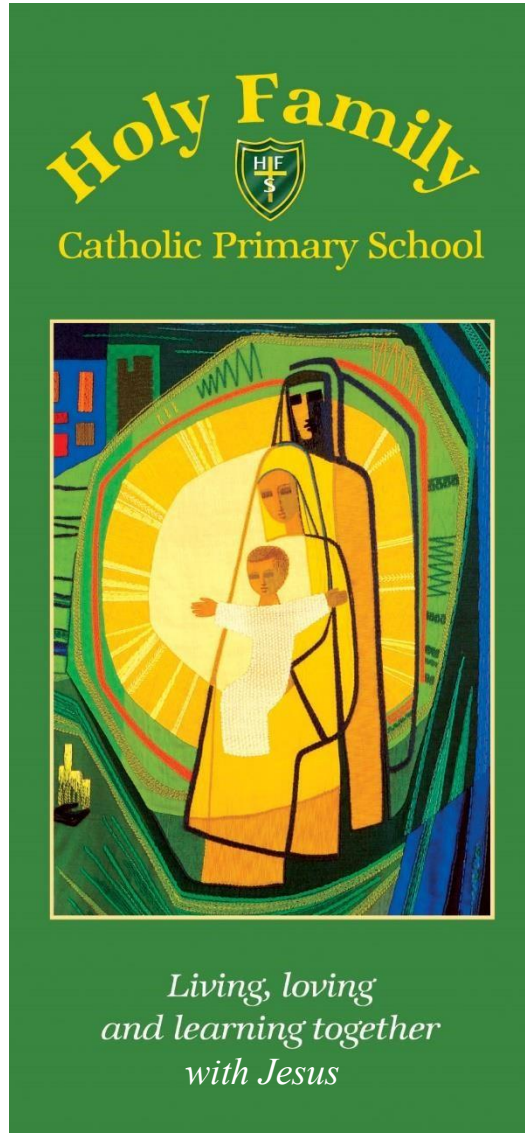


Holy Family Catholic Primary School

The Rosary Trust



Governor Open Day
21 June 2023



FOCUS

The focus of this year's governor open day is mainly for governors to see the breadth of the curriculum and how Religious Education is at the heart of everything that is done in and around the school and is the core of the core subjects.

It will enable governors to collect as much evidence as they can about how the school environment translates Catholic teaching into the pupil's lives – starting from the very day they join the school until the day they leave.

A governor's role is to be part of the school day, not to make judgments or observations, but to increase collective knowledge and understanding of what goes on in a typical school day. 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

Mr Bob Wright

Mr John Glasby

Mrs Korina Murphy-Banham

Mrs Tricia Nicholls

Mrs Helen Jones

Mrs Ana Martin

Mrs Marcella Coleridge*

Fr Nixon Gomes*

*Contributions made separately

FOREWORD BY CHAIR

We have just had another of our successful Open Days for Governors and to be honest, I think we were looking forward to it more than the pupils. Quite frankly it is a golden opportunity for us governors 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 Catholic Education and Catholic Social Teaching and what makes our school unique to the local area. What do we offer pupils that the other non-Faith schools do not?

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.

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.

ANNE WRIGHT – FOUNDATION GOVERNOR - CHAIR

The day started with a cup of coffee and chat amongst my team as to how we could ensure we covered as much of the classes as possible. With so much going on, it is difficult to do this but we believe we made the most of our day. I have a remarkable Local Board of Governors who all work so hard for the benefit of the school. They can always be relied on to undertake these visits with due diligence and in their own time. Several of them are also working at a day job but still find the time to ensure their duties as Governors of the HFS are taken seriously. Others work very hard behind the scene to ensure all the policies and procedures are up to date and relevant and our statutory requirements are fulfilled.



Year 6 – Mrs Rackliff and Mrs Collett

My first visit was to join Year 6 with their Collective Worship today and Mrs Rackliff, ably assisted by Mrs Collett, explained to the class that the Learning Objective was to define “*How do we care for those in need*”. A candle was lit to signify that their heads and hearts were ready and “in the zone” to know that this was an RE lesson. They all did this by bowing their heads reverently and one pupil asked for another minute to prepare, which was granted.

