



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Kington St Michael Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

The Ridings
Chippenham
Wiltshire
SN14 6JG

Diocese: Bristol

Local authority: Wiltshire
Date of inspection: 12th September 2011
Date of last inspection: 28th March 2008
School's unique reference number: 126332
Headteacher: Miss Tracy Cornelius
Inspector's name and number: Mrs Patricia Morris 626

School context

Kington St Michael is a village school on the outskirts of Chippenham, Wiltshire with 120 children on roll. It serves the immediate local community and surrounding area. The majority of children are from a white British heritage. The proportion of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Kington St Michael CE VC Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding

The school's Christian ethos is apparent in all aspects of the school community, contributing to the happy and caring atmosphere. Christian values impact on relationships within the school resulting in high levels of self esteem, maturity and independence. This makes a significant contribution to the children's personal development and increasingly to their learning.

Established strengths

- The outstanding Christian ethos of the school in which all children are highly valued as individuals.
- Relationships within the school which are based on Christian values which encourage and challenge the children.
- The clarity of understanding of the church school vision by the headteacher and governors.

Focus for development

- Develop an effective monitoring system in collective worship to include written responses from children and foundation governors.
- Further develop the children's understanding of Anglican traditions.
- Encourage all governors to attend courses run by the Diocese to ensure an awareness of current initiatives.

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

Kington St. Michael, as a distinctive church school, is outstanding at meeting the needs of all

children. Christian values clearly impact on the life of the school. For example, respect is apparent in the way that children behave towards each other and their teachers: opening doors for each other, listening attentively to the views of others and taking pride in their environment. The school's Christian ethos is seen by the headteacher, staff and governors as a vital part of school life. The impact of this is a school where children are valued and involved in their own learning journey resulting in happy and confident children when they leave in year 6. The Christian character is evident to visitors through displays that clearly value children and their work, emphasising the strong ethos of care for the whole child as an individual. This is reflected in symbols that promote the Christian ethos even before entering the building, from the cross on the school roundabout to the mosaic on the outside wall which children talk about enthusiastically and with clear understanding of what it represents. The school environment is used effectively to encourage spiritual development. For example, inside each classroom there is a quiet area for reflection and these are regularly used and valued by the children. Reflection diaries enable children to personally demonstrate how the school's values have a relevance to their own lives. Children use these to record examples of values being lived out throughout the school and this also gives them time to reflect on what has happened during the week at school. Children are given quality opportunities to engage in meaningful debate where opinions are valued and respected. They are confident to formulate their own views and articulate them clearly. They listen to the opinions of others with respect, knowing that they are equally valued. Good attitudes are further developed in the fair way the children nominate members of their class for the weekly certificate. There is a strong pupil voice through the school council which has successfully contributed to the development of play areas and equipment. A citizen award scheme gives them the opportunity to demonstrate how their values are in operation around the school. The children clearly enjoy the opportunity to attain the various levels within the scheme and talk animatedly about actively demonstrating each stage of the awards. They proudly discussed how every level developed and how long it took them to achieve each certificate. Children recall festivals such as Christingle, Christmas and Easter and discuss their meaning with confidence. Extra curricular activities offer a range of experiences including an excellent variety of after school clubs and trips to support topics which enhance the children's learning. Children make positive contributions to local, national and global communities such as singing at the local residential home, adopting a gorilla in Africa and sponsoring an Indian girl. There was evidence of a recipe book called 'Cooking for Compassion' which they had compiled and sold in order to raise money for the sponsorship. The children acknowledged that 'some children are not as lucky as us'. Links with the wider community are growing and there is an active partnership with Bristol Grammar school. Children recognise the fact that staff are there to help them and the high quality relationships emphasise that the ethos permeates the daily life of the school. Religious education (RE) is a significant and effective element within cross curricular work as well as being taught as a distinct subject. Standards in RE are good, marking is well annotated and progress is apparent. The partnership with the school chaplain is excellent and she plays an important role in the life of the school. For example, one initiative was meditation for the older class and the children recognised the impact of this as a technique in coping with any anxious moments they may experience. School documentation is very clear in promoting and supporting the Christian foundation.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship in the school is good with a clear, varied programme based on Christian values providing for the children's moral and spiritual development. Worship is well planned around Values for Life and the main Christian festivals which are held in the church. This provides a secure framework for staff. The use of Values for Life by visitors helps to reinforce the message to the children and it has a good impact on the children in school and at home. All children are included and enjoy collective worship. They understand that daily acts of worship are an important part of school life as a church school. They have a good understanding of prayer which is said before lunch and sometimes at the end of the school day. Children write thoughtful prayers and these are used regularly in worship as is the school prayer. Other religions are taught as part of the curriculum and the children are given opportunities to experience some of their festivals and celebrations which enable them to appreciate and respect different faiths. Children are given good opportunities for reflection. The children recognise that the candle lit in worship represents Jesus as the light of the world. Children have some opportunities to feedback their views and responses on acts of worship but there is no formal evaluation system that gathers children's comments which can

be regularly analysed and used to inform future development. Children are familiar with some examples of Anglican tradition but could not talk about Anglican practices. They are respectful of each other in worship time and of different opinions. They readily recognise links with their current value of courage and could talk confidently about Daniel in the Lion's Den which was part of the collective worship. They stated that 'courage was being strong' and likened it with the job of a fireman. Good questioning in collective worship helped to guide the children to respond in a thoughtful way. Children said they particularly enjoyed singing and when visitors come into school. They take an active role in worship but would appreciate even more involvement such as role play and singing action songs.

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

Leadership and management of the headteacher and the governing body are outstanding because they have established a clear vision for the purpose of being a church school. Central to this vision is the quality of relationships that exist throughout the school ensuring that children feel safe and highly valued as individuals. This vision is very well planned, clearly communicated to parents and evident in all aspects of school life through clearly articulated Christian values. Self evaluation procedures are well established and accurately identify areas for future development as a church school. Regular meetings with staff and governors to review progress as a church school provide very good opportunities for the leadership and management to evaluate the impact of the core values on the personal development of the children. Governors are totally committed to supporting the Christian ethos because they believe they are providing children with an excellent foundation for their future. Training offered from the Diocese to governors could benefit them even further. Parents have a good understanding of the impact of the school's Christian character on the lives of their children and speak very positively about it. Children and parents say their views are taken into account and this is apparent through regular questionnaires and the school's 'open door' policy. Parents particularly feel that children are well prepared for future life. They say that children are happy, safe and secure which impacts on their learning. They acknowledge that concerns are dealt with effectively and promptly and that staff are available and supportive. They recognise that Christian values enrich attitudes and behaviours throughout the school community. There is a dedicated Friends Association which actively supports the work of the school and a genuine desire to work with the church. Consequently, the collective vision for the school is shared and upheld by all stakeholders. As well as visiting the church for special services, children visit for specific units of work in the RE curriculum and this has strengthened school / church links. RE and collective worship make a very important contribution to the school's Christian character. As one governor stated, 'RE is integral to the curriculum and the values initiated in collective worship are effective and integrated into the whole life of the school'.