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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME OF SCHOOL</th>
<th>St Francis Catholic Primary School</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ADDRESS</td>
<td>Coronation Road</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>South Ascot</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Berkshire</td>
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<td></td>
<td>SL5 9HG</td>
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<tr>
<td>URN</td>
<td>110029</td>
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<tr>
<td>CHAIR OF GOVERNORS</td>
<td>Mr Stephen Poulston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HEADTEACHER</td>
<td>Mrs Jane Gow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAMES OF VALIDATORS</td>
<td>Mrs Jacqueline Davies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mrs Margaret Crompton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DATES OF THE</td>
<td>14th June 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VALIDATION VISIT</td>
<td>25th June 2013</td>
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</table>
### Information about the school

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of pupils on roll</td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of boys</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of girls</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of statemented pupils</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Catholic pupils</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of teaching staff</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of support staff</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Catholic staff</td>
<td>63</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

St Francis school is situated in South Ascot in an attractive and pleasant environment. It is popular and oversubscribed. The grounds and environment are secure, well-maintained with attractive play surfaces, a large sports field and a pond; it is a stimulating environment, offering outdoor challenges for its pupils. The school benefits from its close proximity to the parish church and takes advantage of the opportunities to visit, attend liturgies and celebrate Mass. The school recently became the Mass centre for the parish, while the church underwent substantial refurbishment. The school admits children into the reception class in the year in which they are five. It shares its site with St Francis Pre-School. There are 208 pupils on roll; 91% are Catholic, 8% and 1% are from other Christian and other faith traditions respectively. The school has lower than average free school meals (FSM) take-up, at 3%; special educational needs (SEN) at 12% are also lower than the national average. The socio-economic make-up of the school has remained stable as has the ethnic background, which continues to be mainly British with a minority of children coming from Eastern Europe, Caribbean, Asian and other family backgrounds. The school has an outstanding reputation in the area that it serves and children continue their Catholic education in a variety of schools within the local area. There is no close Catholic Secondary School in catchment; some attend independent schools and others attend Catholic secondary schools some distance away.
The school’s effectiveness in providing Catholic education

St Francis school provides a Catholic education steeped in its mission, which is known and understood by all. The headteacher is driven to improving the experiences provided for the pupils, to ensure that they enjoy value and develop their relationship with God, through prayer, worship and high quality religious education (RE). Her vision is shared with all, ably supported by staff, governors, parish priest and pupils. Her inspirational leadership in providing a Catholic education is to be both commended and celebrated. There is a feeling of calmness and spirituality, which permeates every area of the school life. The pupils care for one another and know how to bring about reconciliation. They delight in sharing their own thoughts and opinions about their school; personal spirituality is evident during lessons, during play and during conversations. Staff are committed to improving further the development of RE teaching and learning in the school and they are well supported by the hard work, commitment and enthusiasm of the RE co-ordinator and her efforts to support and continue to raise standards in RE.

The children are incredibly proud of their school and their Catholic heritage, one stating “It was nice to be able to say and show all the positive things about our school, because there are so many. We made sure we showed things that we are proud of.” Another child emphasised: “We showed you some of our books, picking these randomly to show how meaningful RE is to us. We talked about our collective worship as year sixes how much we enjoy leading these and trying to set a good example.” The children demonstrated how they lived out their faith each day in school and proudly articulated their fidelity to the mission of the school.

a) Key strengths of the school

- Visitors acknowledge the warmth of the welcome they receive.
- The quality of the relationships, the strength and warmth of the welcome the school gives.
- There is a clear process for induction and support for new staff.
- There is a cohesive system for keeping the community informed, through a vibrant website, providing detail for parents to share in the celebration of the children’s success and their life in school.
- The inclusion of the community in a range of school activities, raising money for both individuals and such enterprises as CAFOD and Fairtrade.
- The school environment is well maintained and supports the mission of the school.
- The leadership team is effective, ensuring high expectations in all aspects of school life.
- Governors are aware of their responsibilities; they have a clear understanding of how the school wishes to develop and are supportive of the drive toward school improvement within a Catholic context.
- Relationships are built on respect and consideration; the mission of the school is lived out by all members of the community.
- There exists a strong bond between the home, school and parish.
- The effective leadership and co-ordination of RE maintain the status of religious education within the school.
- There is a range of effective processes to ensure clear direction and the setting of challenging targets.
- The continual endeavour to assess RE comprehensively, both formally and informally.
- The quality of the work in RE is evident; creative ways to ensure understanding are appreciated by pupils, leading to secure progress and attainment across the school.
- The involvement and quality of the children’s acts of collective worship, which they plan and deliver.
- The ability to share prayer spontaneously.
- The support that the school receives from the parish priest and also his involvement in the year 6 retreat.
- Children display leadership skills at all levels, providing support for younger pupils through the buddy system.
- Pupils are articulate, engaging, have respect for their teachers and are immensely proud of their school and their achievements.
b) Key areas for development

