

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Branscombe Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary

Branscombe

Seaton

Devon

EX12 3DA

Diocese of Exeter

LEA: Devon

SIAS inspection: 19 October 2005

Previous S23 inspection: 15/24 November 1999

URN: 113348

Headteacher: Mrs. Katie Gray

SIAS Inspector NS185 : Mrs. Rosemary Davis

Context

This small rural primary school is close to the centre of the east Devon village of Branscombe in an area of outstanding natural beauty on the Heritage Coast. Pupils attend from the village, the surrounding area and Sidmouth. The old school building has been sensitively extended to provide a good learning environment. There is no dining area or hall and the small sloping site is not conducive to outdoor activities but use is made of the village hall and playing field some distance away. Access to the school is difficult. There is an onsite pre-school. The acting Headteacher accepted the permanent post last week.

Summary Judgement

This is a good Church of England Voluntary Controlled school in which the positive Christian ethos and character provide an effective and distinctive learning environment for spiritual and moral development.

Established Strengths

- Distinctive Christian ethos with good pastoral care and a nurturing ethos
- Positive relationships within the school
- Care and concern for individuals, property and equipment which provide a conducive atmosphere for learning and contribute to spiritual and moral development
- Imaginative and creative presentations and displays
- Excellent community links and a good partnership with parents, the Church and PTA

Focus for development

- Promote the Christian vision for the school and acknowledge the school's Church of England foundation by signs and symbols both externally and internally
- Develop and implement a more detailed planning, recording and monitoring system for collective worship to provide continuity, breadth and balance. This must include input from all parties.
- Re-evaluate the physical location of Worship e.g. using the nearby Church
- Extend the spiritual development of the pupils by encouraging a whole school awareness of the many cross-curricular opportunities

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

The school's distinctive Christian character is good and meets the needs of all learners. The caring ethos and the value it places on the uniqueness of each individual pupil encourages the development of Christian values of care and concern for others. Pupils feel valued and special. The expectation of good behaviour encourages pupils to be kind and considerate. There are opportunities for spiritual development such as prayers and time for reflection but these lack structure. Moral development is good. Relationships are good and are based on Christian attitudes. Pupils make good progress and fulfil their potential. The school environment is well cared for. The work of the school in the community is very good. A fund is raised and administered by the pupils for people in distress.

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

Collective Worship has a satisfactory impact on the whole school community and occupies an important place in the life of the school as well as providing many opportunities for spiritual and moral development. Although individual acts of worship are well planned and appear to be good on a day to day basis, the impact of worship on the learners is impaired by lack of continuity, record keeping and evaluation. The physical space for worship restricts variety of presentation and therefore impacts upon the quality and spontaneity of worship. Parents are unable to be part of this central aspect of the school's life. However, worship contributes to learners' understanding of Christian values and attitudes to worship are good. All staff and the Rector lead worship. Pupils' understanding of Anglican faith and practice is satisfactory.

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

The leadership and management of this church school are good and effective. The vision statement is based on Christian values but its relationship to the ethos statement is not clear. The partnership between school, parents, Church and local community is good. The Rector provides very strong support as does the Curate. The local church community welcomes the school to join them for three annual celebrations in Church. Parents appreciate their children's understanding of Christian values which are evident in the care and concern shown for others with different attitudes and opinions. The importance to the school of the Christian faith remains strong. The new headteacher is already building upon existing good practice and extending it in new directions.