

DIOCESE OF PORTSMOUTH S48 VALIDATION REPORT



Holy Family Catholic Primary School

Mansel Road West, Southampton, SO16 9LP

URN: 116397

Date of previous validation: 25th February/ 5th March 2015

Date of this validation: 27th June 2022

Overall effectiveness

Previous s48 validation: Good

This s48 validation: Outstanding

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

This is an outstanding school

- The school's mission statement, '*God, love and family*', is firmly embedded in the life of the school, with all members of staff and pupils taking an active part in living it out.
- Excellent relationships between all members of the community lead to a loving and trusting environment where all are encouraged, nurtured and supported to achieve their full potential.
- The executive headteacher and head of school (RE leader) have a strong and ambitious Catholic vision for the school which is known and actively supported by all in the community.
- The school plays a pivotal role in the local community. The parish priest is strong in his support for the school, which contributes to the pupils' confidence in asking questions about RE and to their well-being.
- Religious education (RE) is central to the life of the school. It is held as the standard other subjects must aspire to. The outstanding support of the senior leadership team helps ensure teachers deliver high quality teaching, leading to outstanding progress and high standards in the subject.
- Pupils are outstanding ambassadors for the school and speak about their school with pride. One commented, '*we are all one global family*'. Their outstanding behaviour and attitudes are underpinned by their knowledge and living out of the school's mission statement.
- Parents are very supportive of the school. Of the small number who responded to the survey and those spoken to on the day, an overwhelming majority was positive about all aspects of school life, particularly the school's role in the local community, the sense of welcome and the strong relationships. '*The school don't just care about the children they care about the whole family*'.
- Older pupils are excellent role models to the younger children.
- Pupils in the school demonstrate outstanding behaviour and Christian attitudes, giving of their time and talents to support those in need.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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

- Allow the children more spontaneity in their planning and leading of worship.
- Ensure that the governing body understand and fulfil their role as a critical friend as well as to provide support, and that they can evidence the challenge provided.

Full Report

The school as a Catholic community

The school community:

Outstanding

The wider community:

Outstanding

- The mission statement, '*God, love and family*', is central to the life of the school. The vision of a faith filled community striving to live out the values and virtues of the Gospel so all, regardless of starting point or background, can succeed is inspiring to all in the community.
- Relationships are strong in the school and help ensure all feel welcomed and supported, with the centrality and importance of the Catholic ethos given a high prominence. The support extends to pupils, staff and families, past and present.
- The Catholic ethos is strongly evident within the school environment. High quality displays, many of which contain a quote from scripture or a link to Catholic Social Teaching contribute to an attractive and purposeful community of learning.
- The vast majority of parents hold the school in very high regard. All parents who responded to the survey said that they would recommend the school to others.
- There are good systems of communication, ensuring all stakeholders receive clear induction, are well-informed and kept regularly updated. The school's newsletter and website, which includes engaging videos, reflect the importance placed on the Catholic life of the school.
- The school benefits from the support given by the parish priest, who is keen to extend his chaplaincy role to staff as well as pupils.
- Holy Family school has a visible presence at Mass with a different class attending every Friday. Consideration should be given to how the school could extend this witness in the parish to a Sunday.
- All members of the school community demonstrate their full commitment to the principles of Catholic Social Teaching through the work of groups such as prayer leaders, sensory garden surveyors, school councillors who focus on the environment and the school's support for CAFOD, Caritas and local and national initiatives.

Curriculum religious education

Attainment and progress:

Outstanding

Quality of teaching:

Outstanding

Leadership and management of RE:

Outstanding

- Religious education in the school has a very high status. All in leadership roles in the school recognise the importance of RE and share a passion in seeking the highest quality of RE for the pupils in the school.
- The evidence in pupils' books, class books, the consistently good or better quality of teaching, the high levels of achievement and discussions with pupils all combine to show that attainment and progress in RE are outstanding.
- The senior leadership's passion and drive for the subject as well as knowledge underpin their outstanding support for all staff. This enables teachers to deliver lessons with confidence and enthusiasm and ensure that standards in RE are high.
- On the day of the visit, all classes were being taught about Sacraments, a key component of the diocesan RE scheme. Throughout the school, children were engaged, interested and quick to demonstrate their very good subject knowledge and religious vocabulary.
- In the best classes, learning was modelled very effectively. In all lessons learning was age appropriate and clear explanations were given to allow progress in learning. An example of this was in EYFS where there was a clear engaging sequence to the learning and where prior knowledge was applied in attributing artefacts about caring for the sick, to the home, school and church.
- Staff witness to their faith using themselves as a resource. This was evidenced through the photographs and artefacts used in lessons identifying different sacraments.