She told them that Scripture was rich in examples to support where Jesus helped others. One pupil mentioned the well-known reading relating to the Good Samaritan and another about the Blind Man of Jericho, knowledgeably quoting the Bible reference to identify the chosen scripture. Most, if not all, of the children, knew these Bible stories.

Mrs Rackliff asked for ideas of how people were in need and suggestions of lack of money; ill health; poor in spirit were given by the pupils.

Everyone was asked what they could do to help those who were feeling very negative about life. “Pay forward” was explained and Mrs Rackliff said that by giving a simple smile to someone could have a “domino effect” as that might be the first bit of kindness that a person had received all day. Tiny things could make a huge difference.

The hymn “*When I needed a Neighbour*” was played and all asked for the line that stood out for them personally. “*When I needed Shelter*” reminded one pupil of when innocent victims of war have been forced out of their homes; people made homeless through no choice of their own. The pupils were told that they needed to be more compassionate in their opinions of these people and not to make assumptions. “We have no right to judge other’s beliefs”.

They were all asked to think about situations where they could help a “neighbour” – which asked the question, “Who is a neighbour?”. A lively discussion followed including various scenarios where they were asked to say what they would do in that situation.

I left the class happily completing a new task given to them. A template of a board game (similar to Monopoly) was handed out and for the rest of the lesson (after break), they were to work in pairs completing the game. It would involve making the “Chance” cards, moves, rules, good deeds, etc. I look forward to seeing the completed games on display around the school at a future time.

Foundation – Mrs Small and Ms Walkden

A whistle stop tour to Foundation found them happily making friendship bracelets, decorating cards, modelling with Playdoh or using their imagination to create all sorts of play scenarios. Through play and without any effort on their part, they are learning how to be kind to each other and to treat others with respect as per Pope Francis’ Encyclical, Fratelli Tutti – “Love Builds Bridges”.

School Office – Mrs Krikor

A visit to the office staff is always part of my personal itinerary. They are the heart of HFS and if they did not function well, the whole slick, mechanism of the school would fail. Working in a sometimes frantic environment, I know that these ladies benefit from a few kind words of encouragement as they do a difficult job. Pupils know that they will receive words of support and an empathetic approach if they need it as the office staff are acting in a form of “Locus Parentis”. From the poor young girl who has injured her knee, from her supportive friend who is helping her to the office, and the office staff who administer TLC, this is all part of the treating others with respect as per Catholic Social teaching. From an early age, pupils learn the school is a safe and respectful environment. Mrs Krikor was holding the fort together on her own today and doing the usual fantastic job. So I was ensuring that she was being cared for by showing her, with the simple action of checking, to see if she needed any help and to let her know that she was not alone.

Lunch and beyond – Mrs Kelliher, Mrs Rackliff, Mrs Eardley, Mrs Scott & Mrs Rockall

After a delicious lunch of baked potato with tuna, cheese and salad, not forgetting the fabulous flapjack, the governors met up with 5 members of staff to talk through the RE books of a random selection of children. This is to enable governors to understand what is expected from each year group. The work was amazing by itself

but it was quite breathtaking to see the deep knowledge of the religious content coming through – whether this was through religious art or through Bible stories – right from Foundation to Year 6.

Religious work throughout the school is on display. Each class has a Named Saint and this is changed Termly so in a year they have studied three people. There is a clear balance between English work and Religious studies but both combine at times. The Catholic ethos of the school is evident from the quiet learning environment created and Faith is at the heart of everything that is done.

TRICIA NICHOLLS – FOUNDATION GOVERNOR

During the morning I had the opportunity to visit the following classes: Foundation, Year 1, Year 4, Year 5 and a very brief call to Year 3 who were doing Forest School activities outdoors.



Foundation - Mrs Small, Mrs Bradley and Ms Walkden.

The first class I visited was the Foundation class. There was a lovely prayer board in the classroom with the school prayers displayed and key vocabulary. The children were actively involved in collective worship at the start of the day and were saying their morning prayer, sitting in a circle. The prayer was said beautifully and it was not a prayer I had heard before in school. They sang the song 'Come And Join The Circle' and one child carried a candle and placed it on a table in the centre of the circle. A piece of scripture, based on John 13: 34-35 was displayed on the Smart board and read aloud to them. Its theme was about loving each other.

