



DIOCESE OF
SHREWSBURY

DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION REPORT:

**THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL
AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

School: St Hugh's Catholic Primary School
Address: Park Road
Timperley
Cheshire
WA15 6TQ

Tel No: 0161 962 1852

URN: 106340

Headteacher: Mr K Platt

Chair of Governors: Mrs SJ Williams

Date of Inspection: 13 March 2019

Inspectors: Mrs C Morgan
Mrs R Moores
Mrs M Bulmer

Our School Prayer and Mission Statement

**This is our school,
let peace dwell here.
Let the rooms be
full of contentment.
Let love abide here;
love of one another,
love of life itself
and love of God.
Amen**

Our mission statement has been continuously under review since January 2019, when our current HT took up his post. Staff, pupils and parents know and support the new vision and mission of the school. The mission statement will be revisited, and a new mission statement formally adopted following this Denominational inspection; in consultation with staff, parents and pupils.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS: how effective is the school in providing Catholic Education.

1

This is an outstanding Catholic school

The above judgement on overall effectiveness is based on all the available evidence following the evaluation of:

CATHOLIC LIFE

1

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

1

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

1

Summary of key findings:

- St Hugh's is an outstanding Catholic school where members of the school and parish community ensure all receive a warm welcome.
- Since the new Headteacher's appointment in January 2019, his vision for the school and his commitment to improvement has seen significant progress in many aspects of school life. This is evident in the Outstanding Collective Worship and the drive for Outstanding Teaching and Learning as well as in reviewed and revised documentation.
- The Headteacher, the enthusiastic and inspiring Religious Education Coordinator and the Deputy Headteacher, supported and challenged by the Governors and Parish Priest, all have a deep commitment to provide outstanding Catholic education for all their pupils.
- The commitment from staff and Governors to the Catholic ethos of the school and to the mission of the church is unwavering and is evident in all that the school does.
- The school intends to reflect on this inspection report and to use it and the much-loved school prayer, as well as the views of all members of the school community, to develop and articulate a new Mission Statement.
- The school engages with its local partners and the new Headteacher is developing strong links with Diocesan partners.
- Parents are very supportive of all areas of the work of the school and appreciate the efforts already made by the new Headteacher to ensure their voice is heard.
- Given the significant progress made since January 2019, the school's capacity for future progress is excellent.
- The extremely strong relationship between home, school and parish is valued by parents, pupils and staff. Pupils talked about 'a sense of community' that 'everyone has a friend', and that 'school rules are based on our faith'.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding and this contributes to their excellent attitude to learning where they exhibit high levels of religious literacy, and in Collective Worship where they contribute deep thought and heartfelt response.
- Although no issues were identified during the last denominational inspection, the school has continued to self-evaluate all aspects of Catholic Life, Religious Education and Collective worship and has made 'strenuous efforts to strive for excellence'.

What the school needs to do to improve further

- Continue to develop partnerships with local clusters and with the Diocese
- Continue to develop links with Catholic social teaching in all curriculum areas
- Consider where and when RE and Collective Worship are placed in the timetable

Information about the Inspection

The Inspection of St Hugh's Catholic Primary School was carried out under the requirements of the Education Act 2005, and in accordance with the Shrewsbury Diocesan Framework and Schedule for Denominational Inspections approved by the Bishop of Shrewsbury. The inspection reviews and evaluates how effective the school is in providing Catholic education. This process begins with the school's own self-evaluation and the inspection schedule follows the criteria set by the National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers (NBRIA 2017).

The inspectors reviewed in detail the following aspects:

- 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 pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education
- How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship
- The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school
- How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education, Collective Worship and the Catholic Life of the school

The inspection was carried out by three inspectors over one day:

- Inspectors observed 13 lessons.
- A range of Collective Worship was observed including a Key Stage Two (KS2) Act of Worship led by the Headteacher, a Key Stage One (KS1) Act of Worship led by the Deputy Head and a KS2 Reconciliation Service led by the Religious Education lead. A lunchtime Singing Club and a Rosary Group were also observed.
- Discussions were held with the Headteacher, the Deputy Headteacher, the Religious Education (RE) Coordinator, the Chair and Vice Chair of Governors, a Foundation Governor and the RE Link Governor, as well as with groups of pupils.
A letter was received from the Parish Priest who was in hospital.
- A sample of pupils' RE workbooks was scrutinised from every class, along with the RE Coordinator's file and files for both Collective Worship and the Catholic Life of the school.
- A range of documents was made available and scrutinised including the Diocesan Self Evaluation Form (DSEF), the RE Action Plan, attainment and progress data, school policies and minutes of governing body meetings.
- Details of monitoring of lessons was scrutinised as well as pupil tracking data.
- Displays around the school and in classrooms were also noted.

