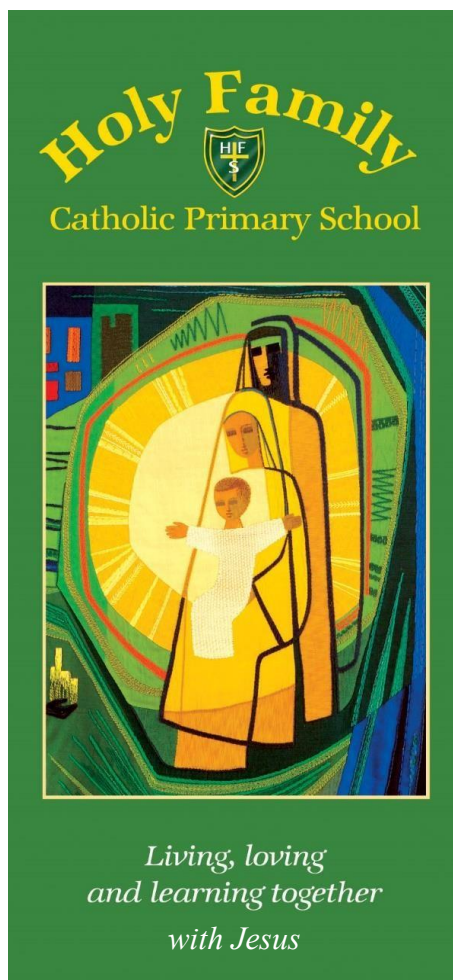


Holy Family Catholic Primary School

The Rosary Trust



Governor Open Day
11 June 2025



FOCUS

The focus of this year's governor open day is mainly for Governors to see how the school has responded to the November CSI Inspection's recommendations:

- Ensure pupils contribute in a planned and systematic way to the school's evaluation of its Catholic Life and Mission and take a lead in planning improvements;
- Ensure pupils have a clear understanding of how well they are doing and of what they need to do to improve, and that they can fully articulate how they have made progress;
- Provide professional development opportunities for all staff to support pupils in planning, leading and evaluating prayer and liturgy.

It enabled Governors to collect as much evidence as they can about how the school environment translates these aims through the Catholic teaching and into the pupils' lives – starting from the very day they join the school until the day they leave.

Today's visit went a long way in providing valuable evidence of how these elements can be demonstrated.

A governor's role is to be part of the school day, to increase collective knowledge and understanding of what goes on in a typical school day, and to be part of the leadership role listed above. These governor days are extremely beneficial in building positive relationships between Governors, staff and the children themselves.

Governors participating in the day were:

Mrs Anne Wright (Chair)
Mrs Marcella Coleridge (Vice Chair)
Mr John Glasby
Fr Nixon Gomes
Mrs Helen Jones
Mrs Kate Prior
Mrs Jasmine Everett
Mr Richard Barber

FOREWORD BY CHAIR

It's that time of year when the Governors are able to see a snapshot of a Day in the Life of Holy Family School that we wouldn't otherwise have been able to see and no two days are the same. You will see from the focus above that we were particularly looking at how the *Celebration of the Word* takes place in each class – from Foundation to Year 6. This included assessing the children's understanding of what they were doing and how each child contributed to the planning of the celebration.

We found so much in support of this and you will be able to read below each of the governor's individual perceptions. I would like to thank all the staff and pupils for their valuable contributions towards making our day so special and for answering all our questions without hesitation and so freely. The pupils never cease to delight us with their excellent behaviour, impeccable manners and their thoughtful answers to our questions.

A few Governors may have visited the same class and therefore what they have written may seem the same. But it is worth reading each account as that is a Governor's personal perception of what they saw and felt and it may differ from their colleague.

As Chair of Governors, I am exceedingly privileged to be supported by members on the Local Governing Board who all work so hard for the benefit of the children, to ensure they are at the heart of everything that we do. Each governor can always be relied upon to diligently undertake these visits and they do so freely in their own time. Several of the Governors are in paid employment as well as being a parent but they still ensure their duties as voluntary Governors of the HFS are taken seriously.

I felt saddened as this is my last opportunity to visit the school as Chair because my term of office has come to an end but I know I am handing over the reins to my extremely capable and hard working Vice Chair, Mrs Marcella Coleridge.

My thanks must also go to my fellow governor, Mrs Ronnie Hannan, who is also finishing her term of office at the end of the Summer term. She has worked so hard behind the scenes to ensure all the policies and procedures are up to date and relevant and our statutory requirements are fulfilled. She will be greatly missed. A massive vote of thanks must go to our professional and efficient clerk, Mrs Elizabeth Murphy, who is also an

integral part of the governing body and will continue to ensure Marcella is fully supported. Together with all the staff at HFS, I hope you will agree that we are a team who are working hard for the benefit of the children.

