



# St Aloysius' RC Junior School

Argyle Street, Hebburn, Tyne and Wear, NE31 1BQ

School Unique Reference Number: **108719**

**Inspection dates:** 21 – 22 March 2019

**Lead inspector:** Elaine White

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| <b>Overall effectiveness</b> | Previous inspection: | Outstanding        | 1        |
|                              | This inspection:     | <b>Outstanding</b> | <b>1</b> |
| <b>Catholic Life:</b>        |                      | Outstanding        | 1        |
| <b>Religious Education:</b>  |                      | Outstanding        | 1        |
| <b>Collective Worship:</b>   |                      | Outstanding        | 1        |

## SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

St Aloysius' RC Junior School is an outstanding Catholic school because:

- As soon as you enter the school it is very clear that the prime purpose is Catholic education, helping children to develop their faith to understand that God loves them. It is a welcoming place where everyone is loved and respected and the love of learning is evident in all aspects of the school.
- The quality of Religious Education is outstanding. Staff know their pupils well and consistently teach high quality lessons which enthuse and engage pupils. Pupils talk very positively about their lessons and make outstanding progress.
- The Catholic Life of the school is outstanding. Governors, senior leaders and staff have high expectations and a shared vision with regards to the Catholic mission and ethos of the school. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the Catholic Life and take a leading role in activities which promote the school's ethos within the school and wider community.
- The quality of Collective Worship is outstanding. It is central to the life of the school and valued by all the school community. Staff and pupils plan and lead high quality acts of worship and pupils act with the deepest reverence and respect.

## FULL REPORT

### INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- St Aloysius' is an average sized school which serves the parish of St Aloysius and St James, Hebburn.
- It is federated with St Aloysius' Infant School, on the same site, and shares the same headteacher and governing body.
- The majority of pupils are white British. The proportion of pupils with a special educational need is average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through pupil premium funding is average.

### WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- Continue to develop the quality of teaching by:
  - sharing best practice in creative Religious Education teaching throughout the school.
- Continue to increase attainment for the most able pupils by:
  - continuing to ensure that high quality tasks and consistency of questioning in pupils' feedback enables all pupils, especially the more able, to attain the higher levels.

## CATHOLIC LIFE

### THE QUALITY OF THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

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- The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.
- The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school.
- How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school.

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#### **The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.**

- All pupils throughout the school have a deep sense of belonging. They all enthusiastically embrace the opportunities the school provides for their personal and spiritual growth. They care for each other and willingly take on lead roles in the school community such as buddies for the younger pupils. The older pupils are excellent role models and command the respect and admiration of other pupils throughout the school. Pupils commented, 'We always feel very happy and safe at school because if you need support there is always someone there for you'.
- Throughout the school pupils work extremely well together demonstrating very positive and enthusiastic attitudes to all aspects of school life. Their behaviour is exemplary; pupils are extremely polite and considerate of others, demonstrating good emotional awareness.
- Pupils express their own beliefs with confidence and have a very good understanding of how their faith impacts on their own lives and others. They are very proud of their school, their religious backgrounds and beliefs and are able to discuss their own spirituality with confidence. They say they feel valued and they can clearly articulate the importance of the Gospel values and how their school is helping them to become better people.
- Pupils are alert to the needs of others both locally and globally. They respond passionately to issues of social injustice through prayer, fundraising activities and service to others such as supporting the work of HCPT, Children in Need, St Oswald's Hospice, Salvation Army, Fr Sanjay for the Third World as well as raising money to support Coloma School in Uganda.
- Relationships with parents, parish and the wider community are excellent. Pastoral care throughout the school is outstanding. Parents commented, 'St Aloysius' is one big family community – children feel safe and are confident because they are truly loved by all of the staff at St Aloysius'.
- All pupils demonstrate respect and show reverence to the rites and traditions of their faith. They are very proud of their religious identity and there is an enthusiastic and active involvement in school and parish celebrations. Pupils actively seek to become altar servers following their First Holy Communion.
- The mission statement is central to the life of the school community; there is a deep sense of ownership and full commitment to promoting a learning community based on the Gospel Values of love, tolerance and forgiveness where the achievements of everyone are recognised and celebrated; 'I have come that you may have life, and have it to the full'.

