



Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection report for St Leonard's Catholic Primary School, Silksworth

URN: 148277

Carried out on behalf of the Most Rev Malcolm McMahon, Archbishop of Liverpool and Apostolic Administrator of the diocese of Hexham and Newcastle on:

Date: 29-30 March 2023

Overall effectiveness The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school.....	2
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Collective worship (p.7) The quality and range of liturgy and prayer provided by the school.....	1
The school is fully compliant with the curriculum requirements laid down by the Bishops' Conference	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The school is fully compliant with all requirements of the diocesan bishop	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The school has responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection	Fully

Summary of key findings

What the school does well

- St Leonard's School community fully embraces the Catholic mission, 'We learn, we grow, we shine in the light of Jesus'.
- Collective worship is central to school life and leaders are exemplary role models for staff and pupils.
- Leaders ensure Christ is at the heart of the school, a golden thread running through all policies and procedures.
- Pupils enjoy lessons at St Leonard's School and they speak with confidence about what they have learned.

- Relationships between staff and their pupils reflect how much pupils and their families are valued; staff provide the highest levels of pastoral care for pupils, ensuring they always make time for the most vulnerable.

What the school needs to improve:

- Develop a creative curriculum in religious education, providing opportunities in lessons for the pupils to become more independent learners.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to reflect on their experience of prayer and liturgy so that they can articulate how they are inspired into living out these missions in their daily lives.

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



Pupils at St Leonard's School fully understand the Catholic mission of their school, 'We learn, we grow, we shine in the light of Jesus'. Pupils know that this distinctive Catholic nature makes their school special. All community members embrace this mission and pupils say that they love their school and are very proud to come here. The pupils know that they are loved and well-cared for by the staff team. There is a commitment to following the teaching and example of Jesus. For example, prayer leaders spend their lunchtimes organising liturgical prayer opportunities for the younger pupils. These sessions are well-attended and pupils show love and care for each other as they gather in prayer. Pupils understand that Catholic Social Teaching calls them to help others, not only locally, but also nationally and globally. They are keen to respond to this call. Pupils were proud to discuss how the school donated its old furniture to a school in Gambia. The Cafod club lead on charitable giving and are currently working towards the LiveSimply Award. They have planned various walking routes for the Cafod's 'Big Lent Walk' to show their solidarity with those less fortunate. Mini Vinnies also seek opportunities to help their community, for example, by organising food collections and making Christmas cards to share with parishioners.

All staff fully support the Catholic identity of the school. Relationships between staff and their pupils reflect how much pupils and their families are valued. Staff provide the highest levels of pastoral care for pupils, always making time for the most vulnerable. A strong sense of community and welcome fills the school. The deacon from St Leonard's parish is a regular visitor in school and is the face of the church for the school community. A range of groups allow pupils to bear witness to their school's Catholic life and mission such as Mini Vinnies, Cafod Club, and Prayer Leaders. All around the school environment, sacred spaces and displays offer opportunities for pupils to celebrate their faith and to reflect. Parents and carers are very positive about the school and are very supportive

of its work. One parent commented, 'The school provides fantastic opportunities to join children in liturgical prayer and Mass, all with beautiful messages to help us all remember what is truly important in life'. Teachers are now delivering the relationships, sex, and health education curriculum using 'Ten:Ten' materials and staff have received training to ensure it is delivered effectively. It is contributing towards a strong moral and social education. Pastoral care is central to school life. Staff feel valued and talk positively about systems now in place. Teachers comment on the support they receive from the religious education leader and appreciate her open-door approach and willingness to help.

Leaders and governors are dedicated to ensuring that all pupils experience a Catholic education which helps them to grow and know Jesus, letting their light shine. Governors ensure that Christ is at the centre of the school community. They describe the Catholic life and mission of the school as a golden thread running throughout, underpinning everything that they do. They recognise the journey the school has been on and the recent transformation of the building and behaviour under the new leadership. Leaders are prepared for future staffing changes and have an effective induction programme in place that supports all staff to have a profound understanding of the school mission. Governors are frequent visitors into school, providing challenge and support for leaders. The school has recently reviewed its mission and values with all members of the community.

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 lessons at St Leonard's School and they can speak with confidence about what they have learned. They are developing knowledge, understanding, and skills in line with the expectations of the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory 2012*. There is a clear and consistent approach to teaching and learning, enabling pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding of religious education. They produce good work that is presented well. They show an awareness of key concepts and use religious vocabulary. One pupil said, 'I love religious education, it is my favourite lesson. It is my chance to get closer to Jesus'. Pupils behave well in lessons and approach their lessons with enthusiasm. Teachers use modelling strategies from other areas of the curriculum when teaching religious education to help children know more and remember more. Live marking within lessons enables pupils to know how well they are doing and respond to questions, further developing ideas. Recently, starter questions have been introduced throughout school in religious education lessons to recap and revisit learning. The impact of this needs to be reviewed so that pupils can answer these questions independently. Teachers are beginning to adapt the curriculum in a creative way, introducing a range of religious art, debates, and story maps in lessons. Consolidation lessons now take place at the start of each topic and revisit previous learning. Attainment is good, with the majority of pupils working at age related expectations. Regular opportunities for moderation of pupil work are provided by the school and by Bishop Chadwick Catholic Education Trust.

