

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Greens Norton Church of England Voluntary Controlled School,

Calvert Rd.
Greens Norton,
Towcester,
NN12 8DD

Diocese of Peterborough

LEA : Northamptonshire

Date of inspection:27.2.2006

Date of last inspection:

School's Unique reference number: 121974

Name of Headteacher: Mrs. Jan Pickering

Inspector's name and NS inspector's number: Mrs. Priscilla Parry

School Context

Greens Norton School is situated in a village 6 miles south west of Towcester. Though long established there is no original Trust Deed. There are 171 pupils on the roll, mostly from the 4 villages in the benefice. Parents fully support the school and are enthusiastic about its links with the church. The church was in interregnum during the Inspection but the incumbent's responsibilities are being taken by a Children's Worker

Summary Judgement

Greens Norton School is a good Church of England School. Relationships between school, church and community, are excellent. Leadership is strong and pupils feel secure and happy, resulting in a strong Christian ethos. Collective Worship is an important part of school life. The teaching of world faiths is good, but the teaching of Christianity in the RE syllabus needs to be reviewed. Monitoring and evaluation of all RE needs reviewing.

Established Strengths

- The commitment of the Head and Governing Body
- The high quality of Collective Worship
- Links with the local church
- Overall Christian ethos in the school

Focus for Development

- The importance in the RE syllabus of Christianity as a world religion.
- Implement more rigorous planning of RE in the Foundation classes, and monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning in RE
- Underpin the values written in the Ethos Statement firmly in Christian belief, with a Mission Statement

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

The School through its distinctive Christian character meets the needs of all learners in a satisfactory way. The Christian ethos is present throughout the school with its key values of support, forgiveness and love, as recorded in the Ethos Statement, pervading all activities and relationships. A friendship bench offers children support by other learners or members of staff on playground duty if they feel lonely or troubled. Year 6 pupils take responsibility for younger ones who need help in the 'buddy' system. Achievements are celebrated for children of all abilities, and good behaviour rewarded. On a table in the entrance hall is a candle and an open book of prayers. In the school hall is a display of the 10 Commandments, and the Lord's Prayer with a version by one of the pupils in his own words. However more could be done to highlight explicit Christian values by anchoring them in the teachings of the Christian faith, including the adoption of a Mission Statement, so that learners can link faith and action. Overseas links could also be developed.

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

The impact of Collective Worship on the school community is good. The focal points for Acts of Worship are a cross and a candle. The worship observed was excellent. It was a clear, focused presentation, imaginative, and included active pupil participation. Learners were quiet and attentive and showed by their attitude they were totally absorbed. The Candlemas candle was lit before the period of quiet reflection. When asked afterwards, learners comments were: 'Thinking time helps you to think of other people'; 'It is quiet and peaceful'; 'It makes you think what you can do'. They consider Acts of Worship an important part of school life. The governors need to be more involved in the monitoring of Collective Worship but it was encouraging to have a recent questionnaire asking all

learners for their views which revealed the value they attach to worship. Suggestions for improvement included more singing, and more Bible stories. The Foundation Governor, Bishop's Visitor, Methodist Minister and Children's Worker are also in the team. There is an effectively planned weekly programme, which includes class worship on some days.

How effective is the Religious Education in the school?

The teaching of Religious Education is satisfactory. Adequate time is given for RE in the weekly timetable. Themes are based on the Northampton Agreed Syllabus. Two RE lessons were observed, one of which was outstanding. Learners said they liked studying other faiths because it helped them understand people better. Asked about the teaching of Christianity, they said they studied other faiths in RE but not Christianity, except during the weekly visits of the Children's Worker! They were most enthusiastic about these visits because they had Bible stories and sometimes dramatised them. Whilst these visits are commendable, they should not take the place of formal RE lessons which are part of the curriculum. The Agreed Syllabus should be followed in full and the Diocesan Supplementary Material would be of value here. Consistent planning of weekly lessons was not evident at Foundation level, and monitoring and evaluation of planning and teaching needs reviewing at all levels. The subject is effectively resourced with videos, tapes, posters and books for teachers and pupils. Valuable visits are made to places of worship throughout the year.

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. The school prospectus states it aims to create a warm and welcoming atmosphere, and it does. The Head Teacher, Chair and members of the Governing Body, especially the Foundation Governors, supported by a team of committed staff, enthusiastic parents, and the PTA, provide a happy and focused school. The church has a significant presence in school life and both pupils and parents welcome this. The Children's Worker is providing the necessary link during the interregnum, and is to be thanked for her dedication and enthusiasm, as are all the Leadership and Management team. Family services and other activities organised by the church are fully supported by members of the school family. Members of the Over 50s club, first contacted through a History Survey run by the pupils, now come into school to help with art, cooking and other activities. However, while all the above are valued and each makes a significant contribution to a successful whole, there needs also to be in place formal monitoring by the Head Teacher and Governors of the development of the Christian dimension of the school's life.

SIAS Report February 2006 Greens Norton Church of England Voluntary Controlled School, Towcester, NN12 8DD