**The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.**

- The provision for the Catholic Life of the school has the highest possible priority with the school's vision statement, 'Striving for excellence, inspired by Gospel values', permeating throughout the school, ensuring that Christ is at the centre of all that takes place at St Aloysius'.
- From the moment you enter St Aloysius' it is apparent that this is a school committed to the Catholic tradition and ethos. A strong team spirit amongst all staff, parents, governors and children, sharing knowledge and good practice, is common place. Relationships are a strength of the school.
- People are at the heart of this nurturing, family community. All are valued and welcomed. Faith is modelled and staff work tirelessly to put the school's inclusive mission into practice. Policy and practice evidence an explicit commitment to all in society, particularly the most vulnerable and needy. Strong relationships and mutual respect between leadership, staff and parents are a feature of the school. As a result pastoral care provision is outstanding, reflecting concern for the welfare of all. A number of staff are trained counsellors and mentors offering regular support to children through a successfully developed Rainbows Programme.
- St Aloysius' has a vibrant and engaging learning environment where focal points, prayer spaces and displays linked to the church's seasons provide many quality opportunities to reflect, pray and celebrate its Catholic character.
- Personal and social education (PSE) and relationships and sex education (RSE) programmes refer to Catholic teachings and principles and are in line with the Diocesan policy.
- The mental health and well-being agenda filters through every aspect of daily teaching and learning at St Aloysius' and is a strength of the school. Staff are trained leaders in the mental health programme and the school is actively leading in this area with mental health champions effectively supporting future developments.

**How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.**

- The leadership of the school in promoting the Catholic Life is outstanding.
- The Catholic Life of the school is given the highest possible priority by leaders which is reflected in the accurate self-evaluation and is a coherent reflection of rigorous monitoring and explicit focus.
- The headteacher is a very positive presence around the school and, together with the senior leadership team, has a very clear understanding of Catholic education and the role of the Catholic school. Together they very effectively promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school. They have a deep commitment to the Church's mission in education; personal development and high quality care is paramount. They are outstanding role models providing very clear direction for improvement and ensure that opportunities for pupils' spiritual and moral development are frequent and have significant impact.
- Staff, particularly those who are new to the school, are very well supported. They are very appreciative of the support given to them as they progress on their personal journey of faith.

- Governors involve themselves wholeheartedly in the life of the school and are fully committed to promoting the religious and spiritual life. Together with the headteacher and senior leaders of the school they have a clear vision and high aspirations for future developments. Their strong promotion of Catholic values is clearly shared by the whole community who demonstrate great pride in their school. They discharge their statutory and canonical duties well, working very effectively with the staff, headteacher and senior leaders, committed to upholding the strong caring ethos that exists throughout. They are passionate about the school's mission, are actively involved in its evaluation and are ready to challenge as well as support where necessary.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

### THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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- How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.
- The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education.
- How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.

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#### **How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education is outstanding.**

- Pupils demonstrate passion and commitment in their lessons. They have a very positive attitude and speak enthusiastically about their learning and want to do well. Books are extremely well presented with a high standard of work and an interesting variety of activities which provide challenge. Pupils in all classes take pride in their work. One child commented, 'I like Religious Education because the teachers make it fun!'.
- Pupils value and appreciate the support they receive from their teachers. In all lessons observed across the school, pupils concentrated well and were rarely off task ensuring that behaviour for learning is outstanding.
- Pupils understand how well they are achieving in Religious Education. Teachers' marking and annotations in pupils' books show that there is outstanding progress across the school. Pupils respond well to advice given to help them take the next steps in their learning.
- Pupils identified as having a special educational need make good progress because their needs are accurately identified and they are very well supported by skilled teaching assistants.
- Overall outcomes for pupils in Religious Education are outstanding. Pupils enter the junior school with knowledge and skills that are typically expected for their age. They make good progress throughout key stage 2 with attainment broadly in line, or above, Diocesan averages. Individual exercise books indicate that pupils have access to a wide range of quality and challenging activities.
- Pupils are religiously literate and most are very articulate and thoughtful in their responses.
- Highly effective systems are in place to evaluate the progress of individual pupils. Inspection findings and evidence provided by the school show no noticeable differences between groups of learners.

