



Diocese of Chichester

Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools

Inspection Report

Name of school: St Margaret's CE Primary School

Address: Whiteway Lane
Rottingdean
Brighton
BN2 7HB

Name of inspector: Olivia Izzard

NS inspector's number: 389

Date of inspection: 30 June - 1 July 2009

The inspection of denominational education and collective worship in the school was carried out in accordance with Section 48 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about the school

Type of school:	Primary
Unique reference number:	114537
Status:	Voluntary Aided
Number on roll:	201
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
LEA:	Brighton and Hove
Name of chair of governors:	Lindsey Delow
Name of headteacher:	Sandra Coleman
Date of previous inspection:	October 2006

Description of the school

St Margaret's CE Primary School is a rural school located in the picturesque village of Rottingdean, on the outskirts of Brighton. It has an annual intake of 30 pupils and the 7 classes are organised into single year teaching groups. The majority of pupils are drawn from Rottingdean and a minority from the neighbouring villages of Ovingdean and Woodingdean. There is a small minority of pupils from ethnic groups but, in the main, they are drawn from white middle class families. The school has been awarded a gold Artsmark, a Healthy School Award and, for the third successive year, a Sportsmark.

Key for inspection grades

1	Outstanding
2	Good
3	Satisfactory
4	Inadequate

Summary judgement

St Margaret's is a good Church school, which has a strong commitment to its foundation. The ethos of the school is good. Children are caring and cared for and speak enthusiastically about their teaching and learning. Collective Worship is good with a sound grounding in Christianity and the Anglican tradition evident in planning and execution. Religious Education is satisfactory. The children learn about and from religion and attainment is in line with national expectations. The leadership and management of the school are good. Self-review demonstrates the team's ability to identify both strengths and areas for further improvement.

Established strengths

- the strong commitment to the school's Church foundation
- the caring, nurturing ethos which, through its distinctive Christian character, meets the needs of most of the pupils
- the effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school in maintaining and developing the school's Christian character

Focus for development

- the provision of cultural activities and speakers to develop cultural education
- the designing of a formal written method of assessment of Worship to measure its effectiveness more accurately
- the adoption of a comprehensive Religious Education Scheme of Work and a regular form of assessment to raise standards

How well does the school, through its distinctive Christian character, meet the needs of all its learners?

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

A large majority of the pupils feel valued and special, feel safe and secure and are happy with their school. One child said 'It's a friendly school' and another added 'the teachers are great too'. The children have very high levels of self-esteem and confidence. Older pupils are encouraged to support younger ones. For example, on weekly visits to the local church the older children accompany younger ones.

Good progress is made in spiritual awareness. The class gardens, the school grounds, time for reflection in worship, RE lessons and weekly visits to the church enhance this development.

The large majority of learners and staff feel their views are taken seriously. They work well together in an atmosphere of care and concern for all. The children look after adults as well as their peers. For example, when I was waiting for a group of children to accompany me to the church service a Year 3 pupil insisted on taking me with him saying 'I don't want you to get lost.'

Conflicts are settled fairly and promptly. The older pupils act as 'Bully Busters' in the play areas and the children are quick to identify action if this is not effective. One child stated 'It gets settled quickly'.

Evidence of the school's Christian character can easily be found throughout the school. A large wall-mounted cross provides an excellent focus for worship in the hall, smaller crosses are in evidence throughout the building and attractive displays in the RE base and in corridors give effective support to RE and general learning. A series of mosaics depicting 'The Creation', which are displayed in a corridor, are a noteworthy feature and were made with tiles sponsored by the local church of St Margaret's.

Opportunities for cultural development are satisfactory but would benefit by the use of visits and visitors to extend this further.

Grade: 2

What is the impact of Collective Worship on the school community?

The impact of Collective Worship on the school community is good.

