

St Martin's East Woodhay Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

East End
Newbury
RG20 0AF

Diocese:

Winchester

Local Authority:

Hampshire

Dates of Inspection:

9th July 2010

Date of last Inspection:

9th October 2007

School's Unique Reference Number:

116356

Head teacher:

Jenny Veasey

Inspector's Name and Number:

Julia Welford 262

School context

St Martin's East Woodhay is a small Church of England Aided Primary School having 108 pupils on roll. The school is situated on an attractive site in a rural area. It is heavily oversubscribed, with many applications from outside the catchment area. Pupils are from predominantly White British backgrounds. With the exception of the Foundation Stage, all age groups are taught in mixed age classes.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Martin's School as a Church of England School are outstanding.

Pupils flourish under the committed Christian vision and leadership of the Headteacher who is well supported by the staff and Foundation Governors. The Christian ethos is visible throughout the school community both in the environment and in the general life of the school, where it is reflected in the impact on the learning, and the spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness of all learners. Christian values such as Love and Respect are fully embedded and impact upon the daily life of the school.

Established strengths

- The Christian leadership of the Headteacher who actively seeks to promote a school where the Christian faith underpins every aspect of the curriculum and school life.
- The enthusiasm and knowledge of the pupils in exploring the Christian faith as well as the culture and beliefs of other faiths.
- The strong links between church and school which have a significant impact on the Christian character of the school.

Focus for development

- The Headteacher is retiring at the end of the academic year, and the Governing Body are actively seeking a new Headteacher who has the vision to lead the school and so continue its spiritual journey.
- Develop the constructive links with the London school in order to promote different aspects of Community Cohesion.

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

The Headteacher and Governing Body have a vision for the school in which its Christian foundation forms an integral part. The school demonstrates a caring, supportive community and pupils commented on the family atmosphere. Christian values are evident throughout the school and pupils clearly understand the role they can play in society. Children talk confidently about their learning in school and value all aspects of school life. Throughout their comments they make reference to the school's Christian foundation and related events such as the celebration of the school's annual Eucharist service in the church. One pupil commented 'everyone was involved and it was a very special experience'. Charitable work is a very significant element in the children's understanding of their responsibilities both to each other and in the wider community. They are proud of the contributions they can make and understand that these are part of their role as stakeholders in a church school. Pupils help to decide which causes to support such as 'Water Aid', through the school council. The school also has close links with Bukuya School in Uganda. Lively and varied displays throughout the school reflect the school's Christian character and are used most effectively to support pupils' spiritual development. The quality of teaching and learning is good and the children speak of their teachers as kind and learning as fun. The Christian values promoted by the school are clearly reflected by the children in discussing their relationships which they describe as friendly, and they can be seen around school helping each other. Through its support for local, national and international initiatives, the school makes a significant contribution to community cohesion. The excellent breadth of experience and independence given to the children through, for example 'Brave Days' has an outstanding impact on their learning and their ability to work together.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

The impact of Collective Worship on the life of the school is outstanding. Worship makes an outstanding contribution to children's spiritual, moral social and cultural development and it is clearly central to the life of the school. This is supported by pupils own views. Worship is carefully planned and the choice of topics allows links to be made with local, national and international events and acknowledges festivals and significant dates of other faiths. Pupils talked enthusiastically about worship they could remember both in school and in Church. In school they particularly enjoy worship led by the Headteacher. The local church is used by the school regularly and significant services in the Church calendar take place there through the year such as Harvest Festival, Mothering Sunday and Christmas. Since the previous inspection the Headteacher has encouraged more members of staff to lead collective worship and the worship observed on the morning of the inspection was led by a member of the teaching staff. Worship reflects a range of Anglican tradition and practice and is central to the life and work of the school as can be seen on display in the school hall. Pupils were particularly moved by the annual School Eucharist in Church and appreciated the fact that they all had a part in its preparation including making the bread. Their understanding of this service was enabled by the preparation and teaching beforehand. Another worship session was observed when children sat in their house groups. It was particularly noticeable how older pupils independently supported the younger pupils. One pupil remarked that the lighting of the candle encouraged everyone to think about their school and 'you feel like you're part of a big family.' Pupils of all ages speak enthusiastically about their experiences of worship. They enjoy the singing and prayers and can talk knowledgeably about past worship as well as those they have experienced more recently. The quality of the small instrumental group that accompanied the singing of 'Be Still' enhanced the spiritual atmosphere.