#### **The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education is outstanding.**

- Overall, teaching and assessment throughout the school is outstanding. Teachers demonstrate high expectations, plan interesting lessons and set appropriate targets for pupils to achieve in their work based upon increasingly accurate assessment. They are continuing to fine tune differentiation when planning to ensure that activities are consistently matched to pupils' ability.

- Teachers have very high expectations of work and behaviour which are communicated effectively to pupils. They are knowledgeable and confident in their teaching and use a wide range of resources creatively, ensuring that children are engaged and motivated in their learning. They are committed to achieving the best possible outcomes for their pupils.
- The school has a highly effective assessment and tracking system to monitor pupils' progress and achievement in Religious Education which informs planning and ensures that pupils are continually challenged.
- Marking and feedback are high quality and pupils regularly respond to feedback which enables their outstanding progress. Pupils are involved in self-assessment and this is well embedded across the school.
- Assessments are regular and systematic and both internal and external moderation indicate levelling is accurate.
- Teaching assistants are highly skilled and make a very positive contribution to pupils' learning.
- The teaching of Religious Education across the school has a high profile, meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference and contributes very effectively to the pupils' spiritual and moral development.

**How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education is outstanding.**

- The role of Religious Education coordinator is given high priority within the school which ensures that Religious Education has a high profile. The coordinator, senior leadership team and headteacher work closely together to ensure that all staff feel supported and valued.
- Senior leaders conduct a range of systematic monitoring activities relating to provision and outcomes in Religious Education. Their analysis provides a firm basis for appropriate and accurate diagnosis of the school's strengths and areas for development. They make very good use of professional development opportunities to support all staff.
- Leaders carry out monitoring and analysis of teaching and learning on a regular basis and the school improvement plan identifies very clear steps for ongoing development. Religious Education is given a high priority within the school improvement plan.
- The deeply committed senior leadership team and Religious Education coordinator are ambitious for the school and have the professional drive and religious conviction to ensure that Religious Education continues to move forward.
- The governing body fulfils its role extremely well with regards to Religious Education, offering support but also confident in their ability to challenge. Governors are kept well informed of the priorities identified to bring about further improvement. They are regular visitors to the school and are totally committed and dedicated to ensure that St Aloysius' continues to grow in strength.
- The Religious Education curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference; it is well resourced and contributes very effectively to the pupils' spiritual and moral development.

## COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

### THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

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- How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship.
- The quality of provision for Collective Worship.
- How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship.

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#### **How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship is outstanding.**

- All pupils are truly inspired by, enthusiastic and respectful in their response to Collective Worship. They listen intently, show respect and offer heartfelt responses; they speak confidently, use drama and dance with feeling and sing joyously.
- Pupils throughout the school are able to articulate what being part of a prayerful community means to them, one child said, 'We like to pray because we want to be closer to God'.
- Pupils are engaged fully with worship and reflect deeply on the Gospel. They regularly prepare and lead the prayer life and do so with enthusiasm, confidence and expert understanding of the liturgical year. They are very confident in using resources and helping to create an atmosphere conducive to prayer, using silence and visual prompts as well as liturgical dance.
- Pupils are at the heart of regular and frequent school celebrations and participate enthusiastically in voluntary prayer sessions at lunchtimes with the school chaplain.
- Pupils show a deep respect for other faiths and are very aware that religious beliefs are important; this is reflected in the manner in which pupils prepare and participate in prayer and liturgies.
- Pupils are confident and at ease in sharing their prayers with others.
- There is a calm and peaceful ethos which pervades the school and this is reflected in the pupils' outstanding behaviour and consideration for others.

