



**DIOCESE OF LANCASTER EDUCATION SERVICE**

**DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION  
REPORT (Section 48)**

**Dean Gibson Catholic Primary  
School**

**Kendal**

**DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION  
REPORT (Section 48)**

**on**

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

**School:** Dean Gibson Catholic Primary School

**Address:** Hawesmead Avenue,  
Kendal,  
Cumbria,  
LA9 5HB

**Email Address:** STansey@deangibson.cumbria.sch.uk

**School URN:** 148697

**Headteacher:** Mrs Sarah Tansey

**Chair of Governors:** Mrs Katy Whenray De Palma

**Lead Inspector:** Dr Elaine Allen

**Team Inspector:** Mrs Annalisa Howarth

**Date of Inspection:** 4<sup>th</sup> July 2022

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Dean Gibson is a single form entry primary school with 166 pupils. It is situated in Kendal and serves the Parishes of Holy Trinity and St George, and the Church of Christ the King Milnthorpe.

The large majority of pupils at Dean Gibson are of White British heritage. 29.6% of pupils are baptised Catholics with 7% from other Christian denominations. A small minority are from other faith backgrounds and 62.7% have no religious affiliation. The percentage of children who come from families whose socio-economic circumstances are disadvantaged, is below national at 17%. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is just lower than the national average at 10%.

Since the last inspection, the governors of the school collaborated with those at St Cuthbert's, Windermere and joined in September 2018, with Mrs Sarah Tansey becoming the Executive Headteacher of both schools. This was originally a three-year arrangement but was extended for another year when both schools joined the Mater Christi Multi Academy Trust. A head of school was appointed in each setting for the duration of the collaboration, which is due to come to an end in August 2022.

PUPILS	N	YR	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	TOTAL
Number on roll	25	17	20	26	30	23	22	28	166
Catholics on roll	14	4	8	4	8	8	8	9	49
Other Christian denomination	14	4	3	1	2	1	0	1	12
Other faith background	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
No religious affiliation	7	9	9	21	19	14	14	18	104
No of learners from ethnic groups	5	1	1	0	0	0	1	3	6
Total on SEN Register	2	1	0	3	4	1	4	2	15
Total with Statements of SEN	0	0	0	2	3	0	1	0	6
Total Pupil Premium	0	3	4	2	6	4	6	3	28

Exclusions in last academic year	Permanent	0	Fixed term	2
Index of multiple deprivation	E			

PARISHES SERVED BY THE SCHOOL	
Name of Parish	No of Pupils
Holy Trinity and St George, Kendal	49
Church of Christ the King, Milnthorpe	0

<b>TEACHING TIME FOR RE</b>	<b>YR</b>	<b>Y1</b>	<b>Y2</b>	<b>Y3</b>	<b>Y4</b>	<b>Y5</b>	<b>Y6</b>	<b>Total</b>
Total teaching time (Hours)	2h	2h	2h	2h 30	2h 30	2h 30	2h 30	16
% of teaching time	10%	10%	10%	10%	11%	11%	11%	10%av

<b>TEACHING TIME FOR ENGLISH</b>	<b>YR</b>	<b>Y1</b>	<b>Y2</b>	<b>Y3</b>	<b>Y4</b>	<b>Y5</b>	<b>Y6</b>	<b>Total</b>
Total teaching time (Hours)	5	5	5	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	45
% of teaching time	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%av

<b>TEACHING TIME FOR MATHS</b>	<b>YR</b>	<b>Y1</b>	<b>Y2</b>	<b>Y3</b>	<b>Y4</b>	<b>Y5</b>	<b>Y6</b>	<b>Total</b>
Total teaching time (Hours)	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	35
% of teaching time	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%av

<b>STAFFING</b>	
Full-time teachers	8
Part-time teachers	2
Total full-time equivalent (FTE)	0.9
Classroom Support assistants	7
Number of 1:1 support Assistants	4
Percentage of Catholic teachers FTE	75%
Number of teachers teaching RE	9
Number of teachers with CCRS or equivalent	4
Number of teachers currently undertaking CCRS	1
Chaplaincy staffing	0

<b>ORGANISATION</b>	
Published admission number	210
Number of classes	7
Average class size KS1	21
Average class size KS	26

<b>EXPENDITURE (£)</b>	<b>Last financial year 2020 - 21</b>	<b>Current financial year 2021- 22</b>	<b>Next financial year 2022 - 23</b>
Total expenditure on teaching and learning resources	£8000	£8,200	£8,577
RE Curriculum allowance from above	£500	£1,500	£700
English Curriculum allowance from above	£800	£2,000	£1,500
Total CPD budget	£2600	£2600	£2,720
RE allocation for CPD	£500	£800	£1,000

### **How the school has developed since the last inspection**

At the last inspection, Catholic life was judged outstanding and Religious Education (RE) was judged as good, with overall effectiveness judged as good. The Headteacher is still leading the school, although is presently Executive Headteacher over another school until August 2022.