Information about this school

St Hugh's is a larger than average Voluntary Aided Catholic primary, catering for 3-11 year olds. The school has an annual admission number of 90, and there are currently 693 children on roll, 98% of whom are baptised Catholics.

The school serves the parish of St Hugh's and St John's in Timperley.

There has been considerable change in staffing and governing body membership over the past few years. A new Headteacher took up post in January 2019. A new Chair of Governors and a new Vice Chair of Governors took office in September 2018.

Staffing includes a full time equivalent of 24 teachers and 35 support staff. 20 teachers and a number of the support staff are Catholic. 10 teachers hold the Catholic Certificate of Religious Studies (CCRS) and one teacher is studying for this qualification.

The school is organised into 24 classes, three within each of the seven single age cohorts, along with a nursery provision.

Full report – inspection judgments

CATHOLIC LIFE

The Catholic Life of the school is outstanding

1

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school	1
The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school	1
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision of the Catholic Life of the school	1

- Almost all pupils are appreciative of and value the Catholic Life of the school and the opportunities it offers them. They actively participate in a broad range of contexts in striving to live out the school's prayer and mission statement: 'This is our school, let peace dwell here. Let the rooms be full of contentment. Let love abide here; love of one another, love of life itself and love of God. Amen.'
- They show respect for themselves and their peers, and for the environment of the school. They treat visitors with respect. On the day of inspection, the behaviour of all pupils was exemplary, within lessons, during Collective Worship, around the school and during break-times.
- Pupils embrace being a member of St. Hugh's school, and many of them take leading roles in shaping the activities that demonstrate its Catholic ethos, in a considerate and caring manner. For example, Year 6 pupils organised Lenten stalls during break time where members of the school community were invited to take part in challenges and activities to raise funds for CAFOD. The Mini Vinnies' group works with the local St Vincent de Paul group (SVP) and they are proud to develop their mission within the school and the community.
- Pupils participate willingly and take leading roles in the liturgical celebrations in school and parish throughout the year, contributing to the very strong home-school-parish links evident in discussions with pupils and staff, and with governors who are also parishioners. They value and respect the Catholic tradition of the school.
- Pupils show reverence and respond well to times of prayer and meditation. They demonstrate a clear understanding of right and wrong, and the concept of forgiveness.
- Pupils feel supported within their school community and respond well to the excellent pastoral support provided through a wide range of activities. The curriculum is designed to offer many opportunities for moral and spiritual development of pupils, through Catholic social teaching within the RE curriculum, in their Personal, Social and Health Education curriculum and the 'Journey in Love' scheme for Relationship and Sex Education (RSE). British Values are also part of teachers' lesson planning. Pupils feel safe and valued.
- The school's mission statement is the school prayer which is known by all and is used daily in a range of celebrations and times of prayer. Following the appointment of a new Headteacher in January 2019, it is planned to revisit the mission statement and the whole school community will be involved in reviewing, developing and articulating the mission of the school.

- Relationships throughout the school are excellent. Staff and pupils respect each other and in turn, pupils show understanding and praise for others. There is a strong emphasis on inclusion and all groups of pupils are well supported through the work of teachers and support staff.
- Almost all staff feel that the schools supports them well and that their pastoral needs are met. They particularly welcome the input of the RE Coordinator and the opportunities afforded through in-house and external professional development opportunities.
- The recent changes in the leadership of the school and in the membership of the governing body have provided new impetus to the high priority given to promoting and developing the Catholic Life of the school. The mission of the Church is prominent in the strategic thinking and vision of the deeply committed leaders, governors and Parish Priest, and this is evident in development planning and in the allocation of resources. For example, with the support of the Parish Priest the RE coordinator works one day a week on 'Maintenance to Mission', supporting and developing the Catholic life of the school and parish.
- The school is committed to working with the local cluster of Catholic schools and is eager to develop this further, leading to sharing of expertise and resources
- Self-evaluation of the Catholic Life of the school has been effective in identifying strengths and areas for development, articulated by leaders and governors. Pupil voice is strong and plays a vital part in driving the development of the School's Mission.
- Staff and governors have taken advantage of the professional development opportunities offered through the Diocese and within the school and this has helped to drive forward their understanding of mission and their roles within the school.
- Parents recognise and support the school's strong Catholic ethos and the positive impact this has on their children. They appreciate the very strong links between home-school-parish and the prominent role school leaders and the Parish Priest play in promoting this. Parents welcome the recent meetings held by the new Headteacher and feel included and valued.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Religious Education is outstanding

