

DIOCESE OF PORTSMOUTH VALIDATION REPORT

St Anne's Catholic Primary School

Pinkerton Road, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG22 6RE

URN:147519

Date of previous validation 13 June 2019
Date of this validation **28 June 2022**



Overall effectiveness	Previous validation:	Requires Improvement
	This validation:	Good

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

This is a good school

- The school's mission to '*Let all you do be done with love*' permeates the life of the school, with all members of the community taking an active part in living this out. It is particularly evident in the strong and supportive relationships within the school.
- Since the last validation, the school community, led by the strong leadership team, have come together to create a clear vision and way forward for the school, where Christ and the best interests of all the children are very much at the centre.
- Leaders, including governors, provide a strong and effective model of Christian leadership, where all are valued. The school is well supported by the Mother Teresa Academy Trust.
- The very good support of the RE leader, who is also one of the deputy headteachers, helps ensure teachers deliver good quality lessons in this core subject. As a result, pupils make good progress and achieve well in religious education (RE).
- Pupils demonstrated a very positive attitude to learning in the lessons observed. The children spoken with on the day commented on how their learning in RE helps them to live their lives. One shared, '*We get to learn about God, and we can then teach and help others.*'
- Spiritual and moral development are good. Pupils are provided with a wide range of spiritual opportunities and provide a Christian witness within the local community, including attending a daytime Mass at the parish church on a regular basis. The children demonstrate excellent behaviour and Christian attitudes, giving of their time and talents to support those in need.
- Parents are very supportive of the school. One described the school as '*Absolutely amazing!*'
- Pupils are excellent ambassadors for the school and speak about their school with pride. Their very good behaviour and attitudes are underpinned by their knowledge and living out of the school's mission statement. One pupil commented, '*We are all one family, St Anne's is a happy place to be, where we all are comfortable to share.*'
- The central displays and school grounds enhance and support the school's Catholic ethos.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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

- Ensure activities in RE lessons capture the pupils' response to the core learning and provide evidence of where pupils are being encouraged to demonstrate greater depth in their thinking.
- Ensure pupils, particularly in upper key stage 2, are provided with regular opportunities to lead prayer both within their own classroom and elsewhere in the school.
- Ensure the monitoring, evaluation and challenge provided by leaders, including governors and directors, to move the school forward in relation to the Catholic life of the school and RE, is robust and documented.

Full Report

The school as a Catholic community

The school community:	Good
The wider community:	Good

- Working with all groups in the school community, a new mission statement, *'Let all you do be done with love'*, has been introduced. This is known and valued by all and underpins the life of the school. The FAITHFUL acronym flows from the mission statement and is effective in helping the pupils live out the values implicit in the statement. Time now needs to be given to ensure the mission statement and values are fully embedded into all aspects of school life.
- The school offers a warm welcome to all who come to visit or stay. There are clear and effective induction policies and procedures for staff, pupils and families, and these include useful information about the school's distinctive Catholic ethos.
- Leaders have worked hard to rebuild the relationship with parents that was fractured at the time of the last validation. From a recent survey carried out by the school, and from the survey completed as part of this validation, it is clear a very large majority of parents appreciate all the school does to support their child's learning both academically and spiritually. One commented, *'Fabulous school, we could not be happier as a family of faith.'* However, leaders are aware there is still more to be done and are particularly looking forward to providing more opportunities for parents to come into the school.
- Communication has improved and this is exemplified in the weekly newsletter and school website which offer both valuable information of a practical nature and also celebrates the Catholic life of the school.
- The school is proactive in working with the local parish, particularly during the current period when there is not a resident priest. Key links include how during the pandemic, prayers written by the children for the sick were read out at parish Masses, a school display board is kept updated in the church, and school staff attended the recent first holy communion services.
- The school has recently introduced the themes of Catholic Social Teaching to staff and pupils. As already planned by the school, they now need to embed the themes across the school's curriculum and into the wider life of the school.
- All in the school recognise that a core purpose of a Catholic school is to support others. One pupil stated, *'We need to reach out to the lost'*. This can be seen in its fund-raising for various charities and its outreach to vulnerable families, particularly during the pandemic.

Curriculum religious education

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

- From the observations of teaching and learning, the work in the pupils' books and discussions with the head of school and RE leader, it is clear that all aspects of RE are securely good.
- In the lessons seen during the visit, strengths included the use of questioning to elicit deeper responses; good scriptural knowledge by both staff and pupils; elements of challenge; engaging activities; good use of adult support, and opportunities for pupils to apply what they were being taught to their own lives. In some lessons, the pupils' learning within the lesson wasn't captured in sufficient detail and this could lead to incorrect judgements being made on their progress. In a small number of lessons too much was planned for the time given.
- In all lessons positive learning attitudes were displayed by the pupils.
- From an examination of the pupils' RE books, it can be seen that both teachers and pupils value the subject. Good progress is clearly seen across the school and within each year group. Each unit of study has a clear sequence of learning, starting with an initial assessment task.

