

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Blackboys Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Blackboys
Uckfield
East Sussex
TN22 5LL

Diocese: Chichester

LA: East Sussex

Dates of inspection: 1 - 2 December 2005

Date of last inspection: 3 April 2000

School's Unique reference number: 114547

Headteacher: Gillian Webb

Inspector's name and number: Richard Saunders 175

School context

Blackboys Primary School is a rural school serving Blackboys and the surrounding villages which has maintained its current size over the past few years. Extensive building work at present being undertaken will provide improved facilities for the school and enhanced opportunities for the pupils. A warm, family atmosphere, engendered by the strong team work of everyone concerned with the school, welcomes the visitor.

At the time of the inspection there were 8 members of the teaching staff: 5 full-time and 3 part-time teachers, and 7 teaching assistants.

Summary Judgement

Blackboys is an effective Church school. Its vision statement and the distinctive Christian character underpins all its beliefs and values. There are very positive relationships throughout the school. The very good opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development have a material impact on all the pupils, enabling them to be happy, caring and successful learners. Collective worship is of a good standard and makes a significant contribution to their spiritual and moral experiences. The planning, preparation and teaching of Religious Education is good. The pupils' overall attainment is in line with national expectations. The school is very well led and managed by the headteacher. The governors, staff and parents are supportive and committed to developing the Christian character of the school and to raising the educational standards of the pupils.

Established strengths

- The very positive and distinctive ethos based upon Christian beliefs and values.
- The valuable contribution that collective worship and Religious Education make to the spiritual and moral development of the pupils.
- The very good relationships and behaviour of the pupils which make a significant contribution to the school's effectiveness as a Church school.

Focus for development

- To maintain a consistent and systematic written record of collective worship to extend good practice and to assist in monitoring and evaluation.
- To further develop spiritual, moral, social and cultural education by creating an overarching policy which integrates curriculum subjects and enhances the pupils' experiences and opportunities.
- To continue to evaluate the distinctiveness and effectiveness of the school as a Church school by developing the self-evaluation toolkit with reference to the National Society's framework for the Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools.

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

The school makes good provision for meeting the needs of all the pupils. The strong Christian character of the school is reflected in the very good relationships which exist throughout the school community. The school staff provide good role models. The pupils are happy, caring and courteous and co-operate well in work and play. Parents/carers feel that the school has a special quality that enables pupils of all abilities and social backgrounds to flourish and fulfil their potential. They acknowledge that pupils leave school as mature, well rounded individuals. The attitude and behaviour of the pupils is good. A variety of commendations encourage the aims of high achievement and good behaviour.

The school's Christian ethos ensures that all the pupils feel valued. Pupils express the view that the school looks after them. The pupils' learning is enhanced by the opportunities provided for spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development. This is good with some outstanding features and sustains the Christian character of the school. The pupils would benefit from an overarching SMSC policy which would integrate all the curriculum subjects. Pupils are encouraged to discuss their concerns through circle time as part of personal, social and health education and are supported by a strong house system and a school council.

Grade 2

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

Worship occupies an important place in the life of the school. It is consistently and recognisably Christian and honours the Anglican tradition. Acts of worship are imaginative and well planned for the whole school by the headteacher. During the inspection the acts of worship observed were of a good standard and made a valuable contribution to the spiritual and moral development of the pupils. Teaching staff are consulted, involved in the planning and all have the opportunity to lead worship. Christian festivals, Bible stories, moral and social issues are clearly identified in the collective worship long-term planning. The school should maintain a consistent, systematic, written record of worship to extend good practice and assist in monitoring and evaluation.

Acts of worship are varied and provide good opportunities for pupils to participate and enhance their spiritual experience through reflection, stories, drama, singing, personal experiences, questions and answers. During the inspection pupils demonstrated very positive attitudes to worship. Pupils are able to recall exciting events in worship and expressed the view that it helped them learn about God. The impact of worship is enhanced by the pupils' attentive behaviour, enthusiastic singing and the playing by instrumentalists at assemblies. Prayers are said daily at assembly, at lunch time and at the end of the day.

Grade 2

How effective is the religious education?

Religious Education is recognised by the governors, headteacher and teaching staff as being of particular importance in a Church school. The subject's status in the school reflects this. The Religious Education policy is clear and offers sound advice to the teaching staff. The scheme of work complies with the Diocesan and Local Education Authority's relevant syllabuses, reflecting the school's Christian foundation, at the same time as giving due weight to other faiths. A week devoted to a Religious Education theme - caring for our world - enabled pupils to work in house groups on a variety of activities and share their experiences with pupils in a cluster group school.

The quality of teaching and learning, as judged by the lessons observed, an inspection of the teachers' planning, the enthusiasm of the staff and the pupils' work, is good. The teachers endeavour to convey that learning about religion should enable the pupils to learn from religion. The pupils show positive attitudes to Religious Education. They demonstrate satisfactory knowledge of previous learning and enjoy the lessons, particularly the research gained from using ICT. Overall the pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations of pupil progress and achievement in Religious Education as judged by the levels in the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority non-statutory framework.

Grade 2

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

The quality of leadership and management by the headteacher contributes very significantly to the success of Blackboys as a Church school. The governors and staff make a tangible commitment to the school's Christian character and are actively involved in monitoring, evaluating and sustaining it. For example, they are supportive of a parent initiative to start a Crusader Club which meets weekly after school. A

strong Christian message is transmitted through termly themes by prayer, choruses and a variety of activities.

There is a strong link with the parish church congregation of Framfield. A small group of members, including the incumbent, lead assemblies fortnightly at the school. Parents/carers attend church services and are welcomed into the school, they speak warmly of the sympathetic and effective way the school deals with their concerns. A variety of social and fund raising events are organised by parents/carers throughout the year. The local community is involved in the Christian character of the school when the children parade through the village re-enacting the Christmas story. The school responds positively to various local community initiatives. The school is to be commended on the variety of charities it supports.

Grade 2

SIAS report 1 - 2 December 2005 Blackboys C E Primary School Blackboys Uckfield East Sussex TN22 5LL