

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### South Malling Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Church Lane

Lewes

East Sussex

BN7 2HS

**Diocese: Chichester**

LA: East Sussex

Dates of inspection: 3 July 2006

Date of last inspection: 6 November 2000

School's Unique reference number: 114509

Headteacher: Bryan Meyer

Inspector's name and number: Alison Flynn and Beryl Burrell

#### School context

South Malling CE Primary School is situated on the outskirts of the county town of Lewes. It has a nursery run separately from the school. It draws its pupils mainly from the local estate which has mixed housing. The school has a few very challenging children for whom extra provision is currently being made. The school has links with St. Michael's Church. Most pupils are of White British heritage and an average number are entitled to free school meals.

At the time of the inspection, there were 10.8 teachers and 14 support staff.

#### Summary Judgement

South Malling CE Primary School provides an effective all round experience for its pupils and allows them to achieve well with good support for their personal development. The school is fully inclusive and has a caring, Christian ethos. The children value opportunities to contribute to the school, the local community and to each other's well-being. The school and church leaders are aware of the need to continue developing the school as a Christian community, and thereby further consolidating pupils' various achievements.

#### Established strengths

- Pupils' personal development and well-being is good.
- Standards of behaviour are good.

#### Focus for development

- To develop and extend the planning of collective worship to enable other providers to lead worship and to ensure continuity, progression and evaluation.
- To consider how the Christian aspects of school worship could be further developed to include more opportunities for regular prayer and specific Christian emphasis.
- To identify ways of raising the profile of the church status in the life and work of the school.

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

The school makes good provision to meet the needs of all its learners. The Christian ethos of the school is reflected in the pupil's sense of well being and permeates many aspects of school life. The pupils spoke highly of their caring school community. Christian values and beliefs are evident in the care of the children by teaching and support staff. Pupils expressed the view that they felt happy, secure and safe in the school environment. Pupils were observed being well behaved and appreciated the support given by staff and other pupils to manage their friendships. Relationships are good between staff and pupils and between pupils. Children show consideration and courtesy to each other and to adults. The atmosphere in school is relaxed and orderly.

There is a vocal and effective school council and a 'focus group' who were very positive and appreciative of all that the school provides. They value the security they feel through the caring ethos which permeates the whole school community. At lunchtime children regularly say Grace and it was noted that good manners were overtly encouraged. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about charity fundraising activities, aware of the charities they have supported and what was done to raise money. The building and grounds are also well-cared for, providing the pupils with very good examples of care and respect for their environment. Spiritual, social and moral development of the pupils is good with less evidence of a diversity of cultures and faiths in the learning environment.

Grade 2

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

Worship has a secure place in the life of the school. Acts of worship are led by the headteacher for Key Stage 2 and by class teachers for Key Stage 1; the children join together for singing practice and a celebration assembly each week. Acts of worship are only planned as a list of themes for the whole year and these are used both in Key Stages 1 and 2. This planning should be developed further to ensure continuity, progression and evaluation of worship. The headteacher who is the worship coordinator, meets with the curate in charge to plan the year's themes in order to provide continuity between the school and the church. Christian festivals are clearly part of the themes. The worship observed during the inspection was recognisably Christian in character although at times the Christian aspect could have been more strongly emphasised.

Acts of worship involve participation by individual pupils. The acts of worship observed provide a variety of experiences including children listening, acting, responding to questions and an opportunity for reflection. Children sing well with enthusiasm and have a broad repertoire of songs and hymns supported by a teaching assistant who plays the piano.

Grade 3

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

The head teacher and governors are aware of the Christian foundation and purpose of the school. Visual symbols of its church school status include a cross above the entrance to the school hall. Foundation governors are involved in planning themes for acts of worship but the involvement of other staff, governors and pupils in monitoring and evaluating needs to be further extended to other aspects of being a church school.

There are links with the local church as well as with the wider community. The curate in charge takes groups of children to the church as part of their R.E. syllabus to extend their learning opportunities. These offer fruitful opportunities to further children's learning and personal development and to support the school's identity as part of the Christian Church in the eyes of the wider community and parents. Year 6 leavers have their own service in the school but do not currently attend a Diocesan leaver's Service. Pupils across the age groups are well represented in a focus group and on the school council; they fully appreciate these opportunities.

Grade 3