

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.

NAME OF SCHOOL	Oaklands Catholic School and Sixth Form College
ADDRESS	Stakes Hill Road Waterlooville PO7 7BW
URN	137345
CHAIR OF GOVERNORS	Mr Andrew Hastilow
HEADTEACHER	Mr Matthew Quinn
NAMES OF VALIDATORS	Ms Rosemary Olivier Mr John Wright
DATES OF THE VALIDATION VISIT	7 th , 24 th & 25 th October 2013

Information about the school

Number of pupils on roll

1364

Number of boys

654

Number of girls

710

Number of statemented pupils

18

Percentage of Catholic pupils

66.3%

Number of teaching staff

98

Number of support staff

107

Percentage of Catholic staff

38.8%

Oaklands is a large Catholic secondary mixed voluntary academy, situated in pleasant grounds in Waterloooville. The school is accommodated in one old house, the original convent, with excellent newer buildings. It serves the Havant Pastoral Area, with the majority of students from there and from Portsmouth. The number of students with special educational needs (SEN) and with a statement of SEN is well below that in other schools. Most students are from a white British heritage; those from minority ethnic groups are below the national average. A small number of students, below the national average, is eligible for the pupil premium.

Most students travel on foot or by bus. Due to the withdrawal of free school transport by the local authority and the cessation of some bus routes, an increasing number of students now travel on buses, the provision of which is negotiated by the academy and for which a concessionary rate is charged for some students. Concessionary travel is a result of local authority subsidy, which is gradually being withdrawn.

The school's effectiveness in providing Catholic education

The school provides outstanding Catholic education. The mission statement of Community, Unity, and Opportunity is firmly embedded in all areas of school life. The headteacher, other leaders and all in the school are committed to the values of the Gospel, articulated in the mission statement. The headteacher shows exceptional skills of leadership, in encouraging spiritual and moral development in students and staff and in providing space for that growth to flourish.

Religious education (RE) in the school is outstanding. The dedicated and progressive RE department makes a distinctive and wide contribution to the academic and spiritual success of the school as a whole.

Governors are equally passionate about the ethos of the school and support its development, through their own work and through encouraging and supporting many initiatives. Students are proud of their school, valuing its community spirit and its good standards.

a) Key strengths of the school

The excellent Catholic community, which encourages young people in the knowledge, understanding and practice of their faith;
The outstanding RE provision and the skills of the RE leader;
The exceptional spiritual and moral development of all students.
The central focus of the school on its Catholic ethos, articulated in the strength of both RE and chaplaincy provision, their status and locations in the school.
The headteacher's personal witness and commitment to the Catholic life of the school.
The commitment of senior leaders and that of all staff to the Catholic life of the school.
The support and work of governors, who are focused on the school's Catholic life.

b) Key areas for development

Continue to provide support for all staff in their roles as leaders in Catholic education.
Share outstanding practice in RE within and beyond school.

c) Progress since the last validation

The school has continued its outstanding provision since the last validation in 2008. In addition, attention has been paid to the recommendation to employ a greater range of IT resources to stimulate learning further in RE, especially for gifted and talented students. This work is successfully embedded.

d) Summary of parents' views of the school

175 parents returned completed surveys. The overwhelming majority are supportive of the school.

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

- Oaklands is an inclusive Christian community deeply rooted in the values of the Gospel
- All members of the community own and live the mission and vision of the school with a sense of community pride permeating the atmosphere; opportunities are provided for staff and student leadership
- The appointment of a Chaplain and Assistant has refreshed the liturgical and spiritual life of the school
- The SLT provide Christian leadership example and promote and develop the Christian life of the school
- Relationships are characterised by respect, forgiveness and affirmation; there is good communication
- There is a robust induction programme for new staff, NQTs (yearly intervention), students, governors and parents
- Visitors and members of the local/wider community are welcomed with Christian hospitality
- Student Voice (in its many forms) has been developed in recent years and students play a key role in our consultation and decision making processes
- The school celebrates its diversity through outreach work with CAFOD, International Schools Award and the Comenius projects
- The environment is well cared for; a programme of improved facilities; shared with primary feeder and parish
- The school has promoted new methods of communicating with parents (text, email, newsletter, website, SLG)

