

DIOCESE OF PORTSMOUTH S48 VALIDATION REPORT



St Teresa’s Catholic Academy, Wokingham

Easthampstead Road, Wokingham, Berkshire, RG40 2EB

URN: 144455
 Date of previous s48 validation 16 November 2015
Date of this s48 validation 6 May 2022

Overall effectiveness	Previous s48 validation: Good
	This s48 validation: Good

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

This is a good school

- St Teresa’s is a school which truly lives out its mission statement; ‘Safe, happy and successful together with God’, with every member of the school community exemplifying a Christian witness, which permeates the whole community.
- The headteacher, together with her leadership team have worked extremely hard, particularly during the challenges associated with the pandemic, to ensure that the school continues to provide a strong Catholic education for its pupils and they are rightly proud of their lovely school.
- The RE leader has made a significant contribution to the Catholic life of the school and has skilfully supported her colleagues to ensure that teaching in RE is consistently good across the school, with pupils given opportunities to learn about the faith through a variety of rich learning experiences.
- The school is fortunate to be situated right next to Corpus Christi Church and this, combined with the strong and loyal support of the parish priest, enables staff and pupils to be familiar with the parish and play an active part in it.
- The prayer-life of pupils is developed through provision which is consistently good. Children are given many opportunities to take part in prayer and reflection and some of them are able to lead this too.
- Moral development is outstanding; the pupils’ behaviour and attitudes are excellent and they are keen to express their love of the school. During the validation one child stated ‘*The teachers here all make you shine!*’
- Parents are very supportive of the school and the great majority of those surveyed were highly complimentary about the school’s Catholic provision. One stated ‘*What the school is doing has brought my family closer to the church*’.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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

- Continue to support staff to develop their subject knowledge in RE through a variety of initiatives, so that they can further challenge more able pupils at key points within RE lessons.
- Further enhance the spiritual development of pupils by developing the confidence of all staff to use a wider range of approaches in the planning and delivery of collective worship.
- Leaders at all levels, should develop systematic and rigorous methods of planning, monitoring and evaluating the provision and standards of RE and collective worship.

Full Report

The school as a Catholic community

The school community:	Outstanding
The wider community:	Outstanding

- The mission statement and the schools' 'Saints Beatitudes' are central to life at the school. Pupils and staff are aware of these and respond well to them, due to them being embedded in school culture through displays and constant references.
- School leaders actively live out their faith through the care, guidance and witness they give to others. The headteacher and her senior leaders are a credit to Catholic education, because of the way in which they tirelessly aid all in the school community, pastorally, spiritually and professionally.
- There are excellent links in place with the parish of Corpus Christi. The parish priest is extremely supportive of everyone at the school and welcomes the whole community into the church without exception.
- Members of the school community support the parish, for example by generously giving up their own time to help the children in preparation for their First Holy Communion.
- Pupils have a wide range of opportunities to live out their faith. In particular the work of the 'Mini-Vinnies' and the School Chaplains is highly impressive and demonstrates how staff enable the children to play a proactive role in helping others.
- The school environment is bright, cheery and highly reflective of the Catholic ethos. Great care is taken to produce displays that are attractive and inspiring and staff and pupils alike are proud of their school surroundings.
- Parents are very grateful of the school's provision and the way that their children are looked after. One summed up the general feeling by stating *'The school is extremely good at teaching the Catholic Faith to their pupils and they are very passionate about our whole community coming on that journey. It's clear that the school has a clear strategy to grow and develop our Catholic community in Wokingham and be instrumental in this change.'*

Curriculum religious education

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

- Lessons in religious education are consistently good across the school with leaders ensuring that the requirement from the Bishop's Conference on the percentage of time spent on RE teaching, is fulfilled.
- Attainment and progress in RE are broadly in line with expectations and are therefore good.
- In the strongest RE lessons, teachers use a range of questioning techniques that enable children to build upon their existing knowledge and learning, so that new concepts are more fully understood.
- Pupils' RE books are of a very good standard. The children take obvious care and pride over their work and RE books are very well presented. Teachers use marking to understand what pupils know and challenge them through further questioning.
- The RE leader is active in working with other local RE leaders and attends relevant diocesan training. She is having a significant impact on the development of the subject across the school and should continue this strong work moving forward.
- The RE leader has recently enabled staff to understand and employ greater use of challenge questions within pupils' RE books. These questions enable children to further demonstrate their understanding and consider related issues in more depth.
- New staff have worked well, with the aid of the RE leader, to develop their subject knowledge. This work needs to continue and be built upon, so that they are equipped to plan

and deliver RE lessons that are of an even higher standard. This will also help teachers to ensure that more-able pupils are appropriately challenged, at key points within RE lessons.

