

DIOCESE OF PORTSMOUTH VALIDATION REPORT



Christ the King Catholic Primary School

Lulworth Road, Reading, Berkshire. RG2 8LX

URN: 110005
Date of this validation: 23rd June 2022
 Date of previous validation: 19th October and 4th November 2015

Overall effectiveness

This validation: Good
 Previous validation: Good

The school community: Outstanding

Attainment and progress in RE: Good

The wider community: Good

Quality of teaching in RE: Good

Spiritual development: Good

Leadership and management of RE: Good

Moral development: Outstanding

Leadership and management: Good

This is a good school

- Christ the King School is an outstanding community of faith, firmly embedded in Gospel values, where every member is welcomed, valued and encouraged to be the best that they can be, *‘Loving, learning, growing together as Christ’s family.’*
- The personal faith, leadership and dedication of the headteacher provides the vision that continues to take the school forward.
- Christ the King is a school that knows itself well. The leadership team and governing body have an open and trusting relationship of challenge and support.
- The commitment and expertise of the RE leader enables her to support staff in ensuring that RE teaching and learning continues to improve.
- The regular support of the parish priest is of great benefit to the school.
- The partnership between the school and parish is very strong and mutually supportive.
- The school effectively communicates with parents, ensuring they are kept up to date with what is happening and are given every opportunity to participate in the life of the school when possible.
- The vast majority of parents, who responded to the survey, were very positive about all aspects of school life, with one stating, *“My child has improved in moral and religious values and this in turn has strengthened our bond as a family.”*
- Good quality teaching in RE inspires and challenges pupils, leading to good attainment and progress in this core subject. A key feature is effective and engaging task design. Relationships within and beyond the classroom enhance learning.
- Moral development is outstanding. Pupils are wonderful ambassadors for the school and speak about their school with pride. Their excellent behaviour and attitudes are underpinned by their knowledge and living out of the school’s mission statement. Children said, *“We work together as a family and grow together as better people.”*
- Through a wide range of worship opportunities, the children are opened to God’s presence in their lives and in the lives of others.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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

- Mapping Catholic Social Teaching across RE and the wider curriculum in a relevant and explicit manner in order for the children to develop an understanding of working towards a more just society.
- Developing the children’s skills in planning and leading prayer and worship.
- Continuing to develop teacher subject knowledge, ensuring this is applied consistently to challenge and inspire pupils.

Full Report

The school as a Catholic community

The school community:

Outstanding

The wider community:

Good

- The school's mission and Christian ethos permeates all aspects of school life, where every member is made to feel included, nurtured, valued and encouraged to recognise their responsibility to others. As one pupil stated, *"As a Catholic school we are being taught to use the gifts of the Holy Spirit and put others before ourselves."*
- The parish priest supports the school through regular visits. He commented, *"Christ the King School is a very treasured part of our parish. The school is about prayer in action; we journey together, not in isolation, but as a parish and a school community."* This is endorsed by the validation team.
- The link with the parish is valued by the school. Parish volunteers read with children, lead hymn practice and a creative writing group.
- Strong, active partnerships exist with local Catholic and non-Catholic schools. This allows for sharing of good practice as well as enrichment events for the children. Collaborative events include: Year 6 Mass, sports events, public speaking and the Koinonia project in collaboration with St Mary's University.
- The school effectively communicates with parents, ensuring they are kept up to date with what is happening through regular briefings, weekly newsletters, school website and the school blog. There is a positive and trusting relationship between home and the school.
- Parents are very supportive of the school. They recognise it as a caring, supportive Catholic community, where they are made to feel welcome, and their children are happy. A parent shared, *"My children really love coming to school."*
- The staff induction process is well thought out and ensures everyone is welcomed to Christ the King and understands their role within the school.
- Pupils contribute to school life through Mini Vinnies, school council, play leaders and house captains. They feel able to contribute to the improvement of their community, one pupil commenting, *"We bought a friendship bench for the playground for those who are feeling lonely."*
- All members of the school community demonstrate their commitment to the principles of stewardship through support of many initiatives, including ReadiFood, COP26 Go Green Day, a collection for local Whitley charity 'Aspire 2', joining the parish in a collection of humanitarian aid for Ukraine and charities related to personal links. The school is now planning future initiatives following the past two years of COVID enforced isolation.