The children were asked to reflect on the theme of friendship, having made a paper chain to reflect friendship the previous week. They closed their eyes and were asked to think about something which had happened with friends which had made them sad. A few of the children shared their experiences. The next activity was to pass around a teddy and each take a turn when holding the teddy to say who they have shown love for and why. Many of the children mentioned the names of their friends in class and it was particularly endearing when one child included her teachers.

The activities they would be doing during the morning were explained to them and included making friendship bracelets and writing a card to a friend.

I left the class but returned at the end of the morning to see the friendship bracelets they had made. Children were chosen to read aloud to the class the words they had written in their friendship cards and were very enthusiastic to do so. They concluded the morning session singing along to 'You've Got A Friend In Me' and singing a version of the Hail Mary which included signing the words which was impressive. All the children knew the words and the actions very well and clearly enjoyed the activity.

It was a lovely experience visiting the Foundation children and I was very impressed with how well they knew their prayers and how respectful they were during their collective worship.

Year 3 - Mrs Lonergan and Mrs Marson

I paid a brief visit to year 3 who were enjoying a Forest School session. The children had done a collective prayer before my arrival and were actively involved in physical activities of their own choice. Children's individual gifts and skills are valued highly. Mrs Lonergan explained that they reflect on their appreciation of nature and the world God has created for us at the start of their sessions. Children had made crosses from sticks and one of their next steps would include making Rosary beads using elderwood. New books about nature had been bought. The Forest School experience has proved very popular for the children and has a positive effect on their well-being.

Year 4 - Mrs Rockall and Mrs Sanders

On my arrival the children were sharing ideas on how to resolve friendship issues having been given a fictional problem to discuss. They discussed what the term 'building a bridge of friendship' meant and what they could do to achieve it. There were lovely, thoughtful contributions from the children about the qualities they look for in a friend and some of their suggestions included honesty, reliability, kindness and loyalty, to name a few.

The next activity was to create their own friendship bridge by making paper cutouts of four 'people figures' joined together and to write on the figures the words they would associate with being a good friend. They could decorate them using felt pens. The children were very supportive and helpful to each other whilst doing the activity and it gave me an opportunity to ask a small group of them what they enjoyed about RE and which activities they have liked doing during the year. Here are some of their responses:

- 'We learn about friendship.'
- 'RE is important as we learn about God.'
- 'It's important to spread God's Word.'

- 'I didn't know about God until I joined Foundation.'

I had an opportunity to look at their books and it was impressive to see the amount and variety of excellent work they had produced during the year. It had been a very enjoyable visit to such a warm and friendly class.

Year 5 - Mrs Gibbs and Mrs O'Shea

After break I visited Year 5 who were being taught today by Mrs Gibbs. It was very much a family affair as she was being assisted by her daughter Isabelle who had kindly given up her free time to support the class in the rules of debating. The motion for debate was: 'Sunday should be kept a day of rest.' The children had been divided into two opposing groups and were adding to the ideas they had been writing before breaktime. They were reminded of the rules and protocols of debating. The children shared their opinions in a thoughtful and respectful manner. Unfortunately, I was not able to stay for the whole of the debate and to find out the outcome as I had planned to return to the Foundation class before the end of the morning.

Lunchtime

I had a very enjoyable lunchtime, eating a school lunch whilst talking to a small number of year 4 children. The children were very friendly and well-mannered and I learnt that science, maths, and PE were their favourite subjects.

Meeting with Teachers and Governors

After lunch there was an opportunity for governors to meet with teaching staff to improve our knowledge and understanding of the RE curriculum as well as the Catholic life and mission of the school. We were shown a selection of RE and English books as comparisons between the subject areas is extremely important within the new CSI framework. There is a lot of evidence in pupils' books and class collective worship books to reflect the range of subject matter being taught in keeping with the guidance of the Diocese. The quality of the work produced was impressive. What is apparent, however, is that RE is at the centre and heart of the school and the positive response of the children in their learning and behaviour towards others reflects this daily.

In conclusion, it was a privilege to be able to visit and see all the excellent work being done in the school. Thank you to the staff for all their hard work and commitment to the children.