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

1. Focus on provision of a responsive curriculum for specific cohorts of students
2. Develop an external mentoring programme in view of reduced LA pastoral support (commenced Summer Term 2012 and to be reviewed Summer 2013)

VALIDATORS' JUDGEMENT

SECTION A1: The school community	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
	✓			

Key strengths

Oaklands is an inclusive Christian community, deeply rooted in the values of the Gospel, where the spirit of the Gospel pervades all aspects of school life. The influence of the Christian vision of the school's leadership can be seen throughout the school. All in the community are highly valued and their needs are taken seriously. The school's mission statement is strongly embedded and its values are reinforced in many interesting ways throughout the school, including in prayers. It is fully committed to the principles of stewardship. All in the immediate and wider community are kept well-informed about the schools' work and achievements. Student Voice is effective through the school council and through house teams, there are additional opportunities for students outside the sixth form to take responsibility as, for example, sports leaders, chaplaincy team, buddy schemes. The environment is attractively maintained and displays make explicit the Christian values of the school.

Areas identified for development

Validators agree with the areas for development identified by the school.

WHAT THE SCHOOL SAYS

SECTION A2: Leadership and management	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
	✓			

Key strengths identified by the school

- The mission statement directs the work of the school; it is celebrated and lived by all member of the community
- The Headteacher regularly communicates his vision to staff, students and parents; the Governors and the SLT provide a strong sense of direction for the school
- 4 members of the SLT have undertaken post-graduate Catholic School Leadership studies; SLT promote the Catholic life of the school through worship, assembly and exemplar teaching; 2 members of SLT are qualified Section 48 Validators; the Head and Chair offer wider support to Catholic schools on academy conversion
- Governors understand their role in relation to the school's Catholic identity and monitor all aspects of school life. Minutes evidence that they will challenge and support the school. The RE Link Governor regularly visits the RE department and assists in the appointment of RE staff
- Self-Review has become embedded in school practice with all departments undertaking a SEF and Leadership and Management Review, ensuring rigorous and robust monitoring of data and Teaching and Learning
- The Head of RE participates in Diocesan network, and supports the Diocesan Working Party on Sex Education and Sixth Form PRE provision; has recently taken on the role of Diocesan RE Co-ordinator.
- Governors' Strategy and Values statement provide a continuing measurement of our commitment to mission

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

1. Governor training and development in ethos and mission to be undertaken in 2013-14 to deepen understanding of mission
2. Update induction of new staff into the Catholic life of the school – July 2013 and Sept 2013

VALIDATORS' JUDGEMENT

SECTION A2: Leadership and management	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
	✓			

Key strengths

The headteacher and governors have a clear understanding of the purposes of Catholic education and strongly support its principles and apply them.

Through their example of Christian leadership, the senior team and other leaders and managers, including the governors, are exceptionally successful in inspiring the school to share a strong sense of purpose, vision and mission. Senior staff carry out extensive and rigorous monitoring, to ensure that no student is left behind. Governors are similarly rigorous in their scrutiny of the school's work, holding all to account for the use of their resources. Governors, through their effective link governor procedures, have a good understanding of the school's work and good relationships with their employees. The school invests significantly in its support for students with a range of individual needs. Support for staff and investment in their development is strong; many staff have developed from their early careers to leadership positions. Staff and students are proud of their school and have confidence in its purpose.

