

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### Dawley Church of England Voluntary Aided School,

Doseley Rd North,  
Dawley,  
Telford  
TF43AL

#### Diocese: Lichfield

LEA: Telford and Wrekin

Dates of inspection: 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> March, 2006

Date of last inspection: January 2000

School's Unique reference number: 123544

Name of Headteacher: Mrs. S M Thomas

Inspector's name: Mr T M Powell National Society inspector's number: 200

#### Context of the school

Dawley Aided is an urban school of 247 pupils, most of whom live in the surrounding area. Pupils' attainment on entry is judged to be well below the national average and the number of those with learning difficulties is well above average. The current headteacher and her deputy have been in post for less than two terms and there had been some instability in staffing for some years prior to this.

#### Summary Judgement

This is a good church school. Its pupils are nurtured and valued within a distinctively Christian ethos. Current initiatives are helping to promote this ethos further and to communicate it to the wider community.

#### Established strengths

- The clear vision of the headteacher, her senior management team and the parish priest for the further development of the school's distinctively Christian ethos.
- The conscientious work of the coordinator for worship and RE.
- Pupils' very good behaviour and positive response to collective worship and to RE lessons.
- The strong and growing involvement that the school has with the parish and the ecumenical partnership.
- The importance that the school places on the provision of collective worship and RE.

#### Focus for development

- Implement the plan for the monitoring of RE and collective worship by the coordinator in order to enhance further their impact and effectiveness.
- Implement the planned review of the Mission Statement and aims at an appropriate time, to involve all groups who have an interest in the school and its development.
- Review the Spirituality Policy as a whole school and identify further ways of promoting this aspect across the whole curriculum.

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

The school's distinctive Christian character makes a good contribution to meeting the needs of all learners. Christian values strongly influence the school's policies and the way in which it relates to its pupils. Children are valued as individuals and are given encouragement to become self-confident and to develop their self-esteem. Care and guidance are good and an effective reward system celebrates good behaviour and attitudes. The school council is effective in developing pupils' sense of responsibility and their feeling that their ideas about the school are valued and considered. Pupils feel that they are well cared for and particularly welcome both the range of extra-curricular activities available to them and the recently formed breakfast club. Pupils' overall levels of academic achievement are judged by Ofsted to be satisfactory. Standards in Religious education (RE) are in line with the requirements of the agreed syllabus with some examples of good achievement. The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils' spiritual development and they respond appropriately. The spirituality policy provides a good focus for thinking about ways of promoting spiritual awareness and describes "special moments" such as pupils' observed responses to poetry, music and beautiful scenery seen on a school visit. It

might be helpful now for the whole school to review the spirituality policy, evaluating its impact on practice and identifying further opportunities in curriculum planning to promote spiritual awareness. The school is looking to find ways of providing areas where pupils might be able to sit and reflect quietly, although the restricted nature of the environment will make this difficult to achieve outside the building.

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

The impact of collective worship on the school community is satisfactory. Worship has a secure and developing place in the life of the school. A list of themes is drawn up to cover a school year. Planning provides an appropriate variety and balance of themes and acknowledges the church's seasons and major festivals. Groupings for worship are either whole-school or key stage. The Wednesday act of worship is led by members of the local clergy team, whose themes link well with the school's own and enhance the overall quality of worship. The three acts of worship seen were of good quality. Pupils entered and left the hall very quietly and the playing of appropriate recorded music and the lighting of a candle to signify the start of worship created a conducive atmosphere. Visual aids were used effectively to engage the pupils' interest. Those pupils interviewed spoke of their enjoyment of acts of worship and particularly of assemblies where awards were given and individual achievement celebrated. Pupils attend the parish church for worship on three occasions a year, at harvest time, at Easter and at Christmas. The rector and ministry team are currently involved in working with the Y5 class to prepare an Easter act of worship to take place at church. The Eucharist is explored in the RE curriculum in upper Key Stage 2. The team rector has initiated discussions with older pupils with a view to celebrating the Eucharist in a school act of worship in due course. As part of its scheduled development the school plans to evaluate the quality of worship and the attitudes and responses of pupils. The worship coordinator and team rector will be closely involved in this.

#### **How effective is the Religious Education in the school?**

Religious education is effective. It is given a high profile and has an important place in the life of the school. There is a good policy document and scheme of work from which detailed plans are drawn up for each class. The work of the subject coordinator is to be commended. She has compiled and monitored portfolios of pupils' work and assessment tasks. She hopes now to have the opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching through classroom observation and discussion. A new diocesan scheme for RE is due shortly; the school intends to examine this when it becomes available and to consider the best way to implement it. Pupils' standards of achievement in RE are in line with the requirements of the syllabus currently in use with some examples of good achievement. There is a considerable amount of recorded work in pupils' RE books, using a variety of approaches and ways of responding. Work is well presented and conscientiously marked, often containing teachers' comments that are designed to lead to further discussion and understanding. In the lessons seen the quality of teaching was good, setting interesting tasks and involving pupils in discussion of the issues raised. Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning. They enjoy their work in RE and are keen to discuss it. They listen very well to their teachers and are eager to respond during lessons. A particular strength was the ability of the older pupils interviewed to talk about some customs of other faiths and to compare them with aspects of Christianity. Some indications of the importance the school accords to RE are the intention to allow the coordinator time to monitor teaching, the plan to update the reference to the subject in the next prospectus and the use of the expertise of the diocese and the parish priest in seeking ways to further enhance provision of the subject.

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

The school is well led and managed as a church school. The headteacher, the coordinator for RE and collective worship and the parish priest are working closely together to establish a firm sense of direction for the school and to enhance its distinctive Christian ethos. The governors are proud of the school's Anglican foundation and ethos. A number of Christian signs and symbols in and around the school, including a cross on the outside wall are reminders of its Anglican status, as are various references to its church school ethos in several of its policy documents. The school's intention to review its Mission Statement, involving all those with an interest in its development, is commendable and should result in communicating its vision to the whole community and helping to realise it in practice. The strong and growing partnership between the school and the local clergy team is helping the school in its monitoring and evaluation of the quality of Religious Education and collective worship.

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