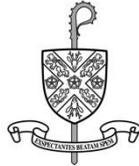


# DIOCESE OF MIDDLESBROUGH

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



**School:** Christ the King Roman Catholic Primary School,  
A Voluntary Catholic Academy

**Address:** Tedder Avenue  
Thornaby  
TS17 9PJ

**URN:** 142279

**Head of School:** Mrs Morita Metcalfe  
**Chair:** Mrs Julia Gerrard

**Date:** 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> May 2017

**Inspector:** Karen Siedle/ Mary Brown

**Date & Grade of Last Inspection:** Outstanding - February 2012  
**Overall Grade for this Inspection:** Outstanding

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 Religious Inspectors and Advisers.

## 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

Christ the King, Catholic Voluntary Academy is located in Thornaby, a mixed urban area on the River Tees and serves the Catholic community in the Parish of Christ the King, Thornaby. The school is a member of Our Lady of Light Catholic Academy Trust, established in September 2015. The Trust is governed by a Board of Directors. The Local Management Board (LMB) is a committee of the Board of Directors.

This is a crucial time for the school as the headteacher retires and the deputy headteacher moves on to new opportunities.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The following evidence was used during the inspection:

- The inspectors observed twelve lessons
- Meetings were held with the parish priest, chair of governors, Religious Education (RE) governor and chair of the Board of Directors
- A group of parents
- RE subject leader
- Scrutiny of work and discussions with the Year Six, Year Four and Year Two teachers
- The inspectors spoke to the Minni Vinnies, school council members, Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD) pupil representatives, Rights Respecting representatives and the head boy and head girl
- Observation of pupil led rosary group
- Observation of Key Stage Two Collective Worship
- Observation of whole school Collective Worship
- Meeting with the headteacher
- Scrutiny of a range of documentation including the school's plan for improvement documents, monitoring information, previous inspection reports, pupil progress and tracking data
- RE subject leader files including continuous professional development (CPD) records, variety of planning and many other sources of information
- Further discussions took place with pupils throughout the day
- The inspectors observed displays and sacred spaces.

### **Pupil Catchment:**

Number of pupils on roll: 277, plus 52 Nursery

Planned Admission Number of Pupils: 60

Percentage of pupils baptised RC: 62%

Percentage of pupils from other Christian Denominations: 24%

Percentage of pupils from other World Faiths: 2%

Percentage of pupils with no religious affiliation: 12%

Percentage of pupils with special needs: 10%

### **Teaching Staff:**

Full-time Teachers: 14

Part-time Teachers: 3

Percentage of Catholic Teachers: 72%

**Support Staff:**

Full-time Classroom Support Staff: 11  
Part-time Classroom Support Staff: 3  
Percentage of Catholic Classroom Support Staff: 60%  
Percentage of teachers with CCRS:

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

FS 10% Yr 1 10% Yr 2 10%  
Yr 3 10% Yr 4 10% Yr 5 10% Yr 6 10%

**Parishes served by the School: The Parish of Christ the King, Thornaby**

# 1 OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

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## MAIN FINDINGS

The Catholic Life of the school is outstanding, with its mission statement, “Christ be our guide and our light” at the centre and many opportunities for all to develop, individually and collectively, their understanding of the Faith and a positive sense of vocation.

Outcomes for pupils are outstanding. Pupils enjoy and understand the value of RE demonstrating passion and commitment in their learning. Behaviour in lessons is exemplary with pupils concentrating well and displaying very positive attitudes to their learning. Standards of engagement, progress and attainment for all pupils within years and across key stages are good in RE.

The provision for the Catholic Life is outstanding. The provision of RE is secure and focused. Teachers have high expectations; they plan interesting and imaginative lessons and use a good range of high quality resources. Prayer life is a strong feature of the school. It engages all pupils to participate, pray and reflect, which they do with reverence and enthusiasm. It supports and enriches the faith life of the school community.

Leadership and management of the school is good. Leaders have a clear sense of direction and purpose, the vision is shared by committed staff. Leaders carry out regular monitoring and analysis of teaching and learning, ensuring impact towards school improvement.

The Trust Board’s plans for succession should secure the capacity to improve and ensure strong governance, affording many benefits at whole-school, subject-specific and individual levels.

### What the school needs to do to improve:

- develop the pace within lessons in all tasks, in particularly during independent work to ensure pupils achieve the highest attainment
- organise pupil progress meetings for RE and develop ‘cross moderation’, with other schools in the Academy Trust.

Ensure all leaders, governors and managers:

- are involved in developing incisive and rigorous monitoring and assessment procedures, which ensure the highest standards and outcomes are achieved
- develop a bespoke RE team to ensure the highest quality leadership, with representatives from within the Multi Academy Trust.

