

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Holy Trinity Church of England V C Primary School

Trinity Road South

West Midlands

B70 6NF

Diocese of Lichfield

Sandwell LEA

Date of inspection: 12/12/2005

Date of last inspection:1999

Unique reference number 103986

Headteacher: Mrs H M Gilbert

Inspector NS 195: Mr W J Griffiths

Context of the school

Holy Trinity serves the area of central West Bromwich, a high proportion of pupils coming from one of the most deprived wards in the Borough of Sandwell, with high levels of unemployment, drug abuse, crime and vandalism. It is part of a Health Action Zone. Most of the pupils are from minority ethnic groups, a majority of these of Indian background. A very high proportion of pupils have English as a second language. Attainment on entry is low and the number with SEN above the national average. In the year before inspection, there were changes in the teaching staff, which included the deputy Headteacher and mathematics co-ordinator. The Ofsted inspection took place under the new framework in the second week in September. Since then the school has made good use of the latest available data in finalizing its Improvement Plan.

Summary Judgement

This is a good church school, which has a clear view of its strengths and has identified the action needed in those areas where it needs to improve.

Established strengths

- an outstandingly cohesive team of Headteacher, Vicar and Chair of Governors, which promotes a very clear Christian vision for the school and receives good support from the whole community
- very good links with the Church and the wider community
- good quality of worship observed
- very good relationships: "The school is a harmonious community in which pupils' different cultures and faiths are valued" (Ofsted 05)
- high expectations of pupil performance and behaviour

Focus for development

- Complete and evaluate the current Collective Worship Action Plan, which includes a review of themes and resources, together with provision for staff training to take account of recent changes.
- Continue to develop systems for recording, monitoring and evaluating collective worship.
- Consider a more regular use of standard prayers to enable pupils to recognise and use them in other situations.

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

The school makes good provision, through its distinctive Christian character, to meet the needs of all learners.

- The School is welcoming and secure, with clear procedures for visitors and an entrance area displaying Christian symbols, the School's Mission Statement, its aims and values, together with an up-to-date information sheet of Church activities.
- Discussion with pupils confirmed the outcomes of parent and pupil questionnaires that all learners feel valued and special. "Pupils enjoy coming to school and behave well" (Ofsted 05). The School Council has regular fortnightly meetings and well-established procedures for listening to the views of all pupils. The school puts its policies of love, care and inclusion into practice. For example a small number of pupils, excluded on a short-term basis, were successfully re-integrated.
- Academic achievement is good in relation to prior attainment and social background, apart from in Mathematics, where the school has a clear improvement plan. The value-added score for the school was positive. Weekly praise assemblies, following worship, reinforce pupils' sense of achievement. Individual and group success is celebrated, such as the tournament-winning basketball team.
- Pupils also flourish as individuals through the very good provision for physical exercise (Healthy Schools' Gold award), playing field, all-weather arena, range of extracurricular clubs, lunchtime Huff and Puff Club. There is a breakfast club and developing work to encourage healthier eating.
- Christian values, explored in collective worship and PSHCE, enhance the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all learners. Faith traditions and cultures of other groups add to this through displays of work in RE and whole school celebration of major festivals. Pupils have a strong sense of what is right. One pupil volunteered the example of helping someone who falls, rather than laughing at them. Dinnertime supervisors confirmed that racial or other conflict is rare and cases dealt with appropriately through the "buddy" system or by senior staff. Pupils learn to care for the environment through helping to maintain the pond area, their concern and care for others shown in charitable fund-raising, most recently for the victims of the Tsunami, the Pakistani Earthquake and combining Harvest and Advent giving to provide "A cow for Christmas".

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

The impact of collective worship on the school community is seen to be good and is a key element in its Christian witness.

- There are prominent sections on worship, links with the Church, the Mission statement and a photograph of pupils at Lichfield Cathedral in the Prospectus. The school's foundation is very well explained.
- A highly original tapestry forms the focal point for worship in the Hall and depicts the school logo of a dove within a cross and children of different races holding hands beneath.
- The whole-school worship observed was judged to be good; there was friendly, respectful ambience, crisp and enthusiastic singing and a good pace in the development of the Advent theme. Excellent use was made of paired discussion, involving all the pupils and staff in imagining how Zechariah might have felt when he heard the good news. The telling of the story led seamlessly into a time for quiet reflection and prayer, before the end of worship was clearly marked by the extinguishing of the Advent candles.
- Planning is good, based on fortnightly themes, reflecting the Christian Church Year. Special services are held in the Church for Harvest, Christmas and Easter, attended by parents, governors and members of the congregation. Celebrations of the other major faiths represented in the school also take place and allowance is made for reaction to unexpected events.
- A good start has been made in monitoring worship; the records and evaluations kept by each teacher are collated by the co-ordinator (the Headteacher) and used to inform annual overall evaluation, involving the pupils, staff and governors, leading to the production of an action plan within the School Improvement Plan.
- Pupils are encouraged to write their own prayers and a large collection is a part of the varied resources available to staff. Resources are regularly updated from an appropriate budget allocation.
- Pupils had positive attitudes to worship, some enjoying singing in whole school worship, others preferring discussion in classroom worship.
- The permanent display area, reflecting the fortnightly theme, has a very positive impact on the school community, serving as a constant reminder of worship activities and events.

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 judged to be good.

The Headteacher, co-ordinator for Worship & RE, Vicar and Chair of Governors (a Foundation Governor) form an outstandingly cohesive team with a very clear Christian vision for the school and its service to the whole community. A popular parent/toddler group is run on the Church premises. An ESOL class, with crèche facilities is also provided and the Christian vision communicated to partner organisations, such as Sure Start. The Headteacher also helps to lead monthly family worship at the Church and is a member of its community committee. She is currently involved in discussions about the admission of children to communion before confirmation.

Foundation governors are involved in all appointments and there is clear support from other governors and from the leadership team in promoting the vision through the action plan and through work in RE, which is taught weekly, rather than in modules. The Vicar leads worship, including classroom worship, supports elements of the RE programme, such as baptism, the Eucharist and visits to the Church. As a former teacher, she also supports other teaching on occasion.

There is good monitoring and evaluation of the Christian dimension of the school's life, involving all stakeholders, and its development is an important part of the overall school improvement plan. The parent questionnaires and discussion with parents demonstrated that relationships between all members of the school community are good and that the school has a special quality, which allows learners of all backgrounds to flourish as individuals.