Spiritual and moral development

Spiritual development:

Good

Moral development:

Outstanding

- Daily collective worship is embedded into the life of the school and pupils have numerous opportunities each week to hear and respond to the Word of God.
- During prayer and liturgy the pupils' behaviour is exemplary and they have an obvious respect and veneration for God. The children express this in varied ways and with great enthusiasm and at the time of validation their singing in particular was inspiring.
- During the pandemic, the school effectively used technology to support pupils in their worship whilst at home. This was rightly appreciated by parents, some of whom commented that they found these experiences beneficial for their whole family.
- The school enables pupils to participate more fully in worship, by leading prayer for each other. This is achieved by the use of 'prayer partners' and 'pupil chaplains' and enables children to have a fuller appreciation of prayer and liturgy.
- Whilst many staff are confident and able to lead meaningful prayer and liturgy, a few are benefitting from further support from the RE lead with the planning and delivery of this. Leaders should ensure that this work continues in order for collective worship to be as strong as possible.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. The children are kind, courteous and friendly with each other, the staff and visitors. They have a keen sense of right and wrong, underpinned by a maturing understanding of Gospel values and they consistently demonstrate this through their very positive relationships.
- Many of the pupils at the school come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. The school welcomes all such pupils and their families and this diversity is a cause of celebration.
- The school has recently implemented a new programme to teach Relationship, Health and Sex Education. Initial observations of this scheme indicate that it is successfully being employed by staff and senior leaders plan to carry out a more formal evaluation in due course.

Leadership and management:

Good

- Leaders at all levels are highly committed to the school and its vision of Catholic education. They have worked hard to sustain effective teaching provision and an authentic Catholic culture during the challenges of the pandemic.
- The school community as a whole is one that is united and cohesive. Leaders exemplify positive Christian values which permeate all aspects of school life and lead to contentment, a productive work ethic and a strong sense of well-being across the whole school.
- Leaders have ensured that good progress has been made since the time of the last validation and diocesan monitoring visit. For example, within RE lessons children are now given a greater range of tasks which are more engaging for them. The school has also revisited its mission statement and through this process developed the 'Saints Beatitudes', which has ensured greater clarity about the mission and purpose of the school.
- School governors are keen to understand the strengths and development points in the school and regularly visit the school, observe practice and to talk with senior leaders. However in order to move further forward, the school should develop more rigorous and formal ways of developing a systematic approach to planning, monitoring and evaluating standards in RE and collective worship.

School details

Name of school	St Teresa's Catholic Primary School
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number of pupils on roll:	338
Chair of Governors:	Anne-Marie Eden
Headteacher:	Nikki Peters
Chair of Directors:	Stephen Paulson
Chief Executive Officer:	Jacqui LeMaitre

St Teresa's Catholic Academy is part of the Frassati Catholic Academy Trust. The school is situated in the Corpus Christi parish of Wokingham. 78% of pupils are Catholic with 12% coming from other Christian faiths and 5% coming from other faiths. The proportion of children who speak English as an additional language is 17%. 7% of the school population are in receipt of pupil premium funding, and 6% of them are on the special educational needs register.

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

Jamie Carroll	Lead Validator
Paula Dix	Assistant Validator

Activities carried out as part of the validation

- Discussion on the school's self-evaluation sheets with the senior leadership team.
- Discussions with various members of the school community, including senior leaders, the chair, a governor, parish priest, the family liaison officer, an early careers teacher and school pupils.
- Observations of key stage and class worship.
- Observations of teaching and learning in RE, including joint observations with senior leaders.
- Pupil work scrutiny.
- Feedback of key findings.

Conclusion

The validators would like to thank the headteacher, RE team, staff, governors, parish priest, parents and pupils of St Teresa's Catholic Academy 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.