

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Malden Parochial Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

The Manor Drive,
Worcester Park,
Surrey
KT4 7LW.

Diocese:Southwark

Date of inspection: 9th-10th July 2007

Date of last inspection: 28th-29th November 2001

School's Unique reference number: 102587

Headteacher: Mrs Cheryl Grigg

Inspector's name and number : Arthur Williams 279

School Context

Malden Parochial School is a single form entry Church of England Primary School in Worcester Park in The Royal Borough of Kingston Upon Thames. It is linked with the Anglican Church of St. John the Baptist and the earliest record of its existence dates back to 1835. There are 7 classes with 30 learners, and a morning Nursery of 26 learners. The large majority of learners are White British, with a small proportion of learners of minority ethnic Asian, White European and mixed heritage. The percentage of learners learning English as an additional language is above average. The school serves a relative static population with above average socio-economic conditions. There are a smaller number of learners with learning difficulties and disabilities than are usual in a school of this size. Approximately 60% of learners come from homes with a church commitment.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Malden Parochial School as a Church of England school is outstanding.

Its mission statement is a bold one. It claims "We are committed to the full development and spiritual growth of all children in a learning environment where Christian values are central to the ethos of the school." The school lives up to this claim and continues to challenge and inspire learners to understand that faith and belief are central to the experience of life.

Established strengths

- The strong Christian ethos that permeates all areas of school life.
- The way that prayer and relection are natural parts of school life.
- The high standards of Collective Worship and Religious Education (RE), particularly the excellent work of the more perceptive learners.
- The strong collective leadership that sustains the school and enables it to go from strength to strength.

Focus for development

- To implement the priorities of the school's own development RE Self-Review Plan particularly,
- To further increase the learners participation in Collective Worship.
- To further develop the use of the present RE assessment structures to inform teaching and learning.
- For the staff and governors to explore what it means to be a school with a distinctive character.

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

The distinctive Christian character of the school is apparent in all aspects of school life. It is very clear and explicit from the documentation and through to classroom practice. Academic standards are very high and learners benefit from a broad and rich curriculum. Learners are keen to point out how they support each other. Some year 5 learners act as mediators at

playtimes, year 6 learners act as elder buddies to new learners in Reception. The maturity of behaviour in and out of the classroom is exceptional. Learners respond positively to the trust put in them. For example, Nursery learners are responsible for their own tidying up, while school learners care for the ecological garden, and represent their class on the School Council. The school recognises the faiths and beliefs of differing communities and is outstanding in the depth of knowledge this generates in learners. Learners respond well to the wider needs of the world. Year 6 raise funds for Christian Aid and in class they debate how they can personally act to conserve the world's limited resources. Much of this work is celebrated in high quality displays around the school allowing all to gain spiritually from these initiatives. This emphasis on personal responsibility demonstrates the school's belief in the uniqueness of each learner while encouraging them to be positive members of a community based on Christian values. Spiritual growth is enhanced by the way prayer and reflection occur throughout the school day. One learner wrote on being given the opportunity to visit the Prayer Centre at Ashburnham on school journey. "It is very quiet, I would feel relaxed and I feel I could really talk to God without being disturbed." Many learners are clear that belonging to a church school means they are challenged to understand that faith and beliefs are part of growing up alongside a respect for your neighbour. Many adults in the school community recognise the Christian character of the school. They recognise it in terms of good behaviour, kindness, caring, respect, a rich curriculum, the link with the church, the celebration of the Christian Year, and the class Eucharist. However the leadership of the school recognises that many of these qualities, while admirable, are not solely Christian. Their strong commitment to the development of this dimension is demonstrated in planned training for the school and church staff in September.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding.

