

## THE VALIDATION REPORT



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.

<b>NAME OF SCHOOL</b>	St Francis Catholic Primary School
<b>ADDRESS</b>	Coronation Road South Ascot Berkshire SL5 9HG
<b>URN</b>	110029
<b>CHAIR OF GOVERNORS</b>	Mr Stephen Poulston
<b>HEADTEACHER</b>	Mrs Jane Gow
<b>NAMES OF VALIDATORS</b>	Mrs Jacqueline Davies Mrs Margaret Crompton
<b>DATES OF THE VALIDATION VISIT</b>	14 <sup>th</sup> June 2013 25 <sup>th</sup> June 2013

## Information about the school

Number of pupils on roll	208
Number of boys	103
Number of girls	105
Number of statemented pupils	3
Percentage of Catholic pupils	91
Number of teaching staff	8
Number of support staff	27
Percentage of Catholic staff	63

St Francis school is situated in South Ascot in an attractive and pleasant environment. It is popular and oversubscribed. The grounds and environment are secure, well-maintained with attractive play surfaces, a large sports field and a pond; it is a stimulating environment, offering outdoor challenges for its pupils. The school benefits from its close proximity to the parish church and takes advantage of the opportunities to visit, attend liturgies and celebrate Mass. The school recently became the Mass centre for the parish, while the church underwent substantial refurbishment. The school admits children into the reception class in the year in which they are five. It shares its site with St Francis Pre-School. There are 208 pupils on roll; 91% are Catholic, 8% and 1% are from other Christian and other faith traditions respectively. The school has lower than average free school meals (FSM) take-up, at 3%; special educational needs (SEN) at 12% are also lower than the national average. The socio-economic make-up of the school has remained stable as has the ethnic background, which continues to be mainly British with a minority of children coming from Eastern Europe, Caribbean, Asian and other family backgrounds. The school has an outstanding reputation in the area that it serves and children continue their Catholic education in a variety of schools within the local area. There is no close Catholic Secondary School in catchment; some attend independent schools and others attend Catholic secondary schools some distance away.

## The school's effectiveness in providing Catholic education

St Francis school provides a Catholic education steeped in its mission, which is known and understood by all. The headteacher is driven to improving the experiences provided for the pupils, to ensure that they enjoy, value and develop their relationship with God, through prayer, worship and high quality religious education (RE). Her vision is shared with all, ably supported by staff, governors, parish priest and pupils. Her inspirational leadership in providing a Catholic education is to be both commended and celebrated. There is a feeling of calmness and spirituality, which permeates every area of the school life. The pupils care for one another and know how to bring about reconciliation. They delight in sharing their own thoughts and opinions about their school; personal spirituality is evident during lessons, during play and during conversations. Staff are committed to improving further the development of RE teaching and learning in the school and they are well supported by the hard work, commitment and enthusiasm of the RE co-ordinator and her efforts to support and continue to raise standards in RE.

The children are incredibly proud of their school and their Catholic heritage, one stating "It was nice to be able to say and show all the positive things about our school, because there are so many. We made sure we showed things that we are proud of." Another child emphasised: "We showed you some of our books, picking these randomly to show how meaningful RE is to us. We talked about our collective worship and as year sixes how much we enjoy leading these and trying to set a good example." The children demonstrated how they lived out their faith each day in school and proudly articulated their fidelity to the mission of the school.