The school's leadership team have acted upon the recommendations from the previous inspection. The leadership team, governors and staff are unified in their efforts. The school is successfully engaging parents in all aspects of school life and there are strong links with the parish.

Inspection has shown that the school's self-evaluation on Catholic life is accurate. They have accurately identified areas of improvement for curriculum RE and are already making great strides towards addressing these. The drive from the school's leadership and the Governing Body is a strength of the school. The dedication and skills-set of the governors together with the commitment of the leadership team and all staff, demonstrate the school's capacity to facilitate continuous improvement.

## INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

### OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

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### CATHOLIC LIFE

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### RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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## KEY FINDINGS

Dean Gibson is an outstanding school with a strong family ethos. It is a happy school where pupils clearly enjoy attending the school and have positive attitudes to learning, deepening their knowledge of their faith throughout their time in school. The school lives out its Mission, written by the children, 'Guided by the Holy Spirit, we listen, learn and care', daily. Governors speak with great pride about their school that they visit regularly and know well. They play a significant part in leading the direction of the school in the community and are regular attenders of school events. The Parish Priest is a regular visitor to school and is also the RE Link governor. The school goes above and beyond in supporting its pupils and families, especially the vulnerable. Recommendations since the last inspection have either been actioned or are in the process of being embedded. Leadership have ensured that the Catholic life of the school has remained outstanding and that the RE provision is good and continuing to improve.

Parents are happy sending their children to this smaller than average community school and welcome opportunities to participate in school life, such as liturgies and Masses. Covid has made this more difficult over the last two years but the school is opening up once again to parents and there are plans in place to increase this involvement further. The majority of parents spoke highly of the school and were happy with the one parent saying, 'my daughter tells me what they have been learning in RE and we often chat about it'.

The quality of provision for the Catholic life of the school is outstanding. The commitment from governors, staff and parish clergy to support pupils and families in their prayer life and growth in faith is a priority. Staff and governors set very good examples, are proud of their school and work hard together. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is outstanding and has a positive impact on everyday life at Dean Gibson. This can be seen through pupils' responses to each other and to the notion of the common good and justice in the world we live in. Gospel values permeate through school life and pupils are helped to grow in faith.

The prayer and liturgy opportunities offered are outstanding; pupils act with reverence and join in prayers confidently. Pupils focus on relating Gospel stories

to their lives today and are very aware of the need to look after our world which is a 'gift from God'.

The quality of RE is good. Teaching is consistently good or better and pupils are provided with opportunities to deepen their faith, to understand Catholic traditions and practices and progress well in their learning. Teachers have very good subject knowledge in RE and children enjoy their learning. Teachers now need to develop further creative approaches to teaching and learning, so that children achieve even more in their RE lessons. Leaders and managers have developed their monitoring systems and set priorities for the development of the subject. As a result, progress is good or better for all groups of learners regardless of their starting points. Staff are well supported by the leadership team and the Parish Priest.

### **WHAT THE SCHOOL NEEDS TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER**

The school needs to continue to develop provision in line with the Religious Education Curriculum Directory and Diocesan guidelines by:

- Developing creative approaches to teaching and learning, utilising a wider range of resources, leading to greater depth and knowledge
- Developing clear differentiation to meet the needs of individuals so that barriers in literacy skills do not stand in their way of attainment and progress.
- Developing further challenge using clear targets to underpin learning objectives linked to the standards of attainment.
- Continuing to embed the planned RSE into the curriculum

## PART A: CATHOLIC LIFE

### 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
- How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school
- The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school

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Inspection confirms the judgement made by the school that pupils make an outstanding contribution to the Catholic life of the school and benefit from it.

All pupils are assisted and supported in their prayer life and enjoy school Masses and liturgies. Half-termly Masses and Feast Day Masses are timetabled for both in school and at the Parish Church and the Parish Priest is a welcome and regular visitor in school. Pupils from an early age take an active role in preparing and linking to real life their prayer and liturgies, as observed in the Foundation Stage, where children were invited to prepare the prayer space by choosing the artefacts and placing on the green liturgical cloth and in Year 1, where pupils were shown images of St Peter holding keys, and 'sent forth' with their own 'keys' to focus them on unlocking love, kindness, sharing, etc. in their lives. Pupils were confident in joining in with the prayers and hymns shared. In the Year 6 pupil-led liturgy on the theme of 'The Day of Many Colours', a day dedicated to celebrating belonging to God's family, pupils were able to confidently choose appropriate scripture readings, prayers and music, and lead their peers in reverent prayer and liturgy.

