

Methodist ethos

Characteristics which were repeatedly identified to describe the Methodist school ethos:

- Friendliness, welcoming, family atmosphere
- Teaching of Christian values
- Pastoral care
- Inclusiveness and openness to diversity
- Loving, caring, tolerance
- Being kind and thoughtful
- Showing understanding towards others
- Teaching and caring for children in response to their individual learning and emotional needs
- Discipline – “children are well behaved”



Chaplains and chapels

Chaplains and ministers are highly valued by pupils, parents and school staff.

They not only provide pastoral care and the spiritual aspect of the school, but also energy, enthusiasm and involvement in the school as a whole – in essence all that their role encompasses.

Many parents and school staff spoke of the chapel or church as a key representation of the school's Christian identity and the atmosphere that it creates – “spiritual”, “serene”, “calmness”, “togetherness”, “community feel”.



The pupils say:

“...He's so cool! So much fun, you know, not stuffy like you'd think they might be. He gets involved with all sorts of things in school, not just into prayers and all that sort of stuff...”

...he's really helped loads of us with problems we've had – and it doesn't matter if your problems are school or home or personal ones, you can speak to him about anything...

“...It's great having a chaplain here – you know there's always someone you can turn to if you need to...”



A closer look at

Methodist Schools



There are 78 Methodist schools in Britain. 64 of these are Voluntary Aided and Voluntary Controlled schools in the maintained sector, of which just over half have an ecumenical foundation. The other 14 are independent schools.

In 2008 staff from the Social Research Centre at Roehampton University undertook a survey of parents, pupils, governors, teachers and Heads from a sample of 11 of these schools*. Its purpose was to increase awareness of how people understand and regard the fact that these are **Methodist** schools.

This leaflet highlights some of the findings which we believe will be of interest to those within the wider Methodist community.

* The full report, along with information about the schools, can be found at www.methodisteducation.co.uk

Overview

There is high parent satisfaction of the schools; pupils are happy in them



Arrangements for pastoral care in the schools are greatly appreciated

There is a high regard for school Chaplains and chaplaincy

The schools have a positive ethos

If faith matters to parents, they are attracted to the schools because they have a Christian foundation rather than because they are Methodist

Few parents understand what Methodism stands for when they first encounter a school ... but they like what they see of Methodism as reflected in what goes on in the schools

They see Methodism as grounded, sensible, calm, informal, inclusive

Photographs courtesy of Methodist Schools



What they say...

The most frequently given reason for choosing a school is its good reputation.

A reputation encompasses not only academic achievements but also discipline, the teaching of morals and values, response to children's learning and emotional needs, expectations of good behaviour, being kind to others, and a caring environment.

...the school makes children aware of others and **their** needs and problems...

...The school immediately felt right, it was the atmosphere, the ethos...

...I didn't expect it to make a difference being a church school but actually I think it does. I think the children get something extra out of it, and I do too...

...there's a gentle emphasis on religion here, and a strong emphasis on caring...

...every child is gifted and talented and we are concerned with helping them discover and reach their potential...

...they're so well looked after here – my daughter who has special needs is taken great care of, not just by teachers but other children are so kind towards her...