Areas identified for development

Validators agree with the areas for development identified by the school. They further suggest that governors be kept constantly renewed about their strategic role in ethos of school

WHAT THE SCHOOL SAYS

SECTION A3: The wider community	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
	✓			

Key strengths identified by the school

- Parish links are strong for both staff and students with a close relationship with Havant Pastoral area and priests
- An active relationship with all our feeder primaries leading to improved transition and sharing of resources and best practice.
- Oaklands works closely with CAFOD and has a link with a Catholic community in Kenya – 5 students have been funded to visit and cascade in school and parishes. Charity fundraising is a strength of the community.
- There is a well-established SVP group which collaborates with a feeder primary to visit a local care home
- Students lead a Genocide Memorial Project to create a monument on the campus; we now have Beacon School Status
- Challenge Week promotes inter-cultural links with other faiths and develop a sense of community
- Other Christian inspirational leaders are invited in to Oaklands to present assemblies or information sessions
- The music department takes part in local festivals and events; DHT chaired the Federation CLT; AHT chairs Federation Inclusions Group; AHT actively involved in Federation SCITT;
- We organised and hosted a Diocese Youth Day as our way of marking the Year of Faith (500 students) 27 Sept 2013
- The Chaplain and the PDC department invite speakers from local organisations (eg Stone Pillow, AA) to present
- We have completed a Comenius Project and has bid for another; and in July 2013 were re-accredited with the International Schools Award promoting the celebration of culture and diversity.
- Lead role in Diocesan Catholic Teaching School Alliance

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

1. To further develop the CAFOD Kenya link, sponsor the primary school and provide support to the lead teacher
2. Support other Catholic schools wishing to convert to Academy status
3. Support the community of Catholic schools in the Diocese through Strategic Partner role in the CTSA
4. To encourage other Catholic secondary schools to join the Beacon Schools Holocaust project

VALIDATORS' JUDGEMENT

SECTION A3: The wider community	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
	✓			

Key strengths

The school is a strong supporter of the local schools, including the Catholic schools. It educates students from a wide area and is the Catholic secondary school of choice for children from 30+ primary schools. Many students travel significant distances to attend the school.

The school is a pro-active and strongly supportive member of the local and diocesan partnership of schools and has a strong partnership with the local Catholic community. Oaklands is a founder member of the Diocesan Education Alliance and a key partner of the Catholic primary Teaching School. The headteacher and governors give, and have given over time, generous support to the diocese and its work, including the academy programme.

Staff take an active interest in supporting the school's charitable and social endeavours. There is a strong and productive parents' association.

There are opportunities for social diversity to be celebrated, allowing students to develop their social conscience, through living out Gospel values and the mission of the school. By working in partnership with a variety of groups and communities, opportunities are given for reciprocal learning and understanding, developing mutual respect and awareness.

Areas identified for development

Validators agree with the areas for development identified by the school.

CURRICULUM RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

WHAT THE SCHOOL SAYS

SECTION B1: Leadership and co-ordination of religious education	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
	✓			

Key strengths identified by the school

- A strong collegiate approach and shared vision for the future of the Department
- All classes staffed by specialist teachers and classes allocated equitably
- Suite of rooms in same building with easy access to resources and each classroom having an IWB
- Sharing of resources and best practice via meetings and shared area
- The clear and effective introduction of the amended KS4 and KS5 specifications – supported by results (Year 11 2013 89% A*-C, Year 12 2013 85% A-C, Year 13 2013 83% A*-C)
- Review of KS3 leading to new schemes of work and assessed tasks, designed to aid progress into KS4 both in terms of content and skills
- Cross-curricular links established with History via ‘Holocaust’ module in Year 9
- Greater identification of and provision for Gifted and Talented students in Years 9, 10 and 11
- Careful and regular self-monitoring and analysis of provision and results
- Emphasis on the importance of taking time to pray and reflect within lessons – new boards in class to facilitate
- Head of RE co-ordinates secondary RE across the diocese

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

1. PRE course – need to monitor and review its effectiveness both in school and across the diocese in comparison to other initiatives
2. Talent management of staff - develop areas of expertise and responsibility

VALIDATORS’ JUDGEMENT

SECTION B1: Leadership and co-ordination of religious education	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
	✓			

Key strengths

The leadership of religious education enables and encourages exemplary practice throughout the department. The head of department has a clear vision of an inclusive and challenging Catholic curriculum, where standards are rigorous and targets are ambitious.

