

Determination Application-Montem School

Rationale

The school had requested an extension of the previous determination. The purpose of this report is to support the application.

Findings of SACRE LA Officer

Date of visit: 12.3.2010

Overview

The Head and Deputy gave an outline of current provision for assembly. (See attached programme) Whole school assemblies are held on Fridays and led by a member of the Senior Management Team. The content is a combination of celebrating the pupils' achievements and themes arising from day to day issues in school, such as bullying or working together. Given the diverse cultural profile of the school there is a strong emphasis on community cohesion and citizenship. Consequently, the assembly may draw on awareness events such as Black African week. Other weekly assemblies will follow the National SEAL programme which focuses on social and emotional aspects of learning. These are rotated daily in paired year groups. When use of the hall is not possible, active worship in the classroom is a planned alternative, using stories or poems to illustrate a moral tenet. Key Stage one assemblies take place in the small hall. All assemblies are linked to the PSHE programme.

The format for assemblies is an opening celebration followed by a story with a moral. Pupils are encouraged to identify how they can apply this personally and to recognise how this links to life in the school community. Pupils are asked to join in prayer to "our God" and may be asked to think of this in context to their own religious books. They may be asked to hold a moment of silence to allow contemplation in their own religion. The assembly closes with a further celebration. Friday assembly also deals with the issue of attendance and the presentation of individual and house certificates. The children's experience is also enhanced by the invitation of outside speakers, for example the Kings Centre.

Observation of Assembly

Routines are clearly established and pupils entered in an orderly manner, with their teachers, and waited sensibly until the head signalled the meeting was open. The children's work was praised and the head presented an award to a reception pupil for initiating a child authors' bookcase. The theme for the assembly was based on the need to record a racist comment which was against the school ethos. The school embraces with pride over 40 nationalities.

The head read a story which illustrated the need to celebrate differences and value each contribution to the whole community. Reception were keen to participate and this added to the general warmth of the occasion. Pupils were tasked to find out about someone different from themselves. They were then asked to join in a prayer for guidance on how to do this, followed by reflection time on how to live together as a community. Each pupil was asked to identify a personal action.

Awards for personal achievement from all year groups were applauded and these ranged from being a good friend to being polite and helpful. Pupils displayed a sense of pride in being chosen and this was also reflected in the response from others.

A keen sense of House identity was evident in the pupils' enthusiasm for team attendance rewards.

Recommendation

That SACRE agree to the determination being extended.

Annie Keighley

Senior Adviser, Standards and Achievement

17.3.2010