



QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

REVIEW REPORT FOR
ST. SWITHUN'S CATHOLIC
PRIMARY SCHOOL

Name of School:	St Swithun's Catholic Primary School
Head teacher/Principal:	Andrew Olive
Hub:	Portsmouth Hub
School type:	Voluntary aided
MAT (if applicable):	Not applicable

Estimate at this QA Review:	GOOD
Date of this Review:	04/02/2019
Estimate at last QA Review	GOOD
Date of last QA Review	29/01/2018
Grade at last Ofsted inspection:	GOOD
Date of last Ofsted inspection:	03/02/2016

Quality Assurance Review

The review team, comprising of host school leaders and visiting reviewers agree that evidence indicates these areas are evaluated as follows:

School Improvement Strategies	GOOD
Outcomes for Pupils	GOOD
Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment	GOOD
Area of Excellence	Not submitted for this review
Previously accredited valid Areas of Excellence	Not applicable
Overall Estimate	GOOD

Please note that a Challenge Partners Quality Assurance Review is not equivalent to an Ofsted inspection, and agreed estimates from the review are not equivalent to Ofsted judgements.

1. Context and character of the school

- St. Swithun's is a 3 - 11 primary school in Southsea. It has 315 pupils on roll and is typically over-subscribed. In September 2018, Sunbeams Pre-school opened on the school site offering 25 places, which have quickly been filled. The main school has one and a half classes in each year group, organised as three mixed classes in Years 5/6, Years 3/4 and Key Stage 1. There are two full-time Reception classes.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. However, there is a high proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL) and the school is in the top 20% for such pupils nationally.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is close to the national average. The school is in an urban setting and serves an area of average deprivation. Pupils come from a wide distance to access this faith-based educational provision, whose mission statement is to 'Love one another as Jesus loved us.'
- There have been significant changes in the leadership of the school in the last few years. The current headteacher took up post in 2015 and, since then, staffing has been much more stable.

2.1 School Improvement Strategies - Progress from previous EBIs

- Since the previous review, school leaders have implemented regular and rigorous internal monitoring procedures. The progress of the most able pupils is carefully and regularly tracked and discussed at progress meetings. Teachers have increased the level of challenge for the most able pupils and, as a result, increasing numbers of pupils are achieving at greater depth. The school now has links with the local training school and teachers are benefitting from the professional development opportunities that membership offers.

2.2 School Improvement Strategies - What went well

- Strong leadership by the headteacher and his senior team, ably supported by talented middle leaders, is resulting in ongoing improvement. There is a great sense of cohesion and collegiality in the school. Staff and pupils are united in following the school's mission statement to 'Love one another as Jesus loved us' and the strong Catholic ethos is very tangible across the school. One pupil said: 'The best thing about the school is that everyone is invited.'
- The school has robust systems in place to ensure honest and clear self-evaluation is undertaken and this is effectively used to inform school improvement planning. The self-evaluation document highlights the strengths of the school and points to

areas for further development. The School Improvement Plan (SIP) flows coherently from the self-evaluation.

- Since last year, pupils' progress has been more rigorously assessed. As a result, teachers are able to plug gaps in pupils' learning more swiftly, enabling them to make faster progress. A wide range of targeted interventions are quickly put in place when pupils are found to be falling behind.
- Teachers and teaching assistants are held robustly to account for the progress pupils are making. Regular formal and informal discussions take place between senior leaders and other staff about pupils' progress.
- Pupils with specific learning needs add a unique and highly positive dimension to the school. These pupils are well served by a strong team of adults who track their progress and offer bespoke provision to cater for a wide variety of needs. In the school as a whole, pupils' positive and inclusive attitudes towards each other, especially those with additional needs, are a strong force for improvement in the school. Pupils are welcoming and supportive of others' differences.
- Professional development lies at the heart of the school. Teachers and support staff benefit from a well-thought-out training programme to build their subject and pedagogical knowledge. Sharing good practice through the school's four 'specialist classrooms' and supporting each other's professional development is a strong feature of the school.
- The recently opened pre-school facility is a high-quality learning environment which prepares children very effectively for school routines. Staff are skilled at identifying children's needs and putting interventions in early to ensure they get off to a flying start.
- Strong leadership of mathematics across the school is helping pupils to make faster progress. As a result of more focussed planning, pupils are developing their problem-solving and reasoning skills more effectively from an early age.
- Leaders have undertaken work to review the school's curriculum. As a result, planning has begun to build a curriculum which promotes pupils' personal development even more strongly.

2.3 School Improvement Strategies - Even better if...

- ...there was greater consistency of expectation in Early Years.
- ...teachers challenged the most able pupils even further.
- ...leaders evaluated the impact of their actions more sharply.