ANNE WRIGHT – Co-Opted Governor - Chair

Every day should start with a smile and there is no better way than to stand by the gate and watch the children come bowling along, full of the hopes of the day. Their faces lit up as I met each of them with a “good morning” and I felt my heart warming at the genuine desire to be in school by most, if not all, of them. I watched some sad faces of a couple of parents who could only watch as their child disappeared into the gates without so much as a backward glance. I remembered those days so well!



Year 4 – Mrs Lonergan and Mrs Cole in Forest School

It's easy to find Forest School as you just look for the line of very happy children singing “Follow Me” and heading across the playground towards their shelter beyond the wooden gate. Under the canopy rests the well laid out altar, the flame colours of the cloth carefully chosen by Year 4 to symbolise Pentecost.

The children respectfully took their seats and, as with every class Celebration, the first action is to light the candle and all are reminded of the reason for this – to show that “Jesus is amongst us”. The sign of the cross in Spanish reminded us that the Holy Spirit had descended on the apostles and gave them the gift of speaking in many languages. The message from today's celebration was “*With Jesus as their guide, the apostles became more confident*”. Mrs Lonergan explained how the Holy Spirit had affected the apostles and their worries had been swept away. She told Class 4 that if they have faith in the Holy Spirit their fears and worries would also be swept away. It was natural to fear new beginnings or change but the Holy Spirit will bring calm. The service concluded with each pair of children being gifted a packet of seeds so that they could plant “the seed of hope”.

Mrs Lonergan explained to me that each year group was divided up by their House Group – e.g. Mathew, Mark, Luke and John. The Celebration of the Word was then planned on a rotation basis by a group. We were handed a detailed proforma plan which clearly showed the rationale behind each part of the Celebration and listed who would be taking part. It was a simple Aide Memoire for the children to use when planning their own service, ensuring they contributed in a planned and systematic way. Each completed plan is used to review What Went Well and Even Better If

It was a joyous and uplifting start to the day!

Year 2 – Mrs Scott

After the sign of the cross, the candle was lit and the hymn, “Yes Jesus Loves me” rang out across the classroom in an enthusiastic and prayerful way. Every child sang to the best of their ability.

The session for today was “How Catholics should collaborate in service of humanity”. The key words were dissected and the meanings explained to the class. The relevance to Fratelli Tutti was discussed. Mrs Scott asked the children what was the meaning of the word “Parable”. They correctly answered:

- From the Bible
- Story
- Story with message
- Teaches a lesson
- Not true, but based on real life situation
- A difficult message put in a simple way!

A video was shown called “The Miracle of Mercy” which explained the concept of Love your Neighbour and Who is my Neighbour as described in the Bible (i.e. The Parable of the Good Samaritan).

A group exercise was undertaken comparing some quotes from scripture with the Fratelli Tutti messages. The differing paragraphs were matched on the white board to demonstrate how close they were in meaning.

Lunch and beyond – Mrs Rackliff, Mrs Small, Mrs Scott

We were lucky to be invited to stay for lunch and today's menu was either a delicious gammon roast dinner or a very tempting jacket potato with tuna or cheese. I chose the latter and loved every bit of it. I was reminded by the MDA to also take my portion of salad, which I did. Sorry Ms Walkden!! This was followed on by a very tasty biscuit.

After lunch, we were shown a sample of the children's RE and English books/workbooks. The detail in each of the books was stunning and it was hard not to under-estimate how much work had gone into exhibiting the

children's work in such a colourful and attractive way. The progression across the years from Foundation to Year 6 was visible to see and the in depth knowledge of scripture and the Liturgical year was evident.

Year 5 – Mrs Rockall

Mrs Rockall started the session by asking for suggestions of what “Freedom and Responsibility” meant. She explained that “Freedom” meant letting something go and “Responsibility” was to do the right thing; you have to have the responsibility to be kind.

She then went on to link the Holy Family Mission Statement (Living Loving Learning Together with Jesus) to the words, “Freedom” and “Responsibility”. Some great suggestions from the class were:

- Learning
- Trying your best
- Supporting others
- Being ready to learn
- The more you learn, the most you know.

The class then were asked to undertake an exercise finding scripture readings linked to Living, Loving, Learning. All children were given a Bible and a list of references and asked to look them up. It was so satisfying to see how the whole class were adept at doing this, finding the first reference in the Books of Proverbs to “Living”. *“When you possibly can, do good to those who need it” : Proverbs 3:27.* A very impressive piece of collective work.

