

# DIOCESE OF PORTSMOUT VALIDATION REPORT



**St Patrick’s Catholic Primary School,**  
Whitefriars, Avenue Road. Farnborough. Hampshire GU14 7BW

Validation dates 20<sup>th</sup> May and 10<sup>th</sup> June 2015

**Overall effectiveness: Good**

<b>The school community:</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>Attainment and progress in RE:</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>The wider community:</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Quality of teaching in RE:</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Spiritual development:</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>Leadership and management of RE:</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Moral development:</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>Leadership and management:</b>	<b>Good</b>

## **This is a good school.**

- St Patrick’s Catholic Primary School is an outstanding example of a Catholic school community, where the spirit of the Gospel is lived out in all aspects of the school’s life and is evident in the quality of the relationships throughout the school.
- The headteacher provides a strong model of Christian leadership and has enabled the school to flourish.
- All those in positions of leadership, including governors, are fully committed in their drive for continuing improvement. They undertake a rigorous cycle of monitoring, evaluation and support, to ensure the celebration of strengths, as well as highlighting areas for development.
- The links between the school, the parish and the local Catholic cluster of schools are very strong and mutually supportive. The parish priest is regarded as “a blessing for the school”.
- An overwhelming majority of parents are positive about all aspects of school life and are fully supportive of the school. One commented that they were “impressed by the school’s active promotion of Christian values and Catholic beliefs”.
- The recently appointed religious education (RE) manager is a key strength of the school. She leads by example and is committed to ensuring that RE is taught to a high standard.
- The quality of teaching and achievement in RE are good.
- Spiritual and moral development are outstanding. Throughout the visit pupils were courteous, supportive of one another and demonstrated exemplary behaviour.
- Staff and children act as witnesses to their faith, through their support for one another and for local, national and international charities.
- The school provides a wide range of high quality acts of worship, which include liturgies, Masses and class collective worship, enabling children to deepen their relationship with God.

## **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

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

- To further embed the level of challenge for more able pupils in RE.
- To ensure consistency of approach so that all pupils are given sufficient time to reflect and respond to the key questions.
- To consider ways in which this school could have a beneficial impact on the work of other schools.

## Full Report

### The school as a Catholic community

The school community:	Outstanding
The wider community:	Good

- The school's mission statement and Christian ethos permeate all aspects of school life. This is reflected in the excellent and secure relationships that have led to a loving and trusting environment, where all achieve their full potential.
- There are very good systems of communication, ensuring all stakeholders are very well-informed and regularly updated. Very good use is made of the school's website to inform parents about, and celebrate the school's Catholic ethos.
- The school is to be congratulated on the great care given to ensuring that its environment is maintained to a high standard and how it is used to enhance the liturgical life of the school, for example, the excellent displays throughout the school and the outdoor prayer garden.
- The school's contribution to the life of the diocese, for example through the Primary Catholic Partnership, where senior leaders have contributed to the development of the early years' course and where the headteacher is a diocesan assistant validator, is valued and appreciated.
- The links between the local parish and the school are excellent and mutually supportive. The parish priest plays a very active and encouraging role in the life of the school. There are strong links with the local Salesian community.
- The school has good and growing partnerships with local Catholic primary and secondary schools and engages fully with other local schools, groups and agencies. It now needs to consider how its work can be beneficial to other schools.
- Members of the school community demonstrate their commitment to the principles of stewardship, through their support for many local, national and international initiatives selected by the School Council, including CAFOD, UNICEF, Children in Need and Phyllis Tuckwell Hospice Care.

### Curriculum religious education

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

- The outstanding relationships create a very positive learning environment, where pupils are confident to contribute. Achievement in RE is good.
- A large majority of groups of pupils make at least good progress, with some for whom it is outstanding.
- When the school's work on challenging the more able pupils in RE is fully embedded attainment and progress in RE should lead to outstanding achievement.
- The use of key and planned questions is developing pupils' knowledge and understanding in RE but there needs to be greater consistency in allowing children time to reflect and respond.
- The school is embedding a very effective and systemic approach to marking and feedback in RE.
- Teaching observed on the day ranged from good to outstanding and evidence in the pupils' RE books supports this judgement. In all lessons children were engaged. High level questioning challenged pupils' thinking and allowed them to demonstrate their knowledge of Scripture. Creatively differentiated tasks enabled pupils to effectively achieve the learning objectives.
- Philosophy for Children (P4C) approaches are having a positive impact across the school, enabling pupils to develop their own questions and reflect on their own and others' experiences.
- The quantity and range of evidence to support learning in RE are good.

- The RE manager provides outstanding support for all staff, through the delivery of RE focussed inset and the opportunity to provide coaching and informal support to colleagues. She has a very clear understanding of key strengths in teaching and learning and areas for development and works tirelessly to see these areas improved and addressed.
- The positive partnership between the headteacher and RE manager ensures a systematic approach to the development and improvement of RE.

## Spiritual and moral development

Spiritual development:

Outstanding

Moral development:

Outstanding

- The school provides a wide range of high quality worship, which allows all members of the school community to express their relationships with one another and with God in a reflective and prayerful manner. The school embraces every opportunity to nurture spirituality and give Christian witness; these include:
  - The confidence of pupils in expressing their own spirituality as seen in the key stage 2 and class collective worships.
  - The use of the school grounds and prayer garden for prayer and reflection.
  - Pupils performing an annual Paschal play and leading Masses for elderly parishioners.
  - Parents being invited to attend class collective worships and Masses, with a member of the parish running a weekly rosary group.
- The parish priest works effectively with the school to provide liturgical celebrations and opportunities for reconciliation for the whole community.
- Pupils are very proud of their school. They commented that, “They base everything they do around God. Every day we learn something new about God.” They have a good understanding of the mission statement and how they live it in everyday life in school.
- 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 staff and older pupils acting as very good role models in the school.
  - Charters based on Rights of the Child, which are regularly re-visited.
  - The opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
  - Celebration assemblies praising behaviour, effort, good manners and attitude.
- Pupils are fully aware of their responsibilities to one another, through the work of the school council and their support of charities.

## Leadership and management:

Good

- The headteacher provides a strong and effective 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 constantly challenges itself through rigorous self-review and aims for high standards in all aspects of school life. Continuing the robust monitoring and well-timed support will embed high achievement across the school.
- Governors are supportive, critical friends of the school and have a secure knowledge of the school’s strengths and areas for development.
- 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.
- Good progress has been made on the areas for development identified in the previous validation.

## School details

<b>Name of school</b>	St Patrick's Catholic Primary School
<b>URN:</b>	116390
<b>Age range of pupils:</b>	4 – 11
<b>Gender of pupils:</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on roll:</b>	216
<b>Chair of Governors:</b>	Dr Chris Richardson
<b>Headteacher:</b>	Paula Dix

St Patrick's Catholic Primary School is an average sized primary school in Farnborough. The school mainly serves the parish of Our Lady, Help of Christian's, Farnborough. The vast majority of its pupils are Catholic. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is well below average. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well above average and the percentage of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities 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

Ursula Clark	Lead validator
Louise Buxton	Assistant validator
Anne-Marie Brister	Diocesan observer

### Activities Carried Out as Part of the Validation

- Ethos walk.
- Discussion on the school's self-evaluation sheets.
- Observations of key stage 2 and class worship.
- Observations of teaching and learning in RE, including joint observations with the headteacher and RE manager.
- Pupil work scrutiny.
- Feedback of key findings to the senior leadership team and a representative of the governing body.

## Conclusion

The validators would like to thank the headteacher, deputy headteacher, staff, governors, the parish priest, parents and pupils of St Patrick'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.