### a) Key strengths of the school

- Visitors acknowledge the warmth of the welcome they receive.
- The quality of the relationships, the strength and warmth of the welcome the school gives.
- There is a clear process for induction and support for new staff.
- There is a cohesive system for keeping the community informed, through a vibrant website, providing detail for parents to share in the celebration of the children's success and their life in school.
- The inclusion of the community in a range of school activities, raising money for both individuals and such enterprises as CAFOD and Fairtrade.
- The school environment is well maintained and supports the mission of the school.
- The leadership team is effective, ensuring high expectations in all aspects of school life.
- Governors are aware of their responsibilities; they have a clear understanding of how the school wishes to develop and are supportive of the drive toward school improvement within a Catholic context.
- Relationships are built on respect and consideration; the mission of the school is lived out by all members of the community.
- There exists a strong bond between the home, school and parish.
- The effective leadership and co-ordination of RE maintain the status of religious education within the school.
- There is a range of effective processes to ensure clear direction and the setting of challenging targets.
- The continual endeavour to assess RE comprehensively, both formally and informally.
- The quality of the work in RE is evident; creative ways to ensure understanding are appreciated by pupils, leading to secure progress and attainment across the school.
- The involvement and quality of the children's acts of collective worship, which they plan and deliver.
- The ability to share prayer spontaneously.
- The support that the school receives from the parish priest and also his involvement in the year 6 retreat.
- Children display leadership skills at all levels, providing support for younger pupils through the buddy system.
- Pupils are articulate, engaging, have respect for their teachers and are immensely proud of their school and their achievements.

b) Key areas for development

- Extend responsibility roles for the pupils to include RE leaders.
- Encourage collaborative visits to other cluster schools.
- Continue to work on assessment in RE and embed and extend assessment and tracking procedures.

c) Progress since the last validation

- The role of the RE leader has ensured that good practice and consistency is shared across the school. Although new to the role the present RE leader is a key figure within the school and has ensured that monitoring is rigorous and acted upon, to improve even further progress and achievement.
- There is now a comprehensive mission statement, understood by all, that has been woven into the fabric of the school. It is demonstrated by what the school community says, achieves, shares and celebrates.
- There is now a raft of communication to inform parents, one of which is a comprehensive, creative and well-managed website. There is a tracking system in place to assist staff in informing parents about progress and attainment in RE. Information is sent out half-termly about topics that the children will cover. This includes personal, social and health education (PSHE) and sex and relationship topics.

d) Summary of parents' views of the school

As part of the school's preparation for the validation parents were asked to complete a questionnaire, which included specific questions on the Catholic life of the school. The school received 77 responses out of a possible 163.

"I feel blessed... because of the way the faith is celebrated and encouraged." My children are "fully welcomed into the school." The parents were keen to share their thoughts about the school, particularly the welcome: "everything we see, love and value about our school." Another parent states "Staff are highly positive and welcoming." As well as stating that her child has regard for RE and that all are welcomed, the parent went on to say that: "Spirituality can be seen through spontaneous prayer and giving her money to charity, amongst others."

From the responses given in the questionnaire it is apparent that parents feel they are welcomed by the school and that they are kept well-informed about what their children are learning in RE. They recognise and appreciate the level of commitment that the leadership team has for the religious life of the school and their commitment to raising standards. They value the opportunity to worship with their children and feel they are well supported by the school, which develops links with the home, school and parish. They agree that the school provides opportunities for pupils' spiritual and moral development and say that their children are happy at school. The majority of the parents feel that the school is a supportive, caring Catholic community and a significant number of parents are happy with the RE work children do at home.

Overall, the responses were very positive and echoed what the validators saw during the validation: that the children at St Francis school are happy, safe and live out the school's mission.

## THE SCHOOL AS A CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

### WHAT THE SCHOOL SAYS

SECTION A1: The school community	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
	✓			

#### Key strengths identified by the school

The life of St Francis school is rooted in its Mission Statement. It is a caring, inclusive and inspiring community where all stakeholders are familiar with the school values which are based on Recognising Christ in Everyone. Visitors are struck by the warmth of the welcome and the calm, happy atmosphere felt throughout the school. The Mission statement is prominently displayed in all areas of the school and has been agreed in consultation with pupils, governors, parents and staff. The school's strategic plan is integral to and evident in all aspects of school life and has been developed with the Mission values at its centre. Shared values form the focal point for Collective Worship, PSHE and cross curricular work. The school buildings are well used by all sections of the parish with parishioners and parents invited to whole school worship each week. Links with parents and parishioners are considered vital to the success of the school with volunteers involved in class and whole school activities including the school choir. The school hosts masses on Saturday and Sunday, Holy Communion and Confirmation classes whilst renovations are taking place in the parish church. The parish priest is a frequent and popular visitor to the school taking part in worship and developing an understanding of key teachings of the Catholic faith with the children and staff. We are a fully inclusive school where all groups, regardless of ethnicity, gender or needs achieve above national expectations, children with additional needs achieve significantly well. The school website reflects the spiritual nature of the school with a prominent feature on the school Mission values, links to parish and diocesan information and children's work and prayers displayed.