I left Year 5 feeling quite buoyant and absolutely certain that they, and all the other classes, have a very clear understanding of how well they are doing as each member of staff works with them as a group, or individually, to show them what is working well and what would be even better if. Progress across all year groups is clearly visible.

JOHN GLASBY – Foundation Governor

I spent another wonderful day at Holy Family school during the Governor Visit. Presently, I have three children attending the school, with one sadly departing in at the end of the current academic year, and another having already left Holy Family to attend Grammar School in Chelmsford.



I observed the start of the school day with pupils entering the premises and interacting with the Head, Mrs Kelliher, who was on the gate that day, and is the case most mornings.

The day started with two sessions of ‘Celebration of the Word’. The first I observed was undertaken by Year 6. It was a well-organised, student-led session. It involved:

- Making the room a peaceful environment and lighting a candle
- A reading from the letters of St Paul
- A period of meditative time on which to reflect on what they had all heard
- The class gave some examples of peace and kindness

The second session I observed was by Year 5, along a similar theme, involving:

- An explanation provided to the class of the meaning of Pentecost
- The same reading from the letters of St Paul
- The class discussed how they can share joy
- Finishing with the classic hymn “Go Tell Everyone”

After the Celebration, various class members of Year 5 were highly enthusiastic about sharing both their own RE work, as well as the class work book. A particularly highlight of many of those I spoke with was St Patrick, who had been a Saint they had researched earlier in the term. However, this had been taught had clearly worked, as everyone I spoke to was able to confidently describe many parts of his life.

Following break, I observed Year 3 in their English and spelling session. This was a well-organised session involving a mixture of reading, teacher-led sessions about particular word types, and then practical application. There was also a section including colouring-in what they were doing. I spoke with a number of students who identified that colouring helped them focus on the information that was on the page, and assisted with later recall.

This was followed by lunch. I then had lunch with some of the Year 3 class, who delighted in telling me what their favourite lunches were as well as a number of other bewildering topics delivered at breakneck speed. As ever, all years that I observed at lunch once again behaved impeccably and every child followed the expected lunchtime protocol. I was impressed at the discipline of even the very youngest children putting their hands up to alert the teaching staff on duty, which included the headteacher, that they were ready for their dessert. All children tidied up after themselves and were very respectful of their environment. During lunch break, I also took the time to walk around the play areas to observe the children at play. It had continued to be a warm and sunny day and pupils were taking advantage of the outside area.

Some of the new outbuildings had been delivered and installed that day, and were a subject of much interest from the children. Mrs Kelliher talked me through the purpose of the new buildings, which are an exciting addition to the school.

After lunch, the other Governors and I spent some time with a number of the teaching staff. The objective of this session was to understand the impact of the new Religious Education Directory and the application of this in the context of both Religious Education lessons and the wider curriculum. We were shown some wonderful examples of work from Foundation all the way to Year 6 and explored how faith was a central tenet throughout the Holy Family learning experience. There was clear evidence of high-quality teacher feedback and pupil growth throughout the various workbooks that I reviewed. I particularly challenged around the feedback from the school's CSI assessment, and I was pleased with the progress the school has made since then, albeit the outcome from the assessment was very good to begin with.

Following lunch, we had some free time to observe other classes. I spent some time with Foundation, during their 'In the Moment' sessions. These are wonderfully energetic, with a mixture of play, learning and child-led activities. This was followed by a session in Year 2, observing some early applications of algorithms. The session was trickier than probably would have been ideal, as the idea was that simple instructions were provided and to be input into a 'Bee Bot' that then followed the instruction. Sadly a number of the Bee Bots were not functioning so there was only one available, but Mrs Scott improvised with counters so individuals could practice before everyone got a chance to use the real thing.

The final part of the day was observing a Year 5 PE session led by Mr Fyfe. It was a warm day and everyone was clearly enjoying being outside. The teams were practicing for their sports day events and much emphasis was being placed on the level of teamwork required in relays. It is clear that everyone across Holy Family very much enjoys their PE sessions, and all the more so on pleasant days.

This was my third governor day, which further reminded me of the quality of the education provided, the sense of community being part of the school brings to the children and the part that the Catholic Faith and Jesus play in shaping tomorrow's generation. I look forward to my next visit.

HELEN JONES – Foundation Governor

The day started with myself and other Governors greeting parents and pupils at the gate as they arrived for school. Most appeared to be happy and ready for their day ahead. We then gathered together to discuss our remit for the day – “to see how pupils contribute in a planned and systematic way to the school's evaluation of its Catholic Life and Mission”.

