

# DIOCESE OF PORTSMOUTH VALIDATION REPORT



## St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Ryde

Amphill Road, Ryde, Isle of Wight, PO33 1LJ

Date of previous validation    November 2011

Dates of this validation        8<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> November 2016

### Overall effectiveness

Previous validation:            Good  
This validation:                Good

The school community:	Good	Attainment and progress in RE:	Requires Improvement
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 Mary's is an example of a good Catholic community, where 'God is at the heart' and this mission is truly lived out and celebrated in all aspects of school life.
- The Christian witness, vision, leadership and dedication of the federation leadership team is a key strength of the school.
- The school embraces the self-review process to drive continual improvement, with governor involvement at all stages.
- Pupils are good ambassadors for the school and speak positively about their school. Their good behaviour and attitudes are underpinned by their knowledge and living out of the school's mission statement; children said, "Your friends and the people around you care for you, we welcome everybody here".
- Religious education (RE) is important to the life of the school. The support of the RE leader has ensured that there is a clear monitoring schedule and an awareness of the need to improve the rate of progress and attainment of pupils.
- The family support worker provides very good support for parents and children.
- Parents are very supportive of the school. Most were positive about all aspects of school life.
- The school provides a range of good quality worship, which allows individual and collective members of the school community to express their relationship with one another and with God, in a reflective and prayerful manner.
- The Vocations Day enables pupils to reflect on who and what God is calling them to be.

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

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

- Ensure it draws on strengths from across the federation to provide a systematic and robust approach to raising standards in RE.
- Use differentiation within RE lessons to raise the number of pupils attaining the higher levels by the end of each key stage.
- Ensure there is clarity as the mission statement continues to be revised, so that it is known and owned by the school community.
- Develop the involvement of pupils in planning and leading worship in the school.

## Full Report

### The school as a Catholic community

The school community: Good

The wider community: Good

- Throughout the school there is firm evidence that you are within a community of faith. Particularly strong examples include:
  - The attractive central displays that are a constant reminder of aspects of our Christian faith.
  - 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 and parents.
  - The good attitudes and behaviour of the pupils.
- School leaders inspire the community to share in a strong sense of vision and mission. This is evident in the process being used to involve all stakeholders in the revision of the school's mission statement, although clarity is needed so that all know what the finalised statement is.
- The Catholic ethos is evident within the setting up of nurture groups and lunchtime groups for those pupils in need of additional support.
- The school works very closely with the local Catholic cluster and other local schools. Links with local Catholic schools are strong and mutually supportive. It is important that best practice from across the cluster is shared with all staff.
- Families value the induction and welcome they receive, which enable them to fully engage in the life of the school.
- The school effectively communicates with parents, ensuring that they are kept up to date with what is happening and are given every opportunity to visit and participate in the life of the school.
- There is a growing partnership between the school and its feeder parish. The support and involvement of the parish priest, the parish First Holy Communion catechists and an invitation to join the parish junior choir, as well as the financial support given by the parish, ensure all pupils, regardless of their faith background, know they are valued members of the parish. The school needs to ensure that opportunities are sought to be more mutually supportive.
- The school provides rich and varied experiences to encourage the children to strengthen their relationship with God. The successful vocations day provided a wonderful opportunity for pupils to reflect on who God is calling them to be.

### Curriculum religious education

Attainment and progress: Requires improvement

Quality of teaching: Good

Leadership and management of RE: Good

- RE is important to the life of the school. Attainment and progress in RE require improvement, as evidenced by the pupils' books and class books and the discussions with pupils.
- Pupils are able to work collaboratively to reflect on issues raised in RE and have begun applying it to their own lives, but as yet they are not able to justify their conclusions using appropriate religious language and a range of Scripture.
- Marking is generally supportive and is used to further challenge the children's thinking, through the use of extension questions.
- Planning is linked to the national levels of attainment; however the lack of differentiation and RE specific tasks do not always allow the children to achieve their potential.
- Teaching assistants play a key role in supporting group discussions but need to be utilised more productively during whole class input.

- Lessons have clear learning objectives and in most lessons observed teachers use a variety of teaching strategies and activities, to stimulate and engage children.
- The RE subject leader, school leadership team and governors have recently established a regular schedule to monitor standards in RE, through work sampling and moderation at school, cluster and diocesan level. Leaders need to ensure that they use best practice from across the federation to systematically and robustly address the issues raised by their monitoring.
- The RE leader is committed to providing support for all staff. This support, along with that of other staff from the federation, should enable all teachers to deliver RE lessons with confidence and enthusiasm and ensure that standards in religious education are continually improving.

## Spiritual and moral development

Spiritual development:	Good
Moral development:	Good

- Prayer and worship are integral to the daily life of the school and focus on the centrality of Scripture and reflection on its message and are respected by the children. Opportunities need to be provided for the children to be involved in planning and leading acts of worship.
- The school embraces every opportunity to nurture spirituality and give Christian witness. Examples include: the prayer garden, woodland walk, prayer tables in every classroom, class and key stage worship, staff prayers and the days of reflection for staff from across the cluster.
- Children's behaviour is good. The school's rewards and sanctions have a strong focus on reflection and reconciliation. More constructive use of teaching assistants during whole class input would help to support those children who find it difficult to remain focussed.
- 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 VIPs, buddies for year R and prefects. The school council needs to consider how it could help support the development of teaching and learning in the school.
- The school has established an ongoing programme of support for CAFOD and families who visit HM prison and have registered for the participator level of the Romero Award.
- Pupils are proud of their school: *"We have lovely teachers who care and it is a fun place to be."*

## Leadership and management: Good

- The impact of the Christian leadership offered by the federation and school senior leadership team and governing body is in evidence throughout the school.
- There is a systematic approach to the monitoring and evaluation of all aspects of school life. Although lapsed for a while, this now includes a focus on RE and the Catholic life of the school. Leaders need to ensure that this becomes embedded in the life of the school.
- The children take on a variety of leadership roles and are very good role models as VIPS, prefects, sports captains and house captains. Pupils need to take a greater lead on initiating ideas for charitable works and contributing to teaching and learning improvement plans.
- Progress has been made on the issues identified for improvement in the last validation, particularly in developing stewardship and has recently begun the process of reviewing the school's mission statement, although clarity is needed on what the actual statement is. Further work is still needed on involving pupils in leading worship.

## School details

<b>Name of school</b>	St Mary's Catholic Primary School
<b>URN:</b>	118195
<b>Age range of pupils:</b>	4 – 11
<b>Gender of pupils:</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on roll:</b>	208
<b>Chair of Governors:</b>	Katrina Rigby
<b>Headteacher:</b>	Janet Tuck

St Mary's Catholic Primary School is a one form entry school, situated in the parish of St Mary's, Ryde within the Isle of Wight pastoral area. It is federated with St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School, Newport: 32% of its pupils are Catholic; 6% of pupils have English as an additional language and come from a variety of ethnic minorities. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is well below average, the percentage who have special educational needs or disabilities is broadly in line with the national 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
Jamie Carroll	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 joint observations with the Federation deputy headteacher and RE leader.
- Pupil work scrutiny.
- Feedback of key findings to the federation deputy headteacher, RE leader, chair of governors, RE governor and another foundation governor.

## Conclusion

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