

DIOCESE OF PORTSMOUTH VALIDATION REPORT

St Walburga's Catholic Primary School, Bournemouth

Malvern Road, Bournemouth, Dorset, BH9 3BY



Date of previous validation March 2009

Dates of this validation 21 & 28 November 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous validation:	Good
	This validation:	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 school

- St Walburga's is an example of an outstanding Catholic community, where all the members 'walk in the footsteps of Jesus' with joy and humility. Their mission to welcome all, join together in prayer, learn to be the best they can and serve God and one another, is truly lived out and celebrated in all aspects of school life.
- The Christian leadership, humility and dedication of the headteacher, deputy headteacher, leadership team and governing body ensure that all in the community are highly valued, supported and challenged and subscribe to a shared vision for the school.
- The governing body, which both supports and challenges, is a key strength of the school. Key members of the governing body are frequent visitors to the school and are knowledgeable on the school's strengths and areas for development, including its Catholic ethos.
- Pupils are outstanding ambassadors for the school and speak about their school with pride. Their outstanding behaviour and attitudes are underpinned by their knowledge and living out of the school's mission statement: 'Our own version of the ten commandments'.
- Religious education (RE) is central to the life of the school. The excellent support of the RE leader ensures that progress and attainment are outstanding. Rigorous monitoring and evaluation ensure that the existing high standards in teaching and learning are being maintained and will improve further.
- The new parish priest offers excellent support to staff, pupils and governors.
- Parents are very supportive of the school. An overwhelming majority was positive about all aspects of school life.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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

- Raise the number of pupils attaining the higher levels at the end of each key stage.
- Ensure the outstanding practice in RE is always consistently applied throughout the school.
- Identify, coach and nurture future school leaders.

Full Report

The school as a Catholic community

The school community:	Outstanding
The wider community:	Outstanding

- Throughout the school there is firm evidence that you are within a community of faith. Particularly strong examples include:
 - The centrality of the revised mission statement in the life of the school and the community and the palpable living out of that mission statement.
 - The warmth of the welcome received by visitors from all members of the community.
 - The care, kindness and support in evidence among all staff, pupils, governors and parents.
 - The outstanding attitudes and behaviour of the pupils.
- School leaders inspire the community to share in a strong sense of vision and mission. The headteacher, deputy headteacher, senior leadership team and governors share a determination to continually strive for improvement and avoid complacency.
- The Catholic ethos is evident within the school environment, where high quality displays contribute to an attractive and purposeful community of learning.
- St Walburga's is very much a diocesan school. The headteacher is a key contributor to developing and supporting Catholic education in the diocese. The school works very closely with the local Catholic cluster and other local schools, sharing expertise and working with schools in need of support. Links with local Catholic schools are strong and mutually supportive.
- The induction of new staff and families into the ethos of the school is highly effective and very supportive.
- The school effectively communicates with parents, ensuring that they are kept up to date with what is happening and are given every opportunity to visit and participate in the life of the school.
- There is a strong partnership between the school and its main feeder parish. The strong involvement of the parish priest ensures all pupils, regardless of their faith background, know they are valued members of the parish.
- The school provides rich and varied opportunities to encourage the children to strengthen their relationship with God. Prayer buddies and the school's RE Enrichment Group support the leading of high quality worship throughout the school.

Curriculum religious education

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

- RE is central to the life of the school. Attainment and progress in RE are outstanding as evidenced by the quality of teaching, the evidence in pupils' books and class books and the discussions with pupils.
- Pupils are able to work collaboratively to reflect on issues raised in RE, apply it to their own lives and as they progress through the school, increasingly justify their conclusions using appropriate religious language.
- Marking is always supportive and is used to further challenge the children's thinking.
- Planning has a clear RE focus and is linked to the national levels of attainment.

Commented [HP1]:

- Teaching assistants play a key role in helping all pupils access the curriculum.
- Lessons have clear learning objectives and teachers use a variety of teaching strategies and activities, including cross curricular, to stimulate and engage children.
- High quality, interactive, RE displays contribute to the quality of learning.
- The RE subject leader and school leadership team rigorously monitor standards in RE, through work sampling and moderation at school, cluster and diocesan level.
- The RE leader's passion and drive underpin his excellent support for all staff, enabling them to deliver RE lessons with confidence and enthusiasm and ensuring that standards in religious education are continually improving.

Spiritual and moral development

Spiritual development:	Outstanding
Moral development:	Outstanding

- Prayer and worship are integral to the daily life of the school and focus on the centrality of Scripture and reflection on its message. The school embraces every opportunity to nurture spirituality and give Christian witness. These include: high quality prayer tables in every classroom, outstanding class and 'prayer buddies' worship, weekly staff prayer sessions, the annual celebration of the school feast day through a day of prayer culminating in an open air Mass, the provision of a monthly prayer calendar to encourage parents to pray with their children and a day of reflection for year 6. Children said 'if we didn't pray with God, we wouldn't grow with God.'
- Children's behaviour is outstanding. The schools' rewards and sanctions, linked to the mission statement, reinforce a culture of high expectations and positive encouragement. The tokens awarded for being 'Super Role Model' and 'Learning Champion' are linked with choosing gifts for CAFOD.
- All staff provide excellent pastoral care, guidance and support to all pupils.
- The school works closely with parents to support pupils' moral development.
- Pupils willingly take on responsibilities and participate constructively in school life as prayer buddies, school councillors, members of Global Gang and the RE Enrichment Group and playground buddies.
- Pupils are justifiably proud of their school. 'It's a community where you are encouraged to love one another and really mean it.'

Commented [HP2]:

Leadership and management: Outstanding

- The impact of the strong Christian leadership offered by the headteacher, deputy headteacher, leadership team and governing body is in evidence throughout the school.
- The rigorous and effective approach to the monitoring and evaluation of all aspects of school life enable the school to constantly challenge itself. There is a constant drive for improvement and insistence on high standards in all areas.
- The children take on a variety of leadership roles and are very good role models as school councillors and school buddies.
- Good progress has been made on the issues identified for improvement in the last validation, particularly in developing assessment in RE and in supporting parents with children's behavioural issues.

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:	482
Chair of Governors:	Patricia Marchiori
Headteacher:	Robert Dare

St Walburga's Catholic Primary School is a larger than average school situated in the parish of the Annunciation and St Edmund Campion and within the Bournemouth pastoral area. The school also has links with the parishes of Our Lady Immaculate and Sacred Heart. A very large majority (94%) of its pupils are Catholic; 25% of pupils have English as an additional language and come from a variety of ethnic minorities. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is well below 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

Helena Pickering	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 a class and prayer buddy worship.
- Observations of teaching and learning in RE, including joint observations with the headteacher and RE leader.
- 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 headteacher, deputy headteacher, RE leader, staff, governors, the parish priest, parents and pupils of St Walburga's 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.