EYFS and Y6

Firstly, I visited Foundation where the pupils were sat in a circle around a table with a candle. Chester was invited to light the candle. Next Nancy placed the rosary on the table and Philip put the Bible with the other icons. Everyone said and signed the Daily Prayer. Mrs Scott asked questions about the Pentecost readings that they had been listening to. It was apparent that all the children had listened carefully and were able to answer the questions about the meaning of Pentecost.



Next, they said and signed the Hail Mary followed by blowing out the candle. Foundation pupils were joined by their Prayer Partners from Y6. They played a flame game based on hide the parcel and guess who had it. All enjoyed the game. Before break the pairs made Pentecost flames by tracing their hands – Y6 on red card and Foundation on yellow card. These were then cut out and stuck together with the yellow hand on top. The result was a flame.

On my way to Y2, I passed Mrs Jarvis (School Librarian) and Mrs Claxton (a parent with children in Y6 and Y2). They were making a scarecrow for Y3 who would be exhibiting it in Writtle. I was told that the pupils had designed the scarecrows.

Y2

Y2 were working on an account of "What I did at the weekend". There were some very interesting tales being written. BBQs, dancing, church, various lunches with families, swimming and meeting friends. I spoke to several of the children who were keen to tell me their stories.

Y5

I next visited Y5 who had been set a project based on the school Mission Statement, Living, Loving and Learning with Jesus. They had been asked to create a poster using rules from the Bible texts that they had been working on. Using 2 pieces of Scripture for each rule, they could include references to the pieces chosen. Some very impressive work was being created.

After a very tasty lunch, the Governors met with Mrs Rackliff, Mrs Small and Mrs Scott to look through the Foundation and Y6 RE books. We were all impressed with the high standard of work throughout the school.

Year 3

In the Computing room, the class were working on creating a Minecraft program. They were all very enthusiastic and were enjoying themselves animating the various characters and moving them around.

Y4 – Mrs Sanders

The class were tasked with making their own pictures using a view finder and choosing a section of a picture – either "The Rainforest" or "Flowers" and draw it, enlarging the section they had chosen. I was amazed at the very impressive results being created.

Overall

I had a very informative and interesting day filled with many special moments. All the staff were very accommodating and allowed Governors to join their classes whenever we wanted to. The pupils also were very welcoming and happy to discuss their projects with us.

KATE PRIOR – Foundation Governor

The usual friendly welcome as we entered the school set the tone for this year's Governor Day. As the children began arriving we went outside to welcome them and to speak to parents. The children arrived happy and exuding a certain confidence that all was well and they were happy to be here.



YEARS 1 & 2 COLLECTIVE WORSHIP.

The children in Yr 1 joined Yr 2 entering to calming music and ambience. Today's worship had been organised by the children in House Group Luke of Yr 2. As the children settled they were made aware that this was their special time to spend with God. Two children from Yr 2 lit a candle to remind everyone that 'Jesus is with us'. We all sang the hymn 'I will be with You' which was displayed on the board and the children sang beautifully. We listened to a passage of scripture from the Gospel of St John and all the children signed themselves with a triple cross on the forehead, lips and chest expressing the hope that God may be in their mind, on their lips and in their heart. The children were asked questions about being a disciple of Jesus.

Q. How can you show that you belong to Jesus?

RESPONSES. Baptism. Caring for others.

Q. How do we show love for one another using words and actions?

RESPONSES. Not hurting anyone. Giving a compliment. Giving a smile.

All the children had a paper heart and were invited to write on it something they wished to pray for and they were all placed in a basket. They also held their prayer stones to think about and pray for someone. Then they prayed: "Thank you Jesus for loving us and showing us how to love one another." The whole celebration was calm, thought provoking and joyful.

YEAR 2 R.E.

The children made the sign of the Cross, lit a candle and sang "Yes Jesus loves me" with gusto. The lesson was entitled "How Catholics should collaborate in service of Humanity." The children learnt that the phrase meant 'working as a team for everyone.' A video of the Good Samaritan called "The Miracle of Mercy" was shown which revealed a surprising message of 'Who is my neighbour?' and what that means.

Yr 2 explored the message of Pope Francis' encyclical Fratelli Tutti - Brothers and Sisters All, with some quotes from Scripture to see how Pope Francis' message had the same meaning. Understanding the parable, Yr 2 considered who may have been a Good Samaritan to them when they have been hurt and when they may have been like the priest/Levite instead of the Good Samaritan.

FOUNDATION & YEAR 6 COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

After break I joined Foundation and Yr 6 for Collective Worship. Earlier, EYFS had made some flames of Pentecost by drawing round their hands on red and yellow paper and glueing them together. EYFS were joined by their prayer partners from Yr 6 and answered some questions about Pentecost stating that:

- It felt like there was a wind.
- They had flames on their heads.
- They talked in different languages.
- It is important to spread God's love.

