

DIOCESE OF PORTSMOUTH VALIDATION REPORT



Bishop Challoner Catholic Secondary School

St Michael's Road, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG22 6SR

URN: 116478
 Date of previous validation 9th – 10th June 2010
 Date of this validation 30th June - 1st July 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous validation:	Outstanding
	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

- The headteacher, senior leaders and governors promote the Catholic life of the school tirelessly by, their work and witness. The ethos and mission of the school are summed up in the 'Challoner Way' and 'Walk with Me' and these are deeply embedded and made concrete in the daily experience of the whole school community.
- Members of staff are wholeheartedly committed to the ethos and mission of the school and give their time extremely generously, including running Saturday School.
- Care for and value of the individual are key features of the life of the school and are manifested in the very strong pastoral team, the care for those with special needs and the very well-planned arrangements for transition. The commitment of staff and the care for individuals result in excellent relationships between staff and students.
- An outstanding commitment to social justice is demonstrated in support for local and international charities and implementation of UNICEF's Rights Respecting School programme.
- The governing body and school leadership have developed robust and effective self-evaluation procedures and so have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- Curriculum religious education (RE) is highly valued by the whole school community and the department has a very high profile in the school, leading many developments in the school. Excellent teaching means that students enjoy RE and progress to reach very high standards.
- Spiritual and moral development are excellent and supported by the wide range of opportunities for reflection.
- Prayer and worship are woven into the daily life of the school and students participate willingly and enthusiastically in the opportunities provided.
- Parents value the school's caring Catholic community and speak highly of the dedication of the staff.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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

- To develop further the opportunities for days of reflection/retreats for whole year groups.
- To share a more consistent approach to marking in the RE department and ensure that all students are given sufficient time to respond to teachers' comments.
- The provision of a prayer space within the main school campus.

Full Report

The school as a Catholic community

The school community:

Outstanding

The wider community:

Outstanding

- The ethos of the school fosters positive relationships and a respect for individual difference. Students feel safe and are encouraged to be themselves.
- The ‘Challoner Way’ is manifest throughout the school. All members of the school refer to it and model it in practice. It informs the daily life of the school.
- Staff give freely of their time and talents in support of their students, who respond positively to this generosity. Parents are also very positive about the school and value the efforts staff make on behalf of their children.
- Transition arrangements are well-developed and the needs of individual children are thoroughly researched and disseminated with appropriate provision made for those with special needs. Staff and students are helped to understand the school’s ethos and mission, through a well-planned process of induction.
- Students are encouraged to achieve all that they can, personally and academically. Achievements are recognised and celebrated in a number of ways, including the use of colours badges, which the students are pleased to receive and wear with pride.
- Strong links exist with the local Catholic primary schools, with a strong and effective cluster group enriching the provision of Catholic education in the area. There is a close relationship between the school and the local parish. This is facilitated by the proximity of the parish church and the willingness of parish clergy to involve themselves in the life of the school.
- The school has a history of promoting social justice and supports a range of charities each year, raising substantial amounts of money. The link with a school in Bamenda is growing stronger every year and encourages an understanding of solidarity and promoting the common good. This is further illustrated by the award of a bronze UNICEF award as a Rights Respecting School.
- The school is an active member of the diocesan family of schools and a number of members of staff contribute significantly to diocesan initiatives.

Curriculum religious education

Attainment and progress:

Outstanding

Quality of teaching:

Outstanding

Leadership and management of RE:

Outstanding

- Curriculum RE is highly prized by the leaders and governors of the school; it is enjoyed and valued by the pupils and parents speak highly of the curriculum and teachers.
- The head of RE and her team work tirelessly to promote the highest possible standards. There are robust monitoring procedures and detailed plans for improvement.
- Attainment at GCSE has been well above the national average consistently over the last four years and the percentage of students achieving top grades at GCSE has been significantly above the national average for the last three years. The vast majority of groups of students in both key stages, including those supported by the pupil premium, make good progress and effective interventions are put in place to help vulnerable students to keep up.
- Students thoroughly enjoy RE and the very warm relationships between students and staff make a significant contribution to learning. Students particularly appreciate the many openings for debate and discussion of different points of view. They also value the broad range of opportunities for learning outside the classroom provided by the department, including the extensive programme of educational visits.

