

Meltham Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Holmfirth Road
Meltham
Holmfirth
West Yorkshire
HD9 4DA

Diocese of Wakefield

Kirklees LEA
SIAS inspection: 28 November 2005
Previous S23 inspection: November 1999
URN: 107718
Headteacher: Ms M McLean
SIAS Inspector NS#214: Mr J D Jagger

Summary Judgement

Meltham CE school is a good Church of England controlled school with aspects of its provision being outstanding.

Established strengths

The school is very successful in ensuring:

- A coherent expression of Christian values is delivered through the educational and social programmes offered
- A strong extended leadership team with a clear view of its priorities
- A high quality of planning, delivery and evaluation of worship
- That staff exploit the rich resources of the building and the surrounding environment to provide a breadth of activities and educational opportunity for pupils
- That due importance is placed on evaluating the effectiveness of the school against its published aims

Focus for development

- The school governors and staff recognise the need to develop the opportunities that are presented to pupils to develop their understanding and contact with the faiths and cultures of other groups within the broader community.

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

Meltham CE is a good Church of England controlled primary school with some outstanding features and a clear awareness of the further developments it needs to make.

The school has developed an appropriate set of systems and policies to ensure that the security and well-being of pupils is continuously reviewed and improved. The outcomes of surveys undertaken, confirm that pupils recognise and value the work undertaken on their behalf. One of the strengths of the school is the development of social awareness and a sense of responsibility amongst pupils through successful programmes such as Befrienders, Circle Time and a well understood behaviour policy.

The school seeks to be inclusive with care for those children with special needs evident and a welcoming atmosphere created for those relatively few pupils of other faiths and cultures. However the relatively small numbers of these pupils presents a challenge to the school as it seeks to present the rest of the pupils with an awareness and understanding of other faiths and cultures. It does however, properly represent the major festivals of other faiths within its programme of worship.

Discussions with pupils confirms that pupils new to the school believe that successful efforts were made to support their integration and all pupils appreciate the attractive learning environment created by teachers and support staff. Many pupils participate with enjoyment and pride in the varied musical, sporting and creative activities developed within the school curriculum and through the schools extensive links with external organisations. Successful efforts are made to ensure that pupils have the opportunities to participate actively within worship, lessons and the broader sporting and cultural activities.

Pupils enjoy and appreciate their participation as members of the School Council although individuals are not always clear about their impact upon school policy making. Behaviour observed was very good, even when confined in classrooms by inclement weather. The respect and support provided for pupils by support staff was positive and pupils responded well to this.

Governors and staff recognise and strive for this supportive culture as a part of being a good school, but also actively seek to promote such a climate within the context of a strong Christian ethos and an awareness of the rights of others. The school is also very aware of the need to continuously evaluate its performance against its own aims and externally defined criteria. As a school it is very clear as to the need to ensure all pupils reach their full potential whether academically or as future citizens of a cohesive society.

What is the impact of Collective Worship on the school community?

The quality of provision for collective worship is judged to be outstanding.

Worship is seen by the school as one of the main elements in the development of an understanding in pupils of Christian values and of the provision of valuable routes to faith, worship and an understanding of Christian traditions for those children who might later seek to develop them.

The planning, delivery, recording and evaluation of the programmes of worship are clear and consistent and provide support and guidance for those members of staff who might be less confident than others.

The programme of worship identified recognises the Christian calendar but also the festivals of other faiths. Examples of worship observed were skilfully matched to the age ranges participating and were sensitive to the subject matter. Later, pupils were able to recall the information about Advent and to explain the relevance of that which they had participated in to the overall Christian message.

The policy for worship and the planning and delivery of acts of worship recognise the importance of reflection and the opportunities provided for this were responded to by pupils. Care is taken to link the themes of worship to the broader curriculum through extension activities designed to reinforce the development of the personal and social education and to highlight the values underpinning worship.

Clergy are engaged in the planning process and the church of St. Bartholomew's provides a venue for worship, particularly during the major festivals. Opportunities are also taken to utilise the resources of both clergy and the church premises to develop an understanding of the significance of rituals, artefacts and vestments involved in the Christian faith.

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

The impact of a strong extended leadership team and a supportive and properly critical governing body result in the judgement that leadership and management is outstanding.

Meltham CE is a very successful controlled church school. All parties are clear of the need to provide for those pupil and parents seeking an education strongly influenced by the values and teaching of the Church of England whilst giving equal esteem to those seeking a good community school but with no church affiliation. The documentation of the school and the environment created within the building reflect the important roles played by the church. The Foundation governors have sought to ensure that the balance between the church and community functions is properly maintained and regularly reviewed. The provision of programmes of collective worship, personal and social education and the implementation of the broad agenda associated with, "Every Child Matters", successfully support the overall aims of the school. Considerable efforts have been made to consult with parents in order to evaluate the effectiveness of these areas on the skills, attitudes and behaviour of pupils. The outcomes of these dialogues have been very positive and the school is committed to continuing this approach. Leaders within school provide excellent role models for staff and for pupils in their professional practice and in their commitment to the school.

Relations with the church communities in the township are strong. Church members actively give support to the school and staff and pupils play an important role in church festivities and in the social life of the community.

Those leading the school have also sought to ensure that teaching and support staff are properly resourced and trained to provide the aspects associated with a good church school and considerable investment has been made in remodelling the building to enhance provision for a wide range of activities and pupils.

SIAS NOVEMBER Meltham CE VC Primary School, West Yorkshire, HD9 4DA