

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### All Saints Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Dudwell Lane,  
Halifax,  
HX3 0SD

**Diocese: Wakefield**

LA: Calderdale

Dates of inspection: 13<sup>th</sup> July 2006

Date of last inspection: 1-3 March 2000

School's Unique reference number: 107569

Headteacher: Mr. David Warbrick

Inspector's name and number: Mr. John Jagger (214)

#### School context

The school was for many years a voluntary controlled primary prior to adopting grant maintained status in 1994 and then opting for aided status in 1999. The school stands adjacent to the parish church, All Saints. Despite quite recent extensions the school is quite cramped and some classrooms are small. However considerable success has been achieved in creating a pleasant working environment and the school is regularly oversubscribed.

#### Summary Judgement

The school is a good church school and is working hard to identify and provide an education appropriate to an aided school whilst recognising the traditions and mission of its host church of All Saints.

#### Established strengths

- A strength of the school is its success in engaging many of its pupils in the life of the church as well as the life of the school;
- Those leading and managing the school are actively engaged in seeking to more clearly define what being an aided school requires and are making progress in this area;
- The Religious Education programme provides pupils with a good understanding of the basic principles of Christianity and an understanding of other faiths.
- Pupils are encouraged to identify and express their opinions and to regard reflection as important to understanding.

#### Focus for development

Governors and teaching staff could further improve provision by:

- Seeking to evaluate the school's success against its published value statement and aims;
- Further the debate as to how the school can best express its aided status and reflect this in its documentation;
- Develop a record of the on-going evaluation of the impact of worship on the attitudes and values of pupils.

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

All Saints is very evidently a good church school. The staff and governors have worked hard to ensure that children feel secure and content within school and pupils are well known as individuals and their progress and social development are well monitored. The school feels it important to encourage pupils to engage in as broad a range of activities as possible and where possible to share their achievements both with adults and with their peers. Pupils show respect for each other, understand the sanctions within the behaviour and anti-bullying policies and show concerns for younger or more vulnerable pupils within the zoned areas of the playground. Members of the School Council state that arrangements for new pupils entering school and for transition to their next classes were helpful. Many areas of the school are crowded and busy but successful efforts are made to encourage opportunities for quiet and reflection both within worship and as a valued part of lessons. Pupils of other races and faiths are well integrated, their beliefs understood and respected. The formal relationship of the school with the Church of England has altered over the years. An indication of the debate as to the expression of the school's special relationship as an aided school has been the development of the school's statement of values to complement the existing aims. In order to further consolidate the

understanding of the special nature of the aided relationship it would be of value to the school to now review the achievements of the school against the aims and value statement to ensure the fullest expression of that commitment.

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

Collective worship is seen as an integral feature of the life and mission of the school. The standard of collective worship and the activities associated with it are judged to be good. An important feature of the school's strategy is the very regular use of the church building to conduct the daily communal act of worship. The church's excellent facilities allow worship to be conducted in a very appropriate environment and it is evident from interview that pupils and staff feel at home within that environment. The act of worship observed was conducted by the incumbent and pupils participated strongly both in the singing of the hymn and in the discussion around "change" and "opportunity" within life. On the days in which worship is conducted within the school hall successful efforts have been made to provide a focal point for worship. The members of staff are supported by a recently reviewed policy for worship and a carefully determined diary of themes. These cover aspects of moral behaviour and stories appropriate to the school as a whole, but pitched to suit the age of the pupils in worship. The key Christian festivals are celebrated, as are some major festivals of other faiths. The balance of the programme is broadly Christian in nature and places emphasis on the school's close relationship with the church as an institution. The school and the church have sought successfully to develop a common language and style of worship that encourages pupils and their families to become involved in worship both in school and in church. The success of this policy is evident in the number of pupils that attend the church on Sundays and talk freely about "their church". The school is aware that it needs to establish means of determining the effectiveness of their programme of worship through evaluation of the pupils retention of the themes discussed and the impact on pupils' actions and values.

#### **How effective is the religious education?**

The quality of Religious Education (RE) provided by the school is good. The school has a helpful and informative policy that is reviewed every two years. The policy has clear links to that for spiritual education and to the school's overall policy for teaching and learning. The headteacher is currently the RE Co-ordinator. The school utilises the Wakefield Diocesan Agreed Syllabus and supplements it at points with material drawn from the QCA guidance. The scheme of work identifies a progressive scheme arranged often in 75 minute blocks each week although in practice teachers frequently break the units up into shorter sessions. The subject material presents an appropriate balance of themes including detailed coverage of Christianity, the Christian way of life and of the work of the church and the purpose of worship. Due reference is also given to the Judaic tradition within key stage one and to the study of Islam and Judaism in key stage two. Both the church building and the incumbent are regularly used as resources. The youngest children follow a closely related scheme that draws on the learning goals for personal and social development but includes content drawn from the themes identified in the diocesan syllabus. Lessons observed included one where younger pupils followed up their visit to the church by discussion of the items they had observed supported by photographs and the children's drawings. Pupils had retained information and could explain the function of the font, identify themes within the windows and of the organ. Older pupils were studying the reverence given to texts such as the Qu'ran and the Torah with the former being explained by one of the pupils. Children in the later years of key stage two were able to draw parallels between important characters in the story of Muhammed and figures in the Christian narratives. All three lessons observed were of a good quality with pupils closely engaged and lessons supported by the use of appropriate artefacts and the use of interactive whiteboards. Workbooks examined indicated a close match to the planned programme and the school engages in regular evaluation of the work covered and the level of understanding of pupils both in written form and through plenary discussion.

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

The quality of leadership of the school is good and the school is already effective in providing a strong educational experience for its pupils built on Christian values. The

systems for monitoring the quality of teaching, for routine self-evaluation and for recording pupil achievement and the provision for those with special needs are effective. There is a close working relationship between the headteacher, the Chair of the Governors and the incumbent and all have a desire to further improve on current achievements. The governors are familiar with the everyday life of the school and there is a good working relationship with the PCC and with the local community. The published admissions policy offers no preferential access to pupils with a close association with the parish but has been identified as being consistent with the evangelical philosophy of the host church. The school contributes through actions and finance to both local and national charities but also contributes to local community activities. The school is actively engaged in many aspects of the Every Child Matters agenda and works closely with the local special school and with its neighbouring primary schools. A strength of the school is the engagement of many of the pupils in the life of the church on a regular basis and the church community recognises and welcomes the responsibilities it has for encouraging and supporting that relationship.

SIAS report July 2006 All Saints CE (VA) Junior and Infants School, Dudwell Lane, Halifax, HX3 0SD