

THE VALIDATION REPORT



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.

NAME OF SCHOOL	St Peter's Catholic Comprehensive School	
ADDRESS	<i>Southbourne Site</i> St Catherine's Road Southbourne Bournemouth BH6 4AH	<i>Iford Site</i> Holdenhurst Avenue Iford Bournemouth BH7 6RG
URN	113908	
CHAIR OF GOVERNORS	Mrs Jan Wyatt	
HEADTEACHER	Mr Anthony McCaffrey	
NAMES OF VALIDATORS	Mr Paul Barras Mrs Celia Axton	
DATES OF THE VALIDATION VISIT	22 nd and 23 rd June 2009	

Information about the school

Number of pupils on roll	1583
Number of boys	820
Number of girls	763
Number of statemented pupils	27
Percentage of Catholic pupils	86%
Number of teaching staff	117
Number of support staff	80
Percentage of Catholic staff	41%

St Peter's Catholic Comprehensive School is a voluntary aided school, under the joint trusteeship of the De la Salle Brothers and the Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth. It belongs to the world-wide network of Lasallian schools. It serves twenty four parishes, some of which are in the neighbouring Catholic Diocese of Plymouth. The majority of the students are of white British origin, reflecting the school population in the area generally.

The school operates on two sites, separated by approximately two miles. Years 7 and 8 are taught on the Iford site and the senior part of the school on the Southbourne site. A full range of facilities, including a chapel, is available on both sites.

The school has two specialisms, in the performing arts and in sport.

The school's effectiveness in providing Catholic education

St Peter's Catholic Comprehensive School is an outstanding Catholic school. With Christ as their guide, the spirit of the Gospel permeates all aspects of school life and the Christian vision can be seen throughout the school. All within the community are highly valued and their needs taken seriously. The Lasallian tradition makes a unique contribution to the quality of provision, strengthening and clarifying the school's purpose.

a) Key strengths of the school

- Leadership and management at all levels are outstanding. The headteacher in particular provides outstanding leadership and a strong and clear direction for the school.
- The deputy headteachers provide high level support for the spiritual and moral dimension of the school.
- The school's governing body is highly supportive and has a clear understanding of the vision and mission of the school, working closely with the senior leadership team.
- The whole community subscribes to a clear vision of Catholic education.
- Students' attitude and behaviour are a credit to themselves and the school; relationships between staff and students, as well as between the students themselves, truly reflect the Gospel values promoted by the school.
- Improvement in academic progress, especially at KS4 and KS5, indicates a strong common purpose.
- The recent review and changes to the roles and responsibilities of senior and middle leaders enable the school to make better use of their skills and attributes.
- The religious education (RE) department is a leading light, making a significant contribution to the school's aim to raise attainment.
- The school's specialists subjects, in the performing arts and sport, make a profound and an extensive contribution to the whole community.

b) Key areas for development

- The validators would like to see the school make greater use of the diocesan section 48 review process, making it a more integral part of whole school self-evaluation procedures.
- They encourage the school to continue to review the balance of its curriculum provision, so that in due course 10% curriculum time is given to KS3, in accordance with the wishes of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.
- They support the school's planned focus on developing pupil voice and leadership, whilst recognising that the school already provides many opportunities for pupils to become involved in leading the life of the school.
- They recognise the commitment of the chaplain and the leadership team in encouraging the spiritual life of the school and further encourage moves to provide additional resources, to enable the chaplain to meet the demands of a far-reaching role.
- They endorse the school's intended focus on increasing parental and parish involvement and encourage close collaboration with the parish priests, in order to build stronger ties.

c) Progress since the last validation

- Current chaplaincy provision reflects the important steps the school has taken to redefine and reform its workings.
- The school's mission statement has been reshaped: it is now clear, understood by students and staff and frequent references made to it.
- Steps have been taken to improve INSET for new staff so that they fully subscribe to the ethos of the school and in particular to its Lasallian tradition.
- The quality of prayer and acts of worship and liturgy have been improved by the provision of INSET to all staff and by the further involvement of all departments.
- The creation of new roles, especially year leaders, with responsibility for both academic and pastoral matters, has had a positive impact on pupil progress.

d) Summary of parents' views of the school

Parents feel that they are made welcome and that their children are happy in the school. Above all, a very large majority of parents say that they appreciate the caring nature of the school as a supportive Catholic community.

