

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Lydney Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Bream Road

Lydney

Gloucestershire

GL15 5JH

Diocese of Gloucester

Gloucestershire LEA

SIAS inspection: 15 November 2005

Previous S23 inspection: 13 July 2000

URN: 115635

Headteacher: Ms Louisa Lawson

SIAS Inspector NS#009: Miss Chris Hammant

Context

Lydney School has seven classes in which children from Reception to Year 6 learn and develop. Pupils mainly come from the town, which is situated in the Forest of Dean. Attached to the school is an Early Years Centre. Pupils start school with below average expectations in language and personal and social skills. The proportion of children with special educational skills is below average.

Summary Judgement

Lydney School is a good church school. It has many strengths which support its effectiveness and make a notable impact on learners.

Established Strengths

- A strong caring ethos.
- A broad and balanced curriculum, which enables every learner's potential to be developed.
- A secure and accepting environment where children are confident to express their feelings and opinions

Focus for development

- Make explicit, through documentation and symbols, the distinctive Christian foundation on which the school aims and ethos are based.
- Acknowledge the centrality of Christian worship in the life of the school.
- Establish strategies and procedures for evaluating collective worship.
- Review planning and assessment in religious education in order to effectively support the ethos of the school and the spiritual development of learners.

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

The school, through its distinctive Christian character, meets the needs of all learners well. The school makes good provision to meet the needs of all its learners. Children care and show respect for each other. They are responsible, well mannered and eager to talk about their learning and understanding. Learners are shown kindness and respect by the adults in school and there is a real willingness, opportunity and provision for them to talk through issues and take time to reflect. The Christian principle of 'Love thy neighbour as thyself' is at the core of the school's ethos. Relationships in the school are good and characterised by care and concern for others. The vast majority of learners do well and their achievement is good or better in relation to their prior attainment. There are good opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development both in and out of the classroom. However, insufficient emphasis is placed upon the Christian foundation of the school to make its distinctive Christian character outstanding.

The governors, head teacher and senior management recognise the importance of religious education in a church school and ensure the provision of appropriate staffing, curriculum time and resources. Christianity occupies two thirds of the RE syllabus across the Key Stages. The newly appointed RE subject leader has received training for her role and is preparing to introduce the revised Gloucestershire Agreed Syllabus. The quality of teaching and learning in RE contributes to the learners' spiritual and moral development and supports the ethos of the school. Learners enjoy RE lessons and show positive attitudes to the subject.

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

Collective worship has a good impact on the life of the school community. Worship occupies an important place in the life of the school, providing opportunities for children to further their spiritual development through listening and taking part. Visitors from the local 'Open the Book' team lead worship each week and share Bible stories in a creative and inspiring way. Children are keen to identify the message in the story and they respond to questions with confidence and assurance. They show respect and reverence during prayers. Acts of worship are planned with care by staff who share the responsibility of leading worship. Monitoring and evaluating collective worship is currently an informal process. Worship as observed is recognisably Christian. Worship led by local clergy introduces the Anglican tradition. The school uses the church for celebratory services, like Christmas, which is well supported by parents. The parish priest attends most special school events and services both in church and at school and visits the school on a fairly regular basis. The school has great respect for the beliefs and traditions of members of other denominations in the school and, where appropriate, ensures acts of worship and curriculum opportunities provide for their spiritual and moral development.

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 generally good. The quality of leadership provided by governors, head teacher and senior management contributes to the success of the school. Its Christian purpose is expressed in the spiritual and worship policies, and through communications and personal contact with parents. The school informs parents about events taking place in the church. Links with the local church are through the parish priest, the 'Open the Book' team and visits by the children to learn about Christianity and the church. They also take a pilgrim journey guided by the priest from school to church when studying pilgrimage. All staff feel valued and appreciated, and there is a strong, supportive team spirit. Parents feel that the school has a special quality, which inspires confidence and enthusiasm in their children. They are generally happy to acknowledge the importance to them of the school as a church school. The impact of the school's leadership on learners is significant for their spiritual, moral, intellectual and emotional development.