#### Areas identified for development by the school *(include timescale for action)*

Induction for new staff members.

### VALIDATORS' JUDGEMENT

SECTION A1: The school community	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
	✓			

#### Key strengths

***St Francis is a school that knows its community well, working very hard and effectively to support, nurture and develop all members. The welcome experienced is outstanding.***

Validators agree with the school's self-evaluation and commend the school for the following:

- The strength and warmth of the relationships between all members of the community.
- The comprehensive approach to fulfilling its mission and the commitment to living it out on a daily basis.
- The excellent physical environment of the school buildings and the challenging opportunities that exist for pupils in the grounds, along with the level of care and attention to detail, all contribute to creating a most attractive learning and working environment.
- The care and thought processes used to inform the community of what the school is doing, through a vibrant and attractive website, which is easy to access and navigate.
- The children value the care and support, which they are given by the staff; they clearly enjoy school.
- The children feel valued and take on roles of responsibility easily and with confidence.
- The strong relationships that exist between the staff and pupils.
- The regard in which the parents hold the school, which they see as a caring Catholic community.

#### Areas identified for development

The validators agree with the school on the identified area for development.

## WHAT THE SCHOOL SAYS

SECTION A2: Leadership and management	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
	✓			

### Key strengths identified by the school

The school leadership is an excellent example to all staff of the Christian vision and values which permeate all aspects of school life. The school has a strong sense of a shared vision which has been developed in consultation with staff and governors and these stakeholders are integral to the rigorous self-evaluation process. The head teacher is an inspirational leader with high aspirations for the school and receives excellent support from her Deputy and other members of the Senior Leadership Team. The caring nature of the school and its desire to recognise Christ in everyone is evidenced by the use of Pupil Premium, the school's involvement with a local food bank, the wide variety of free after school activities and the continuing willingness of the Friends of St Francis Association to fund school trips. The high value placed on RE is shown by the fact that the RE coordinator is part of the senior leadership team to ensure that RE and the spiritual life of the school are integrated into all areas of school life. The RE coordinator receives support from a dedicated support assistant who works on developing the key area of collective worship with children. The school enjoys a stable staff many of whom are actively involved in parish life and the school benefits from links with other parish members. Rigorous performance management processes are in place to provide support and challenge whilst recognising the individual needs of staff members. The governing body are regularly updated with progress in RE through the Head Teacher's regular report and have been a key part of the both the self-review process and the development of the Mission values. The school is currently in the process of developing an application to be a teaching school within the diocese.

### Areas identified for development by the school *(include timescale for action)*

Staff training, induction.

## VALIDATORS' JUDGEMENT

SECTION A2: Leadership and management	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
	✓			

### Key strengths

*The headteacher's vision for the school is outstanding. The leadership team in the school is committed to upholding and developing its Catholic identity within the mission, which is at the heart of all they do.*

Validators agree with the school's self-evaluation and commend the school for the following:

- The strength of Christian witness given by the headteacher and staff.
- The effectiveness of the leadership team in delivering high quality education, within a supportive and caring Catholic ethos.
- The school's constant drive for improvement and insistence on high standards in all areas.
- The effectiveness and commitment of the pupils in carrying out their leadership roles.
- The enjoyment the children display in their roles of responsibility.
- The support and challenge given by the governing body and its commitment always to seek ways to improve.
- The inclusive and comprehensive approach to completing the diocesan self-review.

### Areas identified for development

The validators suggest that the school may wish to consider developing the role of young RE leaders.

