

DIOCESE OF PORTSMOUTH VALIDATION REPORT



St Walburga's Catholic Primary School

Malvern Road, Bournemouth, Dorset. BH9 3BY

Validation date 24th November 2021

Overall effectiveness: **Outstanding**

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

This is an outstanding Catholic school.

- St Walburga's is an example of an outstanding Catholic community, where everyone involved in the school is committed to its mission to 'walk in the footsteps of Jesus'. It is evident that the Spirit of the Gospels is actively lived out in all aspects of school of life.
- Validators commend the school on its success in genuinely providing a first class Catholic education that is supporting pupils to truly live their lives as Christ's disciples.
- Leaders, particularly the headteacher, demonstrate relentless dedication to the school community and the mission of the church, especially during the COVID pandemic.
- The headteacher provides a very effective model of Christian leadership, where all are valued and supported. She has created a confident team who are committed to the shared vision of the school.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school and recognise the impact it has on their children's spiritual and moral development. One parent noted, "*The Catholic ethos of the school is at the centre of their community and as a result the children are insightful and well rounded.*"
- Governors and the parish priest are dedicated and very supportive of the school.
- Religious Education (RE) is highly valued. Pupils are proud of their work and by the time they leave the school are achieving high standards.
- There are varied opportunities for spiritual development which have a positive impact on pupils. Pupils appreciate the chance to lead worship and give Christian witness.
- Pupils are justifiably proud to be a part of St Walburga's; they recognise they can make a positive contribution to their school and feel a valued member of the school community. One pupil explained this saying "*We are a family even though we are not related*".
- The validators only witnessed exemplary behaviour and positive attitudes to learning.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

As the school has already identified, validators would suggest the school;

- Continue to further develop and embed Catholic Social Teaching so that pupils recognise how they are putting their faith into action.
- Implement the Catholic School Inspection Framework, RE Curriculum Directory and Prayer and Liturgy Directory ensuring high standards are maintained.

Full Report

The school as a Catholic community

The school community:	Outstanding
The wider community:	Outstanding

- The school's Mission Statement has a very positive impact on all aspects of school life and there is clear evidence that you are within a community of faith. Particular strengths include the:
 - Warmth of the welcome received by visitors and new families to the school.
 - Opportunities for pupils to take positions of leadership which directly impact the faith life of the school.
 - Commitment to witness to the Gospel in their support for the most vulnerable.
- Validators commend the school on its success in genuinely providing a first class Catholic education that is supporting pupils to truly live their lives as Christ's disciples.
- Outstanding relationships have led to a loving, cohesive and trusting environment where all thrive and achieve their full potential. One parent commented, "*There are countless opportunities for relationship building throughout the year groups (e.g. prayer buddies) and the 'school family' is felt by all.*"
- The school environment is well cared for and the school's mission clearly evident in the high quality displays throughout the school. For example, the Mission Statement Heroes are shared in assembly and displayed in shared areas.
- Pupils are developing a secure understanding of Catholic Social Teaching and leaders are committed to its further development. This along with the school's progress in achieving the Oscar Romero Award is enabling children to put their faith into action.
- There are very good systems of communication, ensuring everyone is well-informed and regularly updated. The school's newsletter and website reflect the importance placed on the Catholic life of the school.
- St Walburga's is very much a diocesan school. The headteacher makes a significant contribution to Catholic education through her leadership of the PCP Partnership Board and involvement in other Diocesan initiatives.
- The school is proactive in their induction and welcome to new members of the school community. Prayer Buddies help to foster a sense of belonging and community.
- The overwhelming majority of parents were positive about the school; their fundamental view is that this school is centred on faith and led effectively.
- The school is active in supporting a variety of charities including visits to a local Nursing Home, CAFOD, Hope for Food and homeless charities and is also committed to the key message of *Laudaudo Si*. The pupils recognise this is helping them put their faith into action.

