

DIOCESE OF PORTSMOUTH VALIDATION REPORT

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Dorset Road, Christchurch, Dorset BH23 3DA

URN:113848



Date of previous validation 3rd and 10th November 2015

Date of this validation 14th June 2022

Overall effectiveness

Previous validation: Good with outstanding features

This 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:	Good	Leadership and management:	Good

This is a good school

- St Joseph's is a good example of a Catholic school, where the mission statement and Christian ethos, have a positive impact on the members of the school community. This is evident in the good relationships between adults and pupils leading to a loving and trusting environment, where all are encouraged to live out their mission statement of "We are all God's children and will try to live, love, work and serve as Jesus taught us.
- The Christian witness of all those in position of leadership has a positive impact on the work of the school.
- The regular support of the parish priest and deacon is a strength of the school.
- Governors are caring and supportive; they take an active interest in the Catholic life of the school.
- The well cared for physical environment and displays in the shared area, celebrate the school's Catholic ethos and identity.
- The quality of teaching is good, as are the standards in RE.
- Good relationships are evident between staff and children in and beyond the classroom and enhance the learning.
- Staff and children act as witnesses to their faith through their support of one another and their support for local, national and international charities.
- There is a good variety of planned opportunities to support pupils' spiritual development.
- Moral development is good. A pupil said, "The whole school is a family and we all respect each other."
- Parents are supportive of the school. A very large majority of parents were positive about all aspects of school life, especially the school's sense of welcome and the strength of the relationships.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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

- Improve standards further in RE by developing a more consistent approach to the use of assessment; planning opportunities for pupils to apply their RE knowledge and understanding; challenge for the more able, and enabling all pupils to be more independent in their thinking and learning.
- Develop more robust monitoring, evaluation and improvement processes, with evidence of the Governing Body providing challenge and holding leaders to account for the Catholic life of the school.

Full Report

The school as a Catholic community

The school community:	Outstanding
The wider community:	Good

- The mission statement is known by all pupils and displayed throughout the school. It impacts the community as can be seen in the positive and secure relationships and mutual respect between staff, pupils and parents.
- Relationships within the school community is a strength with all working towards a common and shared vision.
- The school has a well-structured induction programme for new families.
- The Catholic ethos is strongly evident within the school environment. The displays in shared areas contribute to an attractive and purposeful community.
- Parents hold the school in high regard and are appreciative of the support that was offered during and since the pandemic.
- The Mini-Vinnies make a strong contribution to the success of the school especially in organising charitable events and leading the Rosary Club.
- Parish – school links are strong leading to effective evangelisation of families and staff. The parish priest regards the school as the “jewel in the crown of the local Catholic community.”
- The school worked hard to support the school community during the pandemic.
- The pupils have a good understanding of their responsibilities to support charities and those in need.
- The school benefits from effective links with other schools, especially in regard to RE.

Curriculum religious education

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

- The evidence in the pupils’ books, the quality of teaching and discussions with pupils all combine to show that attainment and progress in RE are good.
- In the lessons observed as part of the validation, evidence was seen of good relationships, pupils had secure knowledge of scripture and teaching assistants offering effective support for pupils within and beyond the classroom.
- Pupils demonstrated a positive attitude to learning and behaviour was good.
- In order to improve standards further, pupils need to be challenged in their thinking and allowed opportunities to work and think with greater independence.
- The support offered by OWLs Nurture room is very good with pupils completing the same work in a small safe environment.
- There is some evidence that the support for planning has led to more secure outcomes for pupils in RE.
- In order to improve standards in RE, assessment outcomes need to inform future planning, both in terms of the immediate next steps and long-term planning for each pupil.
- The school should consider consistent approaches to developing a clear learning journey across each unit so that each lesson contributes to deepening knowledge and which enables pupils to apply their understanding of scripture and RE themes to how they live their lives.
- As the school recovers from the pandemic, further work needs to be done to deepen teachers understanding of task design and challenge for more able pupils so that more pupils have a deeper understanding of RE knowledge and skills.

- The RE leader is a member of the senior leadership team; she works hard and has a secure understanding of the expectations of the RE curriculum.
- The leadership team, including the RE leader, monitor pupil progress through learning walks, book scrutinies and data.
- Moving forward, the school need to provide induction and support for the new RE leader so they have a secure understanding of the new RE Curriculum Directory so that their work can have a positive impact on the quality of education in RE.

Spiritual and moral development

Spiritual development:	Good
Moral development:	Good

- St Joseph's is a good example of a Catholic school community, where a range of experiences contribute to the spiritual development of pupils including regular Masses and liturgies.
- Pupils' attitudes to worship and spirituality are good, which is evident during acts of worship. The worships were well planned, with engaging focal points. Pupils were aware that this was a time for them to spend time with God. The youngest pupils were able to identify things in their lives to thank God for.
- The school should expand the opportunities for pupils to plan and lead meaningful worship and to reflect on its impact.
- The strong support from the parish priest and deacon greatly enhances the spiritual life of the school.
- All members of the community are invited to join the school for liturgies and masses.
- The mission statement underpins the moral development of all pupils, with staff providing excellent role models for the children. As a result, pupil behaviour at St Joseph's is good.
- Pupils are justifiably proud of their roles as Mini-Vinnies and can identify how they contribute to the life of the school. The Mini-Vinnies group should be congratulated for the ways they have organised charitable events, including supporting the Ukraine.
- Pupils are clear about the behavioural expectations, rewards and sanctions and know the difference between right and wrong.

Leadership and management: Good

- A strong personal witness to the faith is provided by the headteacher and governors.
- All members of the school community are valued and recognised for the contribution they make to the school.
- Leaders, including those responsible for governance, promote the school's Catholic ethos which has impact on the school community.
- The monitoring, evaluation and improvement planning undertaken by senior leaders needs to be reviewed and evaluated for its impact on the Catholic life of the school and RE.
- A dedicated governing body take a passionate interest in the mission, development and progress of the school. There needs to be greater evidence of the challenge they provide and how they hold leaders to account in order to support the school's further improvement.
- Staff are committed to supporting the school and work to further its success.
- Progress has been made on some of the issues identified for improvement in the last validation and Diocesan monitoring report, but further work is required to secure improvements in assessment, consistency and planning.

School details

Name of school	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number of pupils on roll:	215
Chair of Governors:	Brigid Hincks
Headteacher:	Elizabeth Rippon

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School is a one form entry school situated in the parish of the Immaculate Conception and St Joseph, they also work with Holy Redeemer parish. The parishes are within the Avon-Stour pastoral area. 47% of pupils are Catholic; 7% of pupils have English as an additional language. The proportion of children entitled to free school meals is broadly average as is the percentage who have special educational needs.

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
Maggie Sanderson	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 whole school and class worship.
- Observations of teaching and learning in RE, including joint observations with the headteacher and RE leader of school.
- Pupil work scrutiny.
- Feedback of key findings to the senior management team, governors and a representative from the Diocese of Portsmouth.

Conclusion

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