The effectiveness of Religious Education is good

The RE in school has a very good impact on the pupils as they talk about their learning in the subject readily and are proud of their work. One pupil said 'Our teacher makes it fun'. All pupils were attentive in the two RE lessons observed in Reception and the Year 5/6 class. In the reception class pupils were able to demonstrate good knowledge of the subject showing their understanding of the old and new testament and characters in the old testament they had learned about recently. The story of Daniel was told using small puppets which enabled the children to interact, moving the puppets, questioning, making suggestions and predictions. One child said 'The King felt he had let them down' showing empathy with the characters. In the Year 5/6 lesson pupils were introduced to aspects of the Church of England Wedding Service. Clergy and lay involvement within the Anglican areas of the curriculum is good practice, as pupils learn so much from those who can share from within their own living faith including the couple celebrating their Golden Wedding anniversary. Children had a good knowledge of Christianity and other faiths studied. They were able to talk confidently about their beliefs and those of others. The range of work in world faiths is also good and children emphasised the importance of understanding other faiths stating 'It makes us grow more respectful.'

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

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school is outstanding. The school is led by a Headteacher who has a clear personal vision of the qualities of a church school. A Governor stated the Headteacher's vision was for pupils to be totally immersed in the Christian environment. This vision is shared by the governors, staff, parents, pupils and representatives of the local churches. The Christian vision is clearly stated in the school's prospectus and communications. St Martins is a church school deeply committed to all its pupils and the wider community it serves. There are good links with the local community and links with the local Church and Deanery are excellent. Relationships between the school, parents, church and the wider community are of high quality. The governors and staff discuss together school development planning in a special committee meeting. The governors are very dedicated in their support for the school and are focusing on the need to continue the excellent Christian ethos of the school when appointing a new Headteacher. Parents express very high levels of satisfaction with the school and a large majority of parents who responded to a questionnaire stated that they felt the school was a Christian community, and being a church school made a difference to the ethos of the school. Parents express their appreciation of the sensitive way in which the school promotes its Christian values. The role that local clergy play in the life of the school is very important. They support the school with enthusiasm and are familiar figures to the children. Pupils showed their commitment to the school and had an excellent knowledge of the Christian faith and a respectful understanding of other faiths and cultures. Pupils were instrumental in forging links with pupils from a city school who they met on a residential trip, and these links are being more formally developed as a continuing commitment to community cohesion. The centrality of worship, the place of religious education, and pupils' understanding of the impact of this teaching on their lives is recognition of the outstanding leadership and management of the school as a Church School.

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

Grade

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

To what extent do all learners feel valued and special?	1
How well do the school's Christian values impact on learners and enable them to flourish as individuals?	1
How well does the Christian ethos support the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all learners, whether they are Christian, of other faiths and of none?	1
How are Christian values evident in the relationships between staff and learners and between staff?	1
How well is the school environment used to encourage spiritual development?	2
How effective is the worshipping experience provided by the school?	
How important is worship in the life of the school and how is this demonstrated?	1
How positive are the attitudes to collective worship?	1
To what extent do learners and staff of all faiths derive inspiration and spiritual growth and affirmation from worship?	1
How well does collective worship develop learners' understanding of Anglican faith and practice?	1
How effective is the Religious Education provided by the school?	
How high are standards in RE and how well do learners achieve? Why?	2
How effective are learning and teaching in RE?	2
To what extent do learners of all faiths and of none demonstrate a positive attitude towards the subject?	1
How well does RE contribute to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all learners?	1
To what extent does RE promote the distinctive Christian character of the school together with an understanding of other faiths?	1
How important is RE in the life of the school and how is this demonstrated?	2
How effective are the leadership and management of the school as a church school?	
How well do the Headteacher and foundation governors promote a distinctive Christian vision for the school?	1
How effectively do the Headteacher, senior management and governors encourage, monitor and challenge the school community to realise this vision?	1
How valued do staff feel and how involved in putting the vision into practice?	2
To what extent are all stakeholders, including learners and their parents, involved in evaluating the school's progress?	1
How effective is the partnership between the school, the church and the local community including parents?	1



Judgement Recording Form (NSJRF)

Name of school: St Martins East Woodhay Church of England Primary VA School
Address of School: East End
 Newbury
 RG20 0AF

School URN: 116356
Date of inspection: 6th July 2010
NS Inspector's Number: 262
Type of Church School: Voluntary Aided
Number of pupils: 108
Phase of education: Primary

Has Diocesan Quality Assurance been obtained for this report?

YES

Rating 1-4

How distinctive and effective is the school as a Church school?	1
How well does the school, through its distinctive Christian character, meet the needs of all learners?	1
What is the impact of collective worship on the school community?	1
How effective is the religious education?	2
How effective are the leadership and management of the school, as a church school?	1
The school meets the statutory requirement for collective acts of worship	Y
The school meets the statutory requirement for religious education *	Y