Curriculum religious education

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

- Attainment and progress in RE are outstanding as evidenced by the quality of teaching, high standards evident in pupils' books and discussion with pupils.
- Pupils' knowledge and skills are developed through each unit of RE through well targeted teaching and learning, appropriately challenging and creative tasks. This would be further enhanced where pupils draw on scripture references to support their arguments and ideas.
- On the day, validators identified the following strengths:
 - Probing questions which elicited deeper level of responses.

- Effectively designed and differentiated tasks that enabled pupils to demonstrate their learning.
- Secure subject knowledge so that teachers could support learning.
- Pupils utilising prior knowledge to respond to today's learning, particularly in key stage 2.
- Assessment for learning used to regroup pupils which provided appropriate challenge and support.
- Effective deployment of additional adults
- Creative approaches to learning.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils, who take pride in their work and show positive attitudes to learning.
- The RE Leader is proactive in her support of colleagues and has a clear understanding of next steps in the development of RE. She has a good understanding of the strengths and next steps for RE.

Spiritual and moral development

Spiritual development:

Outstanding

Moral development:

Outstanding

- The prayer and worship offered by the school effectively enables pupils to build a strong personal relationship with God and is shaping their understanding of Christian discipleship.
- During the validation, two collective worships were observed, which allowed all members of the school community to express their relationship with one another and with God, in a reflective and prayerful manner.
- Pupils are developing their understanding of stewardship and as one pupil said, *"we put our faith into action not just through the big things but also through everyday small things"*.
- There are a wide variety of opportunities for pupils and the school community to come together in prayer including class and phase worship, Marian and School Feast Days, school and class Masses.
- The pupils in the school demonstrate outstanding behaviour and Christian attitudes in their relationships, with a clear sense of right and wrong. Key factors promoting this include:
 - The moral and spiritual foundation provided by the school.
 - The high expectations of pupils.
 - The consistent reinforcement of Gospel values through RE and worship and their application in helping children make the right choice.
- Pupils are encouraged to take on leadership roles including the Worship Council, made up of pupils from across the school who carry out pupil conferencing to get ideas, and year 6 subject ambassadors, who discuss ways to improve subjects. Year 5 pupils have also led collective worship for staff groups including office staff.

Leadership and management:

Outstanding

- The headteacher provides an outstanding model of Christian leadership, demonstrating humility and service and ensures all members of the school community are highly valued.
- Senior leaders and governors share a common Christian vision and through example inspire the community to share in a strong sense of purpose and mission resulting in a highly collaborative and successful school.
- The school challenges itself through self-review and aims for high standards in all aspects of school life. Validators would agree with the identified actions from the improvement plans, which will embed the exemplary provision at the school.

- Governors are supportive, critical friends of the school and know the school's strengths and areas for development in religious education.
- Staff are well supported in their development needs and benefit greatly from collaborative work, including joint moderation and the individual support and coaching they receive.
- Leaders have effectively addressed the issues identified in 2014 Section 48 Validation and 2018 Diocesan Monitoring reports.

School details

Name of school	St Walburga's Catholic Primary School
URN:	113898
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number of pupils on roll:	419
Co-Chairs of Governors:	Samantha Humphrey and Matthew Betts
Headteacher:	Veronica Woodward

St Walburga's Catholic Primary School is a larger than average primary school situated in the Parish of the Annunciation and St Edmund Campion and within the Bournemouth pastoral area. The vast majority (91%) of pupils are Catholic; 32% of pupils have English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with SEND and those entitled to free school meals is well below national averages.

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

Ursula Clark	Lead Validator
Jeff Sendall	Assistant Validator

Activities Carried Out as Part of the Validation

- Scrutiny of school's website and documentation, including the parental survey.
- Discussion with various members of the school community.
- Joint learning walk with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and RE subject leader.
- Observations of class and key stage collective worship.
- Pupil work scrutiny.
- Feedback of key findings to senior leaders, RE subject leader and governors

Conclusion

The validators would like to thank the headteacher, deputy headteacher, RE leader, staff, governors, the parish priest, parents and pupils of St Walburga's Catholic Primary School for the warmth of their welcome, preparation and support during the validation process.