

Aviation House  
125 Kingsway  
London  
WC2B 6SE

T 0300 123 1231  
F 020 7421 6855  
[enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)



14 February 2012

Ms J Hill  
Headteacher  
Mayfield Primary School  
Warwick Road  
Cambridge  
Cambridgeshire  
CB4 3HN

Dear Ms Hill

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

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of the staff and pupils, during my visit on 3 February 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 generally in line with the expectations set out in the Cambridgeshire agreed syllabus. Some attain above the expectations. Overall, this represents good achievement from pupils' below average starting points.
- Pupils develop a broad range of 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, for example

learning from the story of the Good Samaritan and from the life of the Buddha.

- Pupils make at least satisfactory progress across Key Stage 1. By the end of Year 2, they can identify key features of religion and belief accurately.
- The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are aware of the importance of understanding religious, cultural and social diversity in the locality and in the wider world. They model respect for the views of others well. Pupils' behaviour in the lessons observed was good.

### **Quality of teaching in RE**

The quality of teaching in RE is good.

- Lessons are organised, planned and managed well. Teachers make the purpose of learning clear to the pupils using success criteria which pupils readily understand. This helps them and teachers to assess how well learning is taking place in lessons and over time.
- Good use is made of stimulus activities and materials to engage pupils' interests and different needs. Pupils say that this is typical of their lessons and this was evident in those observed.
- Assessment is fit for purpose. Teachers evaluate lessons, particularly in Key Stage 2, so that the next steps are identified in developing knowledge, understanding and skills. Evaluations at the end of each term are assisted by the level descriptors set out in the agreed syllabus. Peer- and self-assessment and teachers' helpful marking and dialogue with pupils enable them to have a clear view of their progress.
- While there are some good examples of teachers encouraging pupils to use an investigative, enquiry-based approach to learning, in discussions pupils suggested that they would like more of these opportunities.

### **Quality of the curriculum in RE**

The quality of the curriculum in RE is good.

- Clear long- and medium-term plans take good account of the agreed syllabus. Schemes of work are detailed and joint lesson planning, where appropriate, enables teachers to ensure that pupils' learning progressively builds on prior learning. The breadth of religions is covered in sufficient detail.
- Suitable links are made with other curriculum areas and pupils are encouraged to use good literacy skills in the subject, for example in extended pieces of writing and in speaking and listening.
- The provision for RE is enhanced through a wide range of visitors and visits, including to some local places of worship. Good use is made of adults within the school community, including parents and carers, to help pupils engage with religious and cultural diversity at first-hand. This helps engender a thirst for learning in pupils and impacts well on their

personal development. Occasionally, older pupils themselves are happy to talk about their beliefs to younger ones.

### **Effectiveness of leadership and management in RE**

The effectiveness of leadership and management in RE is good.

- The subject benefits from strong and committed leadership, supported by senior leaders. The subject leader is hardworking, enthusiastic and passionate about improving pupils' achievement further. Staff teaching RE are supported well with resources and good advice. Community links, for example through opportunities provided by the local authority, supplement the provision.
- Monitoring of planning, assessment and pupils' work helps to inform action planning. Action already undertaken indicates that capacity for continuous improvement is good.
- Professional development opportunities are taken up and followed through to classroom practice.

### **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 in the subject.

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**