

DIOCESE OF PORTSMOUTH VALIDATION REPORT



St. John the Baptist Catholic Primary School, Andover

Floral Way, Andover, Hampshire, SP10 3PF

Date of previous validation June 2014
Date of this validation **22nd and 29th March 2019**

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. John the Baptist's is an example of an outstanding Catholic community, where the mission to '*pray together, work together and always do our best*' is truly lived out and celebrated and woven through all aspects of school life.
- The leadership and vision of the headteacher are a key strength of the school.
- The commitment and shared vision of all staff ensures that all children feel that they are valued and supported to be the best that they can be.
- St. John the Baptist's is a school that knows itself well. Strengths are recognised and celebrated and any areas for development that are identified are quickly addressed.
- Pupils are outstanding ambassadors for the school and speak about their school with pride. Their knowledge and living out of the school's mission statement through their outstanding behaviour and attitudes are reflected in their confidence to challenge injustices that they see in their local community and in the world around them. Children said, '*we are taught by God to listen to and take care of each other as stewards of his creation*'.
- Religious education (RE) is central to the life of the school. The support of the headteacher; who was previously the RE leader and the newly appointed RE leader, has ensured that progress and attainment are outstanding. There is a constant drive to improve standards further.
- The school's learning values that stem from the Beatitudes.
- The governing body, which both supports and challenges, is a key strength of the school. They are frequent visitors to the school and know the strengths and areas for development well.
- The deacon provides outstanding support to the school, staff appreciate the time he gives in advising them on aspects of the RE curriculum and leading devotions with the children.
- Parents are very supportive of the school. An overwhelming majority was positive about all aspects of school life.
- The very positive impact of stewardship can be seen in the daily life of the community.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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

- Develop opportunities for children to plan and lead worship throughout the school.
- To find further opportunities to work more closely with the parish in order to strengthen home, school and parish links.

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 mission statement in the life of the school and the community and the attractive displays throughout the school that are a constant reminder of the living out of that mission.
 - 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, clergy and parents.
 - The outstanding attitudes and behaviour of the pupils.
- School leaders inspire and enthuse the community to share in a strong sense of vision and mission. The headteacher and governors share a determination to continually strive for improvement.
- The Catholic ethos is evident within the welcome and support given to those pupils with additional needs.
- The outstanding quality of the learning environment.
- St. John the Baptist's is very much a diocesan school. The headteacher always engages with diocesan training and meetings and has given generously of her time and expertise in developing resources for the diocesan RE programme. The school links with local Catholic schools where appropriate and recognises the benefits of this mutual support.
- The school effectively communicates with parents, ensuring that they are kept up to date with what is happening and are given and take up many opportunities to visit and participate in the life of the school. Thought should be given to providing opportunities to further strengthen home, school and parish links.
- The school provides rich and varied opportunities to encourage the children to strengthen their relationship with God, for example the Mini Vinnies have been instrumental in organising initiatives in response to local issues, such as the sleep in for the homeless that incorporated opportunities for prayer and worship.

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 are outstanding as evidenced by the quality of teaching, the evidence in the 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, they are able to justify their conclusions using appropriate religious language and sources.
- In lesson assessment is supportive and is used to further challenge the children's thinking.
- Planning and tasks have a clear RE focus, they are closely matched to national standards and structured using the SOLO taxonomy approach, which has enabled the children to make links with prior learning and reach the high standards they are capable of.

- Teaching assistants, where available, play a key role in developing religious imagination and vocabulary and help 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 challenge the children. The children said *“the teachers are the best, we learn a lot and have fun”*.
- RE is effectively monitored through work sampling and moderation at school, cluster and diocesan level.
- The headteacher and RE leader’s passion, knowledge and drive underpin their support for all staff, enabling them to deliver RE lessons with confidence and enthusiasm and ensuring that any inconsistencies that emerge in standards in religious education are addressed.

Spiritual and moral development

Spiritual development:

Outstanding

Moral development:

Outstanding

- Prayer and worship are integral to the daily life of the school. When there is a focus on Scripture and reflection on its message, this is highly valued by the children *‘listening to scripture influences our lives so that we can change other people’s lives’*. Thought needs to be given to providing opportunity for pupils to prepare and lead worship.
- The school embraces every opportunity to nurture spirituality and give Christian witness. These include: prayer tables in every classroom, central prayer areas, class and key stage worship and termly adoration and lectio divina for years 5 and 6.
- Children’s behaviour is outstanding. They value and respect the opinions of others. The school’s rewards and sanctions reinforce a culture of high expectations and positive encouragement. This is celebrated through the mission and golden leaves awarded during collective worship. Pupils are justifiably proud of their school and its achievements.
- 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 leaders. The children said, *‘we all get a turn to show what we can do’*.
- A strong sense of outreach and involvement is encouraged with the elderly, homeless and those with dementia in the community. Children are keen to be of service to others and this is acknowledged through the awarding of the termly Caritas cup.

Leadership and management:

Outstanding

- The impact of the strong Christian leadership offered by the headteacher and governors is in evidence throughout the school.
- The effective approach to the monitoring and evaluation of all aspects of school life enables the school to constantly challenge itself. There is a constant drive for improvement and insistence on high standards in all areas.
- The school provides effective induction and ongoing professional development for its staff.
- All children as they progress through the school take on a variety of leadership roles and are very good role models as school councillors, playground friends, house captains, prefects and subject ambassadors.
- Good progress has been made on the issues identified for improvement in the last validation, although further work is still needed to ensure consistency in books across all year groups.

School details

Name of school	St. John the Baptist Catholic Primary School
URN:	116382
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number of pupils on roll:	214
Chair of Governors:	Jackie Kelly
Headteacher:	Catherine Whatley

St John the Baptist Catholic Primary School is a one form entry school situated on the outskirts of Andover. The school mainly serves the parishes of St John the Baptist, Andover and St Thomas More and St John Fisher, Whitchurch. The majority of its pupils are Catholic. 42% of pupils have English as an additional language and 7% of pupils are from British service families. 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

Catherine Hobbs Lead validator
Veronica Woodward 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 whole school worship.
- Observations of teaching and learning in RE, including a joint observation with the headteacher and RE leader.
- Pupil work scrutiny.
- Feedback of key findings to the headteacher, acting deputy headteacher, acting key stage one lead, RE leader and chair of governors.

Conclusion

The validators would like to thank the headteacher, RE leader, staff, governors, the parish priest, parents and pupils of St. John the Baptist 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.