

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### **Beech Grove Church of England Voluntary Aided Junior School**

Beech Grove

Oswestry

Shropshire

SY11 2PU

#### **Diocese of Lichfield**

LEA: Shropshire

SIAS inspection: 31:01:2006

Previous S23 inspection: 28:01:2002

URN: 123492

Headteacher: Mr. John Demmerling

SIAS Inspector NS 73 : Mrs. Marion Hillaby

### **Context**

The school is on the edge of the small market town of Oswestry in an area of high social and economic deprivation. The school was placed in Special Measures in January 2002. The current Headteacher was appointed in September 2003 and under his leadership the school came out of Special Measures in June 2004. The number on role has fallen from over 300 to 175 in the last four years but numbers are now stabilising and predicted to remain approximately at this level for the next three years.

### **Summary Judgement**

Beech Grove C.E. controlled Junior School is currently a satisfactory Church school which is rapidly improving and is well placed to become a good Church school in the foreseeable future.

### **Established Strengths**

- The leadership of the headteacher and the Foundation Governors.
- The improvement in the environment to encourage spiritual development.
- The range of ways of worship
- The work of the Deputy Headteacher as worship co-ordinator.

### **Focus for development**

- Aspects of collective worship:- planning, record keeping and evaluation
- more involvement of pupils in whole school Acts of Worship
- Encourage further links with the local Churches
- Develop ways of enabling pupils to explore the Eucharist
- Involve parents in evaluating the school as a Church school.

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

The school, through its distinctive Christian character, meets the needs of all learners in a satisfactory way. The school is developing a range of strategies to enhance the pupils' feelings of being valued and special. Pupils' achievements, both individually and as groups, are celebrated at Awards assemblies and in visual displays around the school. A School Council has been established and pupils feel that their views are listened to and acted upon. There are Christian symbols and artefacts in a number of areas. Pupils are aware that the school is a church of England school and a greater understanding of what this means is being developed. In order to support pupils who need extra help to cope in school because of emotional, behavioural and social difficulties a Pastoral Support Assistant has been appointed. Staff work collaboratively to provide a caring, secure learning environment. Consideration has been given to the spiritual development of the pupils in the on-going improvements to the school's environment, both internally and externally. Pupils are able to sit in a quiet reflection area so that they can find space in the busy day to focus on God. A quadrangle has been attractively renovated and a large cross, which will be visible from many areas of the school, is ready to be erected so that pupils are constantly reminded of the Christian foundation of the school.

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

The impact of collective worship on the school community is satisfactory. The Worship co-ordinator has a clear vision of how the school's collective worship could be developed and has produced an action plan to show how this will be effected. She works closely with the Headteacher to implement these plans. She has collected resources which are available to all staff to support the planning and leading of Acts of Worship and sees further development of planning, recording and evaluating as next steps. All members of the teaching staff now lead Acts of Worship and this provides a good role model for the pupils in valuing worship. The weekly class Acts of Worship are broadening the range of ways of worship to involve pupils and develop their spirituality – the use of music from different faiths and secular “music with meaning” led pupils to describe their feelings in quite a profound way, for example, one boy said that he felt alone and lonely although there were people all around. Whole school Acts of Worship, especially those led by the incumbent, affirm the Anglican foundation of the school and all pupils say the Lord's Prayer and sing a hymn. More active participation from the pupils would enhance their positive attitudes to collective worship. The school has a service in St. Oswald's Church at Christmas and groups visit the church as part of the R.E. curriculum. Links with this Church are strong but links with the nearest Church have declined- the Headteacher and worship co-ordinator would welcome renewal of these links.

### **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 is good. The Headteacher is committed to his vision of moving the school forward as a Church school, just as he has already led the school forward out of Special Measures. He is personally developing links with the local community and has addressed a breakfast meeting of a Christian men's group. The deputy Headteacher is equally committed and especially through her work as Worship co-ordinator is supporting the school's significant progress as a Church school. The Foundation Governors, including two who have been newly appointed, take their role seriously; one has recently supported the school's self evaluation by observing and evaluating a number of Acts of Worship and another has offered to work with pupils to make cloths in liturgical colours for the table used in Acts of Worship. The incumbent, who is Vice- Chair of the Governing Body, has known the school well for many years and supports the Headteacher well as a critical friend. The pupils recognise their place in the local community and have been involved in a range of activities such as Carol singing in the local supermarket and distributing harvest gifts to the elderly. They have also had fund raising activities to support various charities. Parents value the way in which their children's personal development and well-being is nurtured. Their involvement in the school's drive to move forward as a Church school would be increased by eliciting their views on the Church ethos of the school.

SIAS Jan 2006 Beech Grove C.E. VA Junior School, Shropshire SY11 2PU