

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools

Dilton Marsh Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

High Street
Dilton Marsh
Westbury
Wiltshire
BA13 4DY

Diocese: Salisbury

Local authority: Wiltshire
Dates of inspection: 1st April 2008
Date of last inspection: June 2004
School's unique reference number: 126375
Headteacher: Mrs. Judith Finney
Inspector's name and number: The Rev. Mary Garrard 19

Context

This is a six-class village school almost next to the church. About 24% of the pupils come from outside the school catchment area through parental choice. The building is relatively modern and boasts various quiet areas inside and out. It is about to undergo some alteration to allow for a new computer suite, a more centrally placed staffroom and more convenient office space for the Head Teacher and her deputy. There are challenging, informative and vibrant displays in corridors, hall and classrooms. The school has an open access policy and parents speak of being welcome in the building at any time. There is a community of Travellers within the village and as a whole about 33% of children within the school have special educational needs.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Dilton Marsh as a Church of England school are outstanding

This is an outstanding school where the needs of children as individuals and as part of a Christian community are held in balance. The balancing of each is seen to be of paramount importance. All staff appreciate the uniqueness of each member of this community and help all members to appreciate their own talents and those of everyone else. Care and concern from everyone for everyone is high on this school's agenda.

Established strengths

- Relationships within the school are outstanding. Children support their peers and are supported effectively by all staff. Parents speak warmly of good communication and care and of the confidence each child achieves through knowing that whatever their particular skill happens to be will be appreciated and celebrated. All adults are supportive one to another and respect for adults and pupils is paramount.
- Governors know their school, their staff and their pupils and provide informed support and practical help.
- Links with the local community are strong and despite difficulties within the church staffing ratios Churches Together and the recently appointed part-time

vicar are ensuring a church presence is seen regularly in the school. Local parishioners provide an effective link in volunteering to help with particular activities within the school.

Focus for development

- For the school to clarify its belief in a 'Christian ethos' in documentation
- Implement the term Worship instead of Assembly
- Create opportunities for the children to learn some additional prayers to |The Lord's Prayer

The school, through its distinctive Christian character, is outstanding at meeting the needs of all learners

This happy school, to which pupils are come enthusiastically, is outstanding in meeting the needs of all learners. All staff support the abilities and difficulties of all pupils and each child is challenged to the limit of his/her ability and provide for individual needs. Although there is a high percentage of children with special educational needs in the school, inclusion is such that visitors find them difficult to identify. On entry to school children's needs are quickly assessed and intervention is put in place. Monitoring and assessment are an integral part of school life. As they move through the school pupils become confident and articulate. They are given opportunities to converse with strangers such as at the weekly lunches prepared by four children and enjoyed by one or two visitors. The visitor may be the local MP, the chief fire officer for Wiltshire, the area bishop or the section 48 inspector! Throughout the school there is evidence of courteous behaviour and welcoming smiles. Pupils expect to care for each other in a supportive way and one older child commented that "the little ones need to learn from you [Y5/6] as a role model." A child who did not start in YR said, "When you come new you are always looked after and people are kind."

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

The impact of worship in this school is good. A group of Y5/6 children spoke warmly of the school worship, one child even going so far as to say, "School isn't school without assembly in the morning." There is evidence that the school council asked for "Wake and Shake" not to follow worship as it detracted from the peaceful feeling they had when they left the hall. The children come in quietly to music and take their places ready to listen and reflect in an atmosphere of calm. They sing well and can name favourite hymns. In KS2 worship pupils have been learning the meaning of the Lord's Prayer phrase by phrase and pupils spoke of enjoying and appreciating this. They use some responsive sentences when the candle is lighted before prayer and spoke of occasionally writing their own prayers. The highlight of the week is obviously celebration assembly at the end of each week. After a hymn, reflection and prayer led by staff classes take it in turns to lead on work done in class. Certificates and such like are presented. Parents, parishioners and members of the community are invited and parents and grandparents spoke warmly of the occasion. The school have always held a carol service in church and staff are working with clergy to devise other meaningful occasions to worship in the church.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school is outstanding

The leadership and management of this school is outstanding. The head described her style of leadership as being distributive and not a top down model. She has endless vision for the school but the details are worked out collaboratively with staff and governors who all give willing and knowledgeable support. Everyone believes that the essence of spirituality lies within the school and that collective worship is only a part of this. They believe passionately that everyone is created equal but different and that each school member has a part to play in the life of the school and the world. Following on from this they believe that the strength of the school community is the combining of talents and using them but not at anyone else's expense. It is these beliefs and their working out that makes Dilton Marsh School the place that it is. It is these beliefs that help each member of the school community to give and receive respect.

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