

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### Anson Church of England Voluntary Aided School Primary School

Main Road  
Great Haywood  
Stafford  
ST18 0SU

#### Diocese of Lichfield

LEA: Staffordshire

Dates of inspection: April 6<sup>th</sup> 2006

Date of last inspection: Dec 1<sup>st</sup> 2003

School's Unique reference number: 124379

Headteacher: Mr Adrian Dipple

Inspector: Mrs Rosemary Shepherd 294

#### Context

Anson School is a village school with 124 pupils from a wide variety of social backgrounds. It is situated adjacent to the Church of St Stephen in Great Haywood. The school has recently received an encouraging Ofsted report after a period of change and difficult decisions, to which all present staff have responded positively.

#### Overall Judgement

Anson School is a *good* Church of England School with *outstanding* features. Christian education and worship at Anson School is presented with an uplifting enthusiasm providing children with interesting and challenging tasks to enliven their education and to enable them to apply their learning to everyday life.

#### Strengths

- Sound and honest self evaluation. The school is good at recognising its strengths and weaknesses and this became very evident during the inspection.
- Internally the school promotes its Christian values at every opportunity, with prayer stations and spiritual places throughout the school and in classrooms.
- Collective worship is well planned and presented in a variety of ways which capture the children's interest and extend their thinking and understanding.
- The delivery of a well planned RE programme provides the children with exciting opportunities to learn about the Christian religion, and to apply their learning to their own lives and the time in which they live.
- Committed and dedicated staff support the Christian leadership of the headteacher and RE coordinator and participate fully in the presentation of learning surrounding all church festivals.
- Strong church links through the enthusiastic and inspirational work of Reverend Davies and Reverend Staton provide valuable support and encouragement for the whole school community.
- The chair of governors has led the governing body in a very positive manner and together they have enabled, supported and encouraged the school to make necessary changes.
- Dedicated and sensitive leadership from the headteacher has established good relationships and a rigorous work ethic throughout the school.

#### Focus for development

- Extend the teaching and learning about other faiths to further the children's knowledge and their understanding of living in a multicultural society.
- Expand resources for RE and Collective worship.
- Empower children in the preparation of worship as well as its presentation.
- Externally celebrate the school's Christian foundation in order to communicate its distinctive Christian character to the wider community.

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

The distinctive Christian character through which Anson School meets the needs of all its learners is *outstanding*. Children are encouraged to celebrate who they are and what they believe, being offered times and special places to think and to pray. Opinions are encouraged and valued by interactive display boards in communal areas in the school.

Children feel valued; their opinions and ideas are listened to and may be included in the school

development through the auspices of their newly formed School Council. They have expressed a desire to be more involved in worship, which this inspection report recommends and supports.

Spiritual and moral development of all learners is greatly enhanced by the teaching and learning in RE. Children care for each other, are respectful and well behaved and demonstrate concern for the wider world through the many charitable efforts they undertake.

Growing church links are further strengthened by the high profiles and engaging activities of Reverend Davies and Reverend Staton within the school programmes of learning.

Relationships in the school are very good. The staff work as a team and are supportive of each other. Children relate well to adults and their peers.

The school's Mission statement is overtly Christian, if somewhat long and difficult to memorise.

#### **What is the impact of Collective Worship on the school community?**

The impact of collective worship on the school community is *good*. Children look forward to worship times and enjoy variety and participation in dramatic presentations which extend their learning and deepen their understanding.

Worship planning and presentation compliment much work done in RE and enable the children to internalise their learning and apply it to their lives.

School worship has a high priority within the curriculum and also embraces a wider community, reaching out to parents and others, for whom school celebrations at Church festival times may be their only experience of Christian ministry.

Understanding of the Anglican faith is developed during times of worship with relevant artefacts and inspiration drawn from biblical text. For example children know that the lighting of a candle represents the light of Christ coming amongst them. Year 6 pupils experience the Eucharist service and take part in an agape meal, both of which are led by clergy.

Children would benefit from more opportunity to prepare and lead worship and to write and use their own prayers.

#### **How effective is the Religious Education in the school?**

The impact of Religious Education is *good*. Standards in RE are above average in 'learning from' and average in 'learning about'. Good progress is made in understanding and learning about Christianity and children are gaining skills in empathy, expression, reflection and questioning.

Much of the teaching and learning in RE is through discussion and practical activities and the children converse knowledgeably and enthusiastically, relating what they know and what has had an impact on them. A parent commented, "We talk a lot about God at home now".

Written work is informative and well presented. Marking of work is sensitive and encouraging.

Themes from the RE programme extend into other areas of the curriculum, such as art and literature, affirming the place of Christianity in all areas of life.

The school is situated next to the church of St Stephen and makes good use of the building and churchyard as a teaching resource in addition to its primary purpose as a place of worship.

The children, who are all of white British heritage, learn about two other religions. Further exploration and time should be given to the understanding of other faiths and their culture in order to prepare the children for life in a multicultural society.

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

Leadership and management of this church School is *good*. Progress made over the last two years indicates the level of dedication, commitment, and hard work of the headteacher, the staff and the governors.

By embedding a prayerful culture within the school and by giving priority to greater involvement of the Church in school life, Anson School is confidently facing the future.

Staff are valued for their contribution to school development and they in turn are appreciative of the efforts of the coordinator, who is to be congratulated on the provision of clear planning and programmes of work for RE and worship which are effective and user friendly.

Regular monitoring of work informs progress and identifies needs.

Governors have a curriculum link role and have visited the school to connect to their area of interest.

Foundation governors provide a strong church link, but could be more proactive in monitoring and evaluating the life of the school.

The guidance and support provided by the clergy, who have a high profile in the school, is very good and children and staff are well nurtured.

Parents are well informed and annually consulted by way of questionnaires. All parents consulted during the inspection are fully supportive of the school and content with the progress made by their children. An adult with a thirteen year connection to the school described it as being "happier now than it has ever been".

The school is active in drawing the village community together through events such as the Summer Fayre. This event attracts participation from the wider community.