THE SCHOOL AS A CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

WHAT THE SCHOOL SAYS

SECTION A1: The school community	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
	✓			

Key strengths identified by the school

- St Peter’s is a very good school, which radiates its Catholic identity and De la Salle heritage.
- The Catholic ethos of the school is well supported by staff.
- Staff training has raised the quality of assemblies and worship across the school.
- The school is designated as a high performing school.
- Student involvement in retreats, chaplaincy work, prayer groups, peer mentoring and prayer- buddies.
- The school successfully redeveloped its mission statement in 2007.
- The school is now in its third year of activity weeks for year 9.
- Ofsted recently said of the Leadership Team: “They have created a cohesive community underpinned by warm, supportive relationships, where staff are strongly committed to students' well-being. Everyone pulls together...to help young people to be fully prepared for life, practically and spiritually”.

Areas identified for development by the school *(include timescale for action)*

- Development of chapel structures and facilities on both sites (July 2010)
- Further expansion of impact and involvement of student voice (July 2010)
- Review of rewards policy and practices (July 2010)
- Involvement of parents/community in liturgical events (July 2010)

VALIDATORS’ JUDGEMENT

SECTION A1: The school community	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
	✓			

Key strengths

The validators fully agree with the school’s judgement and with the strengths identified by the school and highlight the following:

- The headteacher and his senior team provide a clear vision for the direction of the school and are very committed to ensuring that their influence is to be found in all aspects of school life.
- The spirit of the Gospel is present throughout the school and in all its work.
- The mission statement has been successfully reshaped: it is now clear, understood by students and staff and frequent reference is made to it.
- Effective steps have been taken to improve training for new staff, so that they fully subscribe to the ethos of the school and in particular to its Lasallian tradition.
- Parents feel that they are made welcome and that their children are happy in the school: they particularly appreciate the caring nature of the school, as a supportive Catholic community.
- The school provides many opportunities for students to become involved in leading the life of the school.

Areas identified for development

The validators agree with the areas for development identified by the school. They support the school’s planned focus on providing a more coherent approach to enhance further opportunities for pupil voice and leadership.

WHAT THE SCHOOL SAYS

SECTION A2: Leadership and management	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
		✓		

Key strengths identified by the school
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school has redeveloped its leadership structure over the past three years, resulting in an extended senior leadership team (SLT) at senior middle leader level, and a middle management that is more involved in school self-review and direction. • The school is well supported by an effective and highly skilled governing body. • The school has successfully retained its Investor in People status since first being awarded it in 1998. • The leadership of the school's two specialisms is highly competent as recognised by the school's recent Ofsted inspection and by the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust. • The leadership group has recently been described by Ofsted as having "...been highly successful in creating a harmonious and cohesive community based upon their shared values". • Pastoral care is one of the aspects of the school rated as "outstanding" by the recent Ofsted inspection, and reflects the very high quality of leadership and management at all levels.

Areas identified for development by the school <i>(include timescale for action)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the impact of leadership developments and plan for next development phase (July 2009) • Lead a major focus on student progress, in response to Ofsted (July 2010) • Expand student leadership in school (July 2010) • Expand use of ICT in learning for all (July 2010 and ongoing)

VALIDATORS' JUDGEMENT

SECTION A2: Leadership and management	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
	✓			

Key strengths
<p>The validators believe that the school's leadership team has been modest in its judgement. It underestimates the quality of the leadership and management it provides. They believe that the leadership and management provided in the school are outstanding in the following respects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The recent review and changes to the roles and responsibilities of senior and middle leaders enable the school to make better use of their skills and attributes. • The creation of new roles, especially the year leader, who has now responsibility for both academic and pastoral matters. These moves have had a positive impact on pupil progress. • The senior leadership team works effectively and closely with the governing body. • The governing body is highly supportive and has a clear understanding of the vision and mission of the school.

