

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Macaulay Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Victoria Rise,
Clapham,
London
SW4 ONU

Diocese: Southwark

LA: Lambeth

Dates of inspection: 7th and 9th June 2006

Date of last inspection: 15th and 16th February 2000

School's Unique reference number: 100612

Headteacher: Ms Liz Divall

Inspector's name and number: Pamela Draycott (161)

School context

Macaulay is an average sized Church of England primary school serving 234 pupils aged 3 to 11. Oversubscribed for the 30 Reception places, but, like other local schools it has some vacancies in other classes, due mainly to families moving out of the area for more affordable housing. Pupils come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds and from a range of Christian (mainly Anglican) and other faith backgrounds. Attainment on entry is at or slightly above national average.

Summary Judgement

Macaulay is a good Church of England school, which as part of its continuing development, is wanting to more explicitly identify the difference that being a church school makes to all aspects of its life and work.

Established strengths

- the mission statement and aims are clearly linked to Christian values and underpin the very good care and support given to pupils across the school;
- there are good links with Holy Trinity and other Anglican parishes in the area as well as with some other Christian denominations represented locally;
- pupils respond very positively to the good range of opportunities provided for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in worship and Religious Education (RE) and other aspects of school life;
- the good leadership of the headteacher is collaborative in style and this permeates the whole staff team who are supportive of each other and work well together;
- the way in which pupils respond very positively to opportunities provided for them to discuss beliefs, practices and ideas in RE and the depth of many of their oral responses.

Focus for development

- consider further ways in which Christian values can be explicitly developed throughout all aspects of the school's life and work;
- update the RE scheme of work to ensure that high expectations of what pupils should know, understand and be able to do as a result of their work in each RE unit is clearly stated to provide sufficient help for teachers in planning for high quality learning tasks across the school;
- improve the range and challenge of written tasks set in RE;
- improve how progress made in RE is assessed.

How well does the school, through its distinctive Christian character, meet the needs of all learners?

The school, through its distinctive Christian character, meet the needs of all learners well

The majority of pupils do well and make good progress across the school. Pupils are valued as individuals. They are very positive about their experience at school and speak highly of how they are treated by other pupils and the staff. Very good relationships across the school are characterised by mutual respect. Pupils speak confidently about being in a church school and about Christian visitors coming into assembly, saying prayers in school and visiting the church. Christian symbols around the school and a prayer board contribute to identifying the school's Christian foundation.

Pupils respond well to the good range of opportunities provided to focus on spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues. Pupils initiate and take responsibility for others through for example older children acting as buddies for younger children and through supporting various charitable causes including the Bishop's Lent Appeal. They also recently organised a sponsored event to help improve the garden at Royal Marsden Children's Hospital where a child from the school was receiving treatment. Friends in class also organised a rota to visit during hospitalisation and parents and others offered practical and prayer support to the family.

The incumbent, who is also the chair of governors, expresses the underpinning ethos of the school in terms of the importance of the Christian faith being about what people think, what that they believe and how they act.

What is the impact of collective worship on the school community?

The impact of collective worship on the school community is consistently good and central to school life

Worship is well planned and given a high priority by the headteacher and other staff, taking place each day, sometimes as a whole school and sometimes in class. Acts of worship have a clear focus provided by the use of a lit candle and pupils respond very positively by joining in prayers and singing with understanding. In a Key Stage 1 lesson on 'prayer' pupils were asked what prayer meant to them. A child responded by saying, 'It's when your whole body goes still, everything except your mind'. This clearly indicates his personal experience of prayer though school, home and church. There is a strong Christian focus provided through the themes selected with other faiths, as well as various issues of the day also being considered appropriately. Those who come from different religious backgrounds are included sensitively. Pupils speak positively of the range of worship provided. One spoke of how calming and helpful acts of worship in the classroom are and how they help her be peaceful and think about God. Recently saying a prayer at the end of the morning has been introduced and this is appreciated by pupils.

How effective is the religious education?

The effectiveness of religious education is good

Standards in RE are good across the school, especially in oral work with teachers providing a good range of opportunities for pupils to ask and answer questions and present their own views, ideas and beliefs. Pupils respond very well in oral work. In a good lesson focusing on the Hajj pupils were asked to script a radio interview with a Muslim who is about to take part in the pilgrimage. One pair decided that the reasons they would give for taking part would be, 'to show their devotion to Allah (God), to help them feel more part of the the Muslim community and to help them become better Muslims'. In an effective introductory lesson on Hinduism pupils explored the symbolism of Aum through discussion and through listening very carefully to it being chanted. Pupils respond positively to their RE work and speak of finding it enjoyable and challenging – 'RE makes you think hard'.

Teaching in RE is good. Staff are committed to improving further the quality of what is provided for pupils and are committed to the subject's importance in this church school. Oral work is very good but the range and styles of written work is more limited and does not sufficiently challenge all pupils in their learning.

The RE curriculum follows Diocesan guidelines with a few changes to meet the needs of the school community. It rightly focuses predominantly on Christianity with appropriate opportunities to address other faiths.

The current subject leader has had responsibility for the subject since September 05 – she is enthusiastic about her responsibilities and has rightly identified ways in which to develop further the effectiveness of the subject. The school's scheme of work is in the process of being reviewed. Currently medium term planning does not focus sufficiently on learning outcomes for units of work in order to detail what pupils should know, understand and be able to do as a result of their RE work as well as planning in opportunities to encourage them to respond and reflect on their RE learning and so raise standards further. Assessment opportunities in RE are not

linked well enough to learning outcomes for them to be effective in helping teachers, pupils and parents know how well pupils have learned and what they need to do to improve.

How effective are the leadership and management of the school as a church school?

The leadership and management of the school as a church school are good

The headteacher provides good leadership and is supported effectively by her deputy. She works collaboratively and this permeates the staff team who feel valued, are supportive of each other and work well together. The Christian vision for the school's service to its community is worked out in terms of the quality of relationships and the important place given to worship and religious education. The mission statement and prospectus clearly express its purpose as a Church school. Some policies, as they are reviewed, need to more explicitly make links between the school's underpinning Christian vision and the way in which the policy will be worked out in practice. Links with the parish church and other churches are positive. Parents and pupils are positive about the school's Christian foundation. The headteacher and governors are keen to work with staff, parents and pupils to develop the school's Christian identity further. The Diocesan toolkit has been used well to describe effectively what is currently happening. Evaluation of this work is necessary to clearly identify and target future developments as a church school. Governors are aware of the need to become more proactive in working in partnership with others to ensure that the school's Christian ethos explicitly permeates every aspect of its life and work.

SIAS report June 2006 Macaulay CE Primary , Victoria Rise, Clapham, London SW4 ONU