Pupils all speak highly of their school and spoke with pride about their newly designated outdoor prayer space, which they have designed and where they can now go for quiet prayer. The pupils' knowledge and understanding of the Catholic life of the school is enhanced by sharing and contributing to many aspects of school life. From the Foundation Stage onwards pupils are beginning to exhibit their ability to share their own faith through whole class prayer and liturgy led by both adults and pupils. They are aware that their Catholic faith is different from other faiths, and they learn this by sharing similarities and differences with their own. This knowledge is enhanced by visits from parents to share their faith and more recently a whole week dedicated to the religion of Islam.

The school has many active groups including Mini Vinnies, Laudato Si' and the school council. These groups have been instrumental in raising funds for local and global charities including CAFOD and the local Kings' food bank. The Year 5 children in the Laudato Si' group, spoke with passion about 'our world' agreeing that 'the world is a gift from God, and we need to treat it like we would treat



each other and ourselves'. This aids pupils' understanding of the spreading of God's word to the global family and demonstrates their understanding of Scripture.

Inspection confirms the judgement made by the school that how well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life of the school is outstanding.

Governors, leaders, parish clergy, teachers and support staff at Dean Gibson are all committed to supporting the Catholic ethos of the school and its mission, written by the children, 'Guided by the Holy Spirit, we listen, learn and care'. There is a real commitment to support pupils in their prayer life and to grow in faith has remained a priority during the recent times of challenge with Covid. Staff set good examples, support each other, are proud of their school and work well together. When asked about the school, they all agreed 'we are one big family, it feels like home'. They value the support and opportunities that they have to deepen their own religious knowledge and deepen their own spirituality. The Parish Priest, who is also the school's RE link governor, actively fulfils his role, both spiritually and pastorally. Many of the Governors are regular visitors too and take part in the prayer and liturgy sessions in school. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is outstanding and has an impact on everyday life at Dean Gibson. This can be seen through pupils' behaviour, their responses to each other and to their understanding of the notion of the Common Good.

The staff are authentic witnesses to the Catholic Faith and are given ample formation opportunities to fulfil their role. Continued Professional Development (CPD) is well planned and effective and the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies (CCRS) is undertaken. There is a wholehearted expression of the relationship between faith and action. The prayer and liturgy of the Catholic Church are central to the life of the school, of high quality and are a key part of every school celebration. The liturgical seasons and feasts are focal points in the school's life.

The governors, leaders and managers are fully committed to partnerships with the diocesan family of parishes and schools. The school's link to St Cuthbert's over the last four years has strengthened even further its partnership working. They endeavour to reach out to parents and carers in a variety of ways, for example sending home the Wednesday Word and sharing links for the live-streaming of the Sunday mass. This has enabled the Catholic life of the school to have high priority, especially during remote learning in the pandemic. School masses have now resumed and the children participated in a whole school Laudato Si' service recently.

The quality of provision for the Catholic life of the school is outstanding.

Dean Gibson is an inclusive community with a strong Catholic ethos, where everyone is respected and appreciated and pupils and staff flourish. The parish clergy, governors, school leaders, teachers and support staff, are fully committed

to fulfilling their role in ensuring that provision remains outstanding for the Catholic life of the school. They work hard to develop and enhance the school for the benefit of everyone in it. The Executive Headteacher and head of school provide clarity of direction for the Catholic life of the school and the spiritual and moral development of pupils. Prayer and liturgy are central to the life of the school as are the high standards of behaviour that reflect the Gospel values, both of which were clearly evidenced in the whole school service on the weekly Gospel, which took place on the day of the inspection, and the other teacher-led and child-led prayer and liturgies observed during the day.

The school is a prayerful community that provides a stimulating environment to reflect the school's mission and Catholic character. Staff have accessed training offered by the diocese and RE lead teachers, so that staff subject knowledge and confidence in facilitating prayer and liturgy has been strengthened.

## PART B: RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

### THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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

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Inspection judged that the extent to which pupils enjoy and achieve in RE is good.

