

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Malvern Parish Voluntary Aided Church of England Primary School

Manby Road, Malvern,
Worcestershire, WR14 3BB.

Diocese: Worcester

Local authority: Worcestershire
Dates of inspection: 10th December, 2010
Date of last inspection: 16th and 17th April, 2008
School's unique reference number: 116900
Headteacher: Lynn Gill
Inspector's name and number: Philip Mitchell 566

School context

The school, currently with 207 pupils on roll, serves families of a mainly white British background, the majority from local private housing in Great Malvern. There are very few pupils of other faiths or with English as an additional language. The school links with the three parish churches in its catchment.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Malvern Parish Primary School as a Church of England school are good

The school's life is informed by the strong vision of the headteacher, supported by school leaders, governors and the church community. Here children learn respect and care for each other, for adults and for their world. They develop an understanding of Christian faith and values through their religious education (RE) lessons, collective worship and links with local churches. The school provides excellent opportunities for learners to actively contribute to their own and wider communities and to support their moral, social, cultural and spiritual growth.

Established strengths

- A school culture, centred in Collective Worship, which affirms staff, governors, pupils and their families
- The exemplary links with parents, the local community and with a school in Mabawa, Tanzania
- The quality of pupil voice and contributions to the school community

Focus for development

- Increased involvement of pupils and their parents in evaluation of the school's life as a church school
- Planning to provide more opportunities for leadership of CW by pupils
- Development of procedures for monitoring and evaluating RE across the school

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

The school expresses its Christian identity with confidence and its work is underpinned by Christian values. Outstanding pastoral support for all pupils underpins a culture marked for pupils by positive attitudes, behaviour, self-esteem, relationships and achievement; because all are known and celebrated as individuals, children clearly feel valued, special and say they enjoy school life. They know the school values support "*fairness*", the way they behave, their care and respect for each other and adults. Parents recognise the school as a nurturing community and feel supported by the school; one parent commented, "*sympathy and support oozes from every brick of this school*". Many have chosen the school because of its values and voice the influence upon their children's attitudes and behaviour. The school culture encourages developing independence; pupils say they "*listen to each other*" and have many opportunities for pupil voice, leadership and responsibility - in school and class councils, in organising charitable support, as ambassadors and as learning partners. The school offers many opportunities for the spiritual growth of learners in worship, RE and across the creative curriculum, including many extra-curricular activities, augmented by visits, visitors and often focused in specialist weeks. Staff are excellent role-models for pupils; children feel secure and know they can turn to staff and peers for support. Conflicts and rare incidents of bullying are quickly addressed. There is evidence of outstanding links with the local community - with businesses, local schools, churches, care homes. Children's knowledge and concern for the wider community is encouraged in support of charities such as Operation Christmas Child, Children in Need, and in the exemplary partnership with a school in Mabawa, Tanzania. Though formative, the school is developing links with an urban multi-faith school.

The impact of collective worship (CW) on the school community is outstanding

Worship is very important in school life. There is a concise, recently reviewed policy and daily whole-school CW is well planned by staff and clergy with cohesive weekly themes and high quality resources; they focus upon the church calendar and key celebrations of other faiths, the wider curriculum and needs of the school community. Evaluations, conducted by foundation governors, reflect that CW is enjoyed and valued by pupils and staff. Pupil feedback has led to developments such as use of a wider range of traditional and modern songs. In the interactive worship observed, in which an Advent theme was developed using projected images and an Advent Crown, there was enthusiasm in pupils' responses to questions, calmness in prayer and in Collects the school is trialling for the diocese. Children say that CW provides opportunities for prayer, to think about Jesus and to reflect their learning. They believe that CW helps them to learn from and think about others, including those with other faiths, and that CW "*lets the truth be seen and not covered*". The few pupils of other faiths are very well integrated and comfortable in CW. Pupils appreciate CW led by visitors, particularly by clergy and enjoy occasions, more often at the church services, when they have an active leadership. Harvest, Easter and Leavers' services conducted at two local churches strengthen pupil awareness of Anglican practices and are very well supported by parents. Parents value CW as part of school life and also worship with their children at weekly congratulations assemblies. Prayer and reflection are embedded in school life; encouraged in each classroom, pupils use Grace Cubes, Hand Crosses, the Lord's Prayer, other Anglican prayers, write their own and class prayers. A re-formed prayer group of staff, governors and parents supports the life of the school. The school has acted upon the key recommendation from the last inspection to monitor and evaluate the quality of worship and its impact upon pupils.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

RE has equal prominence with other core subjects. It has a recently reviewed policy, appropriate time allocation and opportunities for collaborative planning, supported by foundation governors. Teaching and learning, with excellent involvement of teaching assistants, is informed by a range of visits and visitors, for example 'Spring to Life', 'Lepra'; work is differentiated, often activity-based, well related to children's experience and to other curriculum areas. In consequence pupils enjoy their work, achieve age-appropriate standards and make good progress in both attainment targets. Pupils display a developing knowledge and understanding of Christianity, the Anglican tradition, other denominations and other major faiths. Planned visits to places of worship for other faiths are in early stages of implementation. Displays of RE work are prominent in the hall, corridor and classrooms. Parts of two RE lessons observed and were good with outstanding features, creative, interactive, engaging and well related to pupils' lives. The spiritual and moral development of learners is influenced significantly by the subject's strong emphasis upon values, upon empathy and compassion. RE promotes the Christian character of the school and contributes to pupils' attitudes and behaviour; they are confident in expressing their own views about their own faith and the beliefs of others. The subject leader, early in role, has led staff training and recognises the need to further develop the consistency of recording and assessment of pupil work, and in conjunction with foundation governors to strengthen monitoring and evaluation of the subject across the school.

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

The Headteacher expresses a clear Christian vision for the school which is well supported by school leadership, staff and governors. It underpins policy and planning and is articulated in meetings with parents, the church and local community, in the prospectus and communications. The school's ambition is reflected in its many accreditations, including ArtsMark Silver, National Healthy School, International School Award. The school is recognised for good practice by the local authority and diocese. Staff feel valued, that they are a strong team which models Christian values, supported by procedures for recruitment, induction, planning, evaluation and training. The vicar and foundation governors contribute to the spiritual leadership and the school's Christian foundation and vision are explicitly embedded in policies. Planning and evaluation are led by the Church School's Committee of staff and governors, with evidence that all stakeholder groups have contributed to the excellent toolkit. Pupil well-being and community cohesion are supported by the school's active partnership with the church, its parents, by its outreach into the local community, by positive links with the diocese and involvement in diocesan events and training. There are effective arrangements for collecting and evaluating stakeholder comments to be developed more formally to evaluate the school's distinctiveness. Parents consider that they are welcomed, valued, involved and that their relationships with the school are enhanced by the Friends organisation and by Parent Forum. They say the school's communication is excellent, that staff are approachable, listen to them and respond quickly with care.