Teachers are committed to religious education and they are confident in their subject knowledge as a result of recent training. They appreciate the support they receive from the religious education leader. Teachers start each lesson sharing religious vocabulary and display this in their classroom for all pupils to access. In the mixed Year 5/6 class, pupils benefit from a carefully planned curriculum ensuring that provision matches the needs of pupils in both year groups. There are

opportunities to provide learning outside the religious education programme with visits to the parish church. Recent visits into school from Cafod and the local MP promote pupil learning and engagement. The parish deacon supports the religious education curriculum in creative ways.

Leaders and governors maintain religious education at the heart of the curriculum. They ensure that the curriculum meets the requirements of the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory 2012* and that the required amount of time is given to religious education. The religious education leader is inspirational and is an expert. She has a clear vision for outstanding teaching and learning and leads by example, providing high quality religious education lessons as a model for the rest of the school. She gives valuable support to the St Leonard's team including early career teachers through her open-door policy and is highly committed to the Catholic community she serves. Self-evaluation of religious education by leaders and governors enables the school to plan for improvements. St Leonard's is currently in a period of significant staffing changes. Leaders and governors are aware of the support and supervision they need to continue to provide for new staff so that the school continues to improve. A tracking system for monitoring religious education is securely in place with regular lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work, and data analysis as part of '5 strand' monitoring, all of which are used effectively to further enhance pupil learning. The link governor takes an active role in this monitoring and reports findings to the board in the school improvement monitoring performance meetings.

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

2

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

1

At St Leonard's School prayer and liturgy are central to school life. Pupils talk about their day being punctuated by prayer. Pupils have written their own prayers including for the people of Ukraine. Key stage 2 prayer leaders are becoming confident in preparing and leading prayers, liturgies, and reflections. They fully understand their role when leading liturgies and undertake these confidently. They use their own experience of adult-led prayer and liturgy as a theme to assist them in their planning. Pupils are aware of the Church's liturgical year and recognise that as a school community they pray more during Lent. They are excellent role models to younger pupils and give up their own time during lunchtimes to pray with them in the designated sacred space. However, pupils are not always able to articulate the missions they have undertaken as a result of prayer and liturgy experiences.

Pupils respond well to prayer and liturgy experiences provided by the school. Pupils confidently join in prayer and sing joyfully. They participate willingly with the newly created school prayer during times of worship. Pupils enjoy liturgical dance and pupils say that prayer gives them time to listen to God. The religious education leader is highly skilled at helping pupils plan prayer and liturgy. She shares her expertise with the teaching staff who are using music and creative ways to enhance these experiences. Pupils regularly evaluate worship alongside their teachers and are becoming more independent when doing this. Leaders have provided quality resources to support pupils in planning prayer and liturgy. Older pupils talk confidently about how they plan worship using gather, scripture, respond, and mission. However, younger pupils are still developing these skills with the support of the teaching team. Leaders provide regular opportunities for the pupils to attend Mass and the pupils recently attended church to mark the beginning of Lent where they made their Lenten promises. These opportunities make a significant contribution to the spiritual life of the whole school community. Many quality areas in and around the school, such as the prayer garden and prayer room, continue to inspire and support the development of prayer. The religious

education leader has planned a programme of opportunities for the year in which parents will join their children in prayer.

The head teacher and religious education leader provide training and development to support staff in the provision of prayer and liturgy. They take it in turns to model the delivery of whole school prayer so that staff and pupils witness a variety of ways that prayer can be experienced. As a result, staff are supported in developing consistently quality experiences of prayer and liturgy for pupils and their families. Staff comment on the fact that leaders provide regular opportunities for staff to pray together, uniting the staff team and supporting each other in times of need. The school calendar is timetabled to provide opportunities to celebrate significant times within the liturgical year including attending Mass on holy days. Leaders include prayer and liturgy in their monitoring cycle and have used this to plan improvements. Governors know the school exceptionally well. Relationships between the governors and the school are a strength. Consequently, they provide highly effective support mechanisms to pupils, staff, and the whole community. The link governor regularly joins the pupils for school celebrations and Mass. The turbulent times the school has been through are recognised by governors and leaders. Despite this, school has prayer and liturgy at the heart of school life. Parents are invited into school for prayer and liturgy opportunities and governors see this as an opportunity to strengthen relationships.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St Leonard's Catholic Primary School
School unique reference number (URN)	148277
Full postal address of the school	Tunstall Village Road, Silksworth, Sunderland SR3 2BB
School phone number	0191 5210300
Name of head teacher or principal	Mrs Dionne Dunn
Chair of governing board	Mrs Alison Aisbitt
School Website	www.stleonardsprimary.org.uk
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Bishop Chadwick Catholic Education Trust
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy
Age-range of pupils	4 years – 11 years
Trustees	The Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	2-3 March 2015
Previous denominational inspection grade	Good

The inspection team

Louise Nealings	Lead inspector
Lisa Stokoe	Team inspector
Name of inspector	Lead/team
Name of inspector	Lead/team

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