- Very good learning behaviours in class were evident. Learning is supported by well-organised environments, well-chosen resources and targeted support from teaching assistants.
- Children's knowledge and use of scripture is a key strength. Pupils are able to take the key messages from the Gospel and apply them to real life situations.
- Planning is comprehensive and has a clear RE focus, allowing definite evidence of progression across the school. Tasks ensure learning is clearly based around scripture and Catholic beliefs, practices and traditions. In some classes pupils expressed that there can be an over-reliance on writing rather than creative tasks as the means to capture their responses.
- The senior leadership team rigorously monitor RE through observations of teaching and work sampling. Findings are carefully considered and, where appropriate, action taken and appropriate support provided. Governors are encouraged to participate and kept informed of the strengths and areas for development within the subject, but they need to be more proactive in challenging the information provided.

Spiritual and moral development

Spiritual development:

Good

Moral development:

Outstanding

- The school provides a range of good quality worship, which allows individual and collective members of the school community to express their relationship with one another and with God, in a reflective and prayerful manner, examples include:
 - The range of celebrations linked to the liturgical year.
 - The opportunities for pupils to lead worship in the school.
- Pupils are justifiably proud of their school and the part it plays in their faith development, commenting, *'At Holy Family it deepens our relationship with God on our faith journey'*.
- During the visit three acts of collective worship were observed. Year 2, was led by the head of school, and Year 4 and 5 were pupil led. In all there was an atmosphere of reverence and those participating were encouraged to reflect on scripture and a clear message was communicated for them to take away and put into action. The school needs to ensure that worship is differentiated for the age range of the pupils and that it allows greater opportunity for more spontaneous pupil and staff led worship.
- Pupils value the opportunity to join the Prayer Leaders for Bible stories, activities and prayer at lunchtime.
- Pupils are provided with a range of spiritual opportunities in a variety of settings, including the outside chapel, but would benefit from using a greater range of engaging hymns, drama and art.
- There is a strong commitment to Catholic Social Teaching, which is embedded throughout the school. This is seen not just through the curriculum and displays, but also the work with Caritas in planting hedgerows and building bird boxes as part of the school's work on care for creation.
- The school's outstanding outreach to those in need in the community is seen through the support for the baby bank, meal distribution and foodbank collections co-ordinated with the parish and the Poitier charity.
- Clear behaviour sanctions and rewards contribute to the outstanding behaviour of the pupils in class and around the school.

Leadership and management:

Good

- The personal witness to the faith provided by the executive headteacher and head of school provides a strong vision and direction for the work of the school.
- Leaders, provide a very strong and highly effective model of Christian leadership, where all are valued, supported and nurtured. There is a constant drive for improvement and insistence on high standards in all areas. Staff are encouraged and supported in taking on new roles and initiatives that are of benefit not only to the children, but to themselves and the wider community. This was seen in evidence in the development of the sensory garden.

- Pupils take their responsibilities as leaders seriously. Thought needs to be given to how pupil leadership could be extended further giving more pupils an opportunity to become leaders.
- The senior leadership team have a robust approach to self-review. Going forward this needs to be developed by and shared with all members of the school community including governors.
- Good progress has been made since the school's last s48 validation. Further work is still needed however to embed pupil led worship throughout the school.
- Governors were able to share examples of how they are involved in the monitoring cycle and provide support and challenge at meetings. Currently this is insufficiently documented or reflected in key reports.

School details

Name of school: Holy Family Catholic Primary School

Age range of pupils: 4 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

Number of pupils on roll: 413

Chair of Governors: Sarah Studzinski

Executive Headteacher: Gerida Montague

Head of School: Sarah Hendricks

Holy Family Catholic Primary School is a larger than average primary school situated on the western edge of Southampton, serving the parishes of Holy Family and St Vincent de Paul. The school is part of a soft federation with four other primary schools. There are 413 pupils on roll and the majority of these are White British, approximately a third coming from other ethnic groups. Just under a quarter of the children have a first language other than English. The children come from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds. The number of pupils receiving free school meals is above 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

Lead Validator: Nuala Oster

Assistant Validator: Catherine Hobbs

Activities carried out as part of the validation

- Ethos walk.
- Discussion on the school's self-evaluation sheets.
- Discussions with various members of the school community.
- Observations of collective worship.
- Observations of teaching and learning in RE, including joint observations with members of the school leadership team.
- Pupil work scrutiny.
- Feedback of key findings.

Conclusion

The validators would like to thank the Executive headteacher, head of school, who is also the RE leader, staff, governors, parish priest, parents and pupils of Holy Family Catholic Primary 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.