Curriculum religious education

Attainment and progress:

Good

Quality of teaching:

Good

Leadership and management of RE:

Good

- The RE leader provides very good support for teachers, including the delivery of RE focused training along with informal support. She has a clear understanding of key strengths in teaching and learning and areas for development, and works hard to see these areas improved and addressed. A coaching approach to supporting teachers with skills, such as scaffolding, has given ownership and accountability to staff.
- RE is at the core of Christ the King's curriculum, with 10% of the timetable dedicated to this subject. The school is now engaging with Catholic Social Teaching within RE and recognises the need to strengthen this within RE and to plan for this across the wider curriculum.
- In all the lessons observed during the inspection, teachers showed sound subject knowledge, which contributed to the progress pupils made in the lessons. Plans are in place to further develop teacher subject knowledge, and to ensure this is applied consistently to challenge and inspire pupils.

- The quality of teaching and learning in RE, as evidenced through pupils RE books and the teaching observed on the day, is of a good standard. At times there was a lack of consistency in feedback and marking.
- Pupils in the school value RE and recognise that it can help them in their daily lives. In the lessons observed as part of the validation, pupils were able to draw on knowledge of scripture and relate the messages to everyday life. Pupils acquire knowledge, develop understanding and learn and practise skills well.
- Progress is noticeable in all year groups. Teachers have been given clear direction and support to ensure good outcomes in RE and have worked hard to make the necessary changes. Teaching assistants play a key role in ensuring that pupils are well supported in all areas of their learning.
- The knowledge and dedication of the RE subject leader has ensured teaching and learning within RE has greatly improved. Staff feel confident to plan, deliver and assess this core subject.
- Governors support the leadership team with RE well.

Spiritual and moral development

Spiritual development:

Moral development:

Good

Outstanding

- Prayer and worship are a part of the daily life of the school and members of the school community actively participate in the traditions and practices of the Catholic Church.
- Attitudes to worship demonstrate an open response showing a reverent connection with God. The school has begun developing greater pupil participation in leading prayer.
- During the worships observed on the day key elements included a spiritual and respectful atmosphere, and a sense of purpose in going forth.
- Children’s behaviour is exemplary. The school’s therapeutic approach to behaviour management includes opportunities for reconciliation. There are high expectations of good behaviour from all children. This is supported through consistency of approach and time for reflection.
- Pupils are given opportunities to recognise, understand and discuss important issues and work together effectively to enhance the experience of all at the school. The children are very aware of their responsibility to one another.
- The children’s outstanding progress in moral development is actively supported the behaviour policy, RE, worship and their Relationship, Sex Education (RSE). Staff are positive role models and support parents in their role.
- Pupils are proud of their school. They describe their school as “*warm-hearted, exciting and caring.*”

Leadership and management:

- Progress has been made on the issues identified for improvement in the last validation, particularly in improving the quality of RE outcomes through the coaching of teachers when planning and providing stronger scaffolding to support differentiation. The diocesan self-review process is now part of the on-going monitoring schedule.
- The personal faith and strong leadership of the headteacher is providing the vision that takes the school forward.
- The governing body takes a keen interest in the mission, development and success of the school and has the capacity to meet the school’s needs and be influential in determining the strategic direction of the school. They are fully involved in evaluating the school, including through diocesan self-review, and in supporting and challenging the headteacher.
- Teachers and support staff are committed to supporting the school and work purposefully in their drive for improvement.
- The school provides effective induction and ongoing professional development for its staff.
- Leaders routinely make good use of a range of monitoring activities relating to all aspects of RE and the Catholic life of the school.

School details

Name of school	Christ the King Catholic Primary School
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number of pupils on roll:	333
Chair of Governors:	Vicky Hummell
Headteacher:	Nikki McVeigh

Christ the King Catholic Primary School is a larger than average sized primary school in Reading in an area of high deprivation. The school mainly serves the parish of Christ the King, Reading which is in the Loddon Valley Pastoral Area. The proportion of children attending the school who are Catholic is 41%. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals and/or the pupil premium grant is above the national average. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well above average as is the percentage of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school runs an ASD unit for children.

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

Lead validator: Louise Buxton
Assistant validator: Veronica Woodward

Activities Carried Out as Part of the Validation

- Discussion on the school's self-evaluation sheets.
- Discussions with various members of the school community.
- Observations of collective worship.
- Ethos/Learning Walk
- Observations of teaching and learning in RE, including joint observations with members of the school leadership team.
- Pupil work scrutiny.
- Parent survey.
- Feedback of key findings.

Conclusion

The validators would like to thank the headteacher, RE leader, staff, governors, parents and pupils of Christ the King 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