Areas identified for development
<p>The validators agree with the areas for development identified by the school. They would like to see the school make even greater use of the diocesan self-review process, making it a stronger part of the school's self-evaluation procedures.</p>

WHAT THE SCHOOL SAYS

SECTION A3: The wider community	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
	✓			

Key strengths identified by the school
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good links have been established with parishes within the Larger Pastoral Areas. • Staff and parishioners have been trained to be facilitators in the ‘Rainbows’ programme. • Students from years 12 and 13 work with the wider community as members of the St. Vincent de Paul Society. • In 2008-9 students sponsored over 69 orphans in India through daily donations, raising over £10,000. • Links with feeder primary schools are well established. A ‘pyramid’ day is held every year. • The school’s specialisms have had a very large impact on the wider community through community events, lifelong learning, outreach work and project support (see the impact that the specialist subjects have had on the school’s work in the wider community, above). • The school has links with schools in Spain, France and Italy through the De la Salle community.

Areas identified for development by the school <i>(include timescale for action)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To develop the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) and website (July 2010 and ongoing) • To link with another school in order to further promote the community cohesion agenda (July 2010) • To roll out the life long learning initiative to local communities (July 2010) • To further develop the role of student ambassadors in parishes (July 2010)

VALIDATORS’ JUDGEMENT

SECTION A3: The wider community	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
	✓			

Key strengths
<p>The validators agree with the school’s judgement and with the strengths identified by the school and highlight the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school’s specialisms in the performing art and sport make a profound and an extensive contribution to the whole community. • The opportunities given by the school to enable very high numbers of parents and members of the local community to participate in a range of activities that make full use of the school’s excellent facilities.

Areas identified for development
<p>The validators agree with the areas for development identified by the school. In particular, they endorse the school’s intended focus on increasing parental and parish involvement and encourage close collaboration with the parish priests, in order to build stronger ties.</p>

CURRICULUM RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

WHAT THE SCHOOL SAYS

SECTION B1: Leadership and co-ordination of religious education	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
	✓			

Key strengths identified by the school
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent relationships through a spirit of cooperation between RE staff. • Open and honest formal dialogue occurs during department meetings. • Excellent relationships between teachers and students. • Robust self review measures in place. • Safe, open and trusting teaching environment to share religious practice and faith. • The invitation of guest speakers to inspire students to be the best they can be. • Joint co-ordination of the inaugural philosophy and ethics conference for KS5 with St. Edward's School in Poole. • Effective and productive links with senior leaders in promoting whole school initiatives. • Tracking initiatives at KS4 and KS5 for recording exam results. • Student surveys (paper records and an improvised Pod Room) as a valuable source of students' appraisal and views.

Areas identified for development by the school <i>(include timescale for action)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the new Diocesan scheme of work for Years 7&8 (July 2011) • INSET and Meetings to create a foundation course promoting SMSC (July 2010) • Possible introduction of theology/scripture option for A Level religious studies (July 2010)

VALIDATORS' JUDGEMENT

SECTION B1: Leadership and co-ordination of religious education	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
	✓			

Key strengths
<p>The validators agree with the school's judgement and with the strengths within the RE department identified by the school above and highlight the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent relationships between staff in the department. • High level of support given to each other in the department. • High quality support given to the students of RE and philosophy and ethics. • Clear documentation for planning and tracking pupil progress in key stages 4 and 5. • Established and effective processes for self-review of the RE department.

Areas identified for development
<p>The validators agree with the areas for development identified by the school. They encourage the school to continue to review the balance of its curriculum provision, so that in due course 10% curriculum time is given to KS3, in accordance with the wishes of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.</p>

WHAT THE SCHOOL SAYS

SECTION B2: Attainment and progress in religious education	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
		✓		

Key strengths identified by the school
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective feedback to students to assist with progress (Learning Logs and Assessment for Learning). • Electronic data collection of GCSE results, class test results and mock results for KS4 and KS5. • The average grade attained was 76%: 42 A*^s + 45 A^s is significant, the equivalent of 43% of the overall grades. • A* to B is equivalent to 67%... A* to C is equivalent to 82%. • Overall 83 boys attained A* to C and 83 girls attained A* to C – a dead heat. • The RE Department is one of the highest top performing subjects that contribute to the increasing overall 5 A-C Grades. • KS5 • Very high numbers meeting or exceeding target grades. • Year 13 A-Level Performance (ALPS) score has risen to 5 (good) from 7 (satisfactory) in 2007.