- Extend responsibility roles for the pupils to include RE leaders.
- Encourage collaborative visits to other cluster school.
- Continue to work on assessment in RE and embed and extend assessment and tracking procedures.

c) Progress since the last validation

- The role of the RE leader has ensured that good practice and consistency is shared across the school. Although new to the role the present RE leader is a key figure within the school and has ensured that monitoring is rigorous and acted upon, to improve even further progress and achievement.
- There is now a comprehensive mission statement, understood by all, that has been woven into the fabric of the school. It is demonstrated by what the school community says, achieves, shares and celebrates.
- There is now a raft of communication to inform parents, one of which is a comprehensive, creative and well-managed website. There is a tracking system in place to assist staff in informing parents about progress and attainment in RE. Information is sent out half-termly about topics that the children will cover. This includes personal, social and health education (PSHE) and sex and relationship topics.

d) Summary of parents’ views of the school

As part of the school’s preparation for the validation parents were asked to complete a questionnaire, which included specific questions on the Catholic life of the school. The school received 77 responses out of a possible 163.

“I feel blessed… because of the way the faith is celebrated and encouraged.” My children are “fully welcomed into the school.” The parents were keen to share their thoughts about the school, particularly the welcome: “everything we see, love and value about our school.” Another parent states “Staff are highly positive and welcoming.” As well as stating that her child has regard for RE and that all are welcomed, the parent went on to say that: “Spirituality can be seen through spontaneous prayer and giving her money to charity, amongst others.”

From the responses given in the questionnaire it is apparent that parents feel they are welcomed by the school and that they are kept well-informed about what their children are learning in RE. They recognise and appreciate the level of commitment that the leadership team has for the religious life of the school and their commitment to raising standards. They value the opportunity to worship with their children and feel they are well supported by the school, which develops links with the home, school and parish. They agree that the school provides opportunities for pupils’ spiritual and moral development and say that their children are happy at school. The majority of the parents feel that the school is a supportive, caring Catholic community and a significant number of parents are happy with the RE work children do at home.

Overall, the responses were very positive and echoed what the validators saw during the validation: that the children at St Francis school are happy, safe and live out the school’s mission.
SOURCES OF EVIDENCE FOR THE VALIDATION

As part of the validation process:

Two validators spent a morning in school:
- Meeting with the headteacher and RE leader;
- Experiencing a whole school act of collective worship;
- Being introduced to and speaking with staff;
- Having a comprehensive and full tour with both explanation and enthusiasm from two year six pupils;
- Time was spent discussing the schools’ self-review report and gathering evidence.

163 parental questionnaires were given out and 73 were returned; responses were analysed.

One validator spent a further day in school, carrying out the validation.

On the validation day:
- A sample of pupils’ work was scrutinised;
- Documentation and evidence were examined;
- Two acts of collective worship were observed,
  one key stage 2 and one class act of collective worship at key stage 1;
- Four RE lessons were observed.

Interviews and discussions were held with:
- Pupils;
- Parents;
- A governor;
- The RE governor;
- The RE leader.

Feedback was given to the headteacher and the RE leader at the end of the validation visit.

The validators would like to thank all involved for their time and effort in the very thorough preparation for the validation. They were also very appreciative of the wonderful, warm welcome and hospitality they received throughout the validation process. They appreciated and valued the beautiful prayers and films about pupils’ life and experiences at St Francis School. Validators found it a pleasure and a privilege to be part of the process.