

Aviation House
125 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 0300 123 1231
F 020 7421 6855
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



29 March 2012

Mrs L Quelcuti
Headteacher
Tirlebrook Primary School
Brensham Road
Newtown
Tewkesbury
GL20 8EW

Dear Mrs Quelcuti

Ofsted 2011–12 subject survey inspection programme: religious education (RE)

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff and pupils, during my visit on 21 March 2012 to look at work in RE.

The visit provided valuable information which will contribute to our national evaluation and reporting. Published reports are likely to list the names of the contributing institutions but individual institutions will not be identified in the main text without their consent.

The evidence used to inform the judgements included: interviews with staff and pupils; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of pupils' work; and observation of two lessons.

The overall effectiveness of RE is good.

Achievement in RE

Achievement in RE is good.

- Pupils' attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 is, for the great majority, in line with the expectations set out in the Gloucestershire agreed syllabus. Some attain above the expectations. Overall, this represents good achievement. Pupils develop a broad knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, especially of Christian beliefs and practices. Pupils have a good grasp of the impact that religion has on people's lives and they are able to describe and explain why people belong to religions. They are confident in describing some similarities and differences between religions and, increasingly, within religions. Pupils can reflect on how teachings from religion might apply to their own lives.
- Pupils make at least satisfactory progress across Key Stage 1. Children have good opportunities in the Early Years Foundation Stage to talk about

stories linked to special festivals, such as Easter, and to talk about their feelings and experiences. By the end of Year 2, pupils can identify features of religion accurately, for example with regard to worship, and explain why religion is important to people.

- The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, reflected also in their very positive attitudes to learning and their behaviour in lessons. Pupils can explain why it is important to show respect for religious and cultural diversity.

Quality of teaching in RE

The quality of teaching in RE is good.

- Lessons are structured and taught in a variety of ways across all key stages. Teachers know their pupils well and use questioning effectively to move learning on at a good pace. A good variety of approaches is used, including information and communication technology and other visual aids, to enliven learning.
- Teachers make the purpose of learning clear to pupils and use time well in lessons to provide interesting tasks that are matched well to pupils' different abilities. In both the lessons observed, teachers made good links with literacy thereby helping to promote pupils' speaking, listening and writing skills.
- Assessment is used increasingly well. The school is trialling the use of pupil-friendly statements to record how well pupils are making progress. This supplements teachers' own evaluations using the level descriptors from the agreed syllabus. Careful moderation of teachers' assessment helps to ensure that judgements are consistent.
- Opportunities for pupils to undertake more independent and structured enquiries into religion and belief are not as frequent as pupils would wish them to be. While there are some good examples of teachers encouraging pupils to use an investigative, enquiry-based approach to learning, pupils suggested that they would like more of such opportunities.

Quality of the curriculum in RE

The quality of the curriculum in RE is good.

- The curriculum is structured using the expectations and guidance materials suggested in the agreed syllabus. This ensures that the requirements of the syllabus are met.
- Medium-term plans are used to construct weekly plans which are fit for purpose. It is recognised that there is some variability in the level of detail in the plans but this is currently being addressed to ensure greater consistency. The use of visitors and visits is increasing, augmented by the use of the internet to enable pupils to experience 'virtually' what worship looks like in places other than in churches.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in RE

The effectiveness of leadership and management in RE is good.

- Over a considerable period of time the subject leader has ensured that RE has an established profile in the school. She provides good support to colleagues and ensures that she keeps abreast of initiatives to help maintain the subject's profile. For example, she trialled the use of an assessment strategy with her own pupils to then help other staff to model the practice for themselves.
- There is a strong commitment to raising standards and this is reflected in the use of monitoring activities to help bring about continual improvement. Self-evaluation is accurate and resources are used sensibly to address relative weaknesses.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- maximising opportunities for pupils to use more investigative, enquiry-based approaches to learning to help raise standards further.

I hope that these observations are useful as you continue to develop RE in the school.

As explained previously, a copy of this letter will be published on the Ofsted website and sent to SACRE. It may be used to inform decisions about any future inspection. A copy of this letter is also being sent to your local authority.

Yours sincerely

Dilip Kadodwala
Her Majesty's Inspector