## WHAT THE SCHOOL SAYS

SECTION A3: The wider community	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
		✓		

### Key strengths identified by the school

The school has excellent links with the wider community at all levels. Our parish links are a particular strength. We have an excellent relationship with our parish priest and parishioners celebrate with the school regularly. Currently Saturday and Sunday services, Holy Communion and Confirmation classes are held in the school buildings. We enjoy an excellent relationship with our local Catholic schools with both the RE coordinator and head teacher attending cluster meetings, staff enjoying combined CPD and the school being involved in multi school activities such as the “Big Sing” liturgy held in February 2013. The local cluster is also involved in the shared recruitment of students through the Schools Direct programme. Diocesan links are through RE courses, Head teacher’s professional development, cluster meetings and the children’s involvement in the Good Shepherd Mass. St Francis has a strong link with the local private Catholic school , St Mary’s, taking advantage of their varied facilities including a weekly swimming class and the use of their Rose Theatre for Year 6 productions. The school enjoys a close relationship with other non-Catholic local schools through participation in the Ascot cluster group including leading G&T workshops and shared inset as well as a strong link with our local secondary school through sporting activities and the provision of work experience to pupils. We have an outstanding commitment to helping others through our charitable work. From international links with a school in Sierra Leone and campaigns such as CAFOD and Fairtrade through local issues including the Trussell Trust foodbank to the highly personal support of a disabled child in the parish we demonstrate living out our mission values of compassion and

### Areas identified for development by the school *(include timescale for action)*

Multicultural links.

## VALIDATORS’ JUDGEMENT

SECTION A3: The wider community	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
		✓		

### Key strengths

*St Francis is a school with a community, which values the relationship that exists within the parish and wider community.*

The validators agree with the school’s judgments and commend the school for the following:

- The links with the wider community at all levels.
- Parish links are a particular strength; excellent relationships exist between the parish priest and school, with parishioners celebrating regularly at the school and sacramental parish programmes housed in the school.
- The relationship with local Catholic schools is strong, with both RE co-ordinator and headteacher attending cluster meetings.
- Staff enjoy combined continuing professional development (CPD) in the cluster and are involved in leading gifted and talented workshops and participating in dance festivals.
- Involvement of the school in multi-school activities and its commitment to the many charities and adopted good causes.
- The respect the children have for one another and the wider community.

### Areas identified for development

The validators agree with the school’s identified area for development and recommend that there are further opportunities to celebrate diversity, through worship and prayer.

## CURRICULUM RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

### WHAT THE SCHOOL SAYS

SECTION B1: Leadership and co-ordination of religious education	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
	✓			
<b>Key strengths identified by the school</b>				
<p>RE shares the high status given to other core subjects in the school and is a focus for the Whole School Development Plan. The RE leader is a key figure within the school, regularly attending Senior Management Team meetings. She attends all diocesan and cluster meetings feeding back relevant information to all staff. God Matters is firmly embedded across the school and staff have adapted the scheme where necessary to suit the children's' needs. This has resulted in a more creative approach to teaching offering exemplary opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of their faith. As a result attainment throughout the school is significantly above that expected nationally. Support and guidance to staff have been provided through a number of INSET sessions covering collective worship, assessment and differentiation delivered by the RE manager. Prior to the teaching of each unit the RE manager leads a discussion on the key concepts and ideas involved as part of regular staff meetings. Monitoring of RE is achieved through teacher assessment, observation and children's self-evaluation. A clear focus on the development of worship in the school has led to the introduction of assemblies based around the mission values of St Francis school and increased opportunities for children to plan and deliver their own class workshops. The RE co-ordinator's leadership is outstanding, promoting the highest standards in RE, inspiring staff and pupils through secure subject knowledge and a creative approach. Parents are well informed about children's learning through the school website, parent review meetings and the circulation of the Wednesday Word publication. The teaching of RE and delivery of collective worship form part of the induction pack for</p>				
<b>Areas identified for development by the school</b> <i>(include timescale for action)</i>				
<p>Analyse data and identify units to be developed to achieve high levels.</p>				

