

# DIOCESE OF MIDDLESBROUGH

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



**School:** St George's RC Primary School

**Address:** Winterscale Street  
Fishergate  
York  
YO10 4BT

**URN:** 121647

**Head Teacher:** Mrs Roseleen Mazza

**Chair:** Dr Penelope Fewster

**Date:** 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> September 2015

**Inspectors:** Mrs Liz Huntley (Lead)  
Mrs Morita Metcalfe (Additional)

**Date & Grade of Last Inspection:** Good  
September 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> 2010

**Overall Grade for this Inspection:** Good

A Report from:  
The Diocese of Middlesbrough Schools' Service  
Section 48 Inspection Team  
50a The Avenue  
Linthorpe  
Middlesbrough TS5 6QT

## 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 Advisers and Inspectors.

### 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

St George's school, which is smaller than the average-sized primary school, is situated close to the centre of York in a socially and economically mixed area. It extends a welcome to a mix of nationalities and faith backgrounds resulting in a rich variety of languages and cultures. There is a significant percentage of pupil mobility because of temporary housing and a number of traveller, service and university families. The proportion of children supported through the pupil premium is above average. There is a class for each year group and a 26 place Nursery. A substantive Deputy Head Teacher was appointed in December 2014 and an Assistant Head Teacher was appointed to add to the Senior Leadership Team. Parents have an increasingly strong role within the school through regular invitations to be involved in all aspects of school life and learning. This is a family school with a clear Catholic identity. There are strong links with St George's Parish; the Parish Priest is a frequent visitor. There are many opportunities for families to share in the Catholic Life of the school.

**Pupil Catchment:**

Number of pupils on roll: 208

Planned Admission Number of Pupils:30

Percentage of pupils baptised RC: 45%

Percentage of pupils from other Christian Denominations: 14%

Percentage of pupils from other World Faiths: 6%

Percentage of pupils with no religious affiliation: 35%

Percentage of pupils with special needs: 6%

**Teaching Staff:**

Full-time Teachers including the Head Teacher: 7

Part-time Teachers: 4

Percentage of Catholic Teachers: 55%

**Support Staff:**

Full-time Classroom Support Staff:7

Part-time Classroom Support Staff: 5

Percentage of Catholic Classroom Support Staff: 50%

Percentage of teachers with CCRS: 9%

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

**Parishes served by the School: St George's RC Church York**

# 1. OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

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## MAIN FINDINGS

St George's Catholic Primary school is a good school and the provision for the Catholic life is outstanding. It is a welcoming school in which the children feel secure. Good leadership is dedicated to living out the school's mission 'to be the best we can be' and raising standards in all aspects of the school's work. The 'Come and See' Religious Education programme is embedded throughout the school. Most children make expected progress from their starting points. The teaching of Religious Education is good and in some classes outstanding. It is enhanced by enjoyable extra curriculum experiences.

Whole school Collective Worship is well planned and skilfully delivered by the Junior Chaplaincy Team and all children, from their early years, are given the opportunity to plan and deliver classroom worship. However, the quality of this planning and preparation varies across the school. Pupils are reverent and respectful throughout whole school worship and join in with lively singing. Collective Worship is linked to current 'Come and See' topics or the Church's Liturgical Year.

The 'Statements to Live By' underpin the development of pupils' moral understanding and positive relationships. The learning environment promotes the Catholic ethos and there is a calm atmosphere throughout the school. Pupils make an important contribution to school life through providing feedback about behaviour, fundraising, Collective Worship and play times. These experiences enable them to explore and develop their understanding of justice, peace and human dignity. The Religious Education curriculum supports the pupils' spiritual development. Special places in the school and its grounds for reflection and contemplation are appreciated by the pupils.

What the school needs to do to improve further :

- Continue to raise attainment by challenging pupils, through the use of 'driver' words and at an appropriate stage in their learning, to make further steps to achieve a higher level, thus ensuring better than expected progress.
- Ensure consistency in marking so that pupils know how well they have achieved and understand the steps they need to take for further improvement, always allowing for maximum challenge.
- Continue to use examples of outstanding practice already in the school to raise the performance of all staff through team teaching, coaching or mentor support.
- Continue to enable pupils to improve the quality of the format for Collective Worship by
  - a. establishing a reverent gathering time using music, a focus table/area, suitable artefacts etc.
  - b. promoting a stronger emphasis on scripture and time for reflection on the Word
  - c. giving planned time for pupils' response appropriate to their age
  - d. allowing opportunity for pupils to 'go forth and spread the Good News'.

