

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### Long Marston Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Station Road

Long Marston

Tring

Herts. HP23 4QS

**Diocese: St. Albans**

LA: Hertfordshire

Dates of inspection: 24 April 2006

Date of last inspection: 14, 15 March 2000

School's Unique reference number: 117459

Headteacher: Mr Peter Dickenson

Inspector's name and number: Isobel Vale

#### School context

Long Marston is a Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School catering for 128 pupils aged between 4 and 11. It is located in a small village on the outskirts of Tring. It serves Long Marston and the surrounding villages though currently a third of pupils on roll are from outside this area. Pupils come from a range of social backgrounds with a very small proportion eligible for free school meals. The number of pupils with learning difficulties is slightly above national average.

#### Summary Judgement

Long Marston is a good Church of England school that reflects its Christian foundation well.

#### Established strengths

- The strong Christian ethos in which all pupils are valued and respected.
- The effective leadership of the headteacher.
- The value all members of the school community place on religious education and collective worship.
- The good links with the church and the community.

#### Focus for development

- Develop further the role of the RE Co-ordinator in monitoring standards
- Ensure clear procedures are in place to support pupils in knowing how to advance their learning in RE
- Develop the monitoring and evaluation role of governors in relation to the Christian dimension of the school.

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

This is a good school in meeting the needs of all learners through its distinctive Christian character. (Overall grade 2).

Relationships at all levels in the school are outstanding. Teaching and support staff jointly play a key role in supporting a strong climate for learning and pastoral care which stems from a clear Christian ethos. Pupils are happy, thoroughly enjoy their learning experiences, working well both individually and in groups. Christian values are reflected in the aims of the school and through the headteacher's personal vision many opportunities are provided for these values to be nurtured in practical ways. For example the 3 Es Initiative complements the Christian ethos, positively encouraging pupils to reflect on their own behaviour and attitudes. Overall, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Parents feel involved in their children's education and many believe that the Christian ethos enables their children to flourish. The school environment is bright and stimulating but there could be further opportunities to celebrate more overtly the school's Christian character.

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

Collective Worship has a good impact on the school community (Overall grade 2).

Collective worship has a high profile. There is careful planning and record keeping of the chosen themes which reflect the Christian nature of the school. Where possible visiting speakers and clergy contribute effectively to the programme for collective worship. Pupils speak positively about the experience and value of worship and are

now participating more fully than they were at the time of the last inspection. They are enthusiastic in their singing, and responses but show a respect for the occasion. Good use is made of the local church as part of the wider experience of worship. Pupils enjoy these services which are hugely supported by parents.

#### **How effective is the religious education?**

Religious Education is good (Overall grade 2).

The provision for religious education is good reflecting the important part this plays in the life of the school. Schemes of work reflect the school's Christian foundation whilst at the same time giving due regard to the teaching of other major religions.

Comments from parents recognise the importance of this approach. Work scrutiny indicates that pupils are developing a secure knowledge of Christianity as well as a growing understanding of other world faiths as they move through the school.

Teachers are confident and enthusiastic, aiming to relate material to pupils' lives.

There is a good balance between the attainment targets of learning about religion and learning from religion. In some classes a high level of challenge was evident with older pupils studying a range of images of Jesus and younger children reflecting on people special to them. Appropriate use of ICT enhanced pupils' learning in these lessons. Pupils respond to the effective teaching with great enthusiasm, knowing that teachers and classmates will respect their contributions. Group discussion is especially productive. Overall pupils generally achieve well with many meeting the level expectations set out in the syllabus. Pupils' attainment is comparable with core subjects. There is strong subject leadership with a clear view of strengths and areas for development. Although religious education is monitored, this role needs to be developed further, ensuring rigour, particularly in the area of assessment.

The school continues to develop the use of visits and visitors. Pupils talked with interest and enjoyment about their recent visit to St. Paul's Cathedral. Appropriate school resources and displays complement external resources as is evident from the India topic. There are good cross curricular links stemming from the religious education curriculum.

#### **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 (Overall grade 2).

The high quality of the headteacher's leadership and management contributes significantly to the success of this Church school. The headteacher's vision clearly reflects the importance of collective worship and religious education. Parents are very appreciative of the strong leadership and the Christian ethos. Governors are highly supportive of the headteacher and staff but the Governors' role in monitoring and evaluating the Christian dimension could be developed further. The school is continuing to build strong links with the church on a regular basis. Excellent relationships forged within the school enable both staff and pupils to flourish. The Christian foundation clearly underpins the life of the school.

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