

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Denby Church of England Voluntary Aided School

Goose Green
Upper Denby
Huddersfield, West Yorkshire
HD8 8UN

Diocese: Wakefield

LEA: Kirklees

Dates of inspection: 3rd. February 2006

Date of last inspection: April 2000

School's Unique reference number:107742

Name of Headteacher:Christine Hall

Inspector's name with National Society inspector's number: Alan Thornsby 137

Context

Denby C of E school is a small rural school in the village of Upper Denby. There are 46 pupils on roll arranged in two classes. There are less than average numbers of pupils having free school meals or with learning difficulties.

Summary Judgement

Denby is a satisfactory church school with effective links with the Church and local community that It is beginning to address issues that will enable a more distinctive character to develop and be understood by all.

Established strengths

- The commitment of the whole school community to its school
- The caring supportive atmosphere of the school
- The positive attitudes of the pupils.

Focus for development

- To develop a more rigorous system of evaluation and monitoring of the distinctive elements of a church school
- To develop a more consistent approach to times and places for reflection across the school.
- Review the planning of collective worship to include opportunities for active participation and leadership by pupils

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

The school is satisfactory in meeting the needs of all learners. The school has a distinctive ethos of care and respect based on Christian values, which underpins the daily life of the school. The recently revised mission statement, displayed in the entrance, now makes explicit the impact of Christian values on the school and the respect for other faiths. The school, however, has yet to fully involve the pupils in understanding these values. Pupils feel cared for and secure and have a positive attitude to school. Their efforts and achievements are recognised by weekly awards, the culmination of gaining stickers and merit points. Pupils understand the key factor that they can make a new start and 'we can try harder next week'. Relationships between all members of the community are good. Both parents and pupils find the staff approachable and speak of a family like environment. The school provides satisfactory opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in curricular and out of school activities. In key stage one children are learning to make good use of times for reflection and a special pace in the classroom Displays show how cross curricular links are challenging children's spiritual and moral thinking.

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

The impact of collective worship on the school community is satisfactory. The school values collective worship as a time for being together to reflect and express joy through song and praise. There is a daily act of worship. A display board provides a focus for the current theme. There is no formal monitoring or evaluation system in place to ensure that children have a broad experience of worship and can participate more fully. Thus the coherent impact is lessened. Pupils behave and respond appropriately and enjoy learning from the experience of sharing Bible stories. They enjoy music assembly when they are given the opportunity to reflect on specific pieces of music. This provides opportunities for spiritual development. Older pupils are able to choose prayers to share, but have little experience of expressing their reflections or creating prayers. There are very strong links with the local church and the vicar leads worship each half term. This gives children a sense of being part of the church community.

How effective is the Religious Education in the school?

Religious education is satisfactory. The teaching of Religious education is satisfactory, as is attainment of pupils and helps to develop the Christian character of the school because of the priority given to it. Pupils speak of their enjoyment of the subject, which is seen in their responses in lessons. Some Resources including ICT and the Church are well used. In Key Stage One, pupils are knowledgeable about the church and its features. The reflective area in their classroom provides an effective focus and introduction for spiritual development. Work at Key Stage two is differentiated, addresses both learning about and learning from religion and often provides a level of challenge for the pupils. There is evidence that some marking acknowledges pupils' efforts and knowledge but this is not consistent across the school. The new subject coordinator is beginning to raise standards in the school and has already produced an action plan to address issues raised in an audit of the subject.

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 is satisfactory overall. The headteacher and governors have a vision for the Christian ethos of the school and the revision of the mission statement and the commitment to the key principles of 'Every Child Matters' initiative. This is a clear example of their desire to articulate and share the ethos with the school community, in order to develop the school. Currently however, the school's evaluation of its distinctiveness as a church school is at an early stage and there is little challenge to the level it achieves. Diocesan governors have attended training and pupils and parents feel that the school and governing body is approachable. The school has very strong links with the local church that enables children to see themselves as part of the wider church community. It is used for end of term services, and actively supports 'The Eagles' a church based group. The PCC awards Bibles to Y6 pupils at a Leavers service. The school has an active role in the local community sports and music festivals. Through the efforts of the pupils the school has recently been awarded a grant to develop an area in school to be used as a meeting place for the village community.

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