

## DIOCESE OF PORTSMOUTH VALIDATION REPORT



### St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School, Farnborough

Tilebarn Close, Cove, Farnborough GU14 8LS

URN: 116391  
 Date of previous validation: November 2011  
**Date of this validation: 7<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> November 2016**

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous validation: Good
	<b>This validation: Good</b>

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

#### This is a good school with outstanding features

- St Bernadette's is an outstanding example of a Catholic school community, where diversity is celebrated and the mission statement and Christian ethos have a very positive impact. Excellent relationships between adults and pupils lead to a loving and trusting environment, where all are encouraged to "*develop fully their individual potential in the context of Gospel values of truth and love.*"
- The school makes an outstanding contribution locally, as well as fostering strong links with local parishes, Catholic schools and the diocese.
- St Bernadette's is a school that knows itself well. The leadership team and governing body have put in place a comprehensive and effective system of self-evaluation. Strengths are recognised and celebrated and any areas for development that are identified are quickly addressed.
- The children in the school exhibit exemplary behaviour and Christian attitudes. They value the many opportunities to: "*have a voice and impact many decision-making processes*".
- Parents are very supportive of the school. An overwhelming majority was positive about all aspects of school life.
- Standards in religious education (RE) are good. The RE leader and senior leaders are passionate about supporting all staff to further improve outcomes for all.
- Spiritual and moral development are outstanding.
- The parish priest and other local clergy offer excellent support to staff, pupils and governors.
- Teachers work hard to ensure that RE has a high profile in the school and are ably assisted by enthusiastic support staff.

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

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

- Review planning to ensure that success criteria are driven by the level descriptors.
- Embed effective, consistent and sustained differentiation for all pupils, through the use of key driver words and challenging questions.
- Enhance RE displays by making them more of a working wall, that includes key questions, vocabulary and pupil responses.

## Full Report

### The school as a Catholic community

The school community:

**Outstanding**

The wider community:

**Outstanding**

- St Bernadette's is a school that knows its community and successfully nurtures and supports its members. There is a strong sense of welcome from the moment you step over the threshold.
- The headteacher, deputy headteacher, RE leader and governors inspire the community to share in a strong sense of vision and mission, which has a very positive impact on school life; this is evident in the daily actions, behaviours and relationships within the school community.
- Parents are very supportive of the school. An overwhelming majority was positive about all aspects of school life.
- The school works in partnership with the parishes through a planned programme of liturgies and Masses and support for catechists, as well as sacramental celebrations in school. Local clergy regularly visit the school as part of a planned programme and help with projects and queries if they arise. A parishioner made a beautiful altar for the school and all new bibles have recently been purchased by the parish.
- Pupils from a wide range of groups have a strong and highly valued voice, through the house system, school council, stakeholders' committee, rights and responsibilities committee, healthy schools committee, anti-bullying ambassadors, buddies and liturgy team and are well prepared for their roles as global citizens.
- Children demonstrate outstanding support for a large number of charitable events. They respond with empathy and generosity to world disasters. The school works in partnership with the food bank, CAFOD, Caritas, the local sixth form college, Mayfield community partnership and local schools.

### 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 seen on the day and discussions with pupils all combine to show that attainment and progress in RE are good and improving.
- 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, evidence was seen of pupils reflecting on what heaven is like, through the use of references to Scripture and art. In the best lessons, learning was supported and challenged by the use of key questions and links to prior learning. Pupils demonstrated a positive attitude to learning and behaviour was very good.
- Planning has been improved since the last validation but success criteria need to be driven by the level descriptors. The school needs to embed effective, consistent and sustained differentiation for all pupils, through the use of key driver words and challenging questions.
- RE displays could be enhanced further if used as working walls that include key questions, vocabulary and pupil responses.
- The RE leader ably supports all staff, in particular teachers who are new to the school, enabling them to deliver RE lessons with confidence and enthusiasm.

- The headteacher and RE Leader have a very clear and accurate understanding of the strengths and areas to develop and continually monitor pupil progress, through lesson observations, book scrutinies and assessment data. Feedback is provided for all teachers and there is a continuous drive for improvement.
- Formative marking is being increasingly used to inform future learning.

## Spiritual and moral development

Spiritual development:

**Outstanding**

Moral development:

**Outstanding**

- Worship in the school is richly varied. The parish priest and other visiting clergy work closely with the school to provide liturgical celebrations that provide opportunities for the spiritual development of the whole community.
- The outstanding acts of worship seen on the day highlighted the reverence with which pupils prepare the prayer spaces, act as welcomers and bible buddies, sing and play musical instruments with joy and read passages from Scripture. Staff act as excellent role models.
- The school environment provides opportunities for children to experience the awe and wonder of God's creation and joy of living. The recent addition of an outside prayer garden that is maintained by parents and displays the beautiful Stations of the Cross that were designed by the children is a real asset to the spiritual life of the whole community.
- The children in the school demonstrate outstanding behaviour and Christian attitudes in their relationships. Key factors promoting this include:
  - The very good role models provided by the staff and older children in the school.
  - The consistent reinforcement of Gospel values.
  - The high expectations of pupils.
  - The Mission Maker Cup, where pupils are nominated by their peers for aspects of good behaviour linked to the mission statement.
- Pupils are justly proud of their school. They describe the school as: *'a place where all are welcomed, RE brings everyone together and we all get a say.'*

## Leadership and management:

**Outstanding**

- The personal witness to the faith provided by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and the RE leader at St Bernadette's provides a strong vision and direction for the work of the school.
- The rigorous open, honest and effective approach to the monitoring and evaluation of all aspects of the life of the school enables the school to constantly challenge itself. There is a constant drive for improvement and insistence on high standards in all aspects.
- The governing body are strong supporters of the school and also act as a critical friend. They are fully committed to the recruitment of a new head, who will continue to strive for excellence in all areas of school life.
- Good progress has been made on the issues identified for improvement in the last validation, particularly the approach to planning, although this still needs some refining. Stewardship is being developed through the green team and rights respecting team.

## School details

<b>Name of school:</b>	St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School
<b>Age range of pupils:</b>	4 - 11
<b>Gender of pupils:</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on roll:</b>	334
<b>Chair of Governors:</b>	Judith Moore
<b>Headteacher:</b>	Jo Riglar

St Bernadette's is a larger-than-average-sized primary school. Most pupils are taught in mixed age classes. The school serves the parishes of Our Lady and St Dominic, Our Lady Queen of Heaven, St Swithun's, Yateley and Holy Trinity and Our Lady, Fleet. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups, including those who speak English as an additional language, is well above the national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is broadly average. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is 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

Helena Pickering	Lead validator
Tony Murray	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 key stage 2 and class worship.
- Observations of teaching and learning in RE, including joint observations with the headteacher and RE leader.
- Pupil work scrutiny.
- Feedback of key findings to the senior leadership team and representatives of the governing body.

## Conclusion

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