

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Milton-on-Stour Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Milton-on-Stour

Gillingham

SP8 5QD

Diocese: Salisbury

LA: Dorset

Dates of inspection: July 19th 2006

Date of last inspection: November 1999

School's Unique reference number: 113801

Headteacher: Mr James Stanford

Inspector's name and number: Patricia Bowen 285

Summary Judgement

Milton-on-Stour Primary is an outstanding church school. It successfully provides a friendly but purposeful learning environment with a clear vision of how children can be nurtured within a Christian foundation.

Established strengths

- Close partnership between school, local Church and governors;
- Friendly, family atmosphere;
- Pupils' very good behaviour and attitudes.

Focus for development

- Increase awareness of cultural diversity

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

In this, the school is judged to be good. The ethos of the school is characterised by a warm and friendly atmosphere.

The school treats all children as individuals and actively seeks ways to ensure that all feel valued. The school is developing Assessment for Learning, which helps children to evaluate their own and other's work. This is effective in helping children to take responsibility for their own learning and help them improve.

The school has a Prayer Tree and a Buddy Box, which children use to express any anxieties they are currently experiencing. The school has a School Council. Representatives are invited regularly to a Governors' meeting and they also join in pyramid activities for School Councils.

Behaviour in the school is very good. On the day of the inspection, one class of children had slept overnight in the school; they were observed to be very sensible, taking responsibility for clearing the hall and sorting out lunch boxes, with good humour and obvious enjoyment of the experience.

Children with special needs are well-integrated and the school is rightly proud of their successes in this regard, which they achieve by consistent procedures, well understood by staff and pupils, and support from parents. The staff show respect for each other and for the children, which results in the children feeling valued and secure.

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

Collective worship has a central place in the life of the school and is judged to be outstanding. It is held each day and makes a very positive impact on the school. There is a regular pattern, with a weekly service in the local Church, worship led by a member of the local clergy team and a celebration on Fridays. The well-thought out Collective Worship policy explores a broad theme, such as Justice, over each half-term, which enables children to develop a deeper understanding and makes a very effective contribution to the spiritual and moral life of the school. The worship for each day is well-planned in advance and the visiting clergy are clear where their

contribution fits.

The Collective Worship co-ordinator, the Headteacher, the ex-officio governor and the local Curate work very effectively together and have a clear vision how further links may be developed.

How effective is the religious education?

Religious education in the school is outstanding, with all staff are committed to its importance. The Scheme of Work is very helpful and the co-ordinator is available to offer extra support and encouragement. She has observed lessons so has a clear picture of what is happening in the subject. She has conducted a survey with the children to discover their perceptions of religious education and collective worship, which has been used as part of her evaluation of the subject.

A variety of approaches are used to maintain children's interest, for example writing a news report for a Bible story, considering moral questions, or bringing a Bible story up-to-date. In addition, dance and drama are used. The work is assessed and is generally of a higher standard than other core subjects by the end of Key Stage 2. An appropriate amount of time is allocated to the subject.

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

Leadership and management in the school are outstanding. The governors and the Headteacher have a clear vision of what it means to be a Christian school, which is clearly expressed in the school's mission statement and in school policies. The ethos is inclusive and links with the local Church are exceptionally good.

The parents are very positive about the education provided. The school has addressed issues which a small minority of parents raised following a questionnaire. Relationships throughout the school are very good. The staff are an effective team and all the children feeling valued, secure and happy.

The school has very good links with the local Church. The people in the village are proud of the school. The Parish Church Council has regular reports about the school, children contribute to the Parish Magazine and information about the school is displayed in the Church porch.