All colleagues are given opportunities for responsibility within the department and the wider school community; for example, leading on the Holocaust Beacon School project.

The whole community at Oaklands celebrates the success and witnesses to the impact of the RE department, particularly in regard to the charitable and prayer life of the students.

The head of department provides comprehensive documentation to new and existing colleagues, enabling an efficient management of resources and providing a clear rationale for curricular and wider learning opportunities, which they lead. Detailed schemes of work for all key stages are provided and are the product of collaboration within the department.

There are increasing opportunities for the most able to be stretched, with for example, the small and very successful group in year 9 taking an early short course GCSE in St Mark’s Gospel.

Areas identified for development

Validators agree with the targets set and encourage the RE department to share its pedagogical practices, both within the school and at the appropriate diocesan level.

WHAT THE SCHOOL SAYS

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

Key strengths identified by the school
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are now working towards the FFTD aspirational targets at KS4 and have had excellent results to date (2013) • Pupil Premium and SEN student achieving well above expected levels • The RE database has been improved so it is now part of the SIMS system at KS3 & 4 as well as expanding the range of tracking we now have at KS5 • The Baseline assessment has been changed and will be used in Year 7 on entry. A process of moderation has been introduced to ensure consistency of levelling and thus more accurate target setting • Marking is effective and formative, paying close attention to targets and offering advice to achieve these • New literacy strategies are now in place when marking to more closely reflect recent statutory changes • Schemes of work are detailed, with a clear structure going through all the Key Stages, including lesson objectives/learning outcomes, a variety of learning styles catered for to ensure all learners can succeed • Continued use of AfL in schemes of work and lessons • Regular (half termly) monitoring of teaching and marking by both HoD and as a Dept • Rewarding of progress with HoD stickers & postcards. Tracking and support of underachievement by HoD report, weekly detention, individual parental contact & SIMS monitoring.

Areas identified for development by the school <i>(include timescale for action)</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop Student voice as a Teaching and Learning forum (STARS) 2. Progress of specific groups of students, using data to inform planning

VALIDATORS' JUDGEMENT

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

Key strengths
<p>Students achieve outstanding results in all key stages and at all levels of ability. They often make better than expected progress due to the timely and apposite intervention of their teachers.</p> <p>Students are regularly and skilfully led to a thoughtful consideration of subjects which are spiritually and morally demanding.</p> <p>Marking follows school guidelines and encourages a positive dialogue with students, who are helped to make progress by challenging formative targets.</p> <p>The use of data is well embedded, with students able to articulate their own targets and how to achieve or exceed them.</p> <p>At key stage 5 religious studies remains very popular, with students achieving excellent outcomes. Students enjoy their lessons and refer to success at GCSE and AS level as reasons for their decision to continue with the subject. Each year a number of students read theology or related subjects at university.</p>

Areas identified for development
<p>Validators agree with the targets set.</p>

WHAT THE SCHOOL SAYS

SECTION B3: Quality of teaching	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
	✓			

Key strengths identified by the school

- Schemes of work in place which are accessible, detailed, varied in type of activities/learning experience and contributed to by all members of the Department
- New KS4 schemes of work are more adventurous in the type of activity and learning experience in order to engage boys more and so improve their higher grade passes
- Resources – all rooms have IWB, DVD players as well as all staff having access to a bank of DVD's, CD roms, RE Today resources, picture stimuli, RE lessons online, YouTube, etc
- Staffing – we are now staffed by qualified RE teachers who are totally committed to the vision of the RE Department and support in every way possible
- Cross-curricular link with English, History in Year 9 Holocaust module and PDC (SRE)
- Differentiation is in place and is especially good for the SEN, lower ability and Pupil Premium students
- New KS4 GCSE unit for G&T students has provided excellent results
- G&T conference for Year 10 & 11 students
- Provision of different revision workshops for GCSE & A level students
- Lesson observations by Head of Department indicates that majority of teaching is good and at times outstanding