### VALIDATORS' JUDGEMENT

SECTION B1: Leadership and co-ordination of religious education	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
	✓			
<b>Key strengths</b>				
<p><b><i>Validators agree with the school that leadership and co-ordination of religious education are outstanding, with all members of the community contributing to their success.</i></b></p> <p>Validators commend the school for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The display boards, which demonstrate cohesion and commitment to the current topic, helping the pupils to recognise and develop their understanding of the relevant vocabulary and learning.</li> <li>• The induction pack and training for new staff, which ensures that they understand the context and expectations of the school.</li> <li>• The comparable data for Literacy and RE assessment, demonstrating that the attainment is at least good and usually outstanding.</li> <li>• The on-going commitment to regular staff development to improve teaching and assessment in RE.</li> <li>• The thorough and effective monitoring and evaluation of the subject.</li> <li>• The high status given to religious education by the school leadership and governing body. RE is a valued subject in the school and is recognised as part of the core curriculum.</li> </ul>				
<b>Areas identified for development</b>				
<p>To consolidate the development of the RE leader further, validators recommend that a range of practice in cluster schools be observed, to build on the existing good practice that already exists.</p>				



## WHAT THE SCHOOL SAYS

SECTION B2: Attainment and progress in religious education	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
	✓			

### Key strengths identified by the school

Attainment in RE is outstanding with almost all children achieving above the expected level for their age. God Matters has provided good opportunities for teachers to develop their knowledge and allowed them be more creative in the delivery of lessons. Standards throughout the school are significantly above expectations and this stems from outstanding teaching and learning as observed by OFSTED (January 2013). There has been a focus on assessment based on less formal approaches including the use of discussions and the class Big Books. Children are encouraged to take responsibility for their progress through the self-evaluation section of the front covers for each unit adapted from the diocesan resources. Reported assessment is achieved through a combination of teacher assessment, observations and pupil's self-evaluation. Assessment continues to be a focus with the development of the online tracking system in line with other subjects. The data reported here will be used to inform next steps. Pupil conferencing has shown that children have a generally positive attitude to RE and are able to clearly articulate their opinion of the things they enjoy and are good at. Pupils enjoy RE and learn effectively in challenging and stimulating lessons. Across the school RE is often included in cross-curriculum lessons such as Literacy, ICT and Art. Behaviour in lessons is outstanding with pupils showing a high level of respect for each other when working together as well as there being excellent relationships between pupils and adults.

### Areas identified for development by the school *(include timescale for action)*

Embed and extend assessment and tracking procedures.

## VALIDATORS' JUDGEMENT

SECTION B2: Attainment and progress in religious education	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
	✓			

### Key strengths

*Validators agree with the school that standards in religious education are outstanding. Pupils not only enjoy their RE lessons and take an obvious pride in the work they complete in their books, but speak enthusiastically and knowledgeably about what they are studying.*

Validators agree with the school's self-evaluation and commend the school for the following:

- The very good attitudes to learning. Pupils are well motivated and able to work individually and collectively.
- The outstanding behaviour and attentiveness of pupils.
- In lessons observed during the validation, the children were able to demonstrate how much they enjoyed and learned within the lesson in RE.
- The work in the books and observations on the day show that children are given a variety of activities to develop their understanding in RE.
- The interesting, motivating and creative RE activities provided for pupils.
- The effective monitoring of RE lessons, pupil conferencing and work sampling, which shows the attainment and progress to be consistently good, with considerable outstanding achievement.

### Areas identified for development

The validators agree with the school's identified area for development.

## WHAT THE SCHOOL SAYS

SECTION B3: Quality of teaching	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
	✓			

### Key strengths identified by the school

The teaching at St Francis has been rated as outstanding by OFSTED. Lesson observations have shown that teachers are using God Matters in a focussed way tailored to meet the needs of their children. Teachers are proactive and creative in the way they deliver lessons, taking risks in order to enhance learning. Resources are well researched and of good quality and enable pupils to experience their lessons in a variety of ways. Art, drama and ICT are used across the school with teacher assessment taking account of observations alongside recorded evidence. The use of class Big Books has helped promote effective learning with staff confident to record and celebrate achievement in a less formal way. Staff is able to offer children opportunities to experience their faith through whole school and small group visits to the parish church where they take part in both community services and sessions delivered by the parish priest with a specific learning objective. Staff has conducted RE lessons as part of a whole school Guided Learning initiative, focussing on extending or supporting children. The working environment for children is supportive, offering relevant and inspiring displays with a focus on key vocabulary and questions. SEN children benefit from additional help through the use of adult and peer support and the variety of tasks offered. Teachers are reflective and keen to improve their practice taking account of pupil feedback and learning from each other. The school values and relevant bible teachings are used to help enhance PSHE teaching and to resolve class issues as they arise. Current religious news and cultural events are used as a focus for worship and discussion in class allowing children to extend their understanding of how faith is relevant in their lives.