## 2. PUPILS

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

Pupils and staff have a palpable sense of belonging to this vibrant Catholic school community. They flourish in an atmosphere where everyone is valued and is expected to achieve. The school's mission statement, "Christ be our light and our guide" is lived out daily in the school and is well known and understood by pupils as demonstrated in meetings with them.

Pupils are very proud of their school. They talked about the teachers caring and helping them, "they make learning as fun as fun can be." They eagerly take part in school, community and parish activities, for example through the CAFOD hunger lunch. They are able to contribute to the school's evaluation of its Catholic Life through the school council. The parish priest makes a significant contribution to the life of the school, giving pastoral support to staff, pupils and parents alike.

There are many excellent examples of charitable works, some on a regular basis, some on a more ad hoc basis initiated by pupils. Minnie Vinnies play an important part here, both within school and in the wider community, where they support a local food bank and Lenten lunch club for parish members. They demonstrate a mature understanding that they are serving others, as God wants them to do.

Minnie Vinnies are currently all girls. They are actively seeking to increase membership, to encourage boys to consider involvement, and to increase their capacity for even wider involvement in the planning and delivery of aspects of Catholic Life and Collective worship.

The behaviour of pupils is exemplary. Pupils are alert to the needs of others, they are ready to support each other and celebrate each other's qualities and successes. In every lesson observed pupils were encouraged to articulate their views and opinions; they listened to the views of others and responded well to each other's questions.

The school's Catholic character is evident in the learning environment where all involved in the school strive live out the mission and values. Pastoral care of pupils is of a very high standard; there is a commitment to the most vulnerable in both policy and practice. The school is equally attentive to the pastoral needs of the staff who benefit greatly from high quality relationships and the support of other colleagues.

Religious Education is strong in school: all staff in school benefit from effective CPD and there is a committed RE subject leader. Staff understand how to plan tasks that encourage the enjoyment of the subject. From often modest starting points within and across the key stages, the majority of pupils at the end of Key Stage Two achieve or exceed expectations. Most groups of pupils make at least good progress.

Pupils' keenness and commitment to their learning in RE is extremely evident in the classroom, during the tasks planned. For example, during a Year Four challenging task pupils were asked to investigate St Paul's journey, giving reasons why he became a believer in Christ. Through analysis of scripture, the pupils then discussed the key terminology, changed the facts into their own words and produced questions

to further their knowledge later in the lesson. When asked what they liked about RE they answered “we learn about how Jesus lived and we apply it in our daily lives”. They have a good knowledge of and enjoy looking at old and new testaments.

They tackle a variety of tasks with enthusiasm and are very willing to contribute to class discussions and work collaboratively in a team. For example, a Year Three task was to explore and reveal the gifts of the Holy Spirit using the idea of “pass the parcel.” The pupils had to link the terminology of the gifts to the picture symbols which were hidden in the parcel. The pupils were excited to open the parcel, whilst listening and singing to the Pentecost song. Through the use of creativity and pupil discussions, the pupils could explain the definitions of “right” judgement, reverence and wisdom. They could link them to their own life.

The Catholic character of the school shines through in times of worship and prayer. Collective Worship follows the liturgical year; liturgies and prayer life provide pupils with opportunities to develop spiritually and enhance their beliefs and values. For example, the inspection began with whole staff liturgy followed by Collective Worship led by the headteacher and pupils. The school environment displayed many features which contributed to Collective Worship, such as the scripture of the week, a large Lenten display of which every child contributed, school mission statement – “Christ be our light and our guide” and various examples of a range of pupil voice and involvement with United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) through Rights Respecting, Macmillan cancer support, and CAFOD.

The development of pupils’ faith is one of the school’s main strengths. By further developing pupil-led liturgy in the outdoor spaces, this already prayerful school community has blossomed further so that every pupil is supported to be ‘the best that they can be’ with a clear focus on spirituality in action. Pupils are engaged during Collective Worship; they act with reverence and interest, responding prayerfully and in song, witnessed during several class-based acts of Collective Worship.

Pupils play an increasing part in the leadership of worship: they use song to enhance their presentations to others, creating stimulating and thoughtful moments during whole school gatherings, such as the whole school worship – “We are not alone”. Pupils, even the youngest, join in confidently with the responses and prayers. In EYFS the pupils used outdoor learning to link and celebrate the mission they heard about in whole collective act of worship.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school</li> </ul>	<b>1</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education</li> </ul>	<b>2</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How well do pupils respond to and participate in the school’s Collective Worship</li> </ul>	<b>1</b>

### 3. PROVISION

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The previous Denominational Inspection (2012) identified making more use of drama, dance, art and music as vehicles for learning RE as areas for development. This has been addressed and implemented and the impact of this work was evident during the inspection.