They all learnt a song together - 'Hello to all the Children of the World' and Yr 6 helped EYFS to learn and pronounce the different words and to write them on their 'hand flames'.

The Chaplaincy Team led everyone to the Prayer Garden and everyone walked quietly and respectfully and were encouraged to sit and think about God. They made the sign of the cross together and were led in prayer. One of Yr 6 read a passage from scripture about the Holy Spirit and then they discussed "How can we use the Holy Spirit in our everyday lives?"

Mrs Rackliff gave feedback to Yr 6 on their Collective Worship, suggesting that going forward:

- EYFS might have more time to tell about their prayers.
- They might speak about the scripture that was read.
- They might explain about reflection.
-

Mrs Rackliff concluded that Yr 6 are good role models and they lead with humility. She said "We have a bond with the Holy Spirit and the Spirit bonds us to Foundation."

My time in school was deeply enriching, indeed it was a privilege to be there. It is good to note that Holy Family School Staff have continuing formation together to carry on learning and helping each other; for as St Jean-Baptiste de la Salle states "To be entrusted with the teaching of the young is a great gift and grace of God."

JASMINE EVERETT – Foundation Governor

This being my second Governors visit, I was looking forward to seeing what Holy Family School have been working on.



We started the day greeting the children at the gate waiting for any questions or just general conversation with parents. Seeing all the children's faces smiling and running into school was a delight to see they clearly enjoy coming to school.

I took some time to look at the lovely artwork made by years 5&6, from the pilgrimage day they spent at the church.



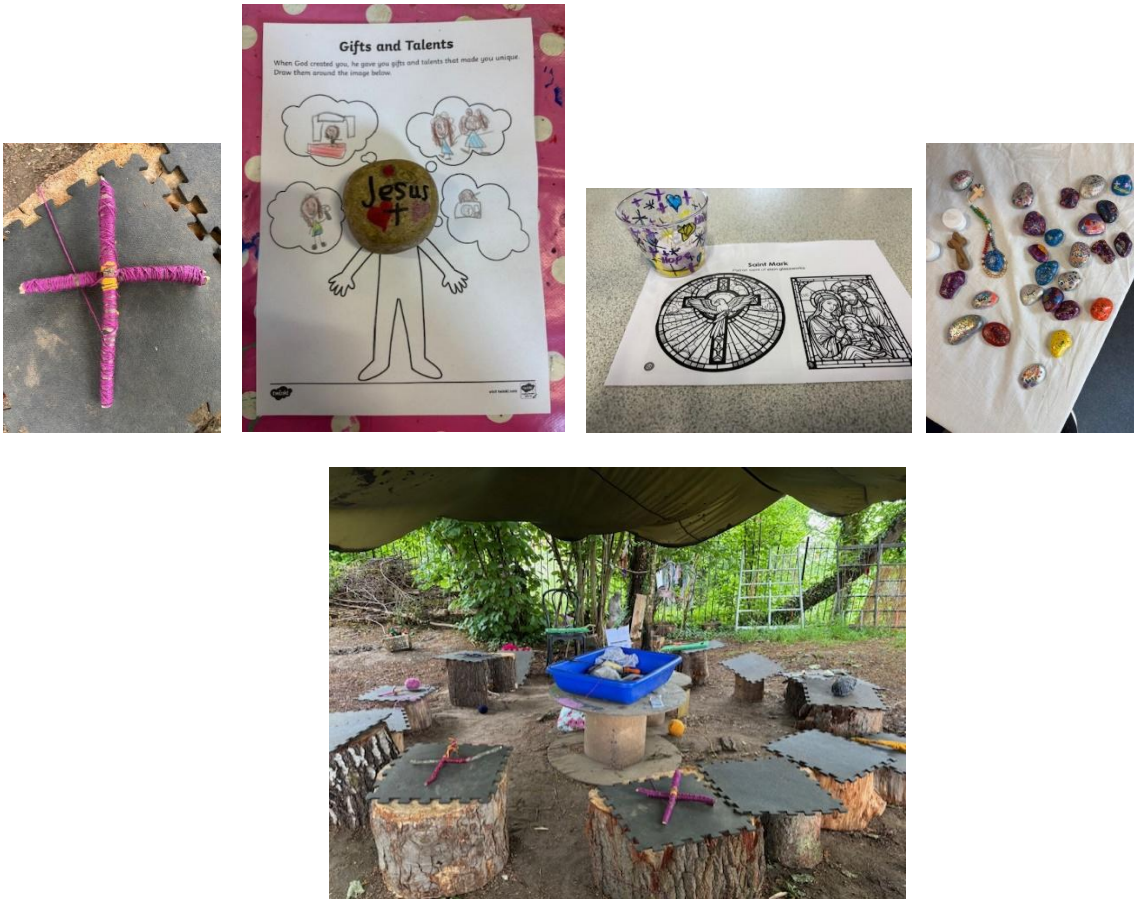
After a brief catch up with my fellow Governors we continued with the day. I was placed with Year 4, where they were having their Celebration Of The Word, out in the Forest School area.

