



Romero Developer Level Final Validator's Report

Validator's Final Report

In the strategic strand statement, it can be seen how leaders and governors at St Swithun's have worked together taking significant steps to ensure that Catholic Social Teaching (CST) is firmly embedded into the school's vision and mission. For instance, CST statements are now included in key policies. In the Relational Behaviour Management Policy these can be seen in the policy's aims and in the RE policy, these statements are outlined explicitly. Governors review the impact they have on integrating CST by reflecting and reviewing this at the end of each meeting, this process was clearly explained during the Validation visit. Leaders have invested in staff formation so that CST understanding is shared by the whole school community. Additionally, a recent INSET focused on guiding subject leaders to audit and develop CST links in their curricular. Children too have been empowered to promote CST principles and hence influence culture and priorities through structures such as the school council, Mini Vinnies, Relational Ambassadors and Language Ambassadors. The 99% response rate to the statement 'I understand the School's Catholic mission and I am supportive of this' demonstrates that the school has been successful in promoting CST principles and sharing these via newsletters and social media with the wider school community. The school states that the School Improvement Plan and SEF explicitly commit to deepening CST integration and to improving provision for vulnerable groups and in the Validation visit both these documents were shared to demonstrate this. Supporting staff wellbeing is a strength, examples include a generous PPA allocation, a compassionate approach to extraordinary leave requests, social events and staff shout outs that always begin with thanks.

St Swithun's states it has made significant and purposeful progress in embedding CST into the curriculum. Following an INSET day, in April 2025, subject leaders have reviewed their long-term plans to identify and strengthen links to the seven CST principles and have, because of this, added images to their plans to demonstrate alignment with these principles. An included example of a medium-term plan for Year 5/6 Geography clearly demonstrates this is now standard practice evidencing that CST is no longer add on but firmly entrenched in everyday learning. Of interest, are the CST at St Swithun's guide and the adoption of CST principles expressed in a child friendly manner along with simple imagery, both of which have ensured that CST language is appropriate and consistent resulting in pupil confidence in identifying and expressing CST values. Additionally, CST is evident in a range of subject areas such as PSHE where dignity, rights and participation are addressed. Geography that explores fair trade, deforestation and global responsibility. An example of an art lesson outcome demonstrates how CST is threaded across this subject. In RE lessons, pupils are able to articulate Gospel values and connect Scripture to justice and care for creation. As well as working towards threading CST vocabulary and imagery into lesson planning, school-wide displays and newsletters are other mediums by which the principles of CST are disseminated. A photo of a display board demonstrates CST in action whereby pupils are invited to nominate members of their community that have demonstrated CST values. Governors are assured that CST is threaded throughout the curriculum by conducting quarterly subject visits and reporting their findings to the governing body. During the Validation visit the school was able to outline how it engages with the key themes of Laudato Si through the Pilgrims of Hope initiative and with Fratelli Tutti where the concept of who is my neighbour is unpicked.

In the practical strand there is plenty of evidence that children are involved in a range of leadership groups which include Mini Vinnies, Eco-Warriors, School Council, Relational and Language Ambassadors plus buddy groups. These groups provide structured ways for children to live out the Gospel. Through pupil conferencing, it was evident, during the Validation visit, how much children value being part of these groups and report increased confidence and the enjoyment they derive from activities such as leading worship and the rosary. Children have also led the CAFOD Big Lent Walk, food bank collections, reverse Advent calendar appeals and environmental stewardship projects. School wide events such as International Day serve to highlight and raise awareness of diversity and global solidarity. The wider community are kept informed of Catholic life via a variety of social media mediums and a comprehensive Catholic Life of the School document has been shared as evidence of this. Catholic life at St Swithun's is described in the summary statement as vibrant, visible and lived daily by both children, staff and the wider community. Vulnerable families are supported with food parcels and a donation system exists whereby more affluent families freely make financial contributions to support those less fortunate. A range of local and national charities, chosen by the School Council, are supported by fundraising and other activities, such as sending Christmas cards to sailors via Stella Maris. Visiting



speakers from organisations such as CAFOD and the RNLI together with careers talks delivered by members of the community covering careers ranging from refuse collection to working in a laboratory demonstrate the CST principles of dignity and respect.

In St Swithun's self-evaluation statement it is evident that the school has reflected on the process of undertaking the Developer Level award. This has allowed them to recognise how deeply their mission shapes daily experience and how the process has shifted culture so that CST is no longer a specialist language but part of everyday conversation among staff and children. In addition, there is a clear articulation of what the school wishes to achieve in relation to CST moving forward. This includes embedding CST more consistently across the whole curriculum, ensuring that all policies reflect and outline CST with impact being reported more systematically to both families and governors, as well as working closely with the wider parish community towards shared social action and community mission. The ideas, discussed during the Validation Visit, to work towards Innovator level are to be commended and hopefully you will be able to bring these to fruition. For this level please also focus on developing your outreach work, paying particular attention to impact. Also continue the good work towards ensuring the CST principles are present and explicit in every subject area. Congratulations on achieving the Developer Award.

Liz Holford, Oscar Romero Validator 2 December 2025