- Teachers have excellent subject knowledge, lessons are planned well and technology is used imaginatively, for example, the RE Twitter account, and all teaching is at least good, with the majority outstanding.
- Marking is affirming and often includes suggestions of how students can improve work; however, students do not always appear to have time to follow up their teachers' suggestions.

Spiritual and moral development

Spiritual development:

Outstanding

Moral development:

Outstanding

- There is a clear emphasis on developing relationships with God and neighbour. Students are encouraged to recognise their own worth and the worth of others.
- The liturgical life of the school is well-planned and provides opportunities for participation by all students, whatever their religious affiliation. The school make good use of the local parish church, where they celebrate Mass and where many students take the opportunity for confession or spiritual direction during services of reconciliation. Students respond positively to invitations to pray and see prayer as a normal part of daily life. The retreat programmes are well received by the students and encourage personal reflection and community cohesion.
- The chaplain makes a significant contribution to the spiritual life of the school, providing a range of experiences that are appreciated by the community. In this she is well supported by the local parish priests.
- Through charitable endeavours the students have become accustomed to giving of themselves for the benefit of others.
- Behaviour is excellent and the shared ethic allows students to reinforce appropriate attitudes and behaviour amongst themselves. Rewards and sanctions are orientated towards the growth and development of students and underpinned by a desire for justice and reconciliation.
- An effective pastoral system provides support and guidance for individuals and helps them to develop an appreciation of right and wrong.

Leadership and management:

Outstanding

- The headteacher demonstrates outstanding Christian leadership, focusing constantly on developing the school's Catholic ethos, so enabling students to experience life in a community based on the Gospel. This was acknowledged and valued by parents, staff and governors.
- The leadership of the school is enhanced by a strong leadership team who, individually and collectively, contribute to the school's flourishing.
- The governors are deeply committed to promoting and developing the Catholic life of the school and the value given to RE and spiritual development is demonstrated by the roles of the chair and vice chair as link governors for RE and chaplaincy.
- The governors are knowledgeable about the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are regular visitors to the school, which is appreciated by members of the community and gives the governors a good understanding of the everyday life of the school
- Robust and challenging systems for self-evaluation of curriculum RE and the spiritual, moral and social development of students are in place and students are increasingly taking a more developed role in such evaluation, taking a more developed role in such evaluation through activities such as the Student Voice Annual Student Conference. This rigorous self-evaluation then leads into strategic planning at departmental and whole school levels.
- The school has effectively carried out the areas for development highlighted in the previous validation.

School details

Name of school:	Bishop Challoner Catholic Secondary School
Age range of pupils:	11-16
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number of pupils on roll:	807
Chair of Governors:	Mrs Kate Webb
Headteacher:	Mr Anthony Corish

Bishop Challoner Catholic Secondary School is a slightly smaller than average secondary school. The majority of students are Catholic, with approximately 17% of students from other Christian denominations. The school admits students from a wide catchment area and students from a wide variety of socio-economic backgrounds. The proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds is above the national average as is the proportion of students for whom English is an additional language; the proportion of disabled students and students with special educational needs is below national average and the proportion of students who are in receipt of pupil premium is also below 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

Miss A-M Brister	Lead validator
Dr C Richardson	Assistant validator

Activities carried out as part of the validation

- Ethos walk with two year 10 students
- Discussion on the school's self-review documentation
- Meetings and discussions with two student groups
- Meetings and discussions with governors, headteacher, leadership team members, head of RE, staff and chaplain.
- Work scrutiny:
 - 4 lesson observations
 - 2 tutor observations
 - 1 assembly observation
- Attendance at staff briefing
- Meeting with representatives of the governing body
- Parental survey

Conclusion

The team wishes to thank the school for its warm welcome and co-operation during the validation process at an extra-ordinarily busy time for the school.