

DIOCESE OF PORTSMOUTH VALIDATION REPORT



Springhill Catholic Primary School

Milton Road, Southampton, Hants SO15 2HX

URN: 137293

Date of previous validation 11 December 2013

Date of this validation 9 November 2018

Overall effectiveness	Previous validation:	Good
	This validation:	Outstanding

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

This is an outstanding school.

- Springhill is an outstanding example of a Catholic school community, where the mission statement and Christian ethos permeates the life of the school. Excellent relationships between adults and pupils lead to a loving and trusting environment, where all are encouraged to live out their mission of *“Together we will do our best for Jesus.”*
- The headteacher inspires the community to share in a strong sense of vision and mission, resulting in a collaborative and highly successful school with a positive ethos where RE and worship are at the heart of the life of the school.
- Religious education (RE) is central to the life of the school. The outstanding support of the RE leader and Section 48 lead helps ensure teachers deliver high quality lessons in this core subject. As a result, pupils make excellent progress and achieve highly.
- The parish priest and the deacon offer excellent support to staff and pupils. The links between school and parish are good.
- Governors play a key role in acting as critical friends and share the drive for continuous improvement.
- Pupils value the excellent relationships within and beyond the classroom that enhance their 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.
- Parents are very supportive of the school. The overwhelming majority of parents are very positive about all aspects of school life.
- Spiritual and moral development are outstanding. Pupils are outstanding ambassadors for the school and speak about their school with pride. Their outstanding behaviour and attitudes are underpinned by their knowledge and living out of the school’s mission statement: children said *“It is welcoming and a nice place to spend the week.”* Overwhelmingly children expressed their longing to be here from the moment they wake up!

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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

- Formulate a more refined model of assessment that is more effectively focussed on moving children’s learning on in RE.
- Review planning after this trial year to enable class teachers to have greater ownership so that teachers can ensure objectives lead to deepening of learning.
- Within RE, ensure children are challenged in their thinking and allowed more opportunities to voice their opinion.

Full Report

The school as a Catholic community

The school community:	Outstanding
The wider community:	Outstanding

- The mission statement, '*together we will do our best for Jesus*', is firmly embedded and is seen being lived out by children and staff in all aspects of school life. Pupils spoken to talked confidently and gave examples of how they do their best to put the words into action.
- The attractive central displays are a constant reminder of the living out of the mission statement.
- The school has a calm and welcoming atmosphere. Relationships within the school community are very strong and children respond openly and with confidence.
- The well planned and structured induction programme for new members of staff reflects the school community's commitment to be inclusive, caring and supportive.
- The Catholic ethos is strongly evident within the school environment. High quality displays, contribute to an attractive and purposeful community of learning.
- Parents hold the school in very high regard. They recognise it as a caring Catholic community, where they are made to feel welcome and their children are happy.
- The school council which includes eco councillors and sports councillors bring the children together so that they have a highly vocal pupil voice in the school.
- Children are given opportunities to be role models through the chaplaincy teams and language ambassadors; they are confident and value the opportunity to contribute to their school and help others.
- The parish priest and deacon are regular visitors to the school, offering support when required.
- All members of the school community demonstrate their full commitment to the principles of discipleship, through support for CAFOD, local and national initiatives.

Curriculum religious education

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

- The evidence in pupils' books, class books, the consistently good or better quality of teaching, the high levels of achievement and discussions with pupils all combine to show that attainment and progress in RE are outstanding.
- In the lessons observed as part of the validation, evidence was seen of pupils reflecting on how Jesus expressed his love through His miracles. In the best lessons, learning was enhanced by teachers' subject knowledge, links to liturgy, good questioning, use of talk partners, personal experience and links to prior learning. Pupils demonstrated a positive attitude to learning and behaviour was outstanding.
- Planning and success criteria are driven by the new assessment guides and includes differentiation for pupils. It would be beneficial for pupils to be challenged in their thinking and allowed opportunities to voice their opinions more.
- RE displays are of a high standard and are beginning to be used more as working walls that include key questions, vocabulary and pupil responses.
- The RE team, provides tireless and effective support for RE and as a result the subject has a high status within the school
- The SLT and RE team monitor pupil progress through lesson observations, book scrutinies and assessment data and as a result standards in the subject are outstanding.
- Teaching assistants play a key role in helping all pupils access the curriculum.
- The RE team provides good support in overseeing developments in the subject.

Spiritual and moral development

Spiritual development:

Outstanding

Moral development:

Outstanding

- Springhill is an outstanding example of a Catholic school community, where 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 live out their mission statement. Prayer and worship are integral to the daily life of Springhill. The range of worship offered is seen in masses, assemblies, class liturgies, and use of the Prayer Hut.
- Children's attitudes to worship and spirituality are outstanding, which is evident during acts of worship. The reverence and respect observed in the key stage one and two Remembrance liturgy was palpable. The class worship led by the class teacher provided the children with a meditative and prayerful encounter.
- Retreat days are planned for all years and are valued by the children, allowing them to deepen their relationship with God. The excellent support from the parish priest greatly enhances these opportunities.
- 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 Springhill is outstanding.
- Children are justifiably proud of their roles as eco councillors, school councillors, language ambassadors and pupil chaplains. One pupil chaplain said, '*We are leading others in their journey of faith*'.
- 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 such as the celebration assembly and are not limited to academic achievement. The importance of stewardship within the school is recognised through the awarding of a weekly 'living like Jesus certificate'.
- Pupils are thoughtful and reflective, demonstrating the school's excellent provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They describe their school as, "*welcoming and a nice place to spend the week.*"

Leadership and management: Outstanding

- The personal witness to the faith provided by the headteacher, RE lead and section 48 lead provides a strong vision and direction for the work of the school.
- The rigorous 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 an insistence on high standards in all aspects of learning.
- A highly skilled and dedicated governing body take a keen interest in the mission, development and progress of the school.
- Morale is very high and staff are committed to the mission, development and success of the school, which is made possible by the unfailing support of senior management and all leaders.
- All staff provide excellent role-models, resulting in outstanding behaviour and spiritual and moral development.
- The robust self-review process is reflective and shared with a range of stakeholders who both challenge and support.
- Good progress has been made on the issues identified for improvement in the last validation, particularly with the introduction of the RE working party who have a very clear understanding of the outcomes of the school's monitoring schedule in RE.

School details

Name of school	Springhill Catholic Primary School
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number of pupils on roll:	687
Chair of Governors:	Dr Gerard Riley
Headteacher:	Patricia Phelan

Springhill is a larger than average primary school in the Southampton Central and West Pastoral Area which serves the parishes of St Edmund, St Joseph and St Boniface, and also the Immaculate Conception. The majority of its pupils are Catholic. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is well below average and almost 50% of pupils have English as an additional language.

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

Nuala Oster	Lead Validator
Liz 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 whole school and class worship.
- Observations of teaching and learning in RE, including joint observations with the headteacher and Assistant heads.
- Pupil work scrutiny.
- Feedback of key findings to the senior management team and RE governors.

Conclusion

The validators would like to thank the headteacher, RE leader, Section 48 lead, staff, governors, the parish priest and deacon, parents and pupils of Springhill 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.