

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### **William Martin Church of England, Voluntary Controlled, Infant School**

Tawneys Road  
Harlow  
Essex  
CM18 6PN

#### **Diocese: Chelmsford**

Local authority: Essex  
Dates of inspection: 17<sup>th</sup> March 2008  
Date of last inspection: June 2003  
School's unique reference number: 115101  
Headteacher: Ms Liz Kinsella  
Inspector's name and number: Ms Sally Lynch, NS 128

#### **School context**

William Martin Infant and Nursery School is to the south-east of Harlow. The majority of children live in the catchment area. At seven most transfer to the Junior School on the same site. The percentage eligible for free school meals is above average. Pupils are mainly white British. The percentage of pupils with learning and / or behavioural disabilities, or statements of special educational need, is broadly average.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of William Martin Infant School as a Church of England school are good**

The school cares for the whole child through an embedded ethos of warmth and encouragement. Christian values underpin the curriculum and wider school life. This is evident in relationships across the school and strong parental support. The stimulating environment and calm atmosphere encourage all children to feel valued. Very strong links with St. Stephen's church impact on collective worship, and all classes visit the church at least once per year. Mexican crosses in the foyer and hall present the Christian faith attractively to young families.

#### **Established strengths**

- A very attractive environment which stimulates awe and wonder.
- Well planned collective worship, drawing on the liturgical year and Anglican ethos.
- Firmly established links with the local church.

#### **Focus for development**

- To establish a system for monitoring and evaluating collective worship, involving children, parents, staff and governors.
- To develop new, broader, schemes of work in Religious Education in line with new national and county guidelines.

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

Children feel valued and express enjoyment for school life. They make good use of the exciting playground at break times and play well together. They speak with enthusiasm about incentives such as the Golden Child and Attendance cup. The weekly prayer used with 'Golden children' is inclusive in giving thanks for all, though children enjoy the success of others. One child commented, 'We're good sports at this school'. The school council, Children's Voice, offers opportunities for shared responsibility. The record of meetings book includes some valuable minutes by children, which has potential for further development.

Parents are very supportive of the care provided and affirm that all concerns are dealt with promptly. Children are keen to learn and are fully engrossed in learning activities. Classrooms are places of purposeful activity. Display throughout the school is excellent, including Religious Education themes in classrooms and, for example, a simple and effective Easter and Holy Books display in the foyer. Every class has a display in the hall and every child contributes during the year. Small flower posies on each dining table make the statement that every part of the children's lives matter.

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

The whole school gathers in the hall daily for an act of collective worship. The spacious and flexible hall space is very well used to enable all children to participate. A well structured two year programme follows the liturgical year and helpfully includes aspects of Anglican life such as sacraments. Children take worship seriously, and are very attentive. A candle is lit at the start of worship and children are able to explain what this symbolises. In one act of worship a range of children answered questions about the holy week story in some detail and were caught up in a re-telling of the story using children and a teacher as actors. The Headteacher, leading the assembly, was affirming of all children. Effective links were made with a simple song on forgiveness, which all sang meaningfully, without printed words. Parents enjoy 'showing assemblies' and spoke very highly of a recent moving Mothers Day service, which included all classes. Some special services are held in the church each year and are popular with everyone. The local priest takes regular assemblies and all children know him by Christian name. Informal feedback on worship is gathered, but the school is keen to develop a structured system of monitoring and evaluation across the whole community.

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

The school ethos statement is overtly Christian and displayed prominently in the foyer and prospectus. All members of the community support it. The chair of governors is the local incumbent and has worked closely with staff and the governing body to ensure that 'all children are honoured by staff'. The new Headteacher has a collaborative leadership style and is developing further the cohesion of the whole staff team. She has a clear Christian vision for the school and is a visible presence around the school. Parents have many opportunities to be fully involved in the life of the school. Many attend assemblies, though fewer respond to annual evaluation surveys. Religious Education is taught both discretely and through a variety of cross curricular projects, leading to attractive display work. It is an integral part of the school. Resources are good, such as the beautiful selection of 'holy books' on display in the foyer. Multi-faith links are developing, for example, the local rabbi is due to visit Year 1 children. The newly appointed R.E. Co-ordinator is keen to develop the breadth of current schemes of work. She has firm support from staff. Firm, caring leadership across the school, including very good Special Needs work, ensures well behaved children and a pleasant working environment.