1

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education	2
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education	1
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education	1

- Pupils enter the school in the Early Years Foundation Stage with a wide variation of knowledge of the Catholic faith and religious figures. Most pupils make good progress and some make outstanding progress from their starting points, so that by the end of KS2 attainment is usually well above average and this is maintained over time.
- Attainment in 2018 was below this, due in part to the high level of SEND within the cohort. The RE Coordinator, leadership team and governors have addressed this through training and support and standards this year are on track to rise.
- Almost all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, make comparable progress with each other.
- Good and outstanding teaching means almost all pupils develop a religious literacy appropriate to their age and capacity to learn. They are fully engaged in lessons and use their knowledge, understanding and skills very effectively to discuss ethical and theological matters. They reflect spiritually and show great commitment to their faith through their actions in their daily lives.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitude to learning is outstanding. Almost all work collaboratively and respond enthusiastically to the wide variety of creative learning tasks they undertake in their RE lessons. They stay on task for extended periods and enjoy their lessons.
- Most pupils have a good understanding of how well they are doing; using the 'I can' statements for reference and responding well when teachers provide feedback on their work.
- The quality of pupils' current written work is at least good, and some is outstanding.
- Through the support of the RE Coordinator and targeted CPD, teachers have a high level of confidence in their teaching of RE. As a result of this almost all pupils enjoy their learning in RE lessons and make rapid and sustained progress.
- The quality of teaching observed was at least good and some was outstanding. Teachers consistently plan high-quality lessons linked to pupils' current assessment and their own knowledge of individual pupils, employing a wide range of teaching strategies, which leads to pupils learning extremely well.
- In the RE lessons observed, support staff were very well deployed. They engage with particular groups or individual pupils, questioning and prompting skilfully and sensitively. Their support enables pupils to engage with the lesson and make good progress.
- The majority of teachers' marking was detailed, focused on learning objectives and challenged pupils to make improvements or to extend themselves. Pupils showed high levels of engagement in their learning and achievement. In some cases, target setting and marking which identifies next steps would enable more pupils to understand more clearly what they need to do to improve.

- Teachers plan together in year groups but are confident to explore creative ways to engage pupils in their learning. For example, a class working on 'sin' as part of the topic of Forgiveness and Reconciliation explored on-line bullying and, through differentiated activities, thought about how they could help and support themselves and others in dealing with this. Another class focused on repentance as exemplified in the parable of 'The Lost Son' and explored ways in which the message Jesus gave permeates their lives as Christians today.
- In other lessons, younger pupils were encouraged to discuss their feelings and to engage in a variety of activities that enabled them to explore their understanding of being 'sorry'. Through the use of art detailing the story of 'The Last Supper', pupils were given opportunities to make observations and pose questions, to understand the importance of the event and the link to Holy Mass.
- Teachers' subject knowledge was excellent. Pupils were set challenging work and lessons were well paced. For example, during lessons on the importance of Holy Week and thinking about why Christians say 'sorry', activities were varied and challenging and excellent use was made of technology to support their learning.
- Assessment in RE is carried out according to diocesan guidelines and opportunities for assessment are identified in teachers' planning. Data is collected regularly and analysed in depth to identify trends of performance and areas for improvement. This is shared with leaders and governors and informs the RE Action Plan, which is a priority in School Development planning. Moderation is carried out within the local cluster of schools.
- The school's RE scheme, 'The Way, the Truth and the Life' (WTL), is the main resource used, as recommended by the Diocese. Throughout the school, high quality displays reflect the current topics. In each classroom and in the halls and corridors, there are interactive areas for prayer and reflection on a seasonal theme such as Lent.
- The RE curriculum meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference, with 10% or more of the timetable dedicated to the subject across all year groups. However, the school should explore other timetable options as RE lessons are often blocked together in an afternoon session. Shorter periods spread across the taught week would allow for more creative and focused periods for all classes.
- The school leadership and governing body have ensured that Religious Education is well resourced, including high priority being given to professional development opportunities for staff, through in-house training and external courses.
- The RE Coordinator is a knowledgeable, committed and inspirational leader, with a passion for the subject. Through careful monitoring and evaluation she has identified the strengths of the RE provision and areas in which it might improve, and is leading staff with energy and enthusiasm. She has undertaken monitoring with the Headteacher who is leading the drive for Outstanding RE. They, and link governors, have shown the high priority they are giving to improving standards and high quality RE teaching across the school. Governors have undertaken learning walks and feel they now have an excellent understanding of what is needed to develop RE even further.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Collective Worship is outstanding