The class lined up outside Forest School, beautifully singing "Follow Me".

Year 4 led the session by laying out a beautiful display as a centre point for their Celebration of the word this included items that were made on the pilgrimage day Woven Crosses were placed on display as well as religious Artwork.

The class spoke about why they like having the Celebration of the word out in the Forest School area and one pupil said that "I really love being out in Forest school I was afraid I would miss it" and another said "It's my favourite time of day as it brings us all together in Prayer" it was also mentioned that it is peaceful and calming the wind was similar to the present of the Holy Spirit passing through.

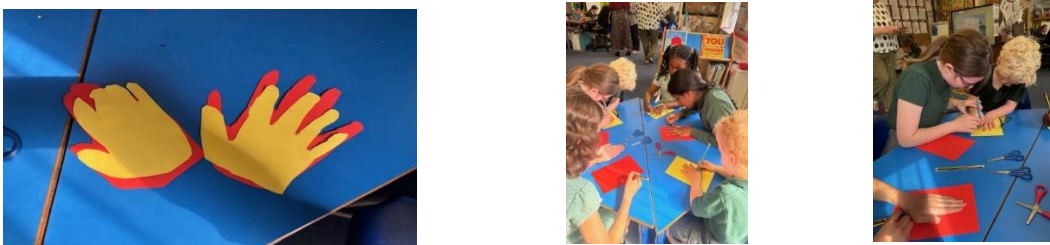
The children wrote their own prayers and did the sign of the cross in Spanish which was amazing to witness nearly all the children could do this so fluently.



The Children were donated some wildflower seeds from The Witham Town council they have labelled them "Seeds Of Hope."

After spending Pilgrimage Day in Forest School with some Pupils, you really do see how much the children really benefit from the almost calming spiritual feeling it gives off.

My next visit was to the Foundation classroom, where foundation together with year 6 were talking about the Holy Spirit. Foundation were paired up with their year 6 prayer partners to make red and yellow hand shaped cut outs. The friendship between the prayer partners was evident, with year 6 leading and guiding the foundation class in what to do. The hands came out beautifully and the children really understood the representation of the Holy Spirit.



After a delightful lunch we have some free time to speak to some children during play. The children spoke about how nice it is to be able to play with their friends on the field and that they loved the different play areas and equipment that was available to them.

After play we were able to go round the classes to see what lessons were taking place. I decided to see what Mrs Stamford had in store for Year 5 and I wasn't disappointed! They were such a well-behaved class. Really taking in information using all the senses. They had to listen to the sound of an instrument and guess which one it was, which they all seemed to be incredibly involved in.

I later walked past the same class, and they were singing at the top of their lungs to a Bon Jovi song, and it was wonderful to hear the excitement and enthusiasm coming from the classroom.

I also spent some time in Year 2 during their English lesson, they were learning how to use past words in sentences and had to describe what they did at the weekend, I was impressed by some of the pupils very neat handwriting.

Walking around other classes I witnessed some beautiful class displays for Pentecost. It ranged from amazing written work, colourful reds and yellows were used in excellent drawings. I could tell a lot of hard work and attention to presentation has taken place in class.

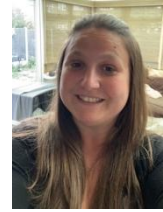


The Governors got to have a look at the classes Celebration Of The Word books and some pupil RE workbooks. I was overwhelmed by the quality of the work, and furthermore, the presentation of the books. It was full of fantastic pieces work ranging from handwritten prayers photos and drawings all beautifully presented in these lovely books. These books are a real testament of how much, from Foundation age to Year 6, embrace and grow with the Catholic faith, the understanding and quality of children's work is exemplary.

As a Governor and a parent of children that attend the school, I do enjoy being able to visit the school and spend time with the children to hear what kind of activities they have been up to. It is a real privilege to be a part of an amazing school with such patient and talented members of staff. They all really do care for the children and support each other. It is clear that the Staff really embed the family feeling within the school helping the children to grow and develop with their faith. Furthermore is evident in the quality of work, and from the children's words and actions.

MARCELLA COLERIDGE – Foundation Governor

I always look forward to our Governor visits as the children are usually so excited to show us around and share with us what they have been learning about and this year was no exception.



