

Enhanced VbE Quality Mark Report for
Holy Family Catholic Primary School



Values-based Education
VbE Enhanced Quality Mark

VbE Adviser: Sue Jones

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1. A Values-based Ethos

Criteria in addition to the standard VbE Quality Mark	Possible Evidence
- Pupils, staff, parents and governors review and reconsider the school/setting's chosen values, including (if in England) the British Values and, where appropriate, develop these into new themes. - The values-based education approach is readily and widely articulated and evident in the ethos, curriculum and general work of the school. - All staff have regular high-quality professional development opportunities to further their values-based education approach. - Every step is taken to ensure that no adult or pupil is inadvertently marginalised through the structures and routines of the school. Each person is valued for his or her intrinsic value. - The school community understands that thinking about and living universally held, positive human values affects consciousness; leading to the expression of 'super' values such as altruism and wisdom, which transform human behaviour and potentially society. - The school/setting works in partnership with parents, community and external organisations to promote this approach in every aspect of its work.	- Minutes of staff meetings - Minutes of Governor meetings - Records of CPD - School Improvement Plan - OFSTED Report - SIAMS Report - Displays of children's work - Reward/award systems/certificates - Interviews with staff, pupils, governors and parents - Staff, parent and pupil questionnaires - Values Policy - Photographs

Assessor's Comments

Introduction:

I arrived at Holy Family Catholic Primary School to conduct an audit for their second Standard Quality Mark. I had received their Audit Tool in advance and had seen that they have been working extremely hard to develop Values-based living throughout the whole school community. I therefore was prepared to consider the criteria for the Enhanced QM as well as the standard one.

On arrival, I was greeted by smiling and friendly staff and the wonderful warm and loving atmosphere of this school.

I was able to speak to groups from all stakeholders and follow up thoroughly on the school's self-assessment.

This is a school where Values are explicitly and naturally part of every aspect of school life. Everyone I spoke to demonstrated their understanding and their commitment to the four Core Values of the school:



- **Growing our Hearts and Minds**
- **Passionate about Learning**
- **We care about Respect**
- **Together we Succeed**

These images and phrases are displayed in every area of the school and are constantly referenced in

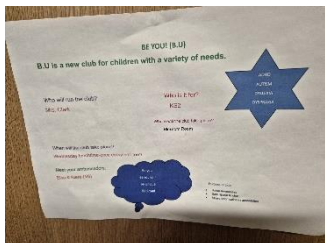
lessons and in day-to-day conversation. They are a fundamental part of every policy and action of the school.

Staff feel highly valued. They receive good quality CPD and are encouraged to develop their individual skills.

The Values are reviewed every September at a Training Day to which all staff and Governors are invited. Thus everyone has a voice and is heard.

Inclusion is a massive strength of the school. They make every possible effort to include everyone and, if the school are not sure how to do this, they ask. For example, one parent from a traveller family told me how Mrs Davison had taken time to ask about their culture and customs and has worked to accommodate these. Refugee families also feel very welcomed and say that the school has become their family and been caring and supportive.

At Holy Family everyone is passionate about putting the Values into Action. The adults model this, but it also comes from the children, who take huge pride in their leadership roles. These are many and varied. There are the Mini Vinnies, who are linked to the St Vincent de Paul Society. They raise funds for various charitable organisations and for the church. The Leadership Team have a variety of responsibilities, and the Communication team represent the views of their peers to improve everyday life at the school, e.g. getting extra picnic benches in the grounds to enhance playtimes. Pupils led the Remembrance Assembly themselves, including the minute of silence. One group, which is unique to the school is the 'Be You' Group. This came about following a review of SEND provision at the school. One pupil said that she wished that children with additional needs had a voice. Since their formation, the group has led assemblies about ADHD and Autism. Next term they are planning to present one about the Zones of Regulation. Another outcome of this review is the formation of the 'Chatty Café' group, which allows parents of children with additional needs to meet informally and chat. Parents have found this very supportive and signposted each other to sources of support.



Staff recruitment is also Values-based. Staff are valued for their unique talents and are celebrated. All feel welcome and that they are a vital part of the team. There is definitely no hierarchy of relationships. One of the most passionate affirmations about the positive impact of Values came from one of the site team, who was almost the first member of staff I met.

2. Values-based Pedagogy and Learning

Criteria in addition to the standard VbE Quality Mark	Possible Evidence
- Pupils and staff regularly engage in reflective practices to develop their internal worlds - the 'inner curriculum'. Emphasis is given to the development and nourishment of Self-energy that nourishes Self-leadership. - School culture is assessed to ensure it is consistent with	- Interviews with staff, pupils, governors and parents - Curriculum planning - Pupil's work - Case Studies

VbE. - The curriculum is values-language rich; pupils and staff use it comfortably and widely across the curriculum. - Pupils are regularly involved in peer-interactive strategies and co-operative learning to enhance and deepen their cognitive and emotional understanding. - Establishing good interpersonal relationships is central to VbE. Adult-pupil and pupil-pupil affirmation is abundant. - Pupils are actively encouraged to engage with moral dilemmas and the curriculum actively fosters the development of moral reasoning. - Pupils are actively encouraged to engage in altruistic acts of compassion and be of service to others, both in outlook and action.	- Staff, parent and pupil questionnaires - Displays/photograph
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Assessor's Comments

Links to Values are in every Policy. I saw lessons in both YR and Y6 where children were learning about the effects of Global warming (topical during the COP29 Conference) and how their Values could be applied to help the situation. In YR they were observing some large blocks of ice and considering the impact of melting on the landscape they had created in their Tuff Spot. This was all linked to a story showing how a group of animals responded to the impact on their habitats (The Journey Home). In Y6 they were ranking the U.N. goals for Sustainability. A very challenging task, but one that children tackled with deep thought.

