



Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection report for
**St John Vianney Catholic Primary School,
Hartlepool**

URN: 148817

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: 23-24 March 2023

Overall effectiveness The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school.....	1
Catholic life and mission (p.3) How faithfully the school responds to the call to live as a Catholic community at the service of the Church's educational mission.....	1
Religious education (p.5) The quality of curriculum religious education.....	1
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	✓
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 exceptional leadership of the head teacher, ably supported by the subject lead for religious education, contributes to the school's successful outcomes; his dedication, experience and support for others is valued and appreciated by all members of the school community.
- A tangible sense of family exists across all ages in this school, from birth to eleven. All pupils belong and feel safe; they feel confident and thrive.
- The behaviour, attitudes and outcomes for pupils are outstanding.

- The quality of pastoral care which ensures all are welcomed into this school to 'Come as you are and grow with us' is exceptional and enables pupils to flourish.
- Meticulous planning and evaluation of curriculum, of prayer and liturgy, and of the school's work in promoting Catholic life, results in exceptionally strong outcomes.

What the school needs to improve:

- Embed the principles of Catholic Social Teaching to enable pupils to make links between their learning and their ability to respond independently and pro-actively to the demands of living them out.
- Ensure that the whole-school marking policy is consistently applied to religious education.
- Develop opportunities for pupils to respond to their learning with a wider variety of means of expression.

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

St John Vianney is an outstanding school where pupils embrace the school's mission to 'Come as you are and grow with us'. The behaviour and conduct of all pupils is exemplary with one child saying, 'We just shine and get along with each other.' All pupils show a deep respect for themselves and for others, including those of other faiths. Pupils flourish within a community dedicated to following the teaching and example of Jesus. From the Eco-Warriors, Faith in Action, and Companions group, the Catholic life permeates the fabric of the school. All pupils speak with fondness of their unique 'Family at School' groups. Year 6 pupils proudly take on the responsibility of leading. They talked with pride about how they were each organising a liturgy for the Stations of the Cross. Pupils respond compassionately to the needs of the community by writing Christmas cards and raising money for charities such as Macmillan Cancer Support. All pupils commit to the school's offer of growing in virtue, but are not fully able to articulate their responsibility to care for our Common Home.

The school's provision spans from age 0 to age 11 and every staff member feels included and united by the school's Catholic mission. Teachers say that everyone has 'a chance to prosper'. This belief is lived out by all, including those caring for the very youngest. Pupils comment that staff 'go above and beyond' providing an inspiring expression of the educational mission of the Church. Everyone is welcomed hospitably, including the most vulnerable. Parents feel at ease dropping off their children due to the nurturing care, effective communication systems, and a lived sense of community. Staff commented on how they see their colleagues as members of their own family. There is a palpable sense that everyone is working together to achieve the school's mission. The overwhelming majority of parents have confidence in the

work of the school and strong evidence was seen during the inspection of how the school diligently and proactively addresses any concerns parents may have. Staff manage behaviour because they actively listen to pupils, making sure all their needs are met by following the clear and consistent systems in place such as 'Think sheets' and the 'Stop-it Box'. Staff arrange activities such as organising a Mother's Day gift with a sleepover for Year 1 pupils. The Personal Health Education programme is comprehensively planned into the school's curriculum, meeting national and diocesan guidance and celebrating the Church's holistic vision of the human person.

School leaders enable all staff to fully embrace the goals of the school by being 'positive agents for change'. This underpins the school's mission where activities are diligently planned throughout the year to meet this objective, such as whole school 'Gift Days'. Clergy, governors and school leaders work cohesively ensuring a flourishing partnership between parish and school. The chair and vice-chair are dedicated long-serving custodians of the school and the governing body regularly monitor the school's work which informs a comprehensive self-evaluation process. A director of the Bishop Hogarth Catholic Education Trust describes the school as one of the Trust's 'shining lights'. The head teacher is an inspiring visionary: from his meticulous organisation, his unwavering dedication and his passionate ambition for the school, he exemplifies servant leadership. Members of the school take inspiration from his leadership because he has a genuine, unrelenting care for everyone who is part of this special school community.

Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

Religious education key judgement grade:.....

1

Pupil outcomes

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

1

Provision

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

1

Leadership

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

1



Pupils at St John Vianney School achieve high standards in religious education. They are knowledgeable, show great engagement with their learning and can remember the content of previous topics well. Pupils enjoy religious education lessons and, as a result, they make consistently good progress from varied starting points. Pupils build their knowledge of the Bible and are able to use scripture well to support their learning. This results in pupils who know more and remember more of their prior learning. They concentrate exceptionally well, love the challenge of learning, and take great pride in the presentation of their work. Behaviour of pupils in and beyond the classroom is exceptionally strong. As a consequence their work is of a consistently high quality. Pupils show passion for learning, a motivation to do their best, and a deep understanding of the demands of religious commitment on their lives. For example, one Year 4 pupil, when discussing selfless service, commented on the importance of being ‘the face of Christ for others’. Pupils know how well they are doing and can explain their progress using the school’s well-crafted assessment processes. They know what they need to do to improve their work and have the opportunity to do so when responding to marked work.

