



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Monks Eleigh Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Churchfield
Monks Eleigh
Ipswich
IP7 7JH

Diocese: St Edmundsbury and Ipswich

Local authority: Suffolk
Date of inspection: 9 February 2010
Date of last inspection: November 2006
School's unique reference number: 124708
Headteacher: Janet Taylor
Inspector's name and number: Simon Windmill 182

School context

This very small primary school serves Monks Eleigh and other local villages. All pupils are White British. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs or disabilities is less than average and no pupils have a statement of special needs. The school has gained the Basic Skills Quality Mark, and achieved Healthy Schools status and the Active Sportsmark. The school currently has no hall, but plans are in place for one to be built.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Monks Eleigh as a Church of England school are good

This school is committed to living the values of the Christian gospel, which has a very positive impact on pupils, staff, governors and its wider community. Its influence is tangible throughout the school, and all pupils can benefit from this firm foundation.

Established strengths

- The strong Christian ethos, which supports the life of the school
- The high quality of relationships and behaviour
- The warm, inclusive and happy atmosphere

Focus for development

- Develop the evaluation of the impact of collective worship on pupils, and opportunities for pupils to plan and lead worship
- Develop a parents' prayer group to support the school
- Complete the project to build a school hall

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

The headteacher, staff and governors see the school's Christian ethos as the heart of the school. Care and support for pupils and staff is good, reflecting the school's Christian foundation through its welcoming atmosphere and commitment to ensuring all pupils are valued as individuals.

As a result, all pupils are known to the staff, and are well supported in developing positive relationships with them and each other. Pupils say they are well cared for, and feel valued and safe. They know they can ask the staff for help if they need it. These good relationships help pupils to grow in self-confidence and independence.

Behaviour is good, and pupils say they enjoy coming to school. They are aware of the needs of others, and have a good understanding of right and wrong. The School Council gives pupils a voice in how the school is run, such as helping to set the school rules. Pupils say the rules are fair, that they understand them, and know the consequences of breaking them, though some of the youngest pupils are less sure about this. The staff provide good role models for pupils to follow.

The school's gospel values are mirrored in pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development - for example pupils look after each other very well. Pupils contribute generously to charities, such as Children in Need, and before the Haiti earthquake happened the school was fundraising for a new bike for the playground, but a pupil said, 'We can get a bike anytime, but Haiti needs help now,' so the bike has been deferred.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship is soundly based on Christian values, and permeates throughout the whole school. Staff, governors and pupils see it as a vital part of school life, having a positive influence on the school as a whole. Worship always includes prayer, singing and Christian teaching. Anglican responses are sometimes used. Pupils have opportunities for quiet reflection, both in worship and at other times, and a candle is used as a visual focus.

Pupils enjoy worship, especially when they are directly involved. They readily offer their own prayers during worship. They have some opportunities for preparing and leading worship, and would like to do this more often. Worship leaders include staff, the Rector, foundation governors and other occasional leaders.

Pupils are able to understand different sorts of prayer, such as saying thank you, saying sorry, and asking for help, healing, peace or forgiveness. The Lord's Prayer is often used.

Collective worship is planned using the 'Values for Life' materials, but also includes Ash Wednesday, Lent, Pentecost and Trinity. Parents enjoy the monthly sharing assembly.

The church is used both as an RE teaching resource and for collective worship on special occasions, such as Christmas, Easter, and the end of year leavers' service. Pupils also take part in Diocesan and other events, such as a Peace Festival at a United Reformed church, and Education Sunday.

The school has identified a need to monitor and evaluate the impact of collective worship on pupils, which is now being addressed. As there is no school hall, collective worship is held in a classroom, but plans are in place to build a hall.

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

The school's Mission Statement sets out a distinctive, active Christian vision for the school, endorsed and supported by the head, senior management team, governors and staff. Following a fallow period for the school, a new headteacher was appointed, and she has raised morale to a much higher level, forging the governing body into an effective and active management team and bringing good leadership to the school. Governors' meetings always start with prayer.

The staff are all committed to the school's Church school status, which is reflected in the very good relationships within the school. Many of the people involved with the school are also leaders or members of local churches, and contribute to the school's life in various ways. Staff feel valued and supported by the school's well-being programme.

Relationships between the school and parents are excellent. Parental surveys confirm they are overwhelmingly positive about the school. One parent said, 'Coming into this school is like coming to meet all my friends.' Links with the wider community are good - for example, the school, church and community are working together to secure the funding for building the school hall.

Church links with the school are maintained through a foundation governor who writes articles on the school for the Parish magazine, and in turn, the school supports the community with village events, the community shop and the village hall. Community members are invited to all school events, and they give a great deal of support to these. Wider links include communication with a school in Australia.