KORINA MURPHY-BANHAM – PARENT GOVERNOR

I was very excited to experience my first Governor Visit Day. The day began going over the timetable and deciding where to start as all the class schedules sounded very interesting.



Year 6 - Mrs Rackliff and Mrs Collett

I began my day with a visit with Year 6. Mrs Rackliff was explaining the lesson to the class. The children all sat beautifully as they listened intently. The lesson was an RE lesson with the objective being explored was - how we care for those in need. Mrs Rackliff was using the scripture story of the Good Samaritan as a starting point for the children. The hum of chat engulfed the room as the children were encouraged to discuss the topic with peers. All of them received a copy of the story to glue into their own RE books - which I could easily see how much pride they had for their work books. It was at this point I decided I needed to move onto another class. Before leaving, Mrs Rackliff explained the class was going to spend the morning exploring the scripture with the aim being that after break, the children would be well equipped to play a Monopoly style game. Reflecting on the morning discussions, the children had been well briefed to make the scenarios for their games.

Year 3 – Forest School with Mrs Lonergan

It was such a beautiful day I decided I'd venture outside and visit with the forest school. Mrs Lonergan has just taken a group of children from year 3 outside. The lesson began with a prayer. I was so taken aback by the children's ability to bless themselves in Spanish! - something I've now decided I'd like to learn. A lovely cross made in Forest School was passed around to each of the 15 children for them to say a private prayer. Mrs Lonergan then reminded the class that they were visitors in this lovely garden belonging to God and how they must be respectful of everything in it. Holly, nettles and even a family of honey bees who'd taken up home in a bird box, were welcomed in the garden and the children needed to use their senses so as not to inadvertently hurt themselves. Then to their excitement the children were let loose on forest school. There certainly was a lot to interest the little explorers, pond dipping where tadpoles were discovered, to Michelin starred food in the mud kitchen, to dens worthy of Grand Designs. It was very evident that all the children were able to use the multitude of talents they possessed. It was a privilege to witness their excitement on sharing their creations with craft weaving and making of stick people. The session was ended with a lovely prayer lead by one of the children.

Year 1 – Mrs Eardley

After break I visited Year 1, where I received a wonderfully friendly welcome from the children. They were all sat beautifully on their carpet listening to Mrs Eardley. The lesson was exploring the differences between a good friend and a bad friend. All the children were willing and ready to offer suggestions on examples of both of these kinds of friends. After watching a little short story which re-enforced these ideas, they eagerly went to work in

groups, sticking various traits to either a good or bad friend sheet. I managed a quick little look around their busy bright and colourful classroom. It was very evident that they have been extremely busy with writing, paintings and much more on display around the classroom. They also have a collection of caterpillars in class and I'm excited to want to pop back to see how they change!. There is a lovely RE table with a beautiful workbook and reading books explaining the Lord's Prayer and the altar.

It certainly was a very busy morning which I enjoyed immensely and I thank all the staff and children for making me feel so welcome.

JOHN GLASBY – FOUNDATION GOVERNOR

I spent a wonderful day at Holy Family School during the Governor Visit. We had determined our principal focus was that of Catholic Social Teaching, and how that was taught in not only RE sessions, but across the wider curriculum.



Presently, I have three children attending the school. The Governors and I established an attendance schedule to work around this, as I determined it wouldn't be fair or appropriate for me to observe my own children at school, as I want them to be 100% themselves. As any student of quantum mechanics will tell you, you can change the outcome of a system simply by observing it!

Year 3 – Mrs Lonergan

My first session was to sit in with some of the Year 3 children attending Forest School in the morning. Forest School is an outdoor-based free play environment for the children to explore and learn more about the local flora and fauna.

The session began both with group prayer, followed by private individual prayer. Prayer was focussed on giving thanks to God for all the things that contribute to the forest school experience. The sign of the cross was also performed in Spanish. The trees, the insects, the life in the pond, the beehive. It was a warm and sunny day, another thing for which to be thankful, but due to the trees and the canopies, it was shaded and peaceful and felt a world away from the usual hustle and bustle of a school.