## 2. PUPILS

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

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school is good. Pupils are proud of their Mission Statement 'to be the best we can be' and are responsive to the needs of others in their own and the wider community. The Junior Chaplaincy team value their responsibilities and reflect on the impact of their actions. As a result of the imaginative day experiencing the life of the children in their partner school in Ghana, the Junior Chaplaincy team demonstrated their ability to lead and plan activities within the school to raise funds for Water Aid UK. Pupils are nearly always considerate to others and caring to anyone in apparent need, with the older children taking on training to become Flutterby Friends. One of the children reported that Flutterby Friends had to have empathy to be successful. The older pupils, through their work with the younger ones, show an understanding of the need to forgive and be forgiven. Pupils are reflective and welcome opportunities for developing their spirituality expressing their appreciation for the quiet places within the school and in the school grounds.

From their starting points, most pupils make expected progress in Religious Education. Data is used to some extent to track pupils' learning but it is not always used effectively to lead to sufficient challenge. Pupils are keen to do well and apply themselves in lessons; they engage with the learning and work at a good pace. They generally seek to produce their best work and are often interested and enthusiastic about their learning, taking a pride in their written presentation. Although 'noisy' in some classes, pupils' behaviour is generally good in lessons and around the school. At the end of Key Stage 1, a large majority of pupils achieve level 2 with only a few achieving level 2b+. At the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils achieve level 3 with a minority achieving level 3a. Pupils who are not in school for the whole of the key stage generally underperform. Standards in general require further improvement, particularly at the end of the final Key Stage.

Pupils show reverence and respect during whole school Collective Worship, rejoicing in the gathering and joining in with enthusiasm; their behaviour is very good. The Junior Chaplaincy children showed great aptitude for planning and delivering a whole school Act of Collective Worship, using ideas about gifts and talents from their Religious Education lesson and involving many of the other children in writing prayers. They understood the recognised format for Collective Worship and were extremely confident. Parents welcome and appreciate invitations to join in Collective Worship saying that this is one of the many effective ways in which the school is totally inclusive. Children throughout have a good understanding of the religious seasons and feasts and are becoming skilled in the use of scripture, religious artefacts and writing their own prayers. They are at ease and act with integrity when praying with others who have different beliefs and attitudes to spirituality. There is a lack of consistency in children's understanding of what is required to plan and prepare class-based liturgies. In those classrooms where children's understanding is lacking, effective intervention is needed to support the children. Where this occurred Collective Worship was of a high quality. Although liturgies were observed at the beginning of the autumn term, this need for intervention would indicate that the approach being used is not yet fully embedded.

• The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school	<b>2</b>
• How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education	<b>3</b>
• How well do pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship	<b>2</b>

### 3. PROVISION

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

Teaching in RE is good overall. On some occasions, when teachers effectively engage pupils, inspiring them to make exceptional progress or when teachers' skilled questioning allows children to think deeply about the meaning and messages of scripture, teaching is outstanding. In general, as a result of the teaching provided and the appropriate use of the "Come and See" programme, children are interested in their learning and are making expected progress from their starting points. Good use is made of technology and other adults in the room. Children enjoy their Religious Education lessons. Because of the termly newsletters, parents are able to discuss learning with the children and extend knowledge and experiences outside of school. To help pupils improve their learning and increase the rate of progress, particularly at the upper end of the school, there should be a more consistent approach to applying 'assessment for learning' procedures. More detailed teacher comments are needed in workbooks so that the children know what they need to do to improve and are allocated sufficient time to respond.

Experiences such as the 'Ghana Day' and pilgrimages enhance the curriculum resulting in a collective, positive responsibility for caring for others in the whole world context. Having children from Nepal in the school, gave the school community a clear focus in raising money for families suffering because of the earthquake. Children acquire knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith in working with the Parish Priest (who is also the RE Governor) and the adult Chaplaincy Team to prepare liturgies which are meaningful and relevant to the school and parish community. Learning is differentiated to meet the needs of groups and individuals but more challenge should be planned by teachers for all children to make rapid progress. Extra-curricular clubs, such as the school choir and football, give a sense of belonging and the responsibility of representing the school. The curriculum contributes effectively to the social, moral and cultural development of the pupils.

