

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Christchurch Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Batten Street

Battersea

SW11 2TH

Diocese: Southwark

LA: Wandsworth

Dates of inspection: 13th /14th June 2006

Date of last inspection: January 2001

School's Unique reference number: 101035

Headteacher: Mrs. Frances Bussey

Inspector's name and number: Mr. Arthur Williams 279

School context

The school has places for 220 learners and a nursery for 26 fte learners (20 full-time and 12 part-time). The school serves the parish of Christchurch and Saint Stephen to the north of Clapham Junction Station. Many learners come from a Christian background, but other faiths are represented. The percentage of learners from minority ethnic groups is high. The majority of these learners are of African or African/Caribbean heritage. Almost half the learners come from homes where the first language is other than English. The school draws its learners from an area of high socio-economic disadvantage and the number of learners eligible for free meals is well above the national average (38%)

Summary Judgement

Christchurch Church of England Primary School is a good church school with a vibrant and living Christian heart.

Established strengths

- The outstanding spiritual development of all the learners
- The outstanding care and nurturing of the learners by the daily living out of the Christian Gospel.
- High quality acts of collective worship including the strong place of prayer throughout the school day.
- The strong Christian leadership of the Headteacher and Chair of Governors.

Focus for development

- Establish strategies for the sharing of good practice in Religious Education (R.E) lessons.
- Provide greater challenge for the more perceptive learners to extend their insights and reflections in R.E. lessons
- Improve the critical friend responsibility of the Governing Body by having a Foundation Governor to regularly visit the school in order to gain their own perspective on the quality of Religious Education and Collective Worship.

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 outstandingly. The quality of the spiritual development of learners is outstanding. This is apparent across all age groups. An example of this is the way that learners use the numerous prayer opportunities throughout the day for mature reflection. Across the school, learners show outstanding respect and care for each other. Young learners are particularly perceptive. They are able to articulate the special qualities of their friends with maturity beyond their years. The daily living out of the Christian Gospel is apparent in every aspect of school life. This is particularly seen in the clear documentation, the application of the behaviour policy and the strong link between the parish church and the school.

There are exceptional examples of pastoral care where professional expertise is used to support vulnerable learners. Learners of other faiths are respected and valued and there is strong and consistent support from parents for the Christian values of the school. Display is of a very high quality. Pentecost was celebrated through a striking reflection table using candles and was supported by other high

quality examples celebrating the gifts of The Holy Spirit. Staff are excellent role models for the learners.

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

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding. Collective worship is imaginative, reflective and inclusive. The school provides a wide variety of collective worship opportunities, all of which are of a very high standard. A thoughtful singing assembly on the theme of peace was used to enhance worship through reflection and prayer and gave learners opportunities to share practical examples of how to bring peace to the lives of others. An excellent class worship assembly provided learners with the opportunity to share their reflections on Pentecost. The occasion was enhanced by the respect of the other learners and the strong support of parents.

Collective worship is significantly enhanced by the school regularly worshipping in the parish church. This allows learners to become aware of the main festivals of the Christian year. A noticeable feature is the involvement of parents. At the recent Pentecost Service parents prayed in eight different mother tongues dramatically underlining how The Holy Spirit equipped the apostles with the gift of tongues. The regular class Eucharists led by the incumbent makes learners aware of the structures of Anglican worship. The printed form of service includes all the structures of The Eucharist, and is a recognised Church of England form of service. Another exemplary feature of collective worship is the linking to the wider life of the school through lessons, class displays, music, art, the respect by the school for the incumbent, the raising of money for others in need and the friendship with a school in South Africa.

How effective is the religious education?

The religious education is good. Standards are good across the school and in some aspects outstanding. Staff use a wide and appropriate range of teaching and learning strategies and this enables lessons to be inclusive.

Staff use group and class discussions, mind mapping, ICT, poetry, art, music, circle time, the learners own knowledge and prayer times. Some unevenness of standards results from a lack of opportunity to share good practice, particularly the use of strategies for meeting the needs of all learners.

Many learners are able to apply their knowledge to every day situations. The older learners use The Bible confidently to find texts. A significant group of children through the partnership of home, school and church have excellent Bible knowledge and spiritual depth. Insufficient use is sometimes made of this knowledge and this reduces the level of challenge. For example some pupils are not given enough opportunity to reflect on and apply their beliefs to more complex every day issues through more demanding thinking skills.

The curriculum is well planned and resourced and benefits from a coherent scheme of work. Lessons make good use of the skills of Learning Support Assistants. The scheme of work includes a study of Islam and Judaism which enables learners to gain respect for those of other beliefs.

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, are good. Strong leadership is provided by the Headteacher and Chair of Governors. The inspection continually found the school's self-evaluation to be accurate. The school's judgements are based on clear monitoring procedures. The Headteacher is the driving force in the setting of high standards for collective worship and the strong Christian ethos that permeates the school. She is very accessible, constantly relating to learners, staff and parents.

She directly involves herself with the staff curriculum committee that is responsible for R.E. The School Development Plan priorities for R.E. are well thought out and achievable.

The Chair of Governors, who is the incumbent, stated that "He was proud of the school." A very fair judgement. He regularly visits the school, involves himself directly in the collective worship by leading the class Eucharists and the school services at

the church. His commitment to the school is strong and this is respected by learners, staff and parents.

The critical friend role of The Governing Body is under-developed. Other Foundation Governors have not developed ways of holding the school to account. For example there is no structure of regular visits to observe R.E. and collective worship in order to help the Governing Body have its own independent evaluation of these key aspects of the school.

SIAS report June 2006 Christchurch Church of England Primary School
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