Every display has links to the Values. The icons for each Value have been designed by the husband of one of the teachers and are used most effectively to help children and adults to make those links.

Governors are also very aware of the Values. They form an agenda item on every FGB meeting, and Wellbeing is a major aspect of the Personnel Committee meetings.

Relationships are warm, caring and compassionate. This does not only apply to the staff and pupils, but very much to the families. All parents I spoke to were thrilled with the way the school has supported them, whether they had come recently from abroad or were long standing members of the school community. Extra support is given at Christmas for families who are struggling financially, and this is clearly appreciated and sensitively offered. There is no doubt, this school is full of love.

3. Values-based School Improvement

Criteria in addition to the standard VbE Quality Mark	Possible Evidence
- The school/setting's self-evaluation has identified areas for enhancement which are addressed through a value-based approach to improvement. - It adopts a consistent philosophy for all its work and can detail how this approach is borne out in areas it has identified for development. - Well-being – including physical, mental and emotional health - for pupils and adults is central to the school's ethos and practices.	- Interviews with staff, pupils, governors and parents - Curriculum planning - Pupil's work - Case Studies - Staff, parent and pupil questionnaires - Displays/photograph

Assessor's Comments

All school improvements are focused on the needs of the children. The school is part of the BELONG research programme. This is in conjunction with the Local Authority Virtual School and Chester University. The whole staff had training on relational approach to behaviour led by a clinical psychologist. Two teachers are conducting research projects in the programme. The impact is already being felt throughout the school. This is just one example of the way Holy Family welcome new ideas that will help them support the children. Another is in accessing the Sale Sharks (Rugby Club) Mentoring team to support a couple of children whose needs were proving a challenge to meet through more usual channels. This came about from listening to a child who was in distress. "So, what kind of person could you work with?" The children see how adults put their Values into action, and they are quick to produce their own ideas for development.

4. Commitment to Working with Disciplines Related to VbE

Criteria in addition to the standard VbE Quality Mark	Possible Evidence
- The school/setting actively fosters a focus on values- based links between subjects, helping pupils to understand the values generated by different areas of study, and reflect upon the potential for each area of academic study to grow human wisdom, and encourage altruism. - The school/setting's self-evaluation processes have identified where working in combination with other disciplines, including those endorsed by Values-based Education (e.g. Philosophy for Children; Mental Health groups, Emotional Literacy) can enhance the experience and development of individuals, groups or all its pupils. - The school/setting's leadership is outward-looking and adopts a discerning approach to embracing strategies and disciplines consistent with the school's values-based ethos.	- Discussion with headteacher/Values leader - Case Studies - School/Setting Development Plan - Lesson Observations/monitoring records - Pupil testimony

Assessor's Comments

My comments regarding Aspect 3 also apply to this aspect. In lessons and in all parts of school life both staff and pupils refer constantly to the four Values statements. Children aspire to earning the certificates (or wristbands in Reception) which identify how they have demonstrated that particular Value. They and their parents appreciate the hand written comments about how they earned the certificate. The Purple certificate for showing all four Values is highly prized. The school is very much involved in sharing their excellent practice, especially through the Diocese. Other schools have adapted the Values-based approach following training from Linda Davison. The school has close links with other organisations within the local community and the region. At Holy Family they are constantly reflecting on their practice and striving to improve. They are open to new ideas and willing to try these in order to improve outcomes for the children.

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5. A Commitment to Leading VbE Across School/Community Settings	
Criteria in addition to the standard VbE Quality Mark	Possible Evidence
- The school/setting is able and willing to be an exemplar for other schools in values-based education. It sees itself as an ambassador for this approach. - The school/setting leads training for other schools/settings in values-based education. - The school/setting is pro-active in sharing its values-based approach with its local community and other external agencies. - The school/setting is able to share resources and ideas it has developed and/or innovated through the VbE website, www.valuesbasededucation.com - The school/setting is willing to compile a case study of effective values-based practice to be shared nationally and internationally.	- Displays - Photographs - Website - DVDs - Prospectus - Newsletters
Assessor's Comments	
At Holy Family staff have shown a firm commitment to sharing the Values-based approach widely and have certainly been great ambassadors for this. They are very ably led by Linda and Ciara and VbE is so well embedded that I am confident this will continue, even if staff move on in their careers. This is a school where the Values really are the bedrock upon which everything else is founded. Everyone is invested totally in this philosophy. It is rare to find a school as wholehearted in its approach and as compassionate to all.	

Suggestions for Next Steps:

- ★ Continue to share the excellent practice widely. Consider going beyond the diocese and reaching out to non-Catholic Primary schools.
- ★ Plan for succession. Ensure that Values stay strong, even if there are changes in Leadership.

Audit Conclusion:

It was an honour and privilege to spend the day at Holy Family Catholic Primary School and it gives me great pleasure to award the school the Enhanced Values-based Education (VbE) Quality Mark. I know that they will continue to share their enthusiasm and excellent practice.

VbE's Enhanced Quality Mark certification is valid for four years.

You have permission to use the Enhanced Quality Mark logos on the school's website and on your documentation throughout the certified period.