



St Edward's Royal Free Ecumenical Middle School
Parsonage Lane, Windsor SL4 5EN



Type of school (Infant, Primary, Middle, Secondary etc)	Middle deemed Secondary
Status (VA, VC or Foundation, CTC or Academy)	Voluntary Aided
Dioceses	Anglican: Oxford , Roman Catholic: Portsmouth
Local Authority	Windsor and Maidenhead
Date of inspection	4 th November 2010
Date of last inspection	4 th October 2007
School's Unique reference number	110086
Name of Headteacher	Rod Welsh
Name of Chair of Governors	Derek Moss
Inspectors	Gillian Allison NS142, Robert Dare

Context

The school is a joint Anglican and Roman Catholic school serving the town of Windsor. The majority of pupils are from Christian families. The majority are of White British heritage and a few only speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs is above average. The school has specialist arts status. It is significantly oversubscribed.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Edward's Royal Free Ecumenical Middle School as a Church of England and Roman Catholic ecumenical school are outstanding.

The context for the school's ethos is Christian values and these find expression in outstanding care and provision for every individual. In this exciting environment the opportunities for spiritual development are exceptionally enriching, so that pupils leave the school as fulfilled, well-rounded individuals.

Established strengths

- Outstanding relationships that reflect Christian values
- The headteacher's leadership in encouraging all to be involved in school improvement
- The work of the worship group which has been a powerful vehicle for change
- Inspirational teaching in religious education that fosters enthusiasm for learning

Focus for development

- Monitor changes to religious education to ensure high standards are not jeopardised
- Seek opportunities to share good practice within the two dioceses the school serves

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

The very distinctive ecumenical ethos permeates all aspects of the school. All groups of stakeholders are able to give positive examples of how this is lived out on a daily basis. New members of the community are very quickly made to feel welcome and are warmly inducted into the life of the school and the strong Christian values that underpin it. This results in excellent relationships at all levels; this is one of the school's greatest strengths. Pupils enjoy the school, characterising it as a place where 'there's lots of trust between people'. The school strives to meet the needs of every child; each respected as a child of God. Standards are high with an expectation that these can be raised still further. There is a strong sense of trust between pupils and staff and between parents and staff. Pupils and parents know they will be listened to and appropriate action taken. Behaviour in the school is excellent. Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong, with high expectations of themselves and others. They feel empowered to attempt to resolve conflicts amongst themselves, seeking adult support when appropriate. Spiritual development is outstanding and impacts on all learners and adults, whether they are Christian, of other faiths or of none. A notable provision is the spiritual retreats in Years 5 and 8 which greatly enhance personal development. The school environment is very well maintained and rich in religious artefacts and displays which enhance the spiritual development of the community.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Worship is central to school life, marking the beginning and end of each day. Integral to major school events, its importance is reflected in plans for the school's 25th Anniversary celebrations. Since the last inspection the school has focussed on collective worship development, so that what was good is now outstanding. Resources are first class; imaginatively used to set a reflective atmosphere, illustrate a theme and enable wonderful singing. In-service training for all staff has stimulated, particularly, improvements to reflection time at the end of the day. The school knows, through regular and carefully designed consultation, that pupils and adults, whatever their faith position, place high value on worship. It strengthens the sense of community and shared values. Worship promotes the school's belief that what is shared through religious belief strengthens rather than divides. So prayer, which is accessible to all, is an important part of school life. Themes and delivery celebrate the school's Anglican / Catholic heritage, extending pupils' understanding of difference and similarity. This is further strengthened by clergy from both denominations regularly leading worship. The worship calendar also includes key festivals from major faiths and focussed events across Christian denominations, inspiring understanding and community cohesion. Staff involvement in whole school worship and in-end-of day reflection time exemplifies its importance. Pupils gain satisfaction from their increased involvement in planning and delivering worship. This is particularly true of reflection time in tutor groups which can be inspirational. The pupil worship group is highly influential. Known throughout the school for its collection and dissemination of ideas about worship, its members epitomise responsible leadership. Their ideas contribute to school development planning.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding

Improvements since the last inspection have continued, so that the high standards achieved by all pupils compare favourably with standards in high performing English. This is because well planned lessons, based on an up-to-date syllabus drawn from Catholic and Anglican schemes, are tailored to meet pupils' needs. The assessment strategy ensures that pupils know what they are aiming for and teaching is designed to support the learning. Feedback from pupils shows that, almost without exception, they believe they "learn a lot from RE". The subject is accessible to pupils from all faith positions and promotes the school's aim of celebrating all faiths. Pupils enthuse about RE. They arrive at lessons eager to learn, and succeed in a setting where excellent behaviour is the norm. In discussion, all age groups promote the subject without prompting, explaining its relevance and interest. They respond very positively to stimulating teaching, delivered at a good pace and involving a variety of learning styles. Independent learning stretches pupils. Well structured discussion encourages excellent spiritual and moral development. Cross-curricular links highlight faith traditions within and beyond the local community, promoting community cohesion and supporting very good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Recent adjustments to timetabling are being monitored to ensure that current standards are not jeopardised.

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

The headteacher clearly articulates the vision of this ecumenical school. He is well supported by dedicated staff and governors, so that the Christian values which underpin the vision are effectively translated into all areas of school life. The working out of the vision is apparent in the support given to collective worship and religious education. The emphasis on prayer and reflection is noteworthy. Self-evaluation is rigorous and effective because senior staff and governors have an excellent understanding of church school distinctiveness. A current area of focus is the school's ecumenical journey through the last 25 years and what that means for the future. Leaders draw upon the views of all in the community to effect change. For example, staff and pupils' issues are addressed by improvements to collective worship. The very effective partnership with parents includes a representative group which regularly meets with the headteacher to discuss school improvement. There is very good pastoral support, including the parent initiated prayer group for parents, staff and governors which feeds the spiritual life of the school. Professional development about church school distinctiveness strengthens and updates staff and governors so that they are effective in their roles. Staff and governors in their turn share ideas and expertise with some church schools across the dioceses. In the specialism setting, the school shares with its partners projects which enrich spiritual experience. There are productive links with local churches which build community cohesion. The school has some links with other faith groups but identifies that this area needs further development. Several of the charitable activities have church links, including the India project which was the object of pupils' Celebration Day giving at Harvest.



**Judgement Recording Form
(NSJRF)**



Voluntary Aided CE Schools

Name of School	St Edward's Royal Free Ecumenical Middle School
Date of inspection	4 th November 2010
NS Inspector's Number	142
Type of Church school)	Voluntary Aided
Number of pupils	374
Phase of education	Middle deemed Secondary

Rating 1-4

<i>How distinctive and effective is the school as a Church school?</i>	1
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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?	1
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