

DIOCESE OF PORTSMOUTH VALIDATION REPORT



St Patrick's Catholic Primary School

Fort Road, Woolston, Southampton, SO19 2JE

URN 116398
Date of previous validation June 2010
Dates of this validation 10th & 22nd June 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous validation:	Good
	This validation:	Good

The school community:	Good	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 Patrick's Catholic Primary School works hard to 'follow the loving example shown by Jesus Christ'. The mission statement is well known and all in the community do their very best to live it out on a daily basis.
- There is a strong sense of welcome from the outset. Very good relationships exist between all members of the community and new families are warmly welcomed into the school.
- The personal witness to the faith provided by the headteacher provides a strong vision and direction for the work of the school. The school leadership, including governors, is fully committed in its drive to further develop the Catholic life of the school.
- Teaching and learning in religious education (RE) are good. Evidence from books, particularly in recent months and the lessons observed, show that children are making secure progress and reaching good standards. Pupils enjoy the subject and appreciate how it can help them in their daily lives.
- The school benefits from very strong links with the local cluster of schools. This includes very good transition arrangements with the local Catholic secondary schools.
- 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.
- Staff and children act as witnesses to their faith, through their support of one another and their support for local, national and international charities.
- The children in the school exhibit very good behaviour and Christian attitudes.
- The links with the local parish are good.
- Parents' views of the school are generally supportive. A very large majority of those responding to the pre-validation survey were positive about all aspects of school life.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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

- Ensure there is clarity and consistency in expectations of teaching and learning in RE.
- Ensure the school complies with the requirement from the Bishops' Conference on the percentage of time spent on teaching RE.
- Make more explicit the school's Catholic ethos in all aspects of school life.
- Increase the children's involvement in the planning and delivery of a greater range of collective worship.

Full Report

The school as a Catholic community

The school community: Good

The wider community: Good

- The school's mission statement, 'Following the loving example shown by Jesus Christ', can be seen being lived out in the interactions between all members of the school community. The children talk about St Patrick's as 'a school where we believe in God and it feels like a family, where we love and care for each other.' Its impact can also be seen in the warmth of the welcome received by visitors and the commitment towards supporting those in need. However, there are areas where the school's Catholic ethos can be made more explicit, particularly how it is presented on the school website, in communication with parents and in reports to the governing body.
- There is a strong sense of welcome from the outset. Very good relationships exist between all members of the community.
- The school is an active member of the diocesan family of schools. There is a strong commitment to the Primary Catholic Partnership SCITT.
- The school benefits from very strong links with the local cluster of schools. This includes very good transition arrangements with the local Catholic secondary schools.
- Members of the school community demonstrate their commitment to the principles of stewardship, through their support of many local, national and international initiatives, including CAFOD, HCPT and the local paediatric intensive care unit.
- Parish links are good, with a significant number of staff taking on key roles within the local pastoral area. Newsletters are shared between the school and all its feeder parishes.
- The school communicates well with parents, making good use of new technology, ensuring they are kept up to date and informed. Parents are given regular opportunities to visit and participate in the life of the school.

Curriculum religious education

Attainment and progress: Good

Quality of teaching: Good

Leadership and management of RE: Good

- The more recent evidence in the pupils' books, the good quality teaching seen on the day and discussions with pupils all combine to show that attainment and progress in RE are good and improving.
- In the lessons observed children were engaged in the tasks they were given and were able to relate the message of Pentecost to their everyday lives.
- The school is developing planning and assessment in RE, by focussing more closely on the national levels of attainment; this will help to improve standards further. Planning needs to regularly include opportunities for children to demonstrate their higher level understanding and reflection, through the provision of more focussed and challenging tasks.
- Through a scrutiny of the work in the pupils' RE books, evidence was seen of a range of activities that enabled the children to demonstrate what they had learnt; however, this is not consistent across all classes.
- Over the course of the year, improvements can be seen in the quality of marking and in response to the more recent RE activities, there is some evidence of teachers' marking, both affirming and using key questions to move learning forward in RE.
- The RE subject leader monitors standards in RE, through observing teaching, pupil conferencing, work sampling and some cross-moderating of levels of attainment.

- There is little evidence of how standards in RE are reported to governors.
- The school does not currently comply with the requirement of the Bishops Conference for RE to be taught for 10% of the curriculum. This needs to be addressed in order for the school to be fully compliant at the start of the new academic year in September.

Spiritual and moral development

Spiritual development:	Good
Moral development:	Good

- 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 school embraces opportunities to nurture spirituality and give Christian witness; these include:
 - Special services to mark the liturgical year, for example, Lent and Holy Week liturgies.
 - The setting up of a lunchtime prayer club, which is run by a member of staff and assisted by the children. This has proved popular with all age groups.
 - The opportunity provided by the recent visit by the Ten Ten Theatre group to stimulate the children's understanding of the application of their faith in everyday situations.
- A start has been made on providing opportunities for the children to take a greater lead in planning or taking a more active role within their class acts of worship; a good example of this was seen during the validation. This practice tends to be more in the older classes; thought should be given to supporting them in modelling this in other classes and training younger pupils in planning and leading on an increasing number of elements within an act of worship.
- Consideration should be given to providing more regular opportunities for staff to come together for prayer. Leading this and the prayer at the start of the governors' meetings should be shared amongst those attending.
- The children in the school demonstrate good behaviour and Christian attitudes in their relationships, with a clear sense of right and wrong. Key factors promoting this include:
 - The use of the mission statement to encourage children to reflect on their actions.
 - The good Christian role models provided by the staff and older children in the school.
 - The consistent reinforcement of Gospel values.
- The celebration of achievement positively promotes pupil self-esteem and confidence. The children are rewarded for good behaviour and successes are celebrated in a variety of ways. Thought should be given to linking some of the awards or rewards more explicitly to the school's mission statement and Catholic ethos.
- Groups of pupils take on key responsibilities throughout the school, including sitting on the school council, acting as librarians and play buddies.

Leadership and management:	Good
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- School leaders provide a good model of Christian leadership, where all members of the school are valued. They inspire the community to share in a strong sense of vision and mission.
- The governing body is a strong supporter of the school, however, more thought needs to be given as to how governors can monitor the quality of RE and the Catholic life of the school more closely and provide the challenge necessary to ensure these key aspects flourish and excel. The leadership in the school is fully committed in its drive to bring about improvements.
- Progress has been made on the issues identified for improvement in the last validation, particularly in helping the pupils to see how the key messages from Scripture relate to their everyday lives.

School details

Name of school	St Patrick's Catholic Primary School
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number of pupils on roll:	369
Chair of Governors:	June Burton
Headteacher:	Elizabeth Kenny

St Patrick's is a larger-than-average sized primary school, situated in an urban environment, close to the port of Southampton. The school occupies a large site adjacent to the parish church and presbytery of St Patrick's. It is part of the diocesan pastoral area of Southampton East and principally serves the Catholic parishes of St Patrick's, (Woolston), Christ the King and St Colman, (Bitterne), The Assumption, (Netley), Our Lady, (Hedge End) and St Brigid's, (West End).

Most pupils are either Catholic (66%) or fellow-Christian (21%). The majority of staff are Catholic. The number of children with special educational needs and the number of children in receipt of free school meals are just below the national average. The number of children with English as a second language is increasing.

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

Robert Dare	Lead validator
Elizabeth Housden	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 collective worship.
- Observations of teaching and learning in RE, including joint observations with members of the school leadership team.
- Pupil work scrutiny.
- Feedback of key findings.

Conclusion

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