

DIOCESE OF PORTSMOUTH VALIDATION REPORT



St Edward's Catholic First School, Windsor

Parsonage Lane, Windsor, Berkshire, SL4 5EN

URN 110031

Date of previous validation May 09

Date of this validation date 20th June and 7th July 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous validation:	Outstanding
	This validation:	Good with outstanding features

The school community:	Outstanding	Attainment and progress in RE:	Good
The wider community:	Outstanding	Quality of teaching in RE:	Good
Spiritual development:	Outstanding	Leadership and management of RE:	Good
Moral development:	Outstanding	Leadership and management:	Outstanding

This is a good school.

- St Edward's Catholic First School is a school where the mission statement underpins all aspects of the life of the school and is evident in the quality of the relationships at all levels.
- The leadership of the headteacher has ensured that the Catholic nature of the school is enhanced by the welcoming, inclusive, calm and purposeful environment, which is acknowledged by parents and visitors to the school.
- The links established between the school, the parish, the local Catholic cluster of schools and St Edward's Middle School are strong and mutually beneficial.
- A very large majority of parents are positive about all aspects of school life and are fully supportive of the school.
- The active involvement and strong support of the parish priest are recognised and valued by all members of the community.
- It is clear that religious education (RE) is given a high status within the school.
- The quality of teaching and standards of achievement in RE are good.
- Spiritual and moral development are outstanding.
- Staff and children act as witnesses to their faith, through their respect for one another and their support for local, national and international charities.
- The school's physical environment affords the opportunity for a variety of purposeful worship, prayer and reflection.
- The headteacher, governors and senior leadership team have ensured that the school is well-placed to welcome the new head in September.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

In order to continue to move forward, the school should consider the following:

- Provide professional development opportunities for staff to moderate and level work across and beyond the school. Validators recommend seeking support for this from the diocesan primary advisors.
- In order for children to achieve at the highest levels in RE, continue the work started and embed further the use of assessment, based on the national levels of attainment.
- Ensure that teaching includes effective differentiation so that all groups of children can achieve their potential.
- Continue the work started in developing more reflective acts of worship.

Full Report

The school as a Catholic community

The school community:	Outstanding
The wider community:	Outstanding

- The school's mission statement and Christian ethos permeate all aspects of school life. This is reflected in the secure and positive relationships evident at St Edward's.
- The Catholic nature of the school is enhanced by the welcoming, inclusive, calm and purposeful environment, which is acknowledged by parents and visitors to the school.
- The school has very good induction procedures for staff and pupils. Children leaving St Edward's First School are well supported in their transition to middle school, whilst those in year R are welcomed with a buddy system, which ensures friendship and security.
- A variety of forms of communication with parents is used to very good effect, including the use of newsletters, diaries and the website, ensuring that parents are well-informed.
- The school has good and mutually supportive links with the parish; the parish priest is very supportive of the school, visiting frequently. The school is involved in some parish events and the parish is involved in some school events.
- There is growing involvement with the community, through breakfast and after-school clubs and liaison and consultation regarding building work. In addition there is outreach singing from Project-St. George's Choir School, sports events and curriculum development, which ensure involvement with other Windsor schools.
- The links with the local Catholic cluster of schools are strong and mutually supportive. The close liaison with St Edward's Royal Free Ecumenical Middle School not only offers the opportunity to share resources and expertise, but also ensures smooth transition for the children in year 4.
- The school supports a number of local, national and international charities. The children have been involved in fund-raising for ADCCT, Bamenda, Samaritan Purse, Children In Need and CAFOD, with examples of school work on the CAFOD website.

Curriculum religious education

Attainment and progress:	Good
Quality of teaching:	Good
Leadership and management of RE:	Good

- The children's work seen by validators indicates that standards in RE are above average. By embedding further higher order questioning and opportunities for more challenging tasks, pupils' depth of understanding will develop.
- The secure, very good relationships in the classrooms impact positively on children's learning.
- Senior leaders and governors take a keen interest in the subject and are aware of its strengths and areas for development.
- Curriculum RE is given prominence in the school.
- Recent developments in assessment are helping to inform more focussed teaching, learning and planning.
- Teaching observed on the day was generally good. In the best examples children showed very good learning behaviours, which contributed significantly to effective learning.

