

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

The Abbey Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

St James's Street,
Shaftesbury,
Dorset
SP7 8HQ

Diocese: Salisbury

LA: Dorset

Dates of inspection: 28th June 2006

Date of last inspection: 2000

School's Unique reference number: 113850

Headteacher: Mrs Kate Caldwell

Inspector's name and number: Chris Williamson 290

School context

The Abbey Church of England Primary School has 165 children on role and serves a mixed catchment area. There are 18% of children on the Special Needs Register. The school has 12% of children from ethnic minority groups. A new Headteacher joined the school in January 2005. The school has recently changed from a first school to a primary school and major building work has been completed as a result of this reorganisation of schools in the Shaftesbury area.

Summary Judgement

The Abbey Primary School is a good school where Christian values are lived out on a daily basis. The effective leadership of the Headteacher and Governors make this an improving school.

Established strengths

- The school has a good standard of pastoral care, providing a caring environment in which all members of the school community feel a sense of belonging and being valued
- There are strong links with the Church
- The school has established a shared vision and is an improving school
- There is a good quality learning environment, following major building work and extensive renovation

Focus for development

- Develop consistently high academic standards in line with the quality of pastoral care
- Develop the partnership with all parents to better enable them to support their children's learning

How well does the school, through its distinctive Christian character, meet the needs of all learners?

The school, through its distinctive Christian character, is satisfactory in meeting the needs of all its learners.

The school makes satisfactory provision to meet the needs of all its children. Good provision is made for those who are experiencing learning or social difficulties. Children's personal development and well being is good; they feel valued and special and the quality of care, guidance and support is good. Mutual respect, together with the Christian ethos of the school, supports the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all the children. Children benefit from the Christian values evident throughout the school; relationships are characterised by Christian care and concern for others. The majority of children do well and are given the opportunity to fulfil their potential. Overall academic achievement is at least satisfactory in relation to prior attainment and social background. A developing and increasing emphasis is being placed on meeting the needs of more able children and the school is working towards achieving the NACE mark.

What is the impact of collective worship on the school community?

The impact of Collective Worship on the school community is good.

Collective worship is important in the life of the school. Acts of worship are well planned, imaginative and thought provoking with themes linked to RE and PSHE enabling follow up work to be completed. Children look forward to collective worship and participate regularly. The importance and quality of worship is enhanced by the

worship table which contains appropriate displays. Acts of worship are consistently and recognisably Christian and honour the Anglican tradition. This is reinforced by the regular visits of the local clergy and the children worshipping in the church on a regular basis.

The school is sensitive to the beliefs and traditions of those children with other faiths or of none. Acts of worship contribute to the spiritual and moral development of the children and they often apply their good knowledge to everyday life situations. Individual choices are respected and children are encouraged to form their own beliefs and opinions.

How effective is the religious education?

Religious Education is good.

Religious Education (RE) is recognised by governors and staff as being important. The school ensures the provision of appropriate staffing, curriculum time and learning resources. Achievement in RE at least matches other subjects and standards of attainment in RE often exceed those achieved in other subjects. The quality of learning and teaching is at least satisfactory and in most year groups is good. Systems are in place, for example Assessment for Learning strategies, which will enable the teaching and learning in RE to improve further next year and also to improve consistency across all year groups. Overall children enjoy RE, particularly exploring new ideas, and the subject makes a significant contribution to the children's spiritual and moral development. Schemes of work comply with the relevant syllabus.

How effective are the leadership and management of the school as a church school?

The Leadership and Management of the school as a church school are good.

The leadership of the Headteacher and the governors contributes significantly to the success of the school. There is a real commitment to developing the school following the acquisition of its new Primary status. Governors are aware of the school's Christian foundation and purpose. Christian life and values, which are expressed in the school's aims and prospectus, are being lived out in the life of the school. There are satisfactory systems in place for planning, monitoring and evaluating school improvement which will enable the school to improve. The school is well on track to realising its Christian vision in all aspects of its life. There are strong links with the local parish church both for worship and for religious education. Relationships are good between all members of the school community. Children have significant links with the local community, for example helping to run the school's café in a recent local fair. Parents are satisfied that the school provides a caring environment, inspired by Christian principles, which makes a significant contribution to the children's development. The school is aware of the need to develop parents' understanding of how their children learn, in order to enhance children's progress.

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