

**Oakley Church of England Voluntary Controlled Combined School**

Worminghall Road  
Oakley, Aylesbury  
Buckinghamshire  
HP18 9QY

**Diocese of Oxford**

Buckinghamshire LEA

SIAS inspection: 21 November 2005

Previous S23 inspection: 22 May 2000

URN: 110448

Headteacher: Joanne Garlick

SIAS Inspector NS 137: Alan Thornsby

**Summary Judgement**

Oakley school is currently a satisfactory church school, which is demonstrating under the new headteacher its capacity to rapidly develop excellent qualities.

**Established strengths**

- Firmly rooted Christian values that underpin the ethos of care, tolerance and respect
- The mutual trust and respect of teachers and pupils
- The voice of the pupils
- The impact of the vision of the new headteacher on the whole school community.

**Focus for development**

- To continue the development of church school links
- To develop a more structured approach to the monitoring and evaluation of collective worship to aid future planning.

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

The school is satisfactory in meeting the needs of its learners, although there are many good elements. The school successfully implements its ethos of care for all pupils who share in this through the Buddy system. Pupils and parents greatly value the welcoming atmosphere of the school and the mutual support and respect that underpins it. This is clearly demonstrated by the successful way that the school integrates and provides for the traveller community. Relationships between all members of the community are very good and thus the school is a happy and joyful learning environment. The opportunities for children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is such an integral part of the school's philosophy that they are identified in the planned curriculum and make a significant contribution to the hidden curriculum. This is seen in the responsibility children take for visitors and the range of after school clubs. Children feel that they are valued and their achievements recognised. The system of awards through the Tree of Kindness and Good work and Behaviour books is particularly effective because both adults and children can make nominations. In RE lessons the pupils are confident in answering questions and then posing follow-up questions. Their recorded work, however, does not show the same level of achievement. The school furthers the links with the whole community through the provision of an out of school club, welcoming visitors to special services and bazaars and helping with the distribution of Christmas presents to older residents. Displays throughout school make clear there is a distinctive spiritual ethos. The vision of the new headteacher reflects the wish of parents to see closer links with the church. These are now developing supported by the vicar who is keen to re-establish her full role in school as well as strengthening the links between church, school and village.

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

Collective worship is a well-established aspect of the school and makes a good impact on the daily experience of pupils. The quality of worship is good but there is a lack of attention to planning and evaluation. The headteacher and staff are aware that this needs to be addressed so that areas for improvement can be clearly identified. Pupils benefit from a range of forms of worship so that they respond well in their own contributions, prayers and singing. The real impact of their experience in the school is seen in the Year 4, 5 and 6 pupils who plan and lead class worship time. They demonstrate that they understand the importance of prayer and the symbolism of a lighted candle as an aid to reflection.

This is a further example of the responsibilities and trust given to the pupils by the staff. Members of the church community lead worship and positive communication between school and church ensured a meaningful Remembrance Day Service. There is real confidence throughout the school in the future development of the links between school and church and what this will mean for collective worship.

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

The leadership and management of the school is satisfactory and rapidly developing good characteristics because of the vision and commitment of the newly appointed headteacher.

The headteacher's vision has been well communicated to all and has made a noticeable impact on the school and governance of the school in a short period of time. This has been acknowledged by all members of the school community and has achieved a united and shared approach to the development of the school.

The school has a well-established ethos of care and concern for personal development of pupils and provides good opportunities for the development of self-expression and confidence. The opinions of parents and pupils have been sought through questionnaires and discussion and the School Council given greater responsibility for fund raising.

There is a genuine community desire to strengthen the links between church and school. The church now has a much greater presence in the school that will enable the vicar to fulfil a chaplaincy role. The response of parents to special acts of worship and the new format of the harvest celebration has been very positive. A foundation governor has the role of RE governor and a further foundation governor appointed who will help to monitor church /school links and continue the support of the governing body for the school and new headteacher.

SIAS NOVEMBER 2005 Oakley CE VC Combined School, Buckinghamshire, HP18 9QY