This reflected in the children's behaviour during the session. Each child took themselves to various activities, which included pond dipping, building, mud kitchen, whittling and weaving. It was striking how well behaved and quiet the children were during this session. I enjoyed observing these slightly older children at play and how they worked and played together.

Lunch

I was absent from the next session due to a work commitment but returned in time for lunch. This was quite an experience. I first spoke with a number of the Foundation pupils as they asked who I was and they told me about their lunches. Mrs Nicholls and I then sat with a number of year 4 pupils who almost unanimously told us their favourite subject was Science, and their favourite food on balance was pizza. They enjoyed the variety of the meals on offer. I then sat with some Year 1 pupils and we talked about their days so far and what they had learned.

All years that I observed at lunch 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. Quite the display of personal discipline! 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 all of the outside area.

After lunch, the other Governors and I spent some time with some of the teachers from each year. The objective of this session was to understand Catholic Social Teaching 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.

Foundation – Ms Walkden and Mrs Bradley

For the final session of the day, I was privileged to witness some 'In The Moment' education in Foundation, lead by Ms Walkden and Mrs Bradley that afternoon. What followed was a 45 minute avalanche of activity. I witnessed much during the session:

- Water play, including large construction materials.
- Block construction.
- Hoopla.
- Dolls & prams.
- Pupils playing on the climbing and slide equipment.

- Crafting.

The 'in the moment' concept was explained to me. The idea is that learning, and the opportunities to learn, can come and be developed through play. For example, during the water play, the learning that came from this, despite the fun of playing with water on a warm day, was that for water to flow through the various tubes, it needed a downward gradient. The children delighted in telling me their names and talking me through what they were doing.

The session finished with some calm time in the classroom with show and tell from some of the pupils, and a flurry of questions from the others. Having witnessed the lively play, the transition from outdoor activity to calm time was impressive.

For someone who works outside the education sector, the experience I gained on the day was invaluable. As a Catholic parent, it was excellent to see how religious studies and Catholic teaching is integrated throughout the children's learning journey through Holy Family School. The end of the Foundation children's goodbye prayer (and also the school motto) summed the day up – 'Living, Loving, Learning Together with Jesus'. I couldn't have put it better myself, and I am very much looking forward to our next visit.

HELEN JONES – FOUNDATION GOVERNOR

Year 5 - Mrs Crane, Mrs Millward and Mrs O'Shea

My first visit of the day was to Year 5.

The theme for this RE lesson was [John 3 16-18](#).

16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. ¹⁸ Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God's one and only Son.

The answers given by the class were very impressive, saying that we can show that we love the world in the following ways:

All joined in singing "He's got the whole world in his hands" then the lesson started with a prayer.

The question was posed "Is it difficult to show that you love the world?"

- Recycling wherever possible.
- Re-use of products instead of throwing away.
- Saving energy, switch off lights when not needed.
- Walk on Wednesday – reduces carbon and pollution and is healthy.
- Tuesday walk and talk – I joined some pupils before school walking around the play area and chatting amiably.
- Saving precious resources such as water and electricity, switch off and turn off.
- Respecting the environment.

The general discussion on the various points was very informed.

[Exodus 20 1-17 The 10 commandments](#)

Next the class discussed understanding the 10 commandments and the importance of rules. The consequences of people breaking the commandments.

Examples and discussions were given such as:

- Not stealing.
- Not worshiping other Gods.
- Not taking God's name in vain.
- Keeping the Sabbath day Holy.

The lesson concluded with a focus on two very different pieces of art by depicting God giving Moses the 10 commandments.

Gaviel Cohen 1933-2017
Gebhard Fugel 1900



The class had a general discussion on what the 2 pictures meant to each of them, what they saw in them and which was their favourite. It was very interesting and enlightening to hear what each had to say, and that the more traditional picture by Fugel was the overall favourite.

The lesson ended with a prayer.

Year 1 - Mrs Eardley/Mrs Kemp

After break I joined Year 1 for their 10/10 lesson.

Mrs Eardley informed the class that today was the Summer Solstice which marked the longest day of the year. Every morning, 365 days of the year the sun rose. Then she discussed the meaning of the word sun. Sun is a bright star that lights the day / son is a special person / Son (with a capital letter) refers to Jesus. The class was sat in a circle around a candle. Mrs Eardley said that the candle represents calm and still minds and hearts.