Staff who teach religious education at this school show deep commitment, have high expectations and are ‘unapologetically ambitious’ for pupils to achieve their best. A meticulously designed curriculum plan ensures strong consistency in curriculum delivery. The ‘Book of Knowledge’, a reference aid for teachers, results in new staff very quickly understanding the centrality of religious education to the whole curriculum. All staff have excellent subject knowledge. The school uses an innovative ‘Red Lines’ approach in each year group to highlight the non-negotiable area of learning that all pupils in each year group must achieve. Teachers at all stages are highly skilled in using questions to adapt learning, to elicit

further knowledge and to challenge all abilities. There is a whole-school marking policy across all subjects. There are some inconsistencies as to how this is applied in religious education although school leaders are aware of this and are supporting practitioners to ensure greater consistency. Whilst work in books demonstrates very strong outcomes, some written work is scaffolded and there are too few opportunities for a wider variety of forms of expression, for example, art and drama.

School leaders show a strong commitment to ensuring that religious education is at the centre of the whole curriculum. The curriculum is closely aligned to the *Religious Education Curriculum Directory 2012* and is exceptionally well-planned and sequentially structured, taking good account of pupils' prior knowledge. This ensures that the subject has at least parity with other curriculum subjects. The subject leader is passionate about this subject, has high expectations, and a high level of experience which inspires confidence in the staff team. Strong evaluation systems ensure that leaders know where to focus and can evidence continuous improvements which enhance outcomes. The principles of Catholic Social Teaching are not fully embedded so not all pupils can clearly make the links between what they are learning and how they can independently and pro-actively respond to the call to action. New staff are supported exceptionally well in this school and all staff can seek accessible support from all school leaders. Forensic self-evaluation results in strategic action and well-targeted actions. Inspirational professional development opportunities are provided for staff and contribute to the outstanding outcomes in this area.

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

1



Pupils at St John Vianney School enjoy and are engaged by prayer and liturgy. They consciously participate and are fully active, responding with enthusiasm, respect and reverence. Pupils are highly skilled at planning and leading liturgies and take an increasing role as they get older. For example, pupils of all ages were led by Year 6 to collaboratively plan liturgies for Stations of the Cross. These include opportunities for silent reflection and meaningful actions to take as a result of hearing the Word. Pupils deeply understand the structure of the liturgical year and how it is experienced. They take opportunities to pray informally such as during the Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament which took place during the inspection. Pupils love singing; they know a wide repertoire of songs and their singing makes a joyful contribution to liturgies. Older pupils relish opportunities to lead prayer experiences with younger pupils and do so with confidence.

Prayer is central to the life of this school and is integral to routine gatherings of pupils, parents, staff or governors. The school day is punctuated by prayer. Staff are inspiring models of exemplary practice and are highly skilled in enabling pupils to lead prayer and liturgy. Parents appreciate and value the invitations to attend school events and high proportions attend and participate. Younger pupils are given opportunities to develop confidence to lead prayer. One parent said, 'The Early Years collective worship was great to see. It was fantastic to see the children share their own learning and experiences with the school and their families.' The weekly structure of liturgy ensures that the Word is kept alive by all pupils and threads through lessons and liturgies for the week so that it is known by all. The head teacher is the lead for collective worship and his knowledge of the liturgical norms of the church means that prayer and liturgies are relevant to the lives of participants. Scripture for liturgy which reflects the

liturgical season is regularly chosen by pupils who can articulate reasons for their choices. A wide range of high-quality music, led by a highly skilled music lead, is integrated into prayer and liturgy and this significantly enhances shared experiences. The school visits the parish church weekly for Mass and at regular times throughout the year. Very strong links with the local clergy enhance the home, school and church partnerships.

School leaders produce a meticulously planned school calendar which ensures that there is a varied range of opportunities for prayer and liturgy offered. This includes Eucharistic celebrations and other appropriate liturgies throughout the year. Experienced and passionate school leaders have a clear and comprehensive understanding of the different levels and skills of participation reflective of the age and capacity of pupils. The distinctive shape of how liturgies are woven together across the week at St John Vianney School reflects the centrality of the Word to the quality of provision. Leaders give high priority to providing inspirational professional development for staff. As a result, all staff understand the centrality of prayer to the life of the school and are able to model exceptional liturgies for pupils. Through deep understanding of ways of praying which are part of the Catholic tradition, leaders confidently articulate the Church's understanding of participation and ministry. School leaders, including governors, evaluate the effectiveness of the programme and ensure that the highest value is given to the school's prayer life. As a result, outcomes, provision and leadership of Collective Worship are outstanding.

Information about the school

Full name of school	St John Vianney Catholic Primary School, Hartlepool
School unique reference number (URN)	148817
Full postal address of the school	King Oswy Drive, Hartlepool, TS24 9PA
School phone number	01429 273273
Name of head teacher or principal	John Hardy
Chair of governing board	David Dring
School Website	www.sjvschool.co.uk
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	Bishop Hogarth Catholic Education Trust
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy
Age-range of pupils	0 years-11 years
Trustees	The Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Date of last denominational inspection	14 October 2014
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

The inspection team

Michael Ewing	Lead inspector
Daniel Fenwick	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