#### **The quality of provision for Collective Worship is outstanding.**

- There is a clear policy for Collective Worship which is central to the life of the school and makes a significant contribution to the moral and spiritual needs of the pupils.
- St Aloysius' is a deeply prayerful community. Prayer and worship permeate the school day and are deeply embedded in the daily practice of the school. The prayer room is at the heart of the school and all classes use this special place for both formal and informal liturgies and prayer times. Dependent upon the age of the children, they are increasingly able to create an atmosphere for prayer and respect for Jesus' presence through silence

and personal reflection.

- The school Chaplain ensures that high quality and interactive focal points and prayer spaces are evident throughout the school providing further encouragement for independent reflection and prayer.
- Acts of worship are well resourced and age appropriate, centred on themes and messages which are easily accessible to pupils. A planned programme of liturgies, Masses and other liturgical celebrations provide many opportunities for participation from the wider school and parish community.
- Developing the spirituality of all is seen as central in supporting the Catholic ethos of the school and this ensures that the needs of all pupils are very well met.
- The school welcomes families to participate in worship on a regular basis, which is well received. Families are becoming increasingly more involved in the pupils' religious development through such things as the travelling crib, rosary bags and Lenten boxes.
- There is a great sense of community at all levels which is evident in the quality of relationships that exist between everyone, staff, governors, pupils and parents. One parent commented, 'St Aloysius' is a great school with very caring staff who go beyond their duty to care for everyone'.
- Pastoral care for all pupils is outstanding as a result of all stakeholders. Clear policies and procedures are in place, which are rooted in Gospel values.

**How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship is outstanding.**

- All staff throughout the school demonstrate expert knowledge of how to plan and deliver quality liturgy and worship. They understand the Church's liturgical year and traditions and are outstanding role models to their pupils. The headteacher, along with the chaplain and senior leaders of the school, show a real depth of passion and commitment and have a clear vision and sense of direction and understanding of what is required to ensure high quality Collective Worship throughout the school.
- The headteacher, parish priest and staff are excellent role models for the children and contribute significantly to the spiritual and moral development of the pupils.
- Highly effective systems and structures are embedded throughout the school which allows quality Collective Worship to take place across the school.
- The headteacher ensures that all staff throughout the school receive the quality formation that they require in the development of spiritual and liturgical understanding.
- The views of pupils, staff and parents are sought through informal meetings, parent forums, questionnaires, etc. and are valued by the governors and senior leadership team of the school. Parents describe the many opportunities to pray with their children as a genuine strength of the school.
- The dedication and commitment of the senior leaders and governors in the school are instrumental in the drive to provide high quality Collective Worship and quality prayer life throughout the school.
- Leaders ensure that pupils have excellent sacramental preparation, working closely with the parish priest, school chaplain and catechists.
- Interviews with governors, the parish priest and headteacher, along with the scrutiny of both pupil, staff and parent questionnaires, reflect the importance of true partnership,

evaluation and a mission to ensure the very best for all pupils at St Aloysius' school.

## SUMMARY OF INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

**HOW EFFECTIVE THE SCHOOL IS IN PROVIDING CATHOLIC EDUCATION:****1****CATHOLIC LIFE:****1**

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.

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The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school.

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How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school.

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**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:****1**

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.

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The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education.

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How well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.

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**COLLECTIVE WORSHIP:****1**

How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship.

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The quality of provision for Collective Worship.

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How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship.

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## SCHOOL DETAILS

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| <b>School name</b>   | St Aloysius' RC Junior School |
| <b>Unique reference number</b>   | 108719                        |
| <b>Local authority</b>   | South Tyneside                |
| This Inspection Report is produced for the Rt Reverend Séamus Cunningham the Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle under canon 806 of Canon Law. For voluntary aided schools it also fulfils the responsibility the governing body has to inspect the school under s48 of the Education Act 2005. |                               |
| <b>Chair of governors</b>  | Mr Eddie Watson               |
| <b>Executive head teacher</b>  | Mr Nick Conway                |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | January 2014                  |
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