

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### Hawthorn Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Norham Road  
Ashington  
Northumberland  
NE63 0LF

**Diocese: Newcastle**

LA: Northumberland

Dates of inspection: 12<sup>th</sup> July 2006

Date of last inspection: NA

School's Unique reference number: 134729

Headteacher: Mrs Karen Biggs

Inspector's name and number: Mrs Jean Mulley 358

#### School context

The school is situated in the middle of a housing estate in Ashington. The headteacher has been in post for four years. The school changed status in 2004.

#### Summary Judgement

This is a good school. There is a good Christian ethos which is developing in a positive and sensitive manner following the recent change to a faith school. Parents appreciate the way in which their children are both cared for and encouraged to achieve their potential. There is a mutual respect for all in the school.

#### Established strengths

Christian values lie at the heart of this school. There is a caring and welcoming atmosphere. This is a school where everyone is valued and respected. There are very good relationships between staff and pupils. There is a strong sense of "togetherness". Children are polite and well behaved. They feel safe and secure in this environment.

#### Focus for development

- There is a need to implement a more rigorous approach to planning and evaluation for collective worship.
- The school should develop the focal point for worship in order to enhance the ambience of the occasion.
- The school would benefit from having more signs and symbols of a Christian nature around the school to make the Christian ethos more explicit.

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

This is clearly a school where Christian values such as love, caring, tolerance and forgiveness are recognised. Pupils are polite, well behaved and welcoming to visitors. They are happy to come to school. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good. There is a school council and a "buddy" system in place. Opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are to be found across the curriculum and all areas of school life. The school has close connections with the parish church. Each classroom has a quiet area with a cross (or other Christian symbol) A prayer corner is set up in the entrance hall and this is used regularly by pupils and adults. There is also a worry box in which pupils are able to place their concerns. The school is firmly rooted in the local community in which it has a good reputation. There are a wide range of out of hours activities and these are well attended by pupils. Pupils raise funds for an extensive range of charities.

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

Collective worship is central to the daily life of the school. Delivery of worship is good. The school endeavours to give pupils variety in worship through a range of visitors and different approaches. The local church is used on special occasions and as a resource. The parish priest is a regular and supportive visitor to the school. A worship table with a cross and candle has been set up but this needs to be in a more prominent position in order to enhance the ambience for worship. The school has developed a very good method of involving pupils in the evaluation of worship. However, overall a more rigorous approach to planning and evaluating worship needs to be developed. The school is sensitive to the beliefs and traditions of other faiths. This is evidenced in displays and artefacts around the school, the R.E. programme and the sensitive way in which pupils of other beliefs are cared for.

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

Leadership and management of this school are good. The headteacher has a clear Christian vision for the school. Staff and governors share and support this vision. There is a strong sense of teamwork amongst the staff and they work well together. Governors are enthusiastic and committed to the school. They know their school well. Foundation governors are aware of the particular role they have in bringing the church aspect into areas of governance. The school has very good links with parents who are generally very supportive to the school but a small minority expressed concern about the disrupted teaching which was due to events totally outside the school's control. The headteacher and governors need to be aware of this minority view so that the needs of all stakeholders can be met.

SIAS report July 2006 Hawthorn C.E. First School Norham Road Ashington Northumberland NE63 0LF