Areas identified for development by the school <i>(include timescale for action)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop the Level Assessments for KS3 (July 2010) • Ensure at least 10% dedicated curriculum time for teaching RE and PSE by specialist RE teachers. • Effective early intervention strategies for under-achieving students (July 2010)

VALIDATORS' JUDGEMENT

SECTION B2: Attainment and progress in religious education	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
		✓		

Key strengths
<p>The validators agree with the school's judgement and with the strengths identified by the school and highlight the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The contribution that the RE department makes to the overall achievement of the school, especially at key stage 4. • Outstanding attainment in public examinations. • The increasing uptake of religious studies, philosophy and ethics at A level in key stage 5. • The increase of students moving on to study these subjects in higher education.

Areas identified for development
<p>The validators agree with the points for development. In addition they see it as a high priority for the school, that assessment and target setting in religious education at key stage 3 becomes as rigorous, as it is in key stages 4 and 5.</p>

WHAT THE SCHOOL SAYS

SECTION B3: Quality of teaching	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
		✓		

Key strengths identified by the school

- All teachers with the RE department are very well qualified which instils a professional approach to their pedagogy.
- Mrs. Farrow, Mrs. Luk and Mr. Antram are Section 48 validators in the Diocese of Portsmouth.
- ‘A’ Level philosophy and ethics conference jointly managed with St. Edward’s School Poole.
- Shared professional practice through collective electronic resources and ideas at meetings.
- Formal lesson observations have been taken place in accordance with performance management targets.
- Effective feedback to students to assist with progress and recognition of achievement (‘Learning Logs’).
- Communication to stakeholders to achieve feedback; via surveys and the Pod Room.
- Reward postcards and letters home to reward progress, contribution and achievement.
- Shared good practice in RE department meetings.

Areas identified for development by the school *(include timescale for action)*

- Widespread use of Learning Logs across all key stages (July 2010)
- Increase use of the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) - ongoing
- Implement a range of teaching styles and methods to promote the Spiritual Moral and Social C Curriculum (SMSC) (July 2011)

VALIDATORS’ JUDGEMENT

SECTION B3: Quality of teaching	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
		✓		

Key strengths

The validators agree with the school’s judgement and with the strengths identified by the school and highlight the following:

- Excellent relationships between teachers and students, allowing students to express their feelings confidently and to respond to discussion in class.
- Students’ contributions are valued by teachers, raising self-esteem and their understanding of each other and their faith.
- Teachers in the department work very hard and are very caring and supportive of the students.

Areas identified for development

The validators agree with the areas identified for development by the school.

SPIRITUAL AND MORAL DEVELOPMENT

WHAT THE SCHOOL SAYS

SECTION C1: Spiritual development	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
	✓			

Key strengths identified by the school
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students have daily opportunities for prayer during tutor time plus a weekly prayer group. • The Sacrament of Reconciliation is offered to all students during Lent. • Liturgies at the end of autumn, spring and summer terms aim to develop within the students a personal relationship with God. • Each year group has the opportunity to go on retreat, and the programme in years 7-9 involves every student. • The Chaplaincy team enjoys active student involvement. • The wristband system identifies those students who attend prayer group, and badges identify 'prayer-buddies'. • Each teaching group has a class Mass, and there are year group Masses during the year. • The school is now the largest, and longest running Rainbows provider in the country. • The quality and consistency of assemblies has risen still further following staff inset in 2008.

Areas identified for development by the school <i>(include timescale for action)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase involvement of Sixth Form in Chaplaincy work and develop retreat programme (July 2010) • Audit SMSC coverage across curriculum post curricular re-modelling (July 2011) • Evaluate tutor reflection and use of weekly reflection sheet developed by Chaplain (July 2010)

VALIDATORS' JUDGEMENT

SECTION C1: Spiritual development	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
	✓			

Key strengths
<p>The validators agree with the school's judgement and with the strengths identified by the school and highlight the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current chaplaincy provision reflects the important steps the school has taken to redefine and reform its working. • The commitment of the chaplain and the leadership team in encouraging the spiritual life of the school. • The deputy headteachers provide high level support for the spiritual dimension of the school.

