

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Leven Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

South Street

Leven

Beverley

HU17 5NX

Diocese: York

LA: East Riding of Yorkshire

Dates of inspection: 11 July 2006

Date of last inspection: December 2000

School's Unique reference number: 117981

Headteacher: Mr Tim Sykes

Inspector's name and number: Mrs Sharon Artley (NS 131)

School context

Leven CE Primary School is smaller than average with 163 pupils on roll. It is in an exclusively rural catchment area, where most families are considered advantaged. The majority of pupils are of white British heritage, with a very small number for whom English is an additional language. A major building programme was completed this academic year, which has provided the school with a variety of new and refurbished facilities.

Summary Judgement

Leven Primary School is a good Church school with some significant features. A strong Christian ethos is its core element and underpins the entire fabric of school life. Recently completed building work now provides a very positive learning environment. The school has created an outstanding visibly Christian environment and places a strong emphasis on the centrality of Collective Worship.

Established strengths

- Strong leadership and vision of the senior management team in creating an enriched learning environment underpinned by Christian values
- The place of Collective Worship as central to the life of the school.
- A vibrant environment in which achievement and success are displayed, together with explicit Christian symbols

Focus for development

- Develop strategies to actively involve foundation governors in monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of Collective Worship and the Christian emphasis in policy documents.
- Develop closer links with the Diocesan Education team to support and sustain the good work already in progress.
- Closer monitoring and evaluation on the effectiveness of RE.

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

The school, through its distinctive Christian character, makes good provision to meet the needs of all learners. Learners ably expressed their views about feeling valued and special and said they felt cared for. They recognise distinctive features of the school as a church school, for example, the use of a special table and lighting a prayer candle at worship. They understand the significance of the cross on the pupil-designed school badge. There is an importance placed on respecting people who are different or are from other faiths. This is seen in the stained glass window for the new hall and pupils could explain its significance and symbolism. Personal reflections and accounts written by learners on the impact of a "Faith in Action" day and other visits are displayed on corridor notice boards. Care and concern for the needs of learners is shown in the way that pupils can express their feelings through "feelings barometers" or thermometers. One class also has a "worry box" where any concerns or issues can be written down. These are followed up individually by the teacher. How people should behave towards each other is visible in "Golden rules" devised by learners and prominently displayed outside all classrooms. Learners show an understanding of what prayer is and why Christians pray. They recite prayers at lunch and the end of school and have also composed books of prayers. There are many occasions to think of others. Pupils sing carols for the elderly and pre-school children at Christmas and have raised money for various charitable events. Learners were involved in the design and making of excellent Christian symbols which strongly

identify the school as a Church school. The Foundation Governors support the school well and are involved in policy making. However, their role in monitoring and evaluation has yet to be explored fully. Transition from pre-school to Foundation stage is a particular strength and parents made special mention of the value of the home visit made by staff before the pupils start school. The care and concern for new pupils is seen in a reassuring phone call to parents during their child's first day at school. Parents commented on the way in which their children's learning and social integration were very quickly moved forward and also on the way in which teachers see the children as a family.

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

The impact of Collective Worship on the school community is good and is central to its life.

The school prayer, introduced by the headteacher speaks of the centrality of God's love. Learners both know and understand this prayer. Pupils enter the hall in respectful silence and the open square formation of seating is very effective in making all feel included and involved. There are separate acts of worship for each Key Stage. In Key Stage 2, a pupil opens worship with "The Lord is here" to which everyone gives the response. Banners, created by the pupils and church members, reflect the seasons of the Christian year or spiritual qualities and affirm the Anglican status of the school. These are used as part of the focus of worship. Pupils sing hymns and say prayers well, They understand the theme of worship for each day. Each class also conducts worship to which parents are invited. A noticeboard displays prayers, together with a photographic presentation of artefacts used in prayer by different faiths and the theme and music for the week. There are visits to the church for special occasions such as Harvest, Christmas and a Leavers' service and pupils participate in the Education Sunday service. Parishioners recently donated a cross for each class which were blessed in a service by the Archbishop of York. Pupils knew that these were to be the focal point of a quiet and reflective space in each classroom. The headteacher has reviewed worship and ethos with small groups of pupils. These give feedback and raise points of development which form part of improvement planning. As yet this is not monitored or evaluated by the governing body.

How effective is the religious education?

The effectiveness of RE is satisfactory with some good features. The subject is well organised and led by the coordinator. The themes used develop a culture of respect for others and this is reflected in displays of pupils' work and learners' responses in lessons. The coordinator has carried out a scrutiny of books, monitors planning and supports staff in improving their own knowledge and understanding of the subject. Lesson observations have not yet been undertaken and a full evaluation procedure involving staff and governors is not yet in place. These should be established as a matter of priority. The subject is well resourced with books and artefacts, though not yet as fully with film or video. In observed lessons, imaginative use was made of the interactive whiteboard for reflective activities. Pupils are able to build on prior learning and respond thoughtfully to questions. The vicar supports aspects of RE by contributing to themes such as baptism or marriage. Attitudes to the subject are very positive, with pupils keen to participate. In lessons visited, younger pupils showed an understanding of how artefacts were used to aid prayer and worship. Older pupils could articulate clearly ways in which Hindus used prayer and meditation to become closer to God and to be aware of their own wrongdoing.

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

Leadership and management of the school are good with some outstanding features. The headteacher's vision for a new school building has resulted in the creation of a very positive and vibrant learning environment which is respected by the pupils. Through questionnaires, views are regularly sought from stakeholders. These are analysed and used to inform and evaluate policy and practice. Parents are regularly informed by newsletters of the life of the school. From the easy to use up-to-date website, many other documents, including policy statements can be accessed. The school's strap line of "Enriching Life Through Learning" can be clearly seen in action through the large number of enrichment activities which are aimed at embedding spirituality throughout the curriculum. The senior leadership team and governors

always have the distinctive Christian character of the school as a central focus. There are clear statements written in key policy documents such as the School Improvement Plan and Ethos, Values, Vision, Mission and Aims which place Christian principles at the core and serve to underpin the work of the school.

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