3.1 Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment - Progress from previous EBIs

- Since the previous review, leaders have focussed on supporting pupils who have

specific needs in four key areas: autism spectrum disorder (ASD), dyslexia, English as an additional language (EAL), and the most-able. Four class teachers, each focussing on one of the key areas, are researching and experimenting with new strategies in their 'specialist classroom', and regularly share their practice with other staff across the school. Consequently, progress in these four key groups of pupils is improving.

Teachers are applying the school's marking and feedback policy more consistently and pupils respond to teachers' feedback thoughtfully.

3.2 Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment - What went well

- There is a warm and welcoming ethos which pervades the school. Classrooms are characterised by very strong relationships between teachers, teaching assistants and pupils, and between pupils themselves. As a result, pupils feel motivated and confident to learn so their level of engagement is high.
- Pupils are very enthusiastic about their learning and recognise that they are being made to work hard. One pupil said: 'In maths we have really hard challenges', and another said: 'Teachers are really hot on homework!'. Pupils also said how much they appreciate the wide range of extra-curricular clubs and activities on offer, such as 'magical maths.'
- There is a calm and purposeful atmosphere in every lesson. Routines are extremely well embedded. Teachers have high expectations of pupils, who get on with their learning eagerly. Pupils' books are well presented and they demonstrate a pride in their work.
- Teachers know their pupils very well and use this knowledge, supplemented by assessment data, to plan interesting work to develop pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. As a result, there is an appropriate level of challenge for pupils so most make sustained progress over time.
- The school's use of 'talking partners' is having a marked impact on the development of pupils' oracy skills. Pupils express their ideas verbally in a very articulate way, using high level vocabulary.
- Teachers have strong subject knowledge and they plan lessons thoroughly, using high quality resources. Classrooms are bright and welcoming with vibrant displays. Where teaching is strongest, it is well sequenced and builds on prior learning. Examples of teachers developing pupils' skills of fluency and reasoning in English and problem-solving in mathematics were evident
- Pupils are expected to work independently following an initial input from their teacher. The work on developing growth mindsets equips pupils to grapple well with problems they may encounter, use a variety of strategies such as 'brain, buddy, boss' before they ask for help and develop high levels of perseverance and resilience.
- Pupils' behaviour for learning is strong and they are supportive and encouraging

of each other. They clearly enjoy working together and collaborate happily. Teaching assistants support pupils' learning very effectively.

- In many lessons seen, teachers modelled learning using subject specific vocabulary. Careful questioning allowed teachers to assess pupils' understanding of new concepts and to adapt teaching as necessary.

3.3 Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment - Even better if...

...the pace of learning was consistently high for all groups of learners.

...teachers were very clear about what they wanted pupils to learn within each task.

4. Outcomes for Pupils

- By the end of Early Years, children made consistently strong progress from their starting points. In 2018, 89% of pupils reached a good level of development (GLD), with more than a third exceeding. This trend has been sustained over time and is well above the national average.
- Consistently, and over time, pupils in Year 1 have exceeded the national average in the phonics screening check due to strong teaching in this area.
- For the past four years, standards for pupils in Key Stage 1 have been in line with national averages. In 2018, Key Stage 1 pupils again performed well with more pupils reaching the expected standard for their age in comparison with the previous year.
- In 2018, Key Stage 2 results were above national averages in reading and writing but results in mathematics were weaker. Consequently, combined results were disappointing. Leaders have clearly analysed the reasons for this and have put a rigorous action plan in place which is bearing fruit.
- While the most able Year 6 pupils performed well in reading and writing, too few of them achieved at 'greater depth' in mathematics. As a result, no pupils reached the higher standard across all three disciplines. Girls performed significantly better than boys. As a result, leaders are tracking pupils' progress more rigorously this year.
- The number of disadvantaged pupils in Years 2 and 6 varies year on year, but numbers are generally small and therefore comparison with other pupils' progress nationally is not always meaningful. Disadvantaged pupils currently in the school show variable rates of progress but teachers are well aware of their needs and provide effective support to help them catch up.
- Pupils who have SEND are making strong progress because of the targeted support they receive. Staff understand pupils' individual needs very well and use a wide variety of interventions, often in consultation with external partners, to provide the best help possible for pupils to succeed.

- The school's tracking information shows that pupils currently in the school are making effective progress from their starting points in almost all year groups. This is backed up by the learning seen in lessons and during a work scrutiny.
- Increasing numbers of pupils on roll speak EAL. They make positive progress in their skills, and most reach the expected level in all areas as a result of the targeted support they receive.

5. What additional support would the school like from the Challenge Partners network, either locally or nationally?

School leaders would like to reflect on any further help they might need. The school is already involved in the local Challenge Partner 'more able' network.

This review will support the school's continuing improvement. The main findings will be shared within the school's hub in order that it can inform future activities.