- Pupils are given a variety of tasks to help them unpick and understand the core message of the scripture being studied - although the design of some tasks can inhibit the depth and length of the response. Staff need to ensure they do not miss opportunities where they can encourage pupils to demonstrate greater depth in their thinking.
- The RE leader leads the subject very well and is having a significant impact on the development of the subject across the school. Together with the head of school, and with support from the RE governor, the RE leader carries out regular and comprehensive monitoring of the subject, including book scrutinies, pupil conferencing and observations of teaching and learning. The reports on this monitoring, however, are often descriptive rather than evaluative. In future, they need to focus more on identifying the key strengths and areas for improvement and sharing them with relevant staff and governors and reporting back at a future date on how these areas have been addressed.

Spiritual and moral development

Spiritual development:	Good
Moral development:	Good

- Pupils are provided with a wide range of spiritual opportunities and prayer is integral to the daily life of the school. In addition to the regular coming together for prayer as a class or larger group, and as things return more to normal following the pandemic, the community have been able to hold a Marian procession together and classes are attending a daytime Mass at the parish church on a rota basis.
- During the visit, validators joined two acts of worship, in both there was a strong sense of reverence and spirituality. The worship was focussed on scripture and the children were encouraged to reflect on what it meant to them.
- The pupils spoken to shared how they enjoy having a prayer partner and how it impacts beyond the worship itself. The older children lead the Angelus or Hail Mary with younger classes after each lunchtime. It is planned to build on this next year with pupils leading class worships elsewhere in the school. The validators would agree that this is the appropriate next step to take. The pupils will initially need support and training in planning quality worship experiences and how to adapt them for younger children.
- Within classrooms there is a good quality prayer focal area where children can add their own prayers. Dedicated areas within the school grounds are also used to support and enhance the spiritual development of the pupils.
- Pupils' moral development is good and their behaviour is excellent. The children are kind, courteous and friendly with each other, 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.
- The mission statement and FAITHFUL values underpin the moral development of pupils. The award of *St Anne's Angels* recognises where pupils have shown these in their actions towards others.
- Staff and the older children provide good role models for the children.

Leadership and management: Good

- The personal witness to the faith provided by the head of school and the two deputy headteachers acts as a strong role model for others in the community and has been a key factor in developing the vision and direction for the work of the school.
- The school has gained from being part of the Mother Teresa Catholic Academy Trust. In particular, the support, challenge and guidance offered by the executive principal has had a positive impact. Partnership working between the two schools in the trust are constantly evolving and producing valued benefits.
- All in positions of leadership, including governors, show a strong commitment to the school's Catholic ethos, and a desire to develop and embed this further.

- Governors were able to share examples of how they both support and challenge senior leaders within this core area but currently this is insufficiently documented, or its core importance sufficiently reflected in key reports and plans. Governors outlined how it is moving to a model of monitoring and evaluation that will be more rigorous and include elements of independent evidence gathering. This is to be commended as a key step forward.
- Leaders have made good progress on the areas for improvement identified at the last validation, particularly in regard to those in positions of leadership actively promoting the school's Catholic vision, and in reviewing and improving communication with parents. More work still needs to be done on how to best enable governors to monitor and evaluate standards in RE and the Catholic life of the school.
- The school has adopted a comprehensive approach to gathering and considering evidence for its own self-review of the areas covered within this validation. This validation agreed all the school's own judgements.

School details

Name of school St Anne's Catholic Primary School

Age range of pupils: 4 – 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

Number of pupils on roll: 243

Chair of Governors: Pascal Sintah

Head of School: Martine Sadie

Chair of Directors: Dr Campbell McCafferty CBE

Executive Principal: Bill James

St Anne's Catholic Primary School is a one form entry primary school situated in the parish of St Joseph. There is currently no parish priest in residence. The school is part of the Mother Teresa Catholic Academy Trust. Seventy-one per cent of pupils are Catholic, and 45% of pupils have English as an additional language. The proportion of children entitled to free school meals is below average and the percentage who have special educational needs is broadly 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: Robert Dare

Assistant Validator: Jeff Sendall

Activities Carried Out as Part of the Validation

- Discussion on the school's self-evaluation sheets.
- Discussions with various members of the school community.
- Observations of whole school and class worship.
- Observations of teaching and learning in RE, including joint observations with the head of school and RE leader of the school.
- Pupil work scrutiny.
- Feedback of key findings to the senior leadership team and the chair of governors.

Conclusion

The validators would like to thank the head of school, executive principal, RE leader, staff, governors, directors, parents and pupils of St Anne's 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.