Almost all classrooms have a well presented prayer/focus table reflecting the current theme and topic. In the best examples, key words are displayed along with the 'Statement to Live By' for the week. In response to the priority given by the school, the Junior Chaplaincy Team set up their focus table the night before they led the whole school Collective worship with the knowledge that they needed a green cloth for 'ordinary time'. It is evident in most classrooms that resources for children to lead Collective Worship are provided with ideas for Gathering, The Word, Response and Going Forth but there is inconsistency in practice. Children who practise other faiths are invited to share and celebrate their beliefs in school.

The Catholic life of the school has a high priority. The learning environment is attractive, well ordered and very clearly of a Catholic nature. Children of all backgrounds are familiar with the Mass as it is celebrated every fortnight in school. School liturgies significantly enrich the Catholic life of the school. Because parents, carers and parishioners are invited to school liturgies, they are able to learn more about the Catholic faith and traditions e.g. the Parish Priest putting on vestments for Mass and setting up the altar. The work of the Chaplaincy Team is highly effective. This year, the Team focused on strengthening links between the school and the parish resulting in children in school having a greater involvement in parish life and Sunday Mass. The Chaplaincy Team regularly evaluates its work adjusting plans to meet topical and pastoral needs. The school makes use of Diocesan resources such as the 'Little Big Assembly' to promote high standards of moral and ethical behaviour.

The school Mission Statement 'to be the best we can be' has a strong visual representation in the school; it is on the front of children's workbooks in this academic year. The school Mission Statement underpins the school's approach to managing behaviour, high expectations and effective learning for each individual. The school's use of social media is an outstanding example of the school's mission to spread the Good News, recognise success and celebrate the diverse nature of the school community.

• The quality of teaching and how purposeful learning is in Religious Education	<b>2</b>
• The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum promotes pupils' learning	<b>2</b>
• The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school	<b>2</b>
• The quality of provision for the Catholic life of the school	<b>1</b>

## 4. LEADERS, MANAGERS AND GOVERNORS

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

The school's leadership in promoting, monitoring and evaluating the provision for the Catholic life of the school is good. Governors' leadership is deeply committed to the Church's mission in education with a strong emphasis on the Catholic life of the school; the Chair and RE Governor are regular visitors to the school and active participants in the school's Collective Worship. A Governor recognised that the Governing Body is a source of inspiration for the children in their journey of life towards Christ. Because the RE Governor is also the School Chaplain, Governors' evaluation of the Catholic life is a coherent reflection of rigorous monitoring, searching analysis and self-challenge for the school. The Governors carry out their statutory duties diligently. A range of monitoring activities, relating to provision and outcomes, carried out by the subject leader and the adult Chaplaincy Team are very effective and place the school in a good position for further improvement. The work of the Chaplaincy Team (turning concern into action) is real and relevant, connecting the children with the local and wider communities. Children's individual spiritual and moral development is very well supported by the work of the Chaplaincy Team. Social media is used to advertise liturgies which invite many families into the community where they are supported and nurtured. Although pupils are at ease when praying with their school community, school leaders need to develop their work to empower pupils to prepare and lead classroom worship which supports the school's mission 'to be the best we can be' and ensure that quiet, reflective time is included.

The Governing Body is actively engaged in evaluating and improving standards in Religious Education and ensuring that teachers and support staff receive appropriate training. Work carried out by the RE Leader with the Diocesan adviser for RE and other schools ensures that standards are accurately assessed. The 'Come and See' programme is at the centre of Religious Education and teachers and support staff are confident with the delivery and connecting enrichment activities. Senior Leaders set high expectations for effort and presentation in the children's work books and the use of homework opportunities for the 'Explore' section. The RE Leader and other leaders regularly carry out learning walks and work scrutiny to inform professional development needs. The enrichment activities e.g. school liturgies serve to ensure that all pupils become familiar with Catholic beliefs and traditions so that they can draw on these experiences to achieve the expected levels of attainment. Now that the time table for Religious Education has been revised, leaders are in a position to raise the levels of attainment by improving the systems of marking, feedback and pupils' response. This, along with sharing current outstanding practice in the school, puts the school in a good position for further improvement.

<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>2</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>2</b>