



Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection report for

Sacred Heart Primary School, Northallerton

URN:
147276

Carried out on behalf of the Right Rev. Terence Patrick Draine, Bishop of Middlesbrough on:

Date: 22 November 2023

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The school is fully compliant with the curriculum requirements laid down by the Bishops' Conference	✓
The school is fully compliant with all requirements of the diocesan bishop	✓
The school has responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection	Fully

Summary of key findings

What the school does well

- The school's mission statement, 'Heart speaks unto Heart', is a central part of Sacred Heart life, with all members of the school community embracing the vision to 'be the best you can be'.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of Catholic social teaching and how these values impact on their everyday life. They live out the message of loving God and loving their neighbour.
- The subject leader for religious education has been the backbone of the school community, providing stability and guidance through times of change.

- The appointment of the new executive head teacher has given new focus and revived the Catholic life and mission of the school. This has helped to strengthen teaching and learning across all year groups.
- Staff are skilled in their deployment of highly effective teaching assistants, whose work heightens the impact of strong teaching on pupils' learning.

What the school needs to improve:

- Ensure that pupils plan, prepare and lead on chaplaincy activities throughout the school.
- Establish consistently strong adaptive teaching across all classes, thus allowing all pupils the opportunity to access the high expectations set by staff.
- Strengthen the pupils' understanding of other faiths and develop their knowledge of other world cultures.

Catholic life and mission

How faithfully the school responds to the call to live as a Catholic community at the service of the Church's educational mission.

Catholic life and mission key judgement grade:.....

1

Pupil outcomes

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

1

Provision

The quality of provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school

1

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school

1



All pupils understand that Christ is central to the life of Sacred Heart and feel safe and happy here. Catholic social teaching values permeate all that the school does and are evident through discussions with pupils and, more importantly, active in the way that pupils and staff treat each other. Pupils' actions contribute to this through their fundraising work at local, national and global levels to help those in need. They talk eloquently about their work with: The Parish Kitchen, the Fair Share Food Bank, Cafod and Ukraine. The school has just launched an appeal for the CAUSE Foundation, working to put together hampers for those in need. Their work and enthusiasm is inspiring. All pupils have a deep respect for others in their community and they demonstrate that they are living out the school's mission and vision beyond their own school community.

The drive and determination of the new leadership team have ensured that the Sacred Heart mission statement is clear and understood by all, it is lived out by all members of the school community; recently reviewed by staff and pupils there is a tangible sense of ownership. All members of the school community talk enthusiastically about how this impacts on the way they behave and treat each other. Pupils of other faiths and none feel that they are just as valued as Catholic pupils and they speak positively of their experiences in school, both socially and spiritually. This is an inclusive school. The physical school environment is demonstrably Catholic through high quality display that pupils can identify with. Pupils commented on a piece of display that showed them all as 'unique individuals made in the image of God'. Chaplaincy is strengthening as the new leadership team look to implement new strategies, with pupils being extremely positive about their encounters with the parish clergy and looking forward to their visits. The school understands the lack of diversity within the pupil community and, as such, is working to develop good pupil understanding of other faiths through the taught

curriculum. There are plans in place to invite those of other faiths into school to enhance the pupil experience.

Leaders and governors are unwavering in their duty to ensure that the Catholic life and mission of the school is key in all that they do; this is evident in all school policies and procedures and filters into the day-to-day life of the school; staff comment on their work and value this. Governors and leaders have also ensured that religious education is woven into all aspects of the school's curriculum and it is clear that the values of taught religious education impact on standards in other subject areas. There are strong working relationships with other Catholic primary schools within the Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust (NPCAT) and the diocese. Additionally, improved communications by the school have aided a developing rapport between parents and carers, with the vast majority being extremely positive about the rapid improvements that have taken place. This has culminated in a strong holistic approach towards the pupil experience at Sacred Heart. Catholic social teaching values are at the fore of all decision making at the highest level. Leaders and governors understand the importance of ensuring that all pupils are supported, especially those whose need is greatest; both spiritually and educationally. Staff within the school feel happy and supported in their work. They recognise the pastoral element of this support, which is shown clearly by leaders and governors. They also comment on the high-quality training they have received through the NPCAT and value this.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade:.....

2

Pupil outcomes

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education.....

2

Provision

The quality of teaching, learning, and assessment in religious education.....

2

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor, and evaluate the provision for religious education.....

1



Pupils enjoy their religious education lessons and are developing secure knowledge and understanding. Consequently, almost all pupils including those with special educational needs make good progress. This is because pupils respond well to the variety of creative tasks on offer within lessons and are keen to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding. The presentation of pupil books is of a high standard and this reflects the pride they show in their work. Staff deliver a religious education curriculum that ensures pupils are immersed in their work, they show genuine interest and engagement. Pupils were able to recall previous learning such as the story of the widow's mite and spoke in detail about the lives of the saints. Consequently, behaviour in lessons is good and pupils thrive. The newly established feedback policy has increased pupils understanding on how well they are doing and how they can improve their work. Pupils use religious terms in the correct context and are fluent with their religious vocabulary. The trend in attainment and progress for all groups of pupils over recent years is good.

