

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Hutton All Saints Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Claughton Way

Hutton

Essex

CM13 1JW

Diocese: Chelmsford

LA: Essex

Dates of inspection: June 19th 2006

Date of last inspection: 2000

School's Unique reference number: 115258

Headteacher: Mrs. Linda Dean

Inspector's name and number: Janet Dyson

School context

The school serves an area to the east of Brentwood. There are 229 pupils on roll. There is a broad range of social circumstances amongst the families whose children attend. The percentage of children entitled to free school meals is about average. The proportion of children from minority ethnic groups is about average. The proportion of children who do not speak English as their first language, whilst in line with the national average, is increasing.

Summary Judgement

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Hutton All Saints as a Church of England school is outstanding. The school supports children's spiritual development very effectively and strongly promotes their understanding of the Christian faith. Religious Education (RE) has a high priority in the life of the school and teaching is good. Children and teachers have a very positive attitude to both RE and worship and children are confident to talk about their beliefs. The Headteacher and Governing Body provide extremely effective leadership.

Established strengths

- The Headteacher and Governing Body provide very strong and effective leadership, based on a shared understanding of, and commitment to, Christian values
- Religious Education is good. It is given high priority in the school and makes a significant contribution to children's personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Children of Christian and other faiths are confident, to talk about their beliefs and feel strongly that they are respected and valued
- Children value and enjoy collective worship especially the opportunities they are given for active participation in the Church services

Focus for development

- Provide time for staff to reflect on their understanding of the distinctive qualities of the school and to focus on their own spiritual development away from the demands of everyday school life.
- Implement the planned quiet times for personal reflection during some acts of worship

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

The school, through its distinctive Christian character, is meeting the needs of all learners very effectively. The Christian ethos is very strong. Children from all cultures and faith backgrounds feel confident that their beliefs are respected and valued, for example, one Muslim pupil explained: "I'm a different religion but feel I can say my own prayers." The commitment to Christian values is shared by the Headteacher, all staff and members of the governing body and there is a common understanding of what this means in practice. The Foundation Governors and, indeed, all governors, provide excellent support. They monitor and evaluate the school's effectiveness as a church school and ask challenging questions when this is appropriate. Behaviour is excellent. Children show respect and consideration for each other, particularly older towards younger ones, in the playground, for example. Discussions with children from all groups represented in the school revealed a strong conviction that all forms of bullying, including racism, are not tolerated in the school. One 7 year old Muslim pupil said "There is no racism because children learn good

manners here.”

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

The impact of collective worship on the school community is very strong. Worship is central to the life of the school. Care is taken to create a calm, reflective atmosphere for worship and children are engaged and focused. All staff attend assemblies and say they find the time meaningful and calming. Worship themes are planned to link with themes in RE. Children know the Lord’s Prayer and write and read their own prayers. They particularly value and enjoy the Friday assemblies for celebration and thanksgiving. Children are familiar with the practice of Church worship. They speak positively about the regular opportunities they have to help plan and lead worship in the Church, celebrating the key events in the Church’s year. Local clergy are involved in leading worship. The school’s self-evaluation has resulted in an appropriate aim to improve the worship space in the hall and to plan times for quiet reflection in some assemblies. No children are withdrawn from worship. It is clear from discussions with children that those from other faiths consider that the school enables them to feel included in worship without making them feel compromised.

How effective is the religious education?

Religious Education (RE) is effective in the school, it is given high priority and teaching is good. Children achieve well and have positive attitudes to RE. They rightly feel that their subject knowledge is good. They know and understand the key beliefs and teachings of Christianity and the other faiths covered in the syllabus. They use religious vocabulary well. Lessons are well planned, taking account of the needs of all learners. ICT is used effectively to support teaching. Teachers model key ideas, for example, reflection. There is a strong emphasis on thoughtful discussion and children participate well. RE contributes significantly to children’s personal, spiritual, social and moral development through exploration of questions about meaning, purpose, and values. Year 5 children discussed loyalty and respect after hearing the story of Ruth. Year 2 children showed good knowledge and understanding of Bible stories. They were able to recall previous teaching about the good Samaritan and could explain the significance of the story: “They started as enemies and became friends”. Reception children showed interest and enjoyment as they explored the idea of jealousy through the story of Joseph’s treatment by his brothers engaging in a range of interesting activities. The balance of the RE syllabus reflects religions other than Christianity and has appropriately been extended to cover Islam to reflect the background and experiences of the local Muslim community. RE successfully reflects the school’s Christian foundation whilst giving due weight to other faiths.

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 Headteacher and Governors provide extremely effective leadership, working in close partnership which is based on a shared understanding of, and commitment to, the school’s Christian purpose. The school’s ability to critically evaluate its work is well developed. Areas for development had been accurately identified in advance of the inspection. Feedback from parents through questionnaires, discussions with children and staff indicate that they are very positive about the school’s Christian ethos and its impact on learners. Staff value the ethos of the school highly but find it hard to identify exactly what the qualities are which make it an effective church school. There is a very good relationship between the school and the local Church community. Church members and parents attend the school’s church services and assemblies. The parish priest, who is also chair of governors, is valued for his strong support of the whole school community. The assistant priest of the parish also plays a major pastoral and spiritual role in caring for children and young people. She is very actively involved in the life of school.

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