I started my day in year 5 where the children were spending some time finishing off some work from yesterday before they began their collective worship session. I was able to chat to a group of children about what work they were doing and was very impressed with the quality of work I was presented with. A couple of children showed me the work they had done on the Solar System. One boy had even taken his book home to complete it because he enjoyed the subject so much he wanted to spend more time on it at home. What I truly took away from these conversations, wasn't so much about the topic they were learning but the passion they have when they speak and the pride they have for the piece of work they have completed. The other children sat around us while I was looking at the books were even sharing compliments about the work I was looking at. The core values of being kind to others that these children were demonstrating was beautiful to watch. My only disappointment visiting this classroom was that I didn't get round to see everyone who wanted to show me their work before the children had to tidy up and prepare for their collective worship session. It was lovely to see the preparations. The chaplaincy team prepared the table and the class had some quiet reflection time. All the children were engaged and it was such a calm environment.

I joined Year 4 in the forest school area just as they had finished their collective worship session. The children were all calm and sat waiting for further instruction. The children were given 2 tasks to complete. Some of the children went and planted some seeds of hope into plant pots and other children sat around weaving crosses. I spoke to some of the children as they were weaving their cross. Some of my favourite comments from the children were "I like being in here and listening to the birds and watching the bugs", "I like to be with Nature" and "we use teamwork to weave the cross together". It was lovely to hear the children chatting to each other while weaving. I heard some of the children talking about friendship so I asked them 'what makes a good friend' their answer was 'you are there for each other when you need them or they need you'. One child also told me that she enjoys the calm time of Forest school because she doesn't get much time to sit quietly and think.

My last classroom visit of the day was to Year 1 where they were learning about the sign of the cross. They were watching a video of people around the world doing the sign of the cross in their own languages demonstrating that although we may not all speak the same language we use universal signs in religion and the sign of the cross means the same thing. Father is God, Son is Jesus and the Holy Spirit are the angels who bought Jesus from God. They learnt how we can't see the Holy Spirit but we can feel it.

The children were asked 'why do we draw the cross and why is the cross important'. The children put their hands up and one child answered saying 'Because Jesus died on the cross and came back like he said he would'.

God has 3 persons.

God the Father – Father of everything.

God the Son – Jesus – teaches us about God and save us from sin

Holy Spirit – When Jesus went to heaven, he sent us the Holy Spirit

Shape that has 3 sides Tri – Angle Tri – nity. Tri means 3, God is 3 in 1.

The children were asked why the cloth on the cross is purple. One child answered "because it shows we are preparing for a special celebration.

Whilst the children were completing their activity I went around and spoke to some children. The children were so eager to show me their books and were so proud of the work they had done. They were also able to talk to me about any page I turned to which showed me that they remember the topics they have learnt. One child showed me their prayer book that is sent home with the children to complete at home. This book is so special and it is clear that a lot of time and effort goes into it. The pages were beautiful and it was nice to see the parents engaging and supporting the children in adding to the prayer book.

I was lucky enough to be offered a school dinner today and I really enjoyed my jacket potato with Tuna and being able to sit with the children to eat it. After eating I went outside to see the children enjoying their lunch break. There were some children playing football and other in the forest school area but there was also lots of children using their imaginations and creating game with their friends.

After lunch we spent some time with the RE leads and spoke about how they teach RE in school. This was a lovely opportunity to look through so books from different year groups. I could see that as the children progress

through the year groups they build on each topic so I can really see the benefit of this and how it will reinforce the bible stories as they learn about them at an age-appropriate level. I believe the recap of the stories will be a great way to reinforce the messages for the children.

FR NIXON GOMES

My visit to Year 5 was very enriching and I enjoyed my visit as it was a well-planned and delivered lesson. The lesson consisted of activity for the children, identify a challenge to work upon. The singing of hymn enriched the prayer during this time.

The introduction of silent reflection after the reading, singing the hymn was spiritually uplifting and prayerful.

After the session, I went round to observe the RE workbooks which the cohorts were happy to show their activities and explain them, namely: meaning of Liturgical seasons, Ash Wednesday and Lives of Saints. I wish them every blessing to Mrs Rockall and the cohorts of Year 5.



RICHARD BARBER – Foundation Governor

I observed the pupils arriving at the school gates and spoke to a number in the playground before school began. I asked what lesson they enjoyed most – with answers ranging from RE, Maths, English, to everything. Pupils were happy to talk, outgoing and articulate. I did not see any pupils that appeared isolated in the playground. When school was about to begin, the pupils lined up in their year groups without pushing or shoving. Playground behaviour was excellent, without need for intervention.