The majority of pupils at Dean Gibson enjoy RE, are religiously literate and are engaged in their learning. They are able to remain on task when entering into discussion and working independently. Pupils show a good knowledge and understanding of the Catholic Faith. Children understand that Christ is at the Centre of all school life and are aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life. For example, children spoke proudly of the charity work they had undertaken for the benefit of others because it is Jesus' way. Focus is now needed in giving opportunities for more creative approaches to learning using a variety of teaching and learning styles and methods so that there is deeper learning, leading to deeper knowledge and greater depth of understanding.

Pupils make good progress in RE from a low baseline when they join Dean Gibson in Foundation Stage. They develop and apply a range of skills throughout Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 including independence and imagination. Pupils in Upper Key Stage 2 were able to reflect on their own faiths and recognised similarities and differences with other world faiths, whilst recognising that everybody's faith is important. Pupils participated in lessons observed and were confident to share their opinions, views and thoughts with their class giving some reasonings behind them. Pupils were able to draw on prior and cross curricular knowledge to inform opinions and actions. For example, Upper Key Stage 2 pupils completing a lesson on equal distribution of wealth across the world, looking at the global world and how we can help and support using the principles of Christ's teachings.

Tracking demonstrates that pupils' attainment is good. The subject leader has introduced a visual form of tracking, whereby progress is clearly identified, and standards recorded. Further development is now needed in this area to identify individual groups and cohorts, indicating particular strengths and areas to work on going forward.

Pupil attainment and progress is good and in line with standards in other core subjects. Reference is made to standards of attainment in some books ensuring coverage. Pupils in Key Stage 2 recognise the standards of attainment and know it is what they will complete over a 2-year cycle. Work now needs to focus on developing pupils' greater depth of knowledge through high order questioning and through being given the opportunity of sharing their knowledge through open ended tasks.

Progress is reported to parents in regular reports alongside other core curriculum subjects. Communication with parents is good. The school sends home regular newsletters and the school website has dedicated areas for RE and the Catholic life of the school sharing examples of provision through photographs and also a detailed long term plan overview of RE and RSE for the whole school.

Inspection found that leadership and management in RE is outstanding. The subject leader has an accurate view of the quality of teaching and learning, monitoring and evaluation in Dean Gibson. She is clear about the improvements needed and is supported by her head of school, Executive Headteacher and governors.

Governors and school leaders are committed to the school's Catholic mission and to its place in RE. The RE Link Governor and subject leader conduct a range of monitoring activities relating to provision and outcomes. Their analysis provides a basis for identification of the school's strengths and areas for development, feeding into the whole school development plan. This now needs to be further embedded for its effectiveness to be realised fully. Less experienced staff are supported and encouraged by their peers. CPD is planned, supported and followed including the completion of the CCRS.

Teaching in RE is good and inspection found provision to be of a good standard. Good quality teaching and learning was observed on the day of inspection. Support staff are deployed to assist pupils with additional needs. In lessons observed, teachers showed good subject knowledge, built on prior learning and were able to share this knowledge with pupils, demonstrating a pride in their faith.

Whilst evident in some books, next steps marking and deeper questioning needs to continue to be embedded across the school together with opportunities for creativity so that achievement is enhanced and not stifled by closed activities.

The quality of displays around the school is good and reflects the pupils' learning.

Curriculum RE is at the forefront of teaching with pupils recognising the teachings of Christ in their everyday lives and how they shape their school. Pupils speak with pride about their school community. For example, pupils spoken to said, 'Dean Gibson is a school where we do not judge others, everyone is supportive, we help one another, we care about others, we are one big family together'. Comments also echoed by governors.

The school follows 'The Way, The Truth and The Life' scheme of work and supplements this with aspects of Caritas in Action. Life to the Full is followed for RSE, which is taught and planned for separately to Curriculum RE.

The RE curriculum meets all the requirements of the Bishops' Conference and is informed by the Curriculum Directory and diocesan requirements. Reference is made to standards of attainment in marking to ensure full coverage.

## SUMMARY OF INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<b>Overall Effectiveness</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Capacity for sustained improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Catholic Life</b>	<b>1</b>
<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 leaders and managers promote and ensure provision for the Catholic Life of the school through monitoring and evaluation.</li> </ul>	<b>1</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school.</li> </ul>	<b>1</b>
<b>Religious Education</b>	<b>2</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 leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.</li> </ul>	<b>1</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The quality of provision in Religious Education.</li> </ul>	<b>2</b>

	<b>Pupil Outcomes</b>	<b>Leadership &amp; Management</b>	<b>Provision</b>	<b>Overall</b>
<b>Catholic Life</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Religious Education</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>