Teaching is never less than good with a number of lessons observed having outstanding features, particularly in the areas of behaviour for learning and questioning. A Year Five lesson studied the conversion of Saul, using the artist Fra Angelico. The pupils had to determine how the artist portrayed the transformation and the effect it had on Saul. Pupils referred to scripture, to Christian belief and examined a range of sources to show their understanding. All pupils were engaged.

A range of teaching styles, good questioning skills and creative approaches in lessons ensure that pupils are consistently interested in their learning and most make good progress. An increased focus by teachers on the importance of creativity within RE has contributed significantly to a rise in attainment, but in order to reach the highest standard pupils need to quickly move onto their independent tasks. Not every pupil is challenged to achieve the highest attainment.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge, which inspires and promotes pupil confidence, this is as a result of effective CPD. The majority of support staff are effectively deployed and less able pupils are supported in their learning.

Pupil progress is tracked and is being used to produce targets for pupil attainment. Assessments are regular, teachers mark work regularly using driver words and the comments support teaching and learning. However they need to be more developed to be incisive and rigorous.

Parents reported how they value the 'Come and See' newsletters, as these give them ideas to support discussion with their children at home. They discussed how their children have benefitted from the brilliant provision of 'Godly Play' in school, enabling pupils to develop their understanding of the faith through stories and play.

A Year One lesson moved pupils' learning forward through strong classroom management and a well-planned, resourced and paced lesson. Pupils were challenged through good question and answering. The teacher and other staff members skilfully utilised different activities throughout the lesson that served to maintain pupil engagement, with some excellent written work. Both Year Two lessons used circle time to discuss the fruits of the Holy Spirit, this enhanced teaching and learning.

Across EYFS, activities were purposeful, effective teaching and learning both supported and moved learning on giving all pupils an excellent depth of knowledge of the Pentecost topic. When asked what he was working on and why, a young pupil told one of the inspectors, he was writing a prayer "because it was Pentecost and Jesus came back to the disciples and was speaking in different languages."

The RE curriculum meets the external requirements of the Bishops' Conference. All pupils displayed an excellent attitude to learning and are highly motivated. The children recognise and celebrate each other's achievements with pride. Pupils explore the beliefs and values of other faiths and religions, as a result pupils are encouraged to respect others, opportunity to develop this further is planned through One World weeks and World Faith weeks.

Collective Worship allows pupils and staff many opportunities to pray individually and in groups of varying sizes. Prayer is central to the life of the school and at the heart of every event and celebration. Praying together is a natural part of the school day for all staff and pupils, starting with whole staff liturgy before school begins. The lunchtime rosary club led by Key Stage Two pupils for Key Stage One pupils is an excellent example of the quality worship provided by the school.

Collective worship is skilfully planned for and resourced very effectively. The prayer focus areas which are used to support collective worship in the classroom are of a high quality, which is consistent in each classroom throughout the school.

The school has dedicated a lot of time into developing the outside areas for prayer and worship. The prayer area at the end of the Key Stage Two classroom and the outdoor environment of EYFS is evidence of this. Pupils enjoy prayer both in the classroom and in the surrounding areas and The Minnie Vinnies group talk confidently about their prayer partners in the parish. Pupils accurately and independently, described the stages of a Collective Worship, they discussed how they plan liturgies and how the sacred space are linked to them.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The quality of teaching and how purposeful learning is in Religious Education</li> </ul>	<b>1</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum promotes pupils' learning</li> </ul>	<b>1</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school</li> </ul>	<b>1</b>

## 4. LEADERS, MANAGERS AND GOVERNORS

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

Governors are supportive of the Catholic ethos of the school, the RE governor and chair of the LMB describe the annual Governor Review day, as a way of monitoring the Catholic Life and Collective Worship.

Excellent opportunities are provided for the staff and pupils to play an active part in the Catholic life and mission of the school. They live out the values of the Gospel in the everyday life of the school, especially in the way they treat each other. They make full use of the 'Come and See' religious education programme. A parent summed up by saying, *'the school is very supportive of families and the school is just another family unit'*. The quality of Collective Worship is a priority for the school. It is effectively monitored and evaluated by leaders. An up to date policy is in place.

The Trust Board of Directors have supported the LMB through a turbulent time with regard to the changing of several key governors, this has affected the challenge to the leadership and teaching team. The Trust Board of Directors is now in a position with the LMB to formalise the reporting procedure to ensure accountability for RE, Catholic Life and Collective Worship, to further plan improvements to outcomes for pupils.

The school ensures that all staff avail themselves of very good induction and in service training to enable them to further understand the Church's mission in education and play their unique part in it.

<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>