The first lesson I observed was the celebration of the word by Year 3. This was quite inspirational. Pupils were very engaged and enthusiastic, clearly understood the structure of the lesson and were very well behaved. A number of pupils contributed, doing readings and prayers, and all the children sang the hymns. The teacher leading the lesson was excellent in taking the children through questions and answers about Pentecost which is quite an abstract concept. The teacher was able to extend the appreciation of Pentecost among the pupils through increasing the depth of questioning. This elicited some excellent responses from the children in, for example, how the apostles responded to the holy spirit moving among them and how they responded. 'Selfless' was one comment. I was very impressed.

I then observed a phonics lesson in Year 1. Again, the pupils were very familiar with all the techniques employed in enunciating the phonics and putting the sounds together to recognise words. There was an obvious range of abilities within the year group, but the lesson used adaptive lesson techniques to extend the more able children while still successfully building on the basics for those who needed support. There were a good range of activities to support the lesson and again, behaviour was good. I noticed several occasions where the children were helping each other, and the spirit of the classroom certainly reflected catholic values and culture.

Other lessons I observed included spelling tests and a maths lesson on translating polygons on a grid for Year 4, PE for Years 5 & 6 and a music lesson for Year 6. It was a very hot day, but despite this, pupils remained even-tempered and cooperative. PE was preparation for district sports day, where, in line with catholic values and inclusivity, the school enters a wide range of pupils into events rather than selecting a small number of the most talented athletes. I was impressed with the relay practices. All pupils tried hard and there were no complaints over baton handovers or other issues.

I ate lunch with the children. The roast dinner was good. The pupils were happy to sit next to me and chat. They enjoyed their food, talked about their lessons and the Year 1's seemed very enthusiastic about the recent Minecraft Movie. I looked at the boards in the corridor which demonstrated the strong catholic ethos in the school. A number of pupils were proud to show me their art on the walls. Two amazing scarecrows, designed by the pupils, were waiting to be taken to the farmers show in Writtle and there were example stories on the walls that had been entered for a writing competition. There was a great deal of interest in what the builders were doing in grounds. I am sure that the new facilities will be greatly appreciated.

It was a wonderful day which showed so many positive aspects of the school: the enjoyment of the children being at school, the excellent behaviour, the quality and impact of the teaching, the strength and enthusiasm of the staff and the broad range of experiences the children receive. Underpinning everything, one could clearly

see the benefits of a Catholic education and how the pupils, staff and the school as a whole bring this all together each and every day.

CONCLUSION BY THE CHAIR ON BEHALF OF THE LOCAL GOVERNING BOARD

Our remit had been to see for ourselves how pupils contribute in a planned and systematic way to the school's evaluation of its Catholic life and mission. Mrs Rockall/Mrs Eardley's Formation Sessions with staff had clearly been showing results. Spirituality had been explained to everyone and this was linked with the Holy Spirit and Grace and contextualised with the lives of Saints who were particularly linked to education e.g. St Ignatius, St John Bosco and St Angela Merici. They interwove each Liturgical Season in the Church's calendar, demonstrating how it affected individual's own self reflections e.g. Advent, which was compared to a journey of preparation for the coming of the Lord. Guest speakers had also added value to the staff's understanding of Spirituality. A staff formation feedback sheet showed that 100% of the staff had found these formation sessions to be useful and had given them dedicated time for reflection and promoting a sense of belonging and purpose. Many thanks must go to Mrs Rockall/Mrs Eardley for all their hard work in introducing this key element to the school as a reminder of why we are all here working as a team. Sessions are planned in liaison with the RE Lead and Headteacher.

Staff systematically plan class Celebrations of the Word with their pupils and together they evaluate how the session went. It is amazing to see the ideas that the children have and the progression that has been made over the year with all pupils (from Foundation to Yr 6) having a big input into the Celebration of the Word.

It was very pleasing to see how the new Religious Education Directory (RED) has been received by staff and children alike in EYFS and KS1. This is in large due to how creative staff are in teaching RE. We saw wonderful class prayer books detailing their work and also saw the prayer bags that the children take home. We heard that all junior staff have (or will be in the next few weeks) undertaking RED training at Diocese so that they can introduce RED to KS2 in September.

Finally, I would like to thank all the staff at HFS for allowing the Governors the freedom to roam in and out of their work space without any hesitation. No-where was out of bounds! They all work so hard as a team to ensure your children are kept safe and feel secure in a learning environment whilst providing a support network to their own colleagues. I would also like to thank all my fellow Governors who support me so well and work so hard behind the scenes to support the staff and children. They are committed to continue to do this under the new leadership of Mrs Coleridge.