluster events for the RE subject leader. She has worked energetically to bring about change, with some elements of positive impact.

However, the school has, over time, become too insular in approach, lacking partnership development that would enable growth in vision and recognition of the rise in standards now routinely expected. Development of such links with other Catholic schools would show the quality of recent practice not only in Religious Education, but also in developing the Catholic Life of the school and Collective Worship.

Rigour of monitoring and analysis is also a priority. Current monitoring is not regular, and not widespread enough to gain an accurate picture of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Assessment data in Religious Education is collected, but not analysed or evaluated to any degree, so that trends in pupil progress are not recognised nor targeted interventions put in place. Information received by governors is thus insufficiently detailed for them to challenge or support effectively.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How well leaders, managers and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life of the school, including collective worship, and plan improvement to outcomes for pupils</li> </ul>	<b>3</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How well leaders, managers and governors monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan for improvement to outcomes for pupils</li> </ul>	<b>3</b>