

Quernmore Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Postern Gate Road

Quernmore

Lancaster

LA2 9EL

Diocese of Blackburn

Lancashire LEA

SIAS inspection: 21 November 2005

Previous S23 inspection: 26-29 April 1999

URN: 119378

Headteacher: Mrs Kristine Morgan

SIAS Inspector NS 179: Miss Heather Starkie

Context

The school is situated in a beautiful rural location on the outskirts of Lancaster. There are 106 children currently on roll, around half of whom live locally in and around the village whilst the remaining half travel from the city of Lancaster.

Summary Judgement

Quernmore Church of England (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School is effective in promoting Christian principles and values amongst its pupils in school. However, the school needs to develop its distinctively Christian character and leadership and management of the school need to be committed to developing a more distinctive Christian vision for the school.

Established strengths

- Christian principles and values are promoted effectively within school and are evident in children's attitudes to learning and in their relationships with each other.
- Excellent outdoor provision which aids children's spiritual development as well as enhancing the school's overall curriculum provision
- Supportive Governing Body and supportive parents
- Use of outside support including local clergy and Christian based outreach workers who help to promote Christian principles and values within school and who help to establish the Christian ethos of the school.

Focus for development

Further development of the distinctive Christian character of the school through:

- Development of the role of the worship co-ordinator in the management of worship
- Leadership and management to be committed to developing a more distinctive Christian vision for the school and sharing this with the whole school community
- Development of whole school self evaluation of the school as a church school
- Development of the whole school environment, particularly the indoor environment, to enable the distinctive Christian character of the school to become more evident.

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

The school, through its distinctive character, meets the needs of all children effectively. Christian principles and values are promoted very well through the curriculum, through the use of the outdoor environment and in the general day to day organisation and routines within school. A range of fundraising activities take place on a regular basis, often initiated by the children themselves. This enables children to think about and show care and consideration towards other people in the world who are not as fortunate as themselves.

Christian principles and values are also evident in the children's attitudes to learning and in their relationships with each other. Very good relationships exist within school between staff and children, amongst children and between staff. There is a very caring and supportive atmosphere within the school which enables children to achieve well, to be happy and to feel safe and secure.

All children feel valued and special. Their work is celebrated through displays in the classrooms and around the school. Children also plan and lead whole school worship each Friday morning, usually on themes which are of specific interest to them.

Excellent outdoor facilities have been developed within the school grounds. These facilities effectively promote the children's spiritual development providing opportunities for them to think, reflect and develop a sense of awe and wonder within God's world. This now needs to be extended and developed further through other aspects of school life including whole school worship and the development of the whole school indoor environment to enable the distinctive Christian character of the school to become more evident. Christian signs and symbols, pictures, books and other Christian based artefacts should now be employed to portray to the whole school community the message that the school has a Christian foundation.

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

The impact of Collective Worship on the school community is satisfactory overall.

Outside visitors come into school on a regular basis to lead worship and they have a significant impact on promoting the Christian character of the school. These visitors include the local clergy and Christian based outreach workers. A Christian based club is also held each week at lunchtime which helps to develop the children's knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith, further enhances their spiritual development and contributes to the teaching of Christian principles and values.

One act of worship was observed during the inspection which was led by a member of the local clergy. This had a very clear Christian message and was effective in portraying God's love for each one of us. Children of all ages within school were able to relate well to the overall content of the worship.

Collective worship and its impact on the children and the school community is a significant area for further development in order for the school to be more effective as a church school, promoting the Christian character and the Christian faith to the whole school family.

The worship co-ordinator, supported by the leadership and management team within school, should further develop her role within school and ensure collective worship is seen as an important feature of daily life within school. A review of the whole school worship policy should be undertaken to ensure it promotes the distinctive Christian ethos and character of the school. More consistency in the planning of worship including structured, regular themes, which are followed, would ensure continuity and progression for the children. Additional resources are required in order to impact more fully on children's spiritual development. Acts of worship should provide the children with a range of experiences including times of quiet reflection and focal points for their thoughts and feelings.

Issues with reference to collective worship highlighted within the previous Denominational Inspection (1999) do not appear to have been addressed. These include the use of a broader range of worship songs within worship and training for the worship co-ordinator and whole staff team.

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

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the Headteacher, leadership team and Governors of the school as a church school is satisfactory overall.

Leadership and management are particularly effective in promoting the Christian principles and values within school. Achievement and personal development of all children is good. The school as a whole provides a warm, welcoming and caring environment which is inspired by Christian principles and values enabling all children to reach their potential. The Chair of Governors together with the incumbent of the parish are both supportive of the school. The role of the school within the parish and community is valued and links between school and church have been further developed during recent years.

Collective Worship and the development of the distinctive Christian character of the school feature, to a limited extent, within the School Improvement Plan. Leadership and management need to be committed to developing a more distinctive Christian vision for the school and this should be promoted within the school, within the staff team and the whole school community as well as permeating through all areas of school life.

Reference to the children's spiritual development is included in the school's Mission Statement and Aims. These should now be further reviewed to include specific reference to the Christian foundation and character of the school.

Whole school self evaluation of the school as a church school needs to take place on a regular basis and the leadership and management of the school needs to be committed to using self evaluation to further improve provision and further develop the distinctive Christian character of the school.

SIAS NOVEMBER 2005 Quernmore CE VC Primary School, Lancashire LA2 9EL