

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### **Milton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School**

School Lane  
Milton Heights,  
Abingdon  
Oxfordshire  
OX14 4DR

**Diocese: Oxford**

Local authority: Oxfordshire

Dates of inspection: 9 November 2006

Date of last inspection: 12 March 1999

School's unique reference number: 123178

Headteacher: Mrs Linda Shatford

Inspector's name and number: Mrs Rosemary Bartlett NS 120

#### **School context**

Milton Church of England School is a very small school serving Milton Heights and Milton Village, with a number of pupils coming from outside the catchment area. The school building includes a community room and a large hall. These benefit the school as well as being well used by the local community.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Milton School as a Church of England school are good.**

Christian values permeate the life of the school. There is a strong ethos of respect and care for others. The school has strong links with the parish church of St Blaise and with the local community.

#### **Established strengths**

- The headteacher and staff exemplify the school's Christian values
- The pupils are happy and enjoy school
- The foundation governors are active in school life

#### **Focus for development**

- Develop opportunities for collective worship within class groups
- Review the provision for spiritual development across the curriculum
- Promote the school's church foundation

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

The school is justifiably proud of the quality of its care for the pupils, and of its close partnership with their families. Pupils feel valued and empowered. The buddy system works well. School councillors are clear about their role. They say: "We discuss what we could do to improve things". The school is to be commended for flying the Eco green flag and for being the second school in the country to win the Level Two Energy Award. Religious education contributes well to pupils' cultural development. "I find it interesting when we talk about celebrations from different beliefs". The lively celebrations of Chinese New Year are clearly much enjoyed by the pupils. Younger pupils respond readily to outstanding teaching on infant baptism. Older pupils remember and recount, with interest, dramatic details in the story of Moses. There are a good variety of school clubs, to meet the range of pupils' interests. Christian symbols around the school building and RE displays such as the collage of Zacchaeus, support spiritual development. Resources used in collective worship are displayed in the school's central area. These help pupils to remember the themes of daily worship. In the school's last inspection one of the key issues was the formulation of a policy for spiritual development. The school now rightly plans to review its guidelines on spiritual development across the curriculum. The key issue on developing pupils' communication skills

has been well addressed.

**The impact of collective worship on the school community is good.**

The school fulfils well its intention to make collective worship a worthwhile experience for pupils. Pupils clearly appreciate the school's imaginative and varied approach. The monthly Value of patience is well exemplified through a demonstration of the game Clock Patience. Pupils respond with interest to well narrated stories of patience and endurance, such as the escape of St Peter from prison. The youngest pupils show exceptional stillness in focussing on a candle. The school shows sensitivity in respecting pupils' individual integrity and in meeting their spiritual needs. Prayer is approached mindfully and its impact carefully considered. In consequence there is no sense of prayer being mechanical. Pupils are invited to participate in prayers and they respond naturally. Following a review of school worship the school has effectively introduced greater variety of groupings and seating arrangements. The school is now planning to introduce class worship in order to provide more opportunities for stillness and reflection. A good number of parents attend the celebration acts of worship on Fridays.

Themes for worship are based on Christian values and festivals. All the teachers lead worship regularly. The chair of governors regularly plays the piano for worship. Pupils enjoy the vicar's weekly act of school worship. They listen attentively and contribute confidently. This strengthens the school's good connection with the church. The Methodist minister and a representative of the Didcot churches also lead school worship on occasion. The recommendations from the last inspection for planning and record keeping in collective worship have been well implemented.

**The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school are good.**

Clear Christian values are consistently upheld by the leadership and management of the school. They are well communicated and exemplified. The admissions policy includes the statement "We welcome all children". This inclusive spirit shines out. There is an effective nurturing programme for the staff. Staff clearly feel valued and supported. There is a strong team spirit amongst the staff who work together closely. RE is enthusiastically and effectively coordinated. There is a very good quality of inservice training. Monitoring of teaching and learning in RE is being developed. Assessment of pupils' progress in RE is identified in the school development plan. The school benefits from the involvement of many members of the community. The vicar regularly spends time in school. He makes a positive contribution to worship, RE and pastoral care. Many pupils take part in church activities such as Crusaders. The lay minister and his wife regularly support the school's drama productions. The foundation governors are actively involved in school life. The school regularly reviews its performance through consultation with parents.

The school has very close links with the wider local community. The community facilities are well used by a number of organisations. The school participates fully in community activities such as the banner making workshop in celebration of the Queen's Jubilee. The school makes good use of the Vale and Parish playing fields and adventure playground.

Most pupils attend the annual village carol service. The governors and senior management of the school are keen to further strengthen its church school status through promoting its foundation and links with the parish church of St Blaise.

SIAS report November 2006 Milton Church of England Primary School LaneMilton Heights, Abingdon Oxfordshire OX14 4DR