

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Lewknor Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

High Street

Lewknor

Oxon OX49 5TH

Diocese: Oxford

LA: Oxfordshire

Dates of inspection: 26th June 2006

Date of last inspection: 2 March 2000

School's Unique reference number: 123128

Headteacher: Jonathan Walker

Inspector's name and number: Lyn Field NS 151

Summary Judgement

Lewknor School is a good church school playing a key role at the heart of its community. There is a real sense of family and children grow in confidence of their own worth and that of others. The new headteacher is making a significant impact in giving clarity to its distinctiveness as a church school.

Established strengths

- The clear vision of the new headteacher for the Christian ethos of the school
- The outstanding personal development of pupils is the result of the quality of care provided by staff
- The links with the Church that enable pupils to experience being part of a worshipping community

Focus for development

- Involve staff and pupils in the evaluation of the Christian dimension of the school
- Ensure that there is consistency in the quality of worship and spiritual development across the curriculum

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

The school is outstanding in meeting the needs of all learners through its distinctive Christian character.

The school successfully enables each child to grow in confidence and self-esteem and so they welcome and engage visitors with pride. Pupils feel their achievement is valued and the citizenship award motivates them throughout their time in school. The School council has recently been reconvened and is already having an impact because all children have a clear way of raising issues in the school. The council members themselves are aware of their responsibilities and now look at the school with an evaluative eye. Children's emotional development is particularly well cared for. They use their individual 'pink books' to share personal concerns with any adult on the staff. They have total confidence that they will receive a sensitive and helpful response and claim this system ensures small issues do not grow into big problems. This reflects the excellent relationships and trust that exists. The way in which boys and girls of all ages play together is impressive, indicative of the powerful family atmosphere in the school. They freely offer and ask for help among themselves. Older children, as well as adults model respect for each other and so different opinions are treated very seriously. All this means children have good attitudes to learning and their moral and social development is outstanding. The good practice in place clearly reflects Christian values. This is now being specifically identified in policy documents but has yet to be translated into curriculum plans so inconsistencies remain. For example, the youngest children listen to music to help them reflect at the end of the morning but very limited use is made of the sensory garden so there are missed opportunities for spiritual development. Children grow up with a strong sense of community because they are aware of being part of a worshipping community as well as their village and their school.

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

Collective worship has a good impact on the school community.

This because collective worship contributes to children's personal development and their knowledge of the Christian faith. All staff participate in worship and parents and parishioners join the Friday celebration assembly in church. This gives children a real sense of being part of a regular worshipping community. Children feel that, like RE, assemblies help them make connections with their own lives. They can explain how faith makes a difference to the way you live and therefore it is important to respect those from other traditions. The pattern of assemblies itself reflects the school's ethos and reinforces the community values. Monday worship in church, led by the headteacher, sets the tone for the week and on Friday, achievement is celebrated in the context of worship, again in church. The vicar leads a mid-week assembly in school. There is no regular monitoring of worship in place so it is not clear to what extent class worship enriches the experience of pupils. The new headteacher's initial evaluation has already resulted in changes and the themes for worship have been broadened to include aspects of belief such as prayer. This is important because it is developing children's understanding of the purpose of worship so that it is more than just an expression of the church school status. Children are keen to be involved and enjoy singing, especially the new material they have learned. The music and the creation of a prayer tree in school demonstrate the headteacher's vision in which worship 'takes children beyond the everyday'.

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, is good.

The new headteacher has made a significant impact on the ethos of the school in a short time. There was already a culture in place that was conducive to Christian values but his clear vision has articulated these and given the Church foundation of the school a higher profile. The sign outside the school, letters and notices now make it clear that this is a church school. In the past year the whole governing body has reflected on how the school's Church status shapes its ethos and this informed the selection of the new head. Everyone is quite clear that this is a school where 'Anglican education is about Christian service to the community, not service to the Christian community'. The headteacher and the vicar have worked together to identify specific Christian values and these are now central to the revised policies for RE and Collective Worship. They reflect the existing good practice in the school but will give a sharper focus to self-evaluation for governors and curriculum planning for staff. The headteacher is developing his role as a spiritual leader and in collective worship there is already a sense that this is enabling pupils to find their inner voice. It has been a year of intensive activity for the governors but with the clear direction of the new head this school is rapidly developing into a very distinctive church school.

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