

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Holy Trinity Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Glebe Road

Cuckfield

West Sussex

RH17 5BE

Diocese: Chichester

LA: West Sussex

Dates of inspection: 23 - 24 March 2006

Date of last inspection: 13 - 17 September 1999

School's Unique reference number: 126054

Headteacher: Mary Stenton

Inspector's name and number: Richard Saunders 175

School context

Holy Trinity Primary School serves an area around the village of Cuckfield, to the west of Haywards Heath. Pupils come from a variety of socio-economic groups including farmworkers, professional people and a travelling community. The original school can trace its foundation to 1509, on a site near the church. The present school was built in 1991 and has benefitted from wide corridors, more classrooms, an ICT suite and a music room. Set in grounds of over 6 acres, the school makes good use of its recreational and environmental facilities.

At the time of the inspection there were 10 full time teachers, 8 part time teachers and 18 teaching assistants/learning support staff.

Summary Judgement

Holy Trinity is an effective church school, characterised by good relationships and a happy, caring Christian ethos. The positive opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development enable pupils to become successful learners and citizens. Standards in collective worship and Religious Education are satisfactory with some good features. Pupils' active participation in collective worship enhances their spiritual experiences. Pupils enjoy Religious Education, their overall attainment is in line with national expectations. The headteacher, governors and staff work well together to promote the school's distinctive Christian character and enhance its reputation with parents and the local community.

Established strengths

- The distinctive character of the school which is firmly based upon Christian beliefs and values.
- The valuable contribution that collective worship and Religious Education make to the pupils' understanding of the Anglican tradition.
- The positive relationship of the headteacher, governors and staff working together to promote the Christian ethos of the school.

Focus for development

- To continue to evaluate the distinctiveness and effectiveness of the school as a church school, using the National Society's self evaluation framework, including strengthening the vision statement.
- To develop the spiritual, moral, social and cultural education by creating an overarching policy which integrates all curriculum subjects and enhances the pupils' opportunities and experiences, already identified in the School Improvement Plan.
- To maintain a consistent, systematic written record of collective worship to extend good practice and assist in monitoring and evaluation.
- To review the pace of Religious Education lessons, develop original written work through literacy strategies and create greater differentiation in class work particularly in challenging the more able pupils.

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

The school makes good provision for meeting the needs of all its pupils, including providing a Scripture Union pack for those starting school in the Foundation Stage. A warm welcome is given to visitors by the staff, who provide good role models, and the children, who are happy, caring and courteous. The school's Christian character is reflected in the good relationships which exist throughout the school. Co-operation

between the key stages is good in work and play. A variety of commendations, including an achievement tree, encourages pupils to strive for good progress and good behaviour. The few pupils with challenging behaviour are well managed. Most parents are supportive of the school and feel their contributions to it are valued. Prayers are important in the life of the school being said at lunch time and at the end of the day.

Pupils are encouraged to discuss their concerns through the school council and at termly meetings with the headteacher. Opportunities for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils are satisfactory to good. These will be further enhanced when the school creates an overarching policy which integrates all the curriculum subjects. In order to strengthen the cultural element the school should consider establishing a link with an urban school to develop the pupils' awareness of religious and ethnic diversity. The governors are to be commended in identifying elements from the National Society's self evaluation framework, which should be included in the school's vision statement in order to strengthen its Christian character.

Grade 2

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

Worship occupies a secure place in the life of the school. It is recognisably Christian and honours the Anglican tradition. The collective worship policy is succinct and focused. Whole school, key stage and class worship form the weekly pattern. Acts of collective worship are planned by the headteacher and the vicar at which Christian festivals, moral and social issues are clearly identified in the worship plan. The vicar and a Baptist minister ensure that worship is led by a member of the clergy each week. A small team of teachers lead worship on a regular basis and provide appropriate opportunities for pupils' active participation. At present the monitoring and evaluation of collective worship is insufficient to inform current, and to extend future, good practice.

During the inspection the acts of worship observed were of a satisfactory standard with some good features, including a candle lit as a focus for worship, the pupils' attentive behaviour and their tuneful singing, accompanied by the school band, emphasising the school's strong musical tradition. In order to strengthen the pupils' religious experiences more exciting worship should be created, whilst retaining the current spiritual emphasis. There are no current plans to introduce the Eucharist. Harvest Festival, Christingle and end of term services are held in Holy Trinity Church, which are very well attended by parents/carers. Year 6 pupils attend a Diocesan Leavers' Service.

Grade 3

How effective is the religious education?

Religious Education is recognised by the governors and teachers as being of importance in a church school. The Religious Education Policy is clear and focused. The current scheme of work follows the agreed syllabus, provides good guidance for teachers and meets the statutory requirements in content and time allocation. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory with some good features, including the enthusiasm and good knowledge displayed by the teachers and the interest shown by the pupils. The use of interactive whiteboards is good, the pupils' use of a range of ICT skills enhances their knowledge and understanding of Religious Education.

In order to enliven lessons, teachers' planning in terms of pace within the various components, matched to the ability of pupils to work on-task, needs to be further considered. The amount of original written work through the literacy strategy should be reviewed in the context of writing in different styles, other than purely descriptive accounts. The review should also look at greater differentiation in work, ensuring that the more able pupils are challenged. The current emphasis is on learning "about" religion, it is important that pupils also learn "from" religion. The school is developing level descriptors as a means of exemplifying and monitoring standards in the subject. Pupils showed positive attitudes to Religious Education and recalled previous

learning well. Overall the pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations of pupils progress and achievement in the subject.

Grade 3

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

The headteacher, governors and staff work very well together to promote the distinctive Christian character of the school. This is further emphasised for visitors by the cross and display in the foyer, and for pupils by the area in each classroom featuring aspects of Religious Education. The pupils benefit significantly from the strong link with Holy Trinity Church. The school makes positive use of the church for services and as a teaching resource. As part of the school's and the church's outreach a service for key stage 1 children and their parents/carers is held weekly and a family service is held monthly after school. The foundation governors have been pro-active in forming a link with the Parochial Church Council of Holy Trinity Church, who make generous financial commitments to the school.

The school has established a positive network with others in the Haywards Heath area, benefitting the pupils through sporting links and the teachers through shared INSET and staff meetings. The school has formed very constructive links with the local community through its participation in sporting, social and cultural events. A variety of social and fund raising events are organised by parents/carers throughout the year. The school supports charities as part of its Christian outreach.

Grade 2

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