Staff have a good subject knowledge and this is reflected in their teaching, which is predominantly good with some outstanding elements having been observed. Expectations are high and staff are skilled in offering a wide variety of different approaches within lessons to assist pupils in meeting these. These approaches are matched to a variety of assessment methods that suit the skills of different types of learners. The deployment of capable, well-informed teaching assistants is excellent and this ensures that all pupils, regardless of need or ability, are fully engaged in classroom activities, making good progress through well timed, adaptive teaching. There were good examples of progress evident in lessons through discussions with pupils, in class books and classroom display. Planning is good and ties in well with pupil assessment procedures, thus informing future work and ensuring that a sequence of lessons is tailored to allow good progress to be made by all pupils. There is good use of praise to encourage pupils to do their best and this motivates them well. In the best lessons,

teachers use questioning skilfully, with pupils' knowledge and understanding being developed. Pupils are allowed time to reflect and extend their thinking, this allows them to consolidate their learning and consider the moral and spiritual dimensions of their learning.

Leaders and governors have ensured that religious education has full parity with other core subjects in the curriculum. It is clear that their commitment to ensuring that the standards set for religious education have impacted on standards in other curriculum areas. The leaders of Sacred Heart have ensured that religious education is the foundation stone upon which all learning is centred. The curriculum offer is challenging, appropriate and well-planned to suit the needs of mixed-age classes. The subject leader for religious education is unrelenting in his drive to ensure the highest standards and expectations for all staff and pupils. His enthusiasm for the subject is infectious and staff appreciate his work. He has been a constant throughout a time of change for the school and this has been recognised by those who work with him. Governors have an accurate understanding of the school's self-evaluation, knowing what needs to be done to improve teaching and learning. Working with leaders, they have recently introduced a modelling programme that has had a positive impact on teaching; staff are able to articulate this well. Leaders have ensured that staff access training that is relevant to their need through links with the professional network of staff offered by NPCAT and the diocese.

Collective worship

The quality and range of liturgy and prayer provided by the school.

Collective worship key judgement grade:.....

1

Pupil outcomes

How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

1

Provision

The quality of collective worship provided by the school

1

Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for collective worship

2



Pupils engage in a wide variety of collective worship activities that promote participation and are thought provoking. They are respectful and responsive to the different forms of prayer offered, both in class and as a whole school. During the whole school assembly communal singing was beautiful and the examples of spontaneous prayers at the end of the scripture reading were special. The opportunity for reflection was also evident and this is clearly a well-established part of prayer life at Sacred Heart. All pupils are comfortable in saying traditional prayers and can articulate how their reflections on prayer lead to action, with some commenting that prayer makes them happy. Reception pupils see their prayers as 'bubbles floating up into the air and going out into the world', whilst older pupils comment on the 'power of prayer' in helping to change the world. There is some evidence of pupils working with others in the planning and preparation of prayer and liturgy activities, however more pupils need to be involved in this aspect of school life. There are no opportunities for formal pupil evaluation which, in turn, does not allow the pupils to consider how they can improve on their contributions. Pupils are aware of the Church's liturgical year and those who are older have a good understanding of how prayer and liturgy in school is linked to this.

The school understands the importance of providing children with a variety of ways to pray, and staff are adept in providing these opportunities. Formal prayers, scripture, lectio divina and silent reflection were among the variety of prayerful experiences witnessed during class collective worship. Pupils respond to these well, the vast majority becoming deeply immersed in the experiences. The centrality of prayer and liturgy is paramount for staff; with collective worship activities, particularly scripture, being age appropriate. This allows the vast majority of pupils to engage fully with them. Staff in the school know their pupils well and this gives them

the opportunity to nurture and skilfully integrate the gifts and talents of the pupils into prayer and liturgy life. The regular use of sacred spaces around the building is valued by pupils, they speak about this in a positive way, recognising that 'prayer can take place anywhere and at any time'. The parish clergy visit school regularly and are involved in many activities throughout the year. Pupils were articulate when talking about this and spoke confidently about praying the rosary with the deacon and celebrating Masses in school, which are held frequently. The school works well with the parish in the catechesis of sacramental preparation. Parish links are strengthening and the school understands its areas for development, work has already been planned to address this.

Leaders and governors have ensured that the school's collective worship policy affords opportunities to tailor provision that best suits the needs of the pupils in their care. They realise the importance of evaluation and regularly monitor and review collective worship, refining activities to improve outcomes for all. However, pupils do not feed into this process and, as a member of staff commented, their absence from the process means that they do not know how to improve or develop their contribution to prayer and liturgy. A full year of events has been agreed and scheduled with the parish priest to improve the pupil and wider community experience. It is clear that leaders and governors know their school well and they resource collective worship appropriately and effectively.

Information about the school

Full name of school	Sacred Heart Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	147276
Full postal address of the school	Broomfield Avenue Northallerton North Yorkshire DL7 8UL
School phone number	01609 780971
Name of head teacher or principal	Mr Paul Conway – Executive Headteacher
Chair of governing board	Graham McCartney
School Website	shn.npcat.org.uk
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy
Age-range of pupils	3 - 11
Trustees	Diocese of Middlesbrough
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	June 2018
Previous denominational inspection grade	2

The inspection team

Mark Taylor	Lead inspector
Angela Phillips	Team inspector

Key to grade judgements

Grade	England	Wales
1	Outstanding	Excellent
2	Good	Good
3	Requires improvement	Adequate and requires improvement
4	Inadequate	Unsatisfactory and in need of urgent improvement