

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

St Mellion Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

St Mellion

Saltash

Cornwall

PL12 6RN

Diocese: Truro

Local Authority: Cornwall

Date of inspection: 20th November 2007

Date of last inspection: October 2003

School's Unique Reference Number: 112030

Headteacher: Mrs Angela Palin

Inspector's name and NS number: Mr Chris Williamson 290

School context

St Mellion School is a small rural school with 43 children on roll. It is a popular school with over half the children travelling from out of the catchment area. There is very high pupil mobility. There are 12% of the children on the Special Needs Register. Almost all children are White British with only 4% of the children from ethnic minority groups and 19% are entitled to free school meals. There has been much improvement to the building and site since 2002 to create a favourable learning environment and facilities. The school does not have a hall.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Mellion Primary School as a Church of England school are good

The distinctiveness of St Mellion School as a church school is demonstrated by the importance placed on the development of the whole child within the context of Christian values of caring and respecting one another. The effective leadership, the strong commitment of the staff, the good links with the church combined with the implementation of a cross curricular approach to learning means that the school is well placed to continue to develop.

Established strengths

- The quality of relationships demonstrated by mutual respect and care for one another
- The level of children's self esteem, self respect and confidence

Focus for development

- To improve the impact of collective worship by embedding the links with the curriculum
- To develop further the cross curricular approach to learning, using RE as a central theme
- To develop systems of formative assessment in RE which aid children's learning

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

There is a strong emphasis in the school on raising standards through quality teaching and learning opportunities. Children feel happy, safe and well cared for within a Christian environment. Children feel valued and special and are told that God loves each one of them and that they and the world are God's creation. Staff believe that the development of the whole child is at the core of the school. Children's personal development and sense of well being is outstanding. The Christian ethos of the school enables children to feel confident and positive. Children appreciate the monthly whole school meetings which involve all children effectively. The quality of guidance and support given to children is excellent. The school's Christian values are having a significant impact on children's development, where every child is valued. For example children demonstrate a care and a respect for each other across the

age groups. The Christian faith is lived out in the school's ethos and in its presentation of the curriculum. Prime importance is placed on the moral and spiritual development of each child. Interactive displays on PSHE and collective worship provide opportunities for reflection. The curriculum impacts on the spiritual growth of the children for example when children used recycled materials for Boconnoc Spring Flower Show, in the planting of plants and in the creation of a vegetable garden. Children enjoy learning in an exciting way where the school tries to create an aura of awe and wonder through lessons, displays, visits and visitors. Children's behaviour is very good. Christian values of forgiveness and tolerance are evident in the excellent relationships that exist throughout the school. Older children look after younger children. There is a mutual respect between adults and children. Children enjoy being responsible for many aspects of daily school life and develop a strong sense of social interaction and interdependence. Children support charities, for example last year children decided to raise money for the Shelterbox charity and also decided how to do this. The children presented the cheque of £490 and followed its progress to its destination. Signs and symbols clearly proclaim the school as a Christian community and excellent relevant displays encourage spiritual growth.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship is a central part of each school day where children of no faith are made to feel just as welcome as children with a faith. Children participate positively in collective worship and enjoy the experience. Children are encouraged to be calm and reflective. Children benefit by participating in their own services in the local church, including at Harvest and Christmas. Children value and enjoy the range of different types of worship provided by the staff and a variety of visitors. This means that children experience a broad view of Anglican faith and practice and are knowledgeable. Children's participation in prayers and opportunities for silence and reflection have a significant impact on their personal growth. For example, last year the Prayer Tree in school enabled children to pray about things that concern them and the people they love.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

Standards in religious education (RE) are good. This is supported by summative assessments. A strength of the school is the cross curricular approach where RE themes are used in all areas of the curriculum and subjects are linked, when appropriate. This approach started last year and is being further developed this year. Good preparation and planning, together with a wide range of activities and learning opportunities catering for different abilities means that teaching is good. A range of visits and visitors enhance children's learning and complement the good resources. Effective links have been established with the RE centre in Plymouth which provides a range of resources and people to support RE. Children enjoy RE, they see the relevance of the subject in their own lives and are able to make links with learning in other subjects. Children also enjoy the practical elements of RE such as preparing and being involved in the Christmas play or raising money for a charity of their own choice. They are self confident, knowing their views are valued, and they work well together. Children's spiritual and moral development is encouraged through RE and children experience many opportunities to express religious ideas. 75% of teaching is about Christianity and the school has found that block teaching of other religions ensures richer experiences and reduces confusion between religions. Emphasis is placed on children developing culturally through, for example, biannual visits to the multicultural cities of Bristol and London where children learn to be more tolerant and accepting of other cultures. RE is seen as important in the school. The school is well placed to improve further the quality of provision in RE.

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

The school's Christian foundation and Christian vision is widely promoted throughout the school. The vision, aims and values of the school are reviewed every three years and the school's Christian ethos and character inform decisions taken by the headteacher and governors. The headteacher and governors are particularly effective at encouraging, monitoring and challenging the school to realise this vision. Significant improvements have been made in the quality of RE and collective worship. For example children say they enjoy

RE more than previously and children appreciate the change in the timing of collective worship. Collective worship now takes place immediately after lunchtime break and children say that this provides a better opportunity to relax and reflect. Relationships are excellent throughout the school and the impact of teamwork is particularly significant. Staff feel valued and are very keen to put the Christian vision of the school into practice. The headteacher and foundation governors contribute significantly to the school's evaluation of itself as a church school. Children and parents are effectively involved in this process on an informal basis. Strong relationships exist between the school and the church with the Rector being a regular visitor to the school. The church supports the school well and sees the school as a vital part of its mission to the community. Children take part in a variety of church activities, for example the annual Cherry Feast. The church and village see the school as the heart of the community.

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