

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Dulwich Village Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Dulwich Village

London

SE21 7AL

Diocese: Southwark

LA: Southwark

Dates of inspection: 29 November, 2 December 2005

Date of last inspection: 24 January 2001

School's Unique reference number: 100823

Headteacher: Ali Silke

Inspector's name and number: Hilary Ferries

School context

Dulwich Village Church of England Infants School is a three form entry voluntary aided infants school set in the heart of Dulwich Village, London. At the time of inspection there were 237 pupils on roll in single age classes. The school has a split site, with 3 reception classes and 1 year one class in the new building and 3 year two classes and 2 year one classes in the old building.

The number of pupils with statements of SEN is above the national average. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is well below the national average.

Summary Judgement

Dulwich Village Infants School is an outstanding Church of England school with a distinctive ethos based on strong Christian beliefs and values.

Established strengths

- The distinctive ethos based on Christian values
- The very positive and caring relationships throughout the school
- The strong Christian leadership and vision of the headteacher, deputy headteacher, RE coordinator, clergy and governors
- The very high quality of the teaching and learning in Religious Education
- The value given to reflection during the school day
- The quality and variety of worship opportunities

Focus for development

The school has identified clear areas for development in the School Development Plan

- Involve members from the school community to review the mission statement of the school to make it more child friendly, explicitly Christian and relate to the identified 'core values' that run through school policies
- Develop the school entrance to further enhance the Christian ethos of the school
- Continue to refine the worship programme to link the Christian input with the application of faith to everyday life.

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

The school makes very good provision for meeting the needs of all pupils to enable them to be successful learners. Planning and observation of lessons showed clear differentiation for pupils across the ability range and staff use a variety of teaching styles to meet the needs of all learners. Christian values permeate all areas of school life, behaviour is very good and pupils flourish as a result of the very positive attitudes and rewards systems in the school. An example of this is the different 'cheers' that pupils devise to praise each other and the display of school 'core values' with photos of the pupils who have particularly displayed them each week. Pupils interviewed spoke of how the school makes them feel valued and special.

Pupils are given opportunities to develop spiritually with reflection time in lessons, in prayer corners and in worship. Pupils are very clear about the difference between right and wrong and all cultures are respected and valued. The excellent relationships between all members of the school community lead to a feeling of

warmth and security where pupils can fulfil their potential. There is a very attractive environment where pupils' work is valued. There are Christian symbols in the school including a cross in each hall and the entrance hall and the school is planning to develop the entrance hall and corridors further to enhance the emphasis they put on Christian values.

Grade: 1

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

Worship is considered to be a vital part of school life and is a key element in its Christian witness. There is an established pattern for worship that is followed closely and acts of worship are well planned. Pupils spoke of the importance of worship to them at their school and of the different opportunities they found most valuable – e.g. whole school, class worship and prayer corners. The worship coordinator plans with the headteacher with input from the vicar to ensure a programme of themes that is relevant to the church year and the distinctive Christian ethos of the school. She ensures that teachers have the resources they need to deliver the objectives of each worship session and is refining the three year programme on an ongoing basis to ensure clear learning intentions and the application of the themes to everyday life.

In the acts of worship observed, pupils were very attentive and involved in the experience. There were many opportunities for pupil participation, from discussion to singing and a range of teaching strategies was used. There were very good opportunities for reflection and very effective use was made of music – making a very positive contribution to the pupils' spiritual education. At the same time, the school is sensitive to the beliefs and traditions of those of other faiths or of none and takes care to ensure that collective worship provides for their needs.

Grade: 1

How effective is the religious education?

Religious Education is recognised by the governors, the headteacher and staff as being of particular importance in their Church school. There is a clear section of the School Development Plan for Religious Education and there is a named governor for RE. The curriculum is broad and balanced and appropriate for a Church of England school, pupils talk enthusiastically about what they have been learning and standards in RE are at least as high as in other subjects and in some cases higher. The well designed curriculum is delivered in an exciting and relevant way which leads to very good pupil involvement and high quality work. Lessons observed showed a clear focus on both attainment targets in RE – for example in Year 1 where pupils observed a video clip of young Christians talking about how and where they worshipped and then a request from the vicar for them to write a booklet that could be used as a guidebook for the church and in Reception where pupils had discussed birthdays and why Christians celebrate Jesus' birthday at Christmas. Spiritual development is also a strong feature of RE – for example in Year 2 where pupils reflected on what had guided them that day. All pupils interviewed showed a very positive response to RE and could talk about their work and learning.

Grade: 1

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

The headteacher is an excellent spiritual leader and her vision for the school is clear. She is ably supported by the Deputy and RE subject leader and the team is very reflective and constantly striving to improve.

Governors are closely involved with the school and monitor and evaluate all areas of school life. There are very close links with the Vicar and her curate who come into school to lead worship on a regular basis and who are also very much part of school life. Governors act as a critical friend and take their responsibilities very seriously. The named governor for RE and collective worship, who only started as a governor in September, has already had an extensive induction programme and has met with the RE coordinator to discuss the plans for RE and to monitor the subject. All staff interviewed were very positive about the school and pupils felt that their school was a

very good place to learn 'about God and other things'.

There is a very active school council which is engaged with the development and improvement of the school. There are very good partnerships between the school, church, and local community. Parents are welcomed to the school and are provided with clear information about the school and its plans. They are positive about and support the school's Christian ethos. The school is clear about how it wants to develop further as a church school and in no way thinks that its work is complete.

Grade: 1

SIAS report December 2005 Dulwich Village Church of England Infants School
Dulwich Village London SE21 7AL