After a moment of still and reflection Mrs Eardley spoke to the class about worker bees, how they work together to make the honey that we all love. It takes 12 worker bees to make 1 teaspoon full, 36 bees to make a tablespoon full and that takes 6 weeks to complete. Bees only live for 6 weeks. She told them that God made the bees that make the honey, and all the flowers to help the bees make the honey. We can grow flowers and trees to help the bees.

She then turned to the ocean and the children joined in with things they could do to help such as pick up rubbish off the beach and recycling. Avoid plastic and use cardboard which disintegrates when wet. Following on from a previous discussion on sea turtles the children said we should not leave nets on the beach because of the sea turtles who get caught in them. They also remembered that the tiny turtles follow the moon so people cause problems for them by lights from houses etc.

The message from the lesson was to keep recycling and to take responsibility for litter and by making good choices.

To practice being still Mrs Eardley played a Christian lullaby, Sleep baby sleep.

Jesus is sweeter than honey, more precious than gold.

Year 5 - Mrs Gibbs/ Mrs O'Shea

I returned to year 5 to hear a debate they were preparing for

Should Sunday remain a day of rest?

The subject was inspired by the earlier lesson on the 10 commandments and referred to "Keeping the Sabbath Holy". The class was prepared by watching a video on how to debate respectfully, not getting personal, not arguing. Mrs Gibbs daughter Isobel spoke to the class about rules for debating.

- The speaker stands up.
- Make eye contact.
- One person speaks at a time.
- Debate the point.

The children then took time to note the various points for their side of the debate.

The debate was very interesting and many varied and valid points were raised and discussed. It focused on people who worked on Sundays, essential workers and emergency workers who had to work on the Sabbath. All the children spoke well and enthusiastically for their team. Many good points were made for both sides.

The conclusion was that it was ok to not to keep Sunday as a day of rest as long as you are following the Beatitudes and commandments and teaching of the Lord.

EYFS - Mrs Willsher/Mrs Small

Before lunch I briefly visited EYFS to see them making their friendship bracelets. They were all very enthusiastic and happy to show their own one. Mrs Willsher read out some of the friendship cards made by the children and dedicated to their chosen friend. The children then practiced the dance they were preparing. A lot of happy enthusiastic jumping and moves were demonstrated.

Lunch

We had a very tasty lunch prepared by the catering team, thank you

After Lunch

We met with **Mrs Kelliher, Mrs Rackliff, Mrs Eardley, Mrs Scott & Mrs Rockall.**

The purpose was to review a selection of their class English and RE books. The standard was very impressive and reflects the hard work and dedication put in by all the teaching and support staff. Well done everyone

Throughout the day all the children were polite and well behaved and participated in lessons enthusiastically. The staff were very welcoming and accommodating when I joined their classes and were keen for me to participate. The catering staff does a great job of providing a good and varied selection of lunches.

ANA MARTIN – PARENT GOVERNOR

I was invited to attend the Governors Day to Holy Family Catholic Primary School on the 21st of June. Since I arrived at school, the staff were welcoming and attentive.



Year 4 – Mrs Rockall

The first group that I visited was Year 4 where they started the school day with a prayer. The teacher and the children were very welcoming and polite. We all prayed for the protection of our world, for everything and everyone living in the planet. Once they finished praying in the class, the teacher guided the children and asked them to go to the hall with her. They had a wonderful service where they lit a candle and had a lovely table with flowers in the centre of the hall. They did a service focused on Pentecost.

From the very beginning, the children interacted and read a part of the service each. They did the sign of the cross and included an explanation about the meaning. They were very respectful and caring for each other. The teacher encouraged them to think about the experience of receiving the Holy Spirit and how the first Christians felt about this experience as well. They closed the service with the hymn: 'Sing It In The Valleys.'

Year 3 – Mrs Lonergan

The next group that I visited was Year 3 (outdoors) – Forest School. The teacher explained how the area is growing at the moment and it has been very well received by the pupils as it is a 'Child Led' environment. The children showed the Governors the crosses made with sticks, stones painted, etc., created by them. They were very proud of their creations. Year 3 has a table outside their classroom with spiritual/nature books and it displays the RE work that the children are making. This is very important as the Forest School activities teaches the children to interact with nature (creation of the Lord) and introduces to practice what Laudato Si, Fratelli tutti, etc., asked us to do (fraternity, social friendship, caring of the natural environment and all people).