Areas identified for development
<p>The validators agree with the areas for development identified by the school. In particular they further encourage the school to provide greater resources to enable the chaplain to meet the demands of a far-reaching role. In addition, the senior leadership team (SLT) and chaplaincy team should seek to establish a more effective and closer partnership between students, staff and parish priests in order to improve the prayer and liturgical life of the sixth form.</p>

WHAT THE SCHOOL SAYS

SECTION C2: Moral development	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
	✓			

Key strengths identified by the school
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school’s code of conduct encourages reflection and reconciliation, and demonstrates concern for the individual. • The new inclusion room has led to a marked reduction in exclusions, and offers students support. • Peer mentoring is well-established and enables bonds of friendship and support to grow. • Incidents of racial/homophobic abuse, violence and theft are extremely low. • The school celebrates achievement through Record of Achievement day and success assemblies. • The school re-entry meeting for each exclusion/internal seclusion builds opportunities for reflection. • The use and development of restorative justice approaches. • The use of the social and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL) initiative. • Ofsted said of students in March 2009; “Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is exceptional. Students feel very happy and secure, and develop very well socially and emotionally.

Areas identified for development by the school <i>(include timescale for action)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review consistency and impact of rewards across the school in recognising progress and achievement (July 2010) • To look at prefecture in peer moral development (July 2010) • To expand inclusion infrastructure (July 2010 and ongoing)

VALIDATORS’ JUDGEMENT

SECTION C2: Moral development	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
	✓			

Key strengths
<p>The validators agree with the school’s judgement and with the strengths identified by the school and highlight the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior and middle leaders provide high level commitment to the moral dimension of the school. • Pupils’ attitude and behaviour are a credit to themselves and the school; relationships between staff and students, as well as between the students themselves, truly reflect the Gospel values promoted by the school. • Improvement in academic progress, especially at key stages 4 and 5 indicates a strong common purpose. • Developments in the school’s discipline procedures and the provision of an inclusion area (the Emmaus Room) are making a real difference. Those youngsters who are in danger of exclusion, or who have been excluded are given effective one-to-one teaching, meeting the school’s objective of integrating them successfully back into their lessons, with the least disruption to other students.

Areas identified for development
<p>The validators agree with the areas for development identified by the school.</p>

SOURCES OF EVIDENCE FOR THE VALIDATION

As part of the validation process:

Two validators spent a preliminary day in the school, meeting with the headteacher, the deputy headteachers and the head of RE, discussing the school's self-review report, touring both sites of the school and gathering documentary evidence.

The validation took place over two school days, when interviews and discussions were held with:

- The headteacher;
- Two foundation members of the governing body, who also have children currently at the school;
- The head of RE and members of the RE department;
- Three members of the senior team with responsibility for personal, social and health education;
- The directors of sport and the performing arts;
- The chaplain;
- Two of the parish priests, who frequently minister in the school;
- The school's social inclusion manager;
- Student members of the school council on both sites.

Eight religious education lessons were observed.

Four acts of collective worship were observed.

A sample of students' religious education exercise books and work folders was scrutinised.

Religious education resources were seen.

An analysis was made of responses to the parental questionnaire.

Informal discussions were held with the staff and students over the three days that the validators were present in school.

A range of documentation from the school was scrutinised, including the school prospectus, the school development plan, the RE handbook, the department evaluation form (DEF) for religious education, examination results, Reporting and Analysis for Improvement through Schools Self-Evaluation (RAISE) online report 2008 and the value added A-level performance system (ALPS) report for the sixth form, the school self-evaluation form (SEF) and the Ofsted report (March, 2009).

Informal feedback was given to the senior leadership team at the end the process.

Conclusion

The validators would like to thank the headteacher, staff and students for their welcome and for their open approach adopted towards the validation process. They would also like to thank the RE department in particular for their high level of co-operation.