

DIOCESE OF PORTSMOUTH VALIDATION REPORT



Holy Family Catholic Primary School

Mansel Road West, Millbrook, Southampton, Hampshire, SO16 9LP

URN 116397
Date of previous validation October 2009
Date of this validation date **25 February and 5 March 2015**

Overall effectiveness	Previous validation:	Good
	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 with outstanding features.

- The children's mission statement of 'God, love and family' permeates every aspect of the school community, with all members taking an active part in living the mission.
- Holy Family is a school where the children are loved and valued. The school works hard and is creative in the way it meets the needs of its families, both past and present.
- The links with the local parish are very good and the school takes justifiable pride in its 'blue ribbon of witness' as the school makes its way to Holy Family Church.
- The school receives outstanding support from the school chaplain.
- The overwhelming majority of parents are supportive of the school and its mission.
- Attainment and progress in RE are good and improving.
- Teaching of RE is consistently good. Elements of outstanding teaching can also be seen.
- Pupils demonstrated a very positive attitude to learning in the lessons observed.
- The enthusiasm and commitment of the RE team to develop practice further is a strength.
- The school brings children of all different backgrounds to a greater knowledge and love of God.
- The popular lunchtime prayer club, run and led by the pupils, where 'children can come to find out about Jesus and have fun' is a visible sign of their commitment to 'God, love and family'.
- Moral development is outstanding. The children in the school demonstrate very good behaviour and Christian attitudes.
- Leaders provide a strong and effective model of Christian leadership, where all members of the school community are valued. They inspire the community to share in a strong sense of vision and mission, resulting in a highly collaborative and successful school with a positive ethos.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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

- The mission statement has not been reviewed for a number of years and the school regularly uses the simpler, 'God, Love and Family.' alongside it. It would be beneficial to review both and agree a single statement that would give direction to both adults and children.
- Teachers need to ensure that the tasks given to children provide the opportunities for them to demonstrate their understanding of the learning, including that shown in discussions. Planning of activities should include opportunities for children to demonstrate their higher level understanding and reflection.
- The children's involvement in the planning and delivery of a greater range of worship should be increased.

Full Report

The school as a Catholic community

The school community:	Outstanding
The wider community:	Outstanding

- Holy Family is a school that knows its community and successfully nurtures and supports its members.
- Throughout the school there is firm evidence that you are within a community of faith. Particularly strong examples include:
 - The centrality and living out of the motto, ‘God, Love and Family’.
 - The determination of all in the school to continually strive for improvement and to enrich the lives of the pupils in their care.
 - The very good relationships between all members of the school community.
 - The attractiveness of the school environment, which is enhanced by the many displays and artefacts celebrating its Catholic nature, beginning with the sign as you reach the school entrance which demonstrates the school’s commitment to prayer.
- The mission statement has not been reviewed for a number of years and the school regularly uses the simpler, ‘God, Love and Family.’ alongside it. It would be beneficial to review both and agree a single statement that would give direction to both adults and children. At the same time, thought could be given to how it can best be woven more explicitly into the day to day life of the school.
- There are very good systems of communication, ensuring all stakeholders are very well-informed and regularly updated. More use could be made of the school’s website to inform parents about, and celebrate the school’s Catholic ethos.
- The school has established very good links with the local parish.
- The school chaplain makes an outstanding contribution to the life of the school. Good support is also provided from one of the local Sisters of St Joseph of Annecy (Medaille Community).
- Holy Family has a good and growing partnership with the local cluster of Catholic schools. The school has a lot of very good practice to share, as do the other schools in the cluster, and all will benefit if the existing links can be enhanced and extended further to include other diocesan schools.
- The school has very good induction procedures for staff and pupils.

Curriculum religious education

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

- Pupils in the school value RE and recognise that it can help them in their daily lives. In the lessons observed as part of the validation, pupils were able to draw on knowledge of Scripture and relate the messages to everyday life. Pupils demonstrated a very positive attitude to learning in the lessons observed and behaviour was very good. Learning is supported by well organised environments, well-chosen resources and targeted support from teaching support staff.
- The evidence in the pupils’ books, the high quality teaching seen on the day and discussions with pupils all combine to show that attainment and progress in RE are good and improving.
- The school has made good progress on the development of planning and assessment. The use of diocesan statements linking God Matters to national level descriptors, together with the associated key questions, will help to improve standards further. Formative marking is being increasingly used to develop pupils’ understanding.
- Teachers need to ensure that the tasks given to children provide the opportunity for them to demonstrate their understanding of the learning, including that shown in discussions.

- Planning of activities should include opportunities for children to demonstrate their higher level understanding and reflection. The school's work on Philosophy for Children will support this.
- The leadership and support provided by the headteacher and RE team help to ensure that the place of RE in the school is given a high status. This could be improved further by reviewing the time allocation and timing of RE lessons and considering the placing of RE within the other core subjects.
- The RE team and headteacher monitor standards in RE, through observing teaching, pupil conferencing, work sampling and carrying out an in-depth analysis of assessments. However, although internal moderation of RE standards is routinely carried out, this needs to be extended to include other Catholic schools on a more regular basis.

Spiritual and moral development

Spiritual development:

Outstanding

Moral development:

Outstanding

- The children's spiritual development is outstanding. The school brings children of all different backgrounds to a greater knowledge and love of God.
- The school provides a wide range of 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. The school embraces opportunities to nurture spirituality and give Christian witness; these include:
 - End of year retreat days for Years 4, 5 and 6.
 - Focus on Mary in May and October, linking with the parish church.
 - Annual Stations of the Cross liturgy.
- Each class has a collective worship leader and other children take a leading role in running a lunchtime prayer club, where 'children can come to find out about and Jesus and have fun.' This could be built upon by increasing the children's involvement in the planning and delivery of a greater range of worship.
- The children in the school demonstrate very good behaviour and Christian attitudes in their relationships, with a clear sense of right and wrong. Key factors promoting this include:
 - Clear behaviour steps displayed in each classroom.
 - Consistent, high expectations.
 - Effective reward systems, for example, the earning of beads and housepoints.
- Groups of pupils take on key responsibilities throughout the school, including, school councillors, house captains, librarians and collective worship leaders.
- Pupils are very proud of their school. They describe the school as 'one big family, where everyone is treated the same and where our teachers don't give up on us, and help us to be the best we can be'.

Leadership and management: Outstanding

- The headteacher, senior leadership team, governors and other leaders share a common Christian vision and, through example, inspire a strong sense of purpose, vision and mission. As a result, Holy Family is a highly collaborative and successful school with a positive Christian ethos.
- The rigorous approach to the monitoring and evaluation of all aspects of the life of the school enables the school to constantly challenge itself and there is a constant drive for improvement.
- The governing body are strong supporters of the school and also act as a critical friend.
- The school should review its admission policy to ensure that all baptised Catholic children are given a higher priority.
- Progress has been made on the issues identified for improvement in the last validation, particularly in fostering the school's distinctive Catholic identity.

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:	398
Chair of Governors:	Angela O'Neill
Headteacher:	Gerida Montague

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 Boniface. The school is part of a soft federation with two other Southampton primary schools. There are 398 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

Robert Dare	Lead Validator
Catherine Hobbs	Assistant Validator

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 headteacher, RE team, staff, governors, the school chaplain, 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.