### Areas identified for development by the school *(include timescale for action)*

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## VALIDATORS' JUDGEMENT

SECTION B3: Quality of teaching	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
	✓			

### Key strengths

***Validators agree with the school that the quality of teaching of religious education is outstanding.***

Validators agree with the school's self-evaluation and commend the school for the following:

- Regular and accurate monitoring of RE teaching.
- Using a range of processes to assess accurately the teaching across the school.
- The school's commitment to developing the teaching staff in their RE understanding and teaching.
- On-going staff training and development of RE.
- The quality of discussion, particularly in KS2, but also across the school, is excellent, with children showing a good level of understanding of complex issues and insight.
- The professionalism and commitment of the teaching staff to provide a RE curriculum that is challenging, creative and of a high quality.
- The work of the learning support assistants in helping all pupils access the curriculum.
- The work in the books and observations on the day, which show that children are given a variety of activities to develop their understanding in RE

### Areas identified for development

The validators recommend that the school extend guided learning in RE, which is currently being trialled by the RE leader, across the school.

## SPIRITUAL AND MORAL DEVELOPMENT

### WHAT THE SCHOOL SAYS

SECTION C1: Spiritual development	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
	✓			

#### Key strengths identified by the school

St Francis school prides itself on the happy and respectful nature of its community. Our mission statement “Recognising Christ in Everyone” is at the heart of all we do. Children are able to develop their relationship with God and deepen their faith through a variety of experiences in school. Daily acts of worship are presented in a variety of formats and at different scales and pupils participate respectfully and enthusiastically. Parents and members of the parish are invited to attend whole school worship every Friday as well as key Liturgies during the year. The common thread in all acts of worship is the gospel. Appropriate readings are delivered from a range of texts and chosen according to either the Liturgical calendar or the occasion. The gospel values from the mission statement are related to daily life through whole school and key stage workshops and through the careful planning and delivery of linked PSHE lessons. Children in KS2 are encouraged to plan and deliver their own class worship with input from teaching staff and a dedicated RE teaching assistant. Pupil conferencing highlighted this as an area which children valued highly. High quality resources including ICT are used to create a spiritual and sacred atmosphere and children are invited to contribute their own thoughts and prayers both written and spoken. Across the school staff are developing the use of questioning and discussion around some of the Big Questions affecting our faith as detailed in God Matters enabling pupils to develop their thinking and faith in a safe, environment. Lesson observations show the high quality of thought and articulation in many lessons. The parish priest is involved in organising and taking part in class reflections including the year 6 retreat which takes place in

#### Areas identified for development by the school (include timescale for action)

- increased opportunities for staff and governor worship
- Strengthen links by bringing church liturgy into school and vice versa
- Prayer garden

### VALIDATORS’ JUDGEMENT

SECTION C1: Spiritual development	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
	✓			

#### Key strengths

*St Francis offers its pupils, staff and parents outstanding spiritual development, with a wide range of rich opportunities to help them deepen their personal relationship with God and ‘recognise Christ in everyone.’*

Validators agree with the school’s self-evaluation that the spiritual development in the school is outstanding and commend the school for the following:

- The range and quality of the worship in the school and the work of the leadership team in ensuring that it continues to develop and improve.
- The support given by the parish priest in leading and supporting worship in the school.
- Its commitment to involving parents and the whole community in the spiritual life of the school.
- The recognition of the pupils’ spiritual needs and the care and commitment of the school staff to ensure that provision is of the highest quality.
- The quality of the prayers that children shared with the validators demonstrated the depth of their understanding of God’s love for them.
- In the worship observed on the day of the validation, the children experienced quiet reflection and well thought-out Scripture. They participated appropriately and reverently, demonstrating confidence, when delivering the worship, which they had planned.

