

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Freshford Church of England

High Street

Freshford

Bath

BA3 6EE

Diocese Of Bath and Wells

Local Authority: Bath and North East Somerset

Date of Inspection: 15th December 2005

Date of last Inspection: October 2000

School's unique reference no: 109195

Name of Headteacher: Ms Anne Forrest

Inspector NS 80: Mrs J Waters-Dewhurst - 80

School Context

Freshford Church of England Primary is a small school. Most of the pupils come from the villages of Hinton Charterhouse, Midford and Freshford and the surrounding area. The school roll is increasing with a significant number joining after the Reception year. All children speak English as their first language but a small number are sometimes from minority ethnic groups. The numbers of pupils identified as having special educational needs fluctuates as does the number of pupils eligible for free school meals. The school is housed in innovative buildings combining the old school house with a modern two storey structure. The building and grounds are used imaginatively and well cared for by the whole school community.

Summary Judgement

Freshford Church of England Primary School is a good Church school with some areas that are outstanding. Its Christian values permeate the life of the whole school and are understood and appreciated by its pupils.

Established Strengths

- The inclusive nature of the school grounded in Christian values
- The excellent child centred education supported by a whole staff willingness to undertake research while remaining true to their educational philosophy
- The outstandingly positive relationships that exist between all members of the school community

Focus for development

- To further develop good church/school links once the new incumbent is in post
- To ensure that developing different aspects of the church foundation is included in each school development plan
- To indicate more clearly for parents that the school has a Christian foundation in the school prospectus and to separate Collective Worship from Religious Education
- To ensure that the opportunity to explore ideas about the nature of God is included in the spiritual development policy

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

The school makes outstanding provision through its distinctive Christian character for the needs of all learners.

The school's motto 'The unhurried school' allows all members of the school community to move forward at their own pace and to develop skills of reflection and evaluation. Attitudes of respect and the dignity of all are evident in all the relationships seen during the inspection. Pupils take their responsibilities towards each other very seriously; the buddy system is one example where Christian values are seen in the life of the school and the attitudes of the pupils. The school environment has been carefully designed to foster a sense of every member of the school being valued, in particular the library with individually chosen quotes painted onto the walls and the outside areas. Innovative teaching rooted in current and ongoing research allows pupils to make the most of learning opportunities and activities such as the philosophy circle and stilling exercises result in work of an extremely high standard across the curriculum and in children fulfilling their potential.

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

The impact of collective worship across the school is good.

Pupils talk enthusiastically about collective worship and appreciate the variety of styles and leaders. They enjoy the frequent personal involvement that they are allowed such as acting out Bible stories as they are told and writing visualisations for the harvest service. Pupils have learnt through collective worship that religion can be special and that there can be opportunities to "have your own place with God". Pupils learn about Bible stories, religious traditions and Christian values through a carefully planned programme of acts of worship.

The Christmas service at the Parish Church included a mix of traditional and contemporary songs all sung with obvious enjoyment. Pupils were seen to be very comfortable in and respectful of the church building. All members of staff including the school administration staff and a peripatetic music teacher were willingly involved in the service and in the care and organisation of the pupils and were treated with an enormous amount of respect and affection.

How effective is the religious education?

Religious Education in the school is good.

They receive an imaginative and balanced RE curriculum through use of the locally agreed syllabus 'Awareness, Mystery and Value'. Pupils' attitudes to world religions are very positive. Much work is done relating knowledge of different religions to the pupils' own lives thus balancing the two attainment targets. For instance a key stage two class after learning about the Buddhist eight fold path moved on to group work devising 'four human truths'. Individuals or groups often present their research in RE to the whole class. RE contributes to the spiritual development of pupils through the use of stilling, visualisation and reflection activities. The cross curricular approach of the school has a positive impact on the RE. The planning of RE, although not in an orthodox form, shows clearly the progression in RE activities from year to year. The Reader from the Parish Church contributes to RE lessons on Christianity in a well planned programme throughout the school.

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 outstanding.

The head and governors work together closely to provide excellent leadership for a close and effective team. All members of that team are valued and are fully aware and supportive of the strong vision that the head has for the school.

The governors see the rapid progress of the school to be a result of the head's outstanding leadership which has allowed staff to develop their expertise and provides an imaginative curriculum which is exciting and varied. The school's Christian values are a fundamental part of the daily life of the school and acknowledged by the whole school community.

The school enjoys good links with the local church and it is to be hoped that these will develop further when the new Rector is appointed. The school prospectus also needs to ensure that parents are clearly informed about the Christian foundation of the school.

The leadership of Freshford Church School clearly enables the provision of an innovative, imaginative and effective education for its pupils.

SIAS December 2005 Freshford Church of England High Street Freshford Bath BA3 6EE