

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Marshwood Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Marshwood
Bridport
Dorset
DT6 5QA

Diocese: Salisbury

Local Authority: Dorset
Date of inspection: 18th June 2007
Date of last inspection: June 2001
School's Unique Reference Number: 113806
Headteacher: Miss Rosie Giles
Inspector's name and NS number: Mr Chris Williamson 290

School context

Marshwood Church of England Primary School has 54 children on roll. It serves the local rural area containing five parishes and, due to its popularity, 40% of children attend from outside the catchment area. Nearly 20% of children are on the Special Needs Register, many of whom have speech problems, and no children are from ethnic minority groups. In 2002 the neighbouring church was developed to provide an additional teaching space whilst still remaining the local parish church.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Marshwood Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding

Christian values and attitudes strongly pervade all aspects of the school. These values and attitudes are embedded in the school's mission statement which is based on Mark 12 v30-31 where Jesus told people to love God and to love their neighbours as themselves. This, together with the very effective leadership and the strong partnership with the local community, makes the school outstanding.

Established strengths

- The Christian ethos, centred on loving God and loving your neighbour as yourself, is evident throughout the school
- The partnership with the local community has enabled the school to develop an outstanding resource by using the church as a teaching area, thereby bringing significant benefits to both the school and the community
- The quality of pastoral care based on repentance, forgiveness and moving forward encourages children to fulfil their potential

Focus for development

- To further develop thinking skills and spirituality in religious education

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

The Christian vision for the school, based on loving God and loving one's neighbour as oneself, is central to the life of the school and is lived out in practice. Many opportunities exist for all children to take responsibility, appropriate to their age and maturity, which boosts their self esteem. The small size of the school enables the strengths and needs of every individual to be well known. Children feel valued and special due to the outstanding quality of care, guidance and support. Children say that they feel happy, enjoy learning and are willing to seek help when appropriate. Parents and children are fully aware of the school's Christian ethos. It has an excellent impact on children's social and moral development, for example, when an incident of poor behaviour occurs, children are encouraged to realise where they

went wrong, repent, seek forgiveness and move forward. Children show respect for the faiths and values of others and are encouraged to form their own opinions. Many opportunities are provided for children's cultural development, for example the children in Years 5 and 6 visit a mosque during their residential visit to London. The wide variety of opportunities for spiritual development also has a significant impact. For example the older children have explored the communion service and its relationship to the Last Supper; as a result, the children led a service with great spirituality for the parents and the local community. Good use is made of reflection time, silent prayers and thinking assemblies which support the children in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The Christian value of treating others as you yourself would expect to be treated has had a significant impact on the quality of relationships in school. Issues are discussed in an open and honest way and there is an atmosphere of collaboration and mutual consideration. Displays, signs and the use of the church as a classroom celebrate the distinctive Christian character of the school.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship is important and integral to the school since it demonstrates all that the school stands for. The school encourages worship in the community through open services held in the church, for example in the key Christian festivals such as Harvest, Christmas and Easter thereby reflecting the importance the school places on worship. Children usually respond well to worship and the older children are keen to plan and lead worship on a topic of their choice. Children actively participate in the annual communion service by baking the bread and receiving bread and a grape during the service. The giving of the grape is becoming an important part of the school's special services, for example the service held outside at nearby Lambert's Castle was particularly successful. Children are often inspired and affirmed from collective worship. Children are encouraged to share their thoughts, think and pray quietly. They also pray spontaneously as well as writing prayers for the church services. Planning of worship is integrated into the life of the school since it follows both the Anglican calendar and the school's four year plan for religious education. There are also opportunities for the children to lead their acts of worship on a theme. Strong links are enjoyed with the local church.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

Standards in religious education (RE) are high. A major factor in this is the impact of the school's strong Christian ethos where everyone feels valued and therefore encouraged to have high self esteem together with the belief that every child can achieve well. RE is taught both as a discrete subject and through other subjects, including assemblies. Teaching is good and learning is enhanced through the use of the interactive whiteboard which stimulates thought and discussion. Children have a positive attitude to RE and enjoy it. The cross curricular approach often enhances discussion, which is planned into most lessons, adding to the children's spiritual and moral development. Children are good at expressing themselves because they have been taught to be good at listening to each other and respecting each other's views. RE plays a major part in promoting the schools distinctive Christian character; in RE Christianity is taught along with other religions. The school demonstrates that RE is a vital and central part of the school.

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

The headteacher has a very clear vision for the school, ensuring that the strong Christian ethos pervades the life the school. The small size of the school allows the headteacher to effectively monitor the quality of provision and challenge the school to realise its Christian vision in an informal way. The headteacher and governors have a good understanding of the strengths of the school and the areas that need to be developed. Staff do feel valued and very much involved in putting the school's Christian vision into practice. The views of all stakeholders are widely sought and the governors are very supportive of the school. Parents praise the school highly. Strong links exist between the school and the church, for example in the development of the church as an additional classroom which has provided significant benefits for both the school and the local community. The school is very much part of the local community, for example the local community is invited to all the school's functions and the school contributes to the community in ways such as singing carols in a residential care

home. The school also raises significant sums of money for a wide range of charities. The school has established a particularly effective link with a school in Uganda. This provides the children with a further opportunity to put the school's Christian vision into practice by supporting their Ugandan peers as well as learning about Ugandan culture.

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