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

1. Look into offering a G&T taster day for Year 6 students led by G&T students at Oaklands, thereby stretching our G&T
2. Cascading of P4C and other active and innovative methods of teaching and learning to staff, to build into lessons/schemes of work to facilitate higher order thinking skills
3. Use of peer observation to embed Good to Outstanding

VALIDATORS' JUDGEMENT

SECTION B3: Quality of teaching	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
	✓			

Key strengths

Overall, teaching is outstanding over time. It has a clear focus on attainment and progress coupled with a commitment to the development of young people, who are happy and willing to articulate their viewpoints.

Teachers offer prayer and reflection opportunities throughout the school, to which students respond readily and with reverence.

Display is informative, contemporary and acts as an aide-mémoire to whole school and departmental initiatives.

The head of department has built a culture of high expectation and mutual support for her colleagues. All team members contribute to the rounded learning experience offered by the department.

The expert delivery of A level religious studies in an affirming, rigorous seminar context gives students an outstanding experience of undergraduate theology.

Students experience an inclusive Catholic Christian perspective on life, which engages them with religion as a living reality and encourages a religiously literate outlook for their futures.

Areas identified for development

Validators agree with the targets set by the school.

SPIRITUAL AND MORAL DEVELOPMENT

WHAT THE SCHOOL SAYS

SECTION C1: Spiritual development	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
	✓			

Key strengths identified by the school

- Appointment of new Chaplain from April 2009 & Chaplain's Assistant from September 2010 has been exciting
- Increased variety of worship experiences through Mass and liturgy for students in addition to existing opportunities, providing more visual and 'active' experiences which engage a reverential response
- Link priest in school every other Tuesday to celebrate Year Masses, Full School Masses, support liturgies and go into RE classes to talk formally and informally. He is supported by other local pastoral area priests for the Sacrament of Reconciliation and some whole school Masses
- Development of in-house Year 8 Day of Reflection at the end of the year, especially the links developed with Portsmouth Family Church and departments across the school. Additional improvements have been made in response to staff and student evaluations to Year 7 Cathedral Pilgrimage & to the Year 9 Relationships Day
- Move to weekly prayer sheet with the intention of making it more responsive to situations as they arise as well as continuing to celebrate the liturgical seasons and saints days
- Whole school mission in March 2011 and other Chaplaincy initiatives such as Signing Group and Youth Alpha
- New school hymnal with revised Mass settings; reconciliation, and adoration are regularly on offer to students
- Ethos SIG group (12-13) representatives from all Departments and Year Groups driving forward SMSC across school
- Opportunity for staff to pray together every Monday and Tuesday morning, plus termly staff mass in the Chapel

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

1. Greater awareness by staff other than RE of the provision they make to pupils' spiritual development, especially the use of the end of day prayer opportunity
2. Distinct professional development for RE Dept (summer 2014)
3. 2nd Sion Community Youth Mission (March 2014)

VALIDATORS' JUDGEMENT

SECTION C1: Spiritual development	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
	✓			

Key strengths

The outstanding chaplaincy provision is anchored in the lay chaplain. She has brought a renewed sense of spirituality to the school. The chapel and chaplaincy team are both reflections of her work and her commitment to supporting spiritual development for all in the school community. Her work is appreciated and recognised by all, students, staff and governors.

Daily opportunities are provided for students to worship together and students frequently take the lead in planning and leading liturgy, through the programme for assemblies and class prayer.

Staff also have sessions for their own spiritual development, including the support they receive from their colleagues and the senior staff, especially the headteacher.

There is a wide variety of high quality, planned and spontaneous religious experiences, including meditation, prayer, contemplation and ritual; these are well-supported by the parish priest.