Collective Worship is at the heart of school life. A clear policy sets out the aims and practice and this is adhered to. The two acts that were observed were of the highest quality. One challenged learners to reflect on how God acted through our hands, the other explored the mystery of God. They were presented through a variety of senses; touch, drama, thoughtful questioning, story telling and singing. Learners were able to volunteer how Jesus used his hands to to serve others through washing the feet of the disciples and healing people. A circle represented by a PE hoop was used as a symbol to help learners understand that God had no beginning or end. The sense of reflection was palpable. Conversations with learners show that they value collective worship especially when they are able to participate in the planning and taking part. The school self-review recognises this. Learners were very positive in explaining how prayer and reflection times are a central part of school life. Learners were perceptive in the different use and occasions for prayer, and recognised that prayer was a practice of other faiths. One learner wrote "You shouldn't rush to pray, you should take time to pray and find a quiet place like a cupboard with some space, or in your bed under the bed sheet. You could pray in the garden. You could pray anywhere like a shed in the garden, or even on a trampoline if you have one! You can pray anywhere!" Older learners spoke very positively about the class Eucharist that is held once a month by the clergy of St. John's and parents commented how they valued it. The school also visits the church to celebrate the main festivals of the Christian Year and each class has a "quiet" visit which is guided by the clergy. This enhances the learners understanding of the Anglican tradition.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding.

The standard of attainment in RE is very high. The school uses the Diocesan level descriptors and at the end of Spring Term 2007, 83% of year 6 learners were secure at level 5 for Attainment Target 2 (Learning from Religion). This level requires learners to have an inquiring mind about the faith commitments of religion and to understand how faith guides people in the way they lead their lives. Observations of teaching and learning, studying written work, and talking to learners about their work confirm these standards. The school is very effective at encouraging learners to apply their religious knowledge to their everyday lives and challenging the more perceptive learners to deeper levels of understanding. Learners were particularly effective at empathising with characters from the Bible. Year 4 learners were able to articulate the challenge of trust in the story of Moses. One learner commented "It must have taken a lot of trust to leave their homes and follow Moses." Learners are challenged to think beyond the superficial. Teachers promote an atmosphere of

security were all views are respected. Learners are made to realise that sometimes there are no wrong or right answers. In year 6 learners in studying the way humans care for God's creation were able to debate the difference between natural disasters and the direct consequences of human selfishness. The scheme of work is well constructed. It ensures that all learners gain an understanding of the Bible, particularly the life and mission of Jesus and the story of the church. Christian Festivals are studied and learners gain an understanding of the beliefs of other major world religions. A particular strength of the scheme is the way it allows learners to revisit the same topic promoting continuity and progression. Learners in Year 2 study Islam and then revisit it again in year 5. The grounding in year 2 enables the learners in year 5 to produce work of a very high quality. The teaching of RE is kept under regular review. The RE co-ordinator has already identified ways in which to use the information from the first year of class assessments to improve teaching and learning; for example, how to further improve the assessment of learners who do not readily respond to written assessments or who are not confident in answering questions.

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

The key reason why the Christian values of the school have a positive effect on all learners and there are high standards in Collective Worship and RE is the excellent Christian leadership. The headteacher displays purposeful and consistent leadership that has the respect of learners, staff and parents and carers. She models excellent practice in the way she leads Collective Worship and in her relationships with staff and learners. She is diligent in ensuring the school benefits from good documentation and that the words on the page are implemented into classroom practice. Her own Christian beliefs are clearly at the heart of what she wants to achieve. In delivering high standards in RE she is ably supported by a very effective RE co-ordinator who has a very clear understanding of what makes a very effective curriculum and has already identified an achievable action plan that will continue to make further improvements. The headteacher is fully supported by other staff with management experience and a governing body that is fully informed and is developing ways of holding the school to account. The clergy see the school as an important part of their ministry. This is visible through the monthly school Eucharist, and their regular presence in the school. The partnership is demonstrated by their shared commitment to an inset day at the beginning of the next school year. Another clear strength of the leadership is that although its own self-review placed it as outstanding in all the sections, this has not led to complacency. The school has a clear RE development plan and is committed to further progress and improvement.

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