

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Moulton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

128 Chippenham Road

Moulton

Newmarket

CB8 8SN

Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich

LA: Suffolk

Date of inspection: 16 June 2008

Date of last inspection: December 2003

School's unique reference number: 124709

Name of Headteacher: John Englebright

Name of Inspector: Simon Windmill

NS number: 182

Context

Moulton Church of England VC Primary School serves the village of Moulton and the surrounding area. A number of pupils come from the nearby US airforce base. It has links with its parish church. Almost all pupils come from white British backgrounds. The number of pupils with disabilities or learning difficulties is below national average. Over the last few years the number of pupils has risen significantly, and the school's accommodation has been enlarged and improved.

Summary Judgement

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Moulton as a Church of England school are good.

The school's Christian ethos and values are embedded in school life and have a strong positive influence on pupils' beliefs and attitudes. Pupils enjoy school, and say they feel valued, special and safe. Parents and the wider community highly appreciate the work of the school and give it a great deal of support.

Established strengths

- Christian values underpin the life and work of the school
- Excellent caring and supportive relationships with and between pupils, staff and governors
- Collective worship is at the heart of the school's life

Focus for development

- Giving pupils even more opportunities to say their own prayers in collective worship
- Improving the evaluation of the impact of collective worship on pupils
- Developing the links between church and school

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

The school's Christian ethos is regarded by the headteacher, staff and governors as a fundamentally important part of school life. Care and support for pupils and staff are outstanding, and reflect the Christian values on which the school is based. This is seen in the school's warm, welcoming, inclusive and friendly atmosphere, and pupils say they feel valued and safe. Parents confirm this, and often comment on the family atmosphere of the school.

Pupils' personal development is excellent. They get on exceptionally well with each other, and with the staff, who provide good role models. Older pupils set good examples for younger pupils, which helps to build both their own and the younger pupils' self-confidence and independence. Pupils like coming to school, and enjoy their lessons and friendships.

Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. Class rules are agreed between pupils and staff, so they know what is expected of them, and know the consequences of lapses in behaviour. These are usually minor and rare, and are always dealt with quickly and effectively. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They have a clear understanding of right and wrong.

The school environment is used to contribute to pupils' spiritual and moral development. There is a cross in the school's entrance and in the hall, and the school's letterhead shows its Christian foundation. The school motto 'Caring and Sharing' is displayed, along with other signs reflecting the school's ethos such as 'Every Child Matters' and the school rules. The staff are considering whether to increase the visual indications that it is a church school.

Pupils who are lonely or unhappy can sit on the friendship bench in the school grounds, and other pupils will go and sit with them to help them to cheer up. Pupils say they like the bench because they know someone will keep them company, and sit with them until they feel better. Pupils' awareness and concern for the needs of others is encouraged, and they help to raise money for a range of charitable causes, such as Comic Relief and the NSPCC.

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

Under the leadership of the collective worship co-ordinator, daily worship is inspirational, and central to the school's life. Pupils see it as a special part of the day, which they enjoy – one pupil said 'It teaches me right from wrong', and another said 'I like having a chance to think about things'. It is soundly based on Christian values, and always includes singing (which is a strength of the school), teaching and prayer. Staff encourage pupils in collective worship with their enthusiasm and obvious enjoyment, making worship pleasurable and meaningful for everyone. The high quality of collective worship makes a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral and social development

Pupils enjoy opportunities to play an active part in worship, such as acting out a story or helping the leader in other ways. Pupils willingly say prayers, either written by themselves or spontaneously. They would like to say their own prayers more often. Pupils have a good understanding of the range of styles and purposes of prayer, such as saying thank you, asking for help, saying sorry, and 'making people who are ill better'. They know and use the Lord's Prayer.

Worship is very well planned around themes based on Christian values and linked to the main festivals of the church year, such as Christmas, Easter and harvest, and some services are held in the church. Links with the church are good. The vicar regularly leads worship. The school is exploring ways of increasing the range of visitors to lead worship.

The school has experimented with systems for recording, monitoring and evaluating collective worship in order to assess its impact on pupils, and is looking for ways to further improve this, for example by including pupils' evaluations.

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

The headteacher gives good leadership to the school, and is very well supported by the staff and governors. Foundation governors and local clergy make a good contribution to the church related aspects of the school, such as monitoring collective worship, leading assemblies and offering pastoral and prayer support.

The staff feel highly valued and involved in the school's development. They all work together exceptionally well, and support each other in their work. This contributes greatly to the happy and supportive atmosphere of the school. Staff say 'We are always talking together about the school's activities' and 'We give and get tremendous support from the head and each other', and this is evident in the way staff communicate both professionally and socially.

The school council represents pupils of all ages and gives them opportunities to share their ideas for improving the school. These requests are taken seriously and implemented whenever practical, and pupils' self confidence is boosted by this. One pupil said 'Teachers listen to our ideas, and usually do what we ask for, but if they can't do what we want, they tell us why.'

The school is actively promoting its good partnership with the church and the wider community. Parents are welcomed and encouraged to visit the school, and they willingly give their time to help out in many ways in the classrooms and in fundraising. Community members are invited to the school for lunches and coffee mornings. Strong links with the playgroup help make a very smooth transition into the Reception class, along with induction sessions and a 'Getting to Know You' evening for 'new' parents. Transition from Moulton is made easier by visits from pupils and staff of the middle school. Pupils helped raise funds for restoring the historic pack-horse bridge, and the Parish Council helped provide a new car park and traffic calming measures. The school contributes to the village newsletter.

The school's accurate self-evaluation provides a sound basis for further improvements.