

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Colnbrook Church of England Voluntary Controlled School Primary School

High Street

Colnbrook

SLOUGH

SL3 0JZ

Diocese of Oxford

LEA: Slough

Dates of inspection: 17 March 2006

Date of last inspection: 8 May 2000

School's Unique reference number: 110000

Name of Headteacher: Janice Brown

Inspector: Judith Babb 139

Context

Colnbrook Primary School is a small school with a nursery class. There is a learning resource unit supporting eight pupils with special educational needs. Pupils are drawn from an area of ethnic diversity, representing several faiths, and including traveller families. Relationships between the school and the parish church broke down several years ago. In September 2005, a new headteacher was appointed (presently acting), and the incumbent from a neighbouring parish will become Priest-in Charge at Colnbrook from September 2006.

Summary judgement

Colnbrook Primary School is a rapidly improving church school. Worship is at the heart of its daily life. Self-evaluation by all in the community is beginning to be established.

Established strengths

- The explicit statement of Christian values to guide school life
- The strong leadership of the acting headteacher
- Detailed attention to Health and Safety at work, with care for the school environment
- Systematic and effective use of praise to build the confidence of pupils
- Care and commitment from all staff creating a welcoming ethos

Focus for development

Building on the recent significant improvements, the governors should:

- Aim to build bridges between the parish church and the school by: drawing up a 2-3 year plan showing how the school can become re-involved in the life of its parish; supporting and involving the priest-in-charge designate; training the foundation governors to develop expertise in their role
- Set up a worship planning group with wide representation (e.g. staff, clergy, pupils, parents) to plan and evaluate acts of worship
- Support the co-ordinator for Religious Education and Collective Worship in the development of both areas of the curriculum and the links between them

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

On balance, the school makes good provision to meet the needs of all its learners, through its Christian character. A clear statement of six Christian values consistently guides the school, so that parents feel their children are safe and well cared for. These values help to create an inclusive school, with pupils from all backgrounds feeling valued. Pupils with special educational needs are integrated well, and take part fully in lessons, including practical subjects. Traveller families feel that they are accepted, and can bring concerns to the school (ref.meeting). Monitoring of all aspects of the curriculum is now established (including 'circle time'), and curricular provision has been enhanced (e.g. more extra-

curricular clubs) so that every pupil has more opportunity. Overall, relationships between pupils, and pupils and staff are positive, a result of consistent praise for good behaviour. Parents commented that, following a questionnaire, there are now effective measures to deal with bullying, and only a few pupils fail to show respect for their peers. Cultural development has some very good features (French and music lessons). Spiritual development is actively encouraged (designing a 'nature' garden) so that pupils appreciate their environment. A school council has been started, and its views are acted upon. Pupils are beginning to be involved in giving back to the community (e.g. visiting the elderly) because they feel that there is community interest in them (e.g. donated prizes).

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

The impact of collective worship on the school community is satisfactory, and is improving. Collective worship is currently co-ordinated by the headteacher; a new co-ordinator will be in post next term. There is evidence (e.g. rota of leaders) of sound planning for the daily act of worship to include pupils of all faiths and none. Staff normally lead assembly, with a good range of visitors from non-conformist churches and charitable organisations. Worship is enjoyed by pupils (interviews), especially singing, and their parents (in meeting) comment favourably on the 'celebration assembly' held on Fridays. The hall is laid out carefully, with some help from older pupils (e.g. operating CD player) so that it is a 'special occasion'. Pupils sit on the floor surrounded by the adults giving a sense of community. They enter reverently to quiet music, although some staff issue instructions too audibly. In classrooms and in the hall, the focal point is a table with a candle, lit by the assembly leader for prayer. Some pupils do not yet understand how to act in a formal situation so that the greeting ('Good afternoon') receives noisy response, spoiling the atmosphere. Story-telling is clear, with sensible use of visual aids, and pupils listen carefully. There is a strong moral content to the presentation, and reflective moments are built in to the worship, with questions and short periods of silence. Pupils know some prayers by heart, including a school prayer. At 'celebration assembly' prayer is very brief. Much detailed work goes into ensuring that as many pupils as possible are affirmed publicly, with generous use of praise, and encouragement to do better. Some thought has been given to the systematic evaluation of worship.

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 satisfactory on the whole, and there are some good features. The newly-appointed acting headteacher has a clear vision for the school as a caring Christian community. Although the development of the governing body is in its early stages, both the headteacher and the active governors understand what is to be done (ref.meetings). Most recently, the arrival of the Priest-in-Charge designate has begun to heal the rift between the parish church and the school. The tradition of leavers receiving a Bible sponsored by the PCC remains. A new foundation governor has been appointed, a member of the PCC, who has expressed a willingness to train. Governors of all faiths actively support the school, including worship. Documentation to parents makes the Christian aims clear (home/school agreement). Prayer is a feature of school life (e.g. at staff meetings). The performance management programme for staff allows for reflection time. Usually, school services for special festivals have been held at the United Reformed Church; there are plans to return to the parish church in the foreseeable future. Diocesan advice has been welcomed, especially the adviser's visits. To date, governors are not involved in self-evaluation as a church school. Governors have recently begun to build worship, and community relations (with the PCC), into their improvement planning.