- Children can make connections with prior learning as a result of good teaching.
- The great majority of teaching is securing good achievement.
- The quantity and range of evidence to support learning in RE are good. The school needs to focus on the provision of appropriately differentiated tasks as they journey from 'good' to 'outstanding'

Spiritual and moral development

Spiritual development:

Outstanding

Moral development:

Outstanding

- Pupils are clear that their school is happy and supportive, with children recognising that the mission statement provides guidance as to how they should live their lives.
- Good quality worship follows the liturgical year. It is topical and appropriate to the age of the children. Work started in encouraging greater reflection in worship is beginning to have an impact, particularly in developing depth of response.
- Pupils relate worship to their everyday lives and are sensitive to the needs of others, for example, children were keen to pray for a child who had broken their arm.
- The school environment actively encourages children to pray, through a range of focal points and high quality artefacts. The new hall is central to this.
- The children talked positively about the parish priest's involvement in leading liturgies and Masses. The validators agree with the action to introduce a Service of Reconciliation during Advent, when children will have the opportunity to go to confession.
- The children value the opportunity to celebrate achievement, including the recognition of good manners.
- The pupils' outstanding moral development is supported actively through the RE and PSHE curricula and through opportunities for worship.
- The staff provide excellent pastoral care, guidance and support for pupils and families.

Leadership and management:

Outstanding

- The headteacher continues to inspire and lead staff and governors in maintaining and developing further all aspects of school life.
- All those involved in leadership, including governors, share a common Christian vision, which drives the purpose and mission of the school.
- Staff, pupils, parents, parishioners and governors are proud of the school and are fully committed to the furtherance of the Catholic faith.
- The school has addressed the key issues arising from the last validation.
- The diocesan self-review process is given a high priority and is effective in securing high standards and on-going improvement.
- The governors are key partners in ensuring the aims and mission of the school are fulfilled.
- The current leadership team has the skills and capacity to support the new headteacher as she takes up her new post in September 2014.

School details

Name of school	St Edward's Catholic First School
Age range of pupils:	4 – 9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number of pupils on roll:	237
Chair of Governors:	Mrs Katharine Horler
Headteacher:	Mrs Patricia Chudziak

St Edward's Catholic First School is a popular and over-subscribed school in Windsor. The school serves the parish of St Edward and St Mark. The vast majority of its pupils are Catholic. Approximately 67% of pupils are of White British heritage with 20% from White Other backgrounds. The remainder of pupils are from a range of other ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is broadly average at 20%. A few are at the early stages of learning English. Approximately 10% of pupils have special educational needs. Three children have statements. The percentage of pupils in receipt of pupil premium (6%) is well below average.

Information about this validation

This report to the Bishop of the Diocese under Canon 806 of the Code of Canon Law is also the report to the governors of the school on religious education. For Catholic maintained schools, the report also fulfils the requirements of Section 48 of the Education Act 2005.

Validation Team

Tony Murray	Lead Validator
Ursula Clark	Assistant Validator

Activities Carried Out as Part of the Validation

- An ethos walk.
- Discussion of the school's self-review procedures and the self-evaluation sheets.
- Discussions with the RE governor and chair of governors.
- In-depth discussions with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- A meeting with the parish priest.
- Meeting and conferencing with children.
- Observations of key stage two worship and year R class worship.
- Observations of teaching and learning in RE, including joint observations with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Pupil work scrutiny.
- Feedback of key findings to the senior leadership team and governors.

Conclusion

The validators would like to thank the headteacher, deputy headteacher, staff, governors, the parish priest, parents and pupils of St Edward's First School for their preparatory work for the validation, which forms part of the school's regular self-review cycle. They would also like to express their appreciation for the warmth of welcome they received and the support given during the validation process.