1

How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship	1
The quality of provision for Collective Worship	1
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship	1

- The outstanding Acts of Collective Worship observed by the inspectors engaged pupils' interest in a variety of ways. Pupils' responses were thoughtful and relevant to how they and others live their faith in their daily lives. Communal prayers were said reverently and responses were confident, thoughtful and thought-provoking. In a guided meditation during a KS2 Lenten Reconciliation Service, all pupils showed reverence and maintained a prayerful silence when placing their 'sorry stones'.
- Pupils confidently lead worship in their classrooms; they are supported and encouraged to plan creative and resourceful liturgies, for example through use of the 'Wednesday Word'. As pupils progress through the school, they become more confident in planning and leading class collective worship and that for whole key stages. According to their age, they understand the structure of liturgy and about relevant themes across the liturgical year, including feasts and celebrations. By the end of KS2, pupils have a firm understanding of the church's seasons and how different forms of liturgy are used for different occasions.
- During the inspection, there was an opportunity to observe a voluntary lunchtime Rosary group, which was led by a parishioner. The small group of pupils were obviously used to participating in quiet prayer and listening to a Gospel reading and it provided 'a wonderful prayerful opportunity' that led to 'a lovely, peaceful experience'.
- A lunchtime Singing Club was also observed where well-chosen hymns inspired pupils to sing joyfully. The leader used the opportunity to develop the pupils' understanding of liturgy and the occasions when the hymn chosen might be used. This club followed self-evaluation of the liturgical life of the school when contemporary music was identified as a way of encouraging a heart-felt response from the pupils.
- Prayer is central to the daily life of the school and pupils experience many forms of prayer, during the school day and during liturgies. The school prayer is well known by almost all pupils. They are able to grow spiritually and morally from their experience of worship throughout their time at this school. Pupils are highly skilled at writing their own prayers both in relation to their RE lessons and for Collective Worship.
- Staff are enthusiastic about the way in which prayer and reflection has been embedded into the beginning of every staff meeting and praise the work of the RE Coordinator in leading these times. The majority of staff feel very well supported in leading or facilitating times of Collective Worship. The RE coordinator models Collective Worship and provides guidance to staff in planning Acts of Worship.
- The RE coordinator, supported by the Parish Priest and Headteacher, ensures that Collective Worship is always carefully planned with a clear message and is relevant to the occasion. This is appreciated by pupils, parents and staff who participate joyfully in the school's liturgies.

- Monitoring of Collective Worship is carried out by the RE Coordinator, the Headteacher and the Deputy Head. The Parish Priest is present at many of the celebrations and liturgies, as well as some governors, and he shares his ideas of how Collective Worship could be developed. During monitoring, points for future development are noted and staff and pupils are encouraged to work creatively to provide meaningful and memorable worship.
- Leaders have ensured that the excellent resources used for Collective Worship are used to inspire and promote collective and individual prayer and reflection. Pupils are highly skilled at choosing appropriate resources to enhance liturgical experiences.
- Pupils confidently take the lead in parish family Masses and there is an excellent relationship between the school, families and the parish. The Parish Priest is a frequent visitor to the school; he is dedicated to the mission of the Church and this is much appreciated by the families and the school. He, along with leaders and governors, is instrumental in ensuring that Collective Worship as well as the RE curriculum plays a vibrant part of the Catholic Life of the school.
- Links between the school, home and parish are outstanding.
- The effect of being immersed in a faithful, praying community is obvious in the deep sense of respect the pupils afford to those who are not of the Catholic faith. Through prayer and liturgy all pupils, irrespective of faith or ability, develop morally and spiritually during their time at St Hugh's