Worship occupies a place of central importance in the life of the school and underpins its Christian character. Planning is clear and appropriately based around the Christian Calendar. The children are encouraged to be active participants before, during and after each act of worship. Older children organise furniture before and after each service and operate technology within the worship. All children are active participants in worship. They contribute to discussion, listen attentively, enjoy participating in drama, pray respectfully and sing tunefully.

Frequent use is made of prayer, silence and reflection to ensure spiritual growth. The learners are able to discuss key Christian festivals and celebrations, recite The Lord's Prayer and know Christian greetings. Pupils have provided some feedback on the impact of worship although a more formal, written form of assessment would provide greater detail to increase the impact of worship.

There are productive links with the local parish Church. The vicar takes a weekly, whole-school service in the church, is an active governor of the school and visits regularly to explain aspects of Christianity within school worship and Religious Education.

Grade: 2

How effective is Religious Education?

The effectiveness of Religious Education (RE) is satisfactory.

Despite several changes of staff since the last inspection, most learners achieve the expectations of the diocesan syllabus. Progress in RE has remained secure and achievement is in line with national expectations.

The current scheme of work is satisfactory and, as a result of an area for development from the previous inspection, the newly written one is due for ratification by governors in September. To improve the effectiveness of RE, however, the newly written scheme of work and regular assessment of the subject needs to take place as soon as possible.

The vast majority of learners demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the subject well and can discuss their differing beliefs. For example, during the inspection a Year 6 group of pupils were discussing the power of prayer and God. One pupil stated 'I don't believe in God but I pray when I am in trouble.' Then he added 'I suppose I must believe in God then although some religions have more than one, especially Hindus'.

The teaching and learning in RE are good. The lessons are well planned, well resourced and appropriate to the children's ability levels. There is a satisfactory balance in teaching Christianity and other faiths but visitors and visits are needed to improve pupils' cultural awareness.

RE is recognised by most learners and key stakeholders as being a priority in the life of the school and consequently has its own co-ordinator, teaching base, resources and display facilities.

The co-ordinator has clear objectives for the subject's future development, which includes the adoption of the new scheme of work with regular assessment and visits to other places of worship to enhance pupils' knowledge and understanding.

Grade: 3

How effective are the leadership and management of the school as a Church school?

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

The school leaders and governors use Christian values well to promote a distinctive Christian vision for the school. The Christian foundation is promoted through displays of the mission statement throughout the building, school rules are based on Christian values, and the leadership articulates the school's vision at open evenings and evenings for prospective parents. Opportunities are created for staff and governors to explore the Christian character of the school through regular inservice.

Links between the school and church community are strong and beneficial to both parties. The contribution of the Clergy and members of the church community is open and honest and much appreciated by the school, its children and parents. Parents speak warmly of the vicar's involvement in the school and one described him as 'a gift to children'. The school also works closely with a local school, Our Lady of Lourdes Primary School, to the mutual benefit of both schools.

The school leaders and governors prepare and plan well for the future leadership of Church Schools. The senior staff meet weekly for strategic planning, governors play a major role in monitoring, planning and sharing In-service Days and, as a team, they support and encourage newly qualified and trainee teachers within a Church School ethos.

Completion of 'The Self-Evaluation Toolkit for Church of England Schools' demonstrates that the leadership and management of the school work effectively together and are realistic and accurate in their vision for development of St Margaret's as a Church School. Their aim of 'working together through Christ' for the benefit of the children is well met.

Grade: 2

The school meets the statutory requirement for Collective Worship	Yes
The school meets the statutory requirement for Religious Education	Yes



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Judgement Recording Form

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Date of inspection:	30 June - 1 July 2009
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Status:	Voluntary Aided
Number on roll:	201
Type of school:	Primary

Rating 1-4

How well does the school, through its distinctive Christian character, meet the needs of all its learners?	2
What is the impact of Collective Worship on the school community?	2
How effective is Religious Education?	3
How effective are the leadership and management of the school as a Church school?	2

The school meets the statutory requirement for Collective Worship	Yes
The school meets the statutory requirement for Religious Education	Yes