#### Areas identified for development

The validators agree with the school’s identified areas for development and recommend that they consider focusing on the prayer garden, to create awe and wonder in the beautiful setting that exists.

## WHAT THE SCHOOL SAYS

SECTION C2: Moral development	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
	✓			

### Key strengths identified by the school

Visitors to St Francis comment that they are immediately aware of the caring and Catholic nature of our school. The school mission statement is at the heart of all we do. Focussing on one of our values for half a term ensures that all members of the community are familiar with its meaning and can relate it to real life. Staff provide opportunities for children to reflect upon moral and ethical issues during class time reacting swiftly and with compassion to day to day incidents. A positive behaviour management scheme and the promotion of restorative justice reinforce a culture of excellent behaviour and positive encouragement. Peer Mediators provide the children with opportunities to resolve differences through discussion and consensus while accepting that the opinions of others are equally valid. Behaviour within in the school is rated as excellent by OFSTED and by parents. The consistently thoughtful behaviour of pupils promotes a positive and supportive learning environment for all leading to excellent progress for all groups. Recognising children's achievements in all areas of life is important at St Francis and these are celebrated regularly through the Special Mention and Sporting achievement assemblies. Pupils are encouraged to take on leadership roles within the school including House Captain, school council membership, lunchtime assistants and Reception buddies. Participation in events outside school such as The Big Sing and the Budgens Bread Challenge, builds the children's understanding that they are within the broader context of our local cluster of schools (LA and Diocesan). The school has a close partnership with parents, which is highly effective in supporting pupils' moral development.

### Areas identified for development by the school *(include timescale for action)*

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## VALIDATORS' JUDGEMENT

SECTION C2: Moral development	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
	✓			

### Key strengths

***Validators agree with the school's self-evaluation. Relationships within the school bear witness to the mission and are built firmly on Gospel values. All members show respect, care and consideration for those in the school and wider community.***

Validators agree with the school's self-evaluation and commend the school for the following:

- The mission of the school is clearly experienced by all; its influence is visible in the relationships that exist in the school which 'recognises Christ in everyone.'
- The outstanding behaviour of the pupils.
- The systems and structures for rewards and sanctions.
- The pastoral care offered to pupils by all staff.
- The clarity of Christian values, which guide and inform behaviour and policies.
- The involvement of pupils in support and care for others, through roles of responsibilities and in giving to charities and supporting a child in the parish.
- The pupils respect and respond to their teachers and hold them in high regard.
- Pupils know the difference between right and wrong and understand how to support one another.

### Areas identified for development

The school may wish to present even more opportunities for moral dilemmas to be discussed in RE.
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## **SOURCES OF EVIDENCE FOR THE VALIDATION**

As part of the validation process:

Two validators spent a morning in school:

- Meeting with the headteacher and RE leader;
- Experiencing a whole school act of collective worship;
- Being introduced to and speaking with staff;
- Having a comprehensive and full tour with both explanation and enthusiasm from two year six pupils;
- Time was spent discussing the schools' self-review report and gathering evidence.

163 parental questionnaires were given out and 73 were returned; responses were analysed.

One validator spent a further day in school, carrying out the validation.

On the validation day:

- A sample of pupils' work was scrutinised;
- Documentation and evidence were examined;
- Two acts of collective worship were observed, one key stage 2 and one class act of collective worship at key stage 1;
- Four RE lessons were observed.

Interviews and discussions were held with:

- Pupils;
- Parents;
- A governor:
- The RE governor;
- The RE leader.

Feedback was given to the headteacher and the RE leader at the end of the validation visit.

The validators would like to thank all involved for their time and effort in the very thorough preparation for the validation. They were also very appreciative of the wonderful, warm welcome and hospitality they received throughout the validation process. They appreciated and valued the beautiful prayers and films about pupils' life and experiences at St Francis School. Validators found it a pleasure and a privilege to be part of the process.