Year 6 – Mrs Rackliff

A brief visit to Year 6 gave me the opportunity to listen about the topic of 'How we care for those in need'. The children were extremely thoughtful suggesting doing the following: playing their favourite hymn/song to them; giving time; if someone is spiritually broken, we can be there for them, so we can listen to their situations/problems; asking for prayer/Mass.

Year 2 – Mrs Scott

Also, I visited Year 2, where the teacher was leading the topic 'How to treat others' based in Chloe's story. The children were really attentive to the class. The teacher had different sins/bad behaviours and good deeds in a box, one child at the time chose from a box a little paper with these good/bad behaviours trying to encourage 'examination of conscience – e.g. Is it correct to put the rubbish in the bin or if you don't share how to play a game with a friend, is this bad or good?' After finishing this they reflected on how to be kind: having happy friends, helping an insect that it is trapped, being selfless (put other people before yourselves). The teacher prompted questions such as 'What happens when someone says sorry to you? What do you need to do if you have upset or hurt someone? How do you know if someone is really sorry?, etc.' The children replied wonderfully: 'Doing nice things for the person you have hurt, keeping saying sorry repeatedly, etc.'

The members attending the Governors Day had the opportunity to have a very interesting, productive meeting with the Head Teacher, RE Teacher and different teachers from school. They showed us the pupils' books (RE, literacy) and how important is the link between them. The work produced by the pupils was outstanding, some linked to a piece of art such as Supper at Emmaus by Caravaggio describing, interpreting and inferring based on the painting creating a remarkable piece of writing work.

The RE Teacher (leader) explained how important it is for every class to lead a Mass, to have a class worship and prayer. Also, the topic of Catholic Social Teaching has been introduced to pupils and parents and the pupils are already applying the practices/actions that this encourages.

I had the opportunity to ask some of the children if they enjoy RE classes/services and they replied: 'Yes, because I can pray with my family', 'It teaches us to be better people in our community', 'I can be good with my friends, etc.'

Year 5 – Mrs Gibbs

Finally, I visited Year 5 - Spanish class. The teacher and the children were very welcoming saying 'Hola, Señora Martin'. They were very respectful and said all the prayers in Spanish (the sign of the cross, Hail Mary) and we sang a song together. They did different activities in Spanish as well. The class was extremely enjoyable.

In summary, the children, teachers and staff in general were very friendly, collaborative and well-mannered during my visit to school making my experience really positive and fruitful as well. Thank you, Holy Family School, for such a delightful time.

BOB WRIGHT – GOVERNOR

My day started with greeting the parents and children at the gate which is always a great start as most of them looked happy and had a positive attitude.

I joined them for their Walk and Talk Walk which involved several children walking in one direction around the playground as a healthy start to the day.



Year 4 – Mrs Rockall

A visit to Year 4 and Mrs Rockall was first on my agenda. We started with Morning Prayer which is a quiet time to reflect on yesterday and a time to think about how they were going to challenge the day to get the most positive outcome. The class discussed the Pope's encyclical and read out aloud a prayer for the earth and the planet. It was uplifting to see that everyone in the class joined in both of these prayers, even those who were not from a Catholic family.

The whole class then went to the hall for Collective Worship where numerous pupils read out extracts from a prayer. It was evident that everyone joined in during this prayer and were respectful to the message being given.

Forest School – Mrs Lonergan

My next port of call was Forest School to see how Mrs Lonergan was getting on. The meaning of Pentecost was discussed and what message Jesus gave to his disciples. Everyone joined in the hymn.

Mrs Lonergan reinforced the message that Forest School was based on being thankful for nature and the environment which is given to us by God to look after. This was against the usual message of asking God for forgiveness and saying prayers for help. Instead, the minds were being concentrated on what is around us and how we can use it for good and not destroy it.