Worship follows the liturgical year. Opportunities for individual prayer outside arranged times are actively taken up.

Retreat experiences are provided for students in all year groups. Opportunities to foster student spiritual development are found across the curriculum.

Areas identified for development

Validators agree with the areas for development identified by the school, especially the constant need to keep staff aware of their role in students' spiritual development and maintaining a programme to enable staff to do this.

WHAT THE SCHOOL SAYS

SECTION C2: Moral development	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
	✓			

Key strengths identified by the school

- New EPR Policy written in June 2013 with contributions from both RE & PDC Departments
- New behaviour policy through staff working party and presentations to staff during INSET day in July 2010. Outcomes displayed in every classroom for pupils to see.
- New rewards system implemented September 2009 and furthered through introduction of Epraise October 2012
- Buddies system developed for Year 11 pupils to support and guide pupils new to the school in Year 7
- Fair Trade status and the Fair Trade group continues to grow; good support for events such as Fast Days and Fair Trade Fortnight as well as the Fair Trade Fayre in July 2011
- PDC and Chaplain liaise with outside speakers: homelessness charities, drugs rehabilitation, Palestinian farmers
- Development of 6th Form CAFOD group who lead new initiatives such as flash mob in December 2012
- The successes of pupils are celebrated and rewarded in the annual Awards Assembly and Presentation Evening
- Year 9 Relationships Day has been developed following evaluations from staff, students and outside speakers
- Buttons genocide memorial project was initiated and led by students, including presentations to the media
- Students participate in community projects such as the Borneo and Ecuador trips; weekly SVP visits to feeder primary school and Borrows Age Concern Centre

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

1. Retreat for staff to ensure protected time to develop ethos and spirituality (June 2014)
2. Development of school's Holocaust Beacon Status (only RC school currently involved) within student body and also to include other local schools

VALIDATORS' JUDGEMENT

SECTION C2: Moral development	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
	✓			

Key strengths

Students' consistently thoughtful behaviour is a factor, where learning is good and outstanding. Their considerate behaviour around school creates an extremely positive school ethos. Rewards and sanctions reinforce a culture of high expectations and positive encouragement within school.

Students resolve conflicts appropriately and sensitively and seek consensus, while accepting the right of others to hold different opinions and beliefs. The role of the chaplain and other staff are key in managing conflict and resolving difficult relationships.

Students' outstanding moral development is actively supported through the RE and Personal Development and Citizenship (PDC) programmes and through opportunities for worship.

Students are, in the main, extremely supportive of the ethos and values of the school and of their environment. The site is well-maintained and the vast majority of students treat it with respect.

Students' involvement with charitable programmes, especially the year 12 students' involvement with CAFOD, raises awareness of global dimensions of the need for action to counter poverty.

Areas identified for development

Validators agree with the areas for development identified by the school.

SOURCES OF EVIDENCE FOR THE VALIDATION

As part of the validation process:

Two validators spent two and a half days in school, touring the school, observing teaching and scrutinising documentation.

During the validation days interviews and discussions were held with:

- The headteacher and senior leaders
- Members of the governing body
- Representatives of teaching staff
- Representatives of support staff
- Students
- Representatives of the student council
- The pastoral team
- Heads of RE and PDC departments
- The RE department
- The special educational needs co-ordinator
- The head of sixth form
- The parish priest
- The lay chaplain
- The student chaplaincy team

Eight religious education lessons across all key stages were observed.

Four acts of worship were observed, both assemblies and tutor-based prayer.

A widespread scrutiny of students' written work was carried out.

An analysis was made of the responses to the parental questionnaire.

Informal feedback was given to the chair of governors, senior leadership team, the head of RE and the lay chaplain at the end of the validation visit.

Conclusion

The validators wish to thank the headteacher and all staff and students for the warm welcome offered to them and for the generous hospitality. They particularly thank the assistant head, who organised the schedule.