



Diocese of Chichester

Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools

Inspection Report

Name of school: Mountfield & Whatlington CE Primary School

Address: Vinehall Road
Mountfield
Robertsbridge
East Sussex TN32 5JN

Name of inspector: Wendy Bray

NS inspector's number: 512

Date of inspection: 10 & 11 November 2008

The inspection of denominational education and collective worship in the school was carried out in accordance with Section 48 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about the school

Type of school:	Primary
Unique reference number:	114513
Status:	Voluntary Controlled
Number on roll:	63
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
LEA:	East Sussex
Name of chair of governors:	Valerie Bennett
Name of headteacher:	Joe Hellett
Date of previous inspection:	November 2004

Description of the school

Mountfield and Whatlington CE Primary School is a mixed age four-class primary school situated between the two villages. The children are drawn from the two villages and also from the surrounding areas of Battle and Robertsbridge. The pupils are mainly of white British origin with a very small number from a mixed race background. The social and economic backgrounds of the pupils vary widely due to the very large catchment area.

The school holds the Healthy Schools Silver Award and the Active Mark.

Key for inspection grades

1	Outstanding
2	Good
3	Satisfactory
4	Inadequate

Summary judgement

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Mountfield and Whatlington as a Church of England school are good. The good leadership of the headteacher, supported by a cohesive staff and caring governing body, ensures that all pupils, whatever their background or ability, feel happy, safe and cared for. The staff know pupils well and provide for their individual needs, so creating a nurturing Christian family. Collective Worship is important in the daily life of the school and it makes a good contribution to the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) development of pupils. The good links with the local churches bear witness to all that the Christian faith is an important part of the ethos of the school.

Established strengths

- the good provision for the pupils' Spiritual, Moral and Social development
- the strong Christian ethos of the school in which all pupils are nurtured and highly valued
- the good links between the local churches and the school

Focus for development

- to use rigorous self-evaluation as a tool for the measurement of the school's effectiveness as a Church school, involving all stakeholders
- to introduce an effective system for the monitoring and evaluation of Collective Worship
- to celebrate the Christian foundation of the school more explicitly through the school aims

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

The school, through its distinctive Christian character, is good at meeting the needs of all its learners. This is reflected in the good relationships throughout the school. Pupils are happy and secure in school. They speak of enjoying their school, especially its 'small friendly atmosphere', and their approachable headteacher who 'is always there to sort things out'. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. Any problems are dealt with quickly and fairly by the staff, who provide good role models. The value of the individual child is evident in the daily life of the school and contributes positively to the development of each child as a successful learner. A parent said that the school was particularly good at meeting individual needs by providing 'individualized programmes for them'.

Opportunities for the Spiritual, Moral and Social development of pupils are good. The school's community challenge project on recycling reflects the pupils' clear sense of personal responsibility for conserving the environment. Their appearance on the BBC show Points of View to discuss the suitability of the soap Eastenders demonstrates their good understanding of Christian moral values and social responsibility. The school has close links with the Mustard Seed School, Namagunga in Uganda, raising money to support it as well as exchanging letters. This Christian outreach develops pupils' sense of global citizenship and an empathy with the wider world. There is good provision for spiritual development through reflection in acts of worship, 'circle times', and the provision of the Forest Education for the younger pupils.

Grade: 2

What is the impact of Collective Worship on the school community?

The impact of Collective Worship on the school community is good. The daily act of worship occupies an important place in the life of the school. The headteacher and the senior teacher effectively plan the themes for the acts of worship, which are linked to the Church's Year and then extended to include other Christian themes. The form of worship used encourages willing participation and a positive response from all those present. A good variety of strategies, involving pupil participation, are used in the delivery of the acts of worship. The use of drama is particularly popular with the pupils. Notable strengths of the acts of worship observed were the opportunities for pupils to reflect on their week's worship on being a good friend and the importance of forgiveness as well as their ability to recite the Lord's Prayer.

There are productive links with the local parish churches of Mountfield and Whatlington. Whatlington Parish Council recently funded a coach to enable pupils to visit the local parish church of St Mary Magdelene and the school holds its annual Christingle service in the church.

At the present time there are no formal structures in place to monitor the effectiveness of Collective Worship and these would inevitably help the school to make the worship more meaningful and increase its impact.

Grade: 2

How effective are the leadership and management of the school as a Church school?

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school, as a Church school, is satisfactory. The headteacher is a committed school leader who articulates a vision for the school that makes reference to Christian values. Visual symbols of its church school status include a stained glass cross presented by the churches of Mountfield and Whatlington in the foyer and wooden crosses displayed in the headteacher's office and the school hall. The school's mission statement on prominent display clearly indicates the Christian nature of the school though this could figure more explicitly in the school's aims and in its policies.

However, the school's leaders and governing body have limited processes in place for self-evaluation as a Church school. Although the headteacher's role in promoting the Christian ethos of the school is recognised and respected, all stakeholders need to be involved in the self-evaluation of the school as a Church school by utilising the Diocesan self-evaluation toolkit. In addition, members of the school community need to develop a clearer and more strategic view about church school improvement which is based on evidence from effective self-evaluation. Procedures for evaluating and monitoring its effectiveness as a Church school therefore need to be developed.

There is good parental support for the school and parents speak in particular about the caring ethos, the welcoming nature of the school and the personal qualities of the headteacher. Links with the local parish churches have led to some families from school attending special services such as the pet service and the festival of light. Although pupils and their parents are consulted well over their views about the school, they are not questioned about the impact of the school's status as a Church school.

Grade: 3

The school meets the statutory requirement for Collective Worship	Yes
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Judgement Recording Form

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NS Inspector's number:	512
Status:	Voluntary Controlled
Number on roll:	63
Type of school:	Primary

Rating 1-4

How well does the school, through its distinctive Christian character, meet the needs of all its learners?	2
What is the impact of Collective Worship on the school community?	2
How effective are the leadership and management of the school as a Church school?	3
The school meets the statutory requirement for Collective Worship	Yes