

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Middleton Tyas Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Kneeton Lane
Middleton Tyas
Richmond
N.Yorks
DL10 6SF

Diocese: Bradford

Local authority: North Yorkshire
Date of inspection: 28th January, 2008
Date of last inspection: October 2001
School's unique reference number: 121509
Headteacher: Mr. John Ridley
Inspector's name and number: Mr. Neville Norcross NS403

School context

Middleton Tyas is a church of England voluntary controlled school which is below average in size. The school moved into new premises in 2004 and the number on roll has grown considerably in recent years. Nearly all pupils are of white British heritage. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or or disabilities is well below the national average, while the proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs is broadly average.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Middleton Tyas as a Church of England school are satisfactory

The school provides a high level of care for its pupils and their behaviour is very good. Christian values are clearly evident in the daily life of the school and make a significant impact upon the personal and academic development of all pupils. The school provides an inclusive community in which all children are valued and encouraged to reach their full potential.

Established strengths

- The commitment of staff and governors to providing an inclusive environment in which every child can reach their full potential in both personal and academic development.
- The behaviour of the children and particularly the high level of care which they show for each other.
- The school's links with the local church and the wider community.

Focus for development

- Include all members of the school community in a structured evaluation of its distinctiveness as a church school.
- Ensure that church school issues are included as part of the school's strategic planning arrangements.
- Provide more opportunities for children to play an active part in the planning, delivery and evaluation of the daily act of collective worship.

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

The school places great significance on its policy of inclusion. This enables all pupils to feel valued and to develop high levels of self-esteem. All feel safe within the school and respond positively to the way in which their achievements are celebrated. Particular pride is taken in the way the individual needs of children with learning and/or behavioural difficulties are met.

Parents are generally positive about the level of care shown to their children. They express confidence in the headteacher's commitment to the school and the way he has built an inclusive community. Pupil behaviour is very good. They work and play in a spirit of co-operation - the older children taking pride in the way they are entrusted to care for the younger ones. The school council enables pupils to take personal responsibility for the way in which their school functions. Children are pleased to find their voice is listened to and are negotiating to meet more regularly. Moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Strong and productive links have been established with the local community through, for example, exploiting the multi-use games area. Good understanding is developed of other cultures, traditions and geographical areas from a link with a school in Kenya and through links with schools in the north east of England. There are, however, limited opportunities for pupils to enjoy times of reflection and to be challenged in their views about deeper, personal ideas. The school provides an attractive and stimulating environment in which to work and play. The site is a secure environment for children to exercise their freedom and to take managed risks by making full use of the excellent play facilities which are available. The school has responded to a recommendation in the previous church school inspection report by placing a cross in the entrance corridor. However, the Christian character of the school is not made evident through displays and symbols in classrooms and other areas. Christian values are clearly evident within the daily life of the school although their relationship to the Christian gospel is not yet articulated by all members of the school community. The weekly meeting of the St. Michael's club on school premises, run by an enthusiastic group of church members, gives children and their parents a positive experience of the Anglican church in the village.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is satisfactory

Worship is described as being central to the life of the school. This is well supported by an appropriate setting with a focus table which contains a candle, cross and other Christian artefacts. The old school bell is rung just before each act of worship. This demonstrates clearly to children and the local community that a special time is about to commence in the school. The weekly themes are planned for the whole year and contain a mixture of topics from the Christian calendar and themes which are linked to the school's programme for social and emotional development. The planning does not indicate how each act of worship is to be developed however, so there is no sense of continuity and progression over the whole week. Children enter the hall quietly and display a sense of reverence as the introductory music is played. Their behaviour during worship is good and most respond appropriately to the singing story and prayers. In discussion they commented upon the fact that they see worship as an opportunity for the whole school to meet together. This is not supported, however, by the level of staff attendance which undermines the importance of the occasion. One key recommendation from the last church inspection was to involve more members of staff in leading worship for the whole school. This has not been addressed so an opportunity for children to see how adults value worship has been lost. The pupils take pleasure in sometimes playing instruments and reading their own prayers. They say that they particularly enjoy the four occasions each year when they celebrate the major Christian festivals in church. The special atmosphere in the church and the presence of a large number of adults make it seem especially significant to them. In conversation, however, they have not yet recognised the centrality of worship in the life of the school. Overall there are only limited opportunities for pupils to become involved in the planning, delivery and evaluation of worship. The school governors have been involved in the evaluation of worship and this has helped to raise an awareness of some important issues. Parents express positive views about the links with the church but regret that they are not invited to be more involved with the daily act of worship. The role of the vicar within the life of the school ensures that important aspects of Anglican faith and practice are provided for pupils.

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

The school has a clearly-expressed vision statement which is familiar to all members of the school community through public documents such as the School Prospectus. There is a positive response from parents to the impact which the school, as a church school, has on their children. However, pupils, parents and staff have not yet been challenged to look at the implications of the statement for the daily life of the school. The school has put in place some procedures for the monitoring and evaluation of its distinctive character although there is no

clear process by which any issues can find their way into the school's development plan. Good recruitment procedures make clear the responsibility of all staff to promote the school's distinctive character. However, there have been very few professional development opportunities for staff to be supported in understanding the full implication of the school's distinctive character. The headteacher and governors have worked hard in developing effective systems for whole school improvement and these have had a significant impact on the children's standards and progress. This experience, coupled with a commitment now to make church school issues a priority, provides a good opportunity to develop the school's distinctive character.

SIAS report January 2008, Middleton Tyas C of E Primary, North Yorkshire DL10 6SF