Outside of the circle the children are left to use their imaginations to utilise nature and the tools to create activity e.g. building walls, cooking, digging, weaving, pond dipping – where they could see the evolution of tadpoles to frogs. When one part of the area had too many children working there, it was good practice to see that some of them would move to another area and create a different working environment. One child said to me that he was building a pond house i.e. a house next to the pond, because he liked Forest School so much he wanted to live there. Another child said that they preferred being in a class room. This shows that they are forming their own opinions and their own environment. All opinions are respected.

Year 2 – Mrs Scott

Mrs Scott was supervising her class cutting out feet to represent the Journey of Jesus – the pathway to forgiveness and walking in God's footprints. On the foot they were going to write words about friendship and forgiveness. She asked the children for examples of words they could use and also got them to spell them first. One child showed me their RE book and what they liked best about it. They told me about the River Jordan and Rosary Beads. I explained to them that I had been to the River Jordan and seen the spot where Jesus had been baptised. I asked another child what the best bit about school was and he replied "lunchtime".

All the class sang a song and used sign language throughout.

Sadly I had to leave the school as I had a medical appointment. But I returned after lunch for the group of governors' meeting with the members of staff. It was really good to hear the teachers so animated about their work with the children and how they got the best out of each individual pupil. This was evident to see from the work. I fully support the thoughts that art and music are important in developing the senses and how the fundraising was contributing to the provision of music in the school.

MARCELLA COLERIDGE – FOUNDATION GOVERNOR

I always look forward to our Governor visits because it is so nice to see the school come to life. Sadly, I was unable to physically join my fellow governors on the usual joint day but was lucky enough to be invited along to the **Catholic Social Teaching parental workshop** and it was lovely to see some parents there too.



We were all welcomed and David gave us a little explanation about what CAFOD does and what Catholic Social Teaching looks like in schools, he also explained how to explore the principles of Catholic Social Teaching in a child centred way.

We looked at the key principles and matched different statements to each principle. It was interesting to see that each parent group matched them slightly differently, showing how easily these principles cross over and more than one is often used together.

The 9 principles are listed below and for each principle there is an associated cuddle toy. This is a great way to engage younger children. When a child has done something that reflects a principle, the teacher would be able to pick up the cuddle toy as a visual and say for example 'Daisy the Dove loves how you showed to promote peace just then'.

Human Dignity – Luc the Deer

We are beautifully made in the image and likeness of God.

The Common Good – Chikondi the Giraffe

We are called to work for the good of each and of all.

Participation – Patiriki the Penguin

We all have the right and duty to participate fully in society.

Stewardship – Sofia the Sloth

We are guardians of God's creation, living sustainably and enhancing the wellbeing of our planet.

Solidarity – Shristi the Sun Bear

God created us as one global family called to support our brothers and sisters.

Subsidiarity – Sid the sheep

We are called to empower communities, to let everyone have a say.

Distributive Justice – DJ the Dolphin

Everyone should have access to their fair share of resources.

Promoting Peace – Daisy the Dove

We can be God's instruments of peace through seeking justice.

Preferential option for the poor – Poppy the Popokotea

The needs of the poor and vulnerable should be out first.

I can see with these resources used through the school how the children will be able to identify the good they do and in time be able to identify it in others.

I believe this is a fantastic resource for the school and the children, it truly reflects the values and ethos of the school.

I am very pleased I was able to attend and really enjoyed the session. If the chance comes up again, I would highly recommend both parents and governors to attend.

FR NIXON GOMES

After celebrating Mass with the school children for the Feast Day of Saints Peter and Paul, I had a wonderful time with the children of Year 5 observing their RE work in class. The children have written the reflections on Good Friday, Mary the Queen of Heaven, Easter and Pentecost. The works involved colouring, writing and drawing images of Joy, Happiness and compassion.



The children were enthusiastic to present their work which had depth of reflection and understanding on the Christian celebrations. Well done Year 5.

CONCLUSION BY THE CHAIR

Our remit had been to see for ourselves how the whole school environment supported the Catholic Ethos and the school's Catholicity. There is no doubt in any of our minds that the calm, peaceful learning environment is created by ensuring Living, Loving, Learning with Jesus is at the centre of everything the children do.

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. It is our commitment to continue to do this.

PHOTOGRAPHS FROM THE DAY





