

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Rathmell Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Hesley Lane

RATHMELL

SETTLE

North Yorkshire

BD24 0LA

Diocese: Bradford and Ripon & Leeds

LA: North Yorks.

Dates of inspection: 20th March 2006

Date of last inspection: 19/20th June 2000

School's Unique reference number: 8153365

Headteacher: Mrs. Sarah Peel & Mrs. Christine Boxall

Inspector's name and number: Mr. S. Weston. No 347

School context

Rathmell C of E Voluntary Aided school is a small village primary school of 54 pupils situated in Ribblesdale, three miles from Settle. The majority of children are from agricultural related business backgrounds and most arrive at school by bus. There are at present no pupils from other faiths in the school. The school has recently built a new library space and much work has been undertaken to maximise the space available. The school successfully features a "job share" scheme with two head teachers.

Summary Judgement

Overall, the school is an outstanding church school and Christian values underpin all its work. A strong commitment to the development of the whole child within the context and environment of a united and supportive school community creates an environment in which the children flourish and is the product of outstanding leadership from the head teachers and governors, with the support of the whole staff.

Established strengths

- A very strong focus on Christian values through RE and Collective Worship.
- A very strong emphasis on the spiritual and moral development of the children.
- Outstanding leadership creating an exceptional Christian ethos that permeates all aspects of school life and is highly valued by all of the school's community

Focus for development

- Continue to sustain and develop the outstanding work already in progress.
- Develop links with the Diocesan Education Team and access professional development to further develop the current good practice in RE and in Collective Worship and embed the principles and practice of the new Diocesan RE Syllabus and Collective Worship Guidelines.
- Fully reflect the strength of the school's Christian Ethos, in the SEF document.

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 in an outstanding way

The Christian ethos of the school is very strong and creates an outstanding environment for learning. The life and work of the school is firmly rooted in the Christian beliefs and values as outlined in the mission statement and is strongly promoted by the head teachers and governors and with the support of the whole community. High quality personal relationships are seen as key and the pupils feel safe, secure, happy and confident. Christian values are evident in every part of the school particularly in the quality of relationships between staff and pupils. Pupil's work and achievements are cherished. The school is very much at the heart of the community and is involved in an extensive programme of activities with the church and community as a whole. The staff and governors believe it is important for the pupils to grasp the importance of belonging and contributing to their own local community.

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

The impact of Collective Worship on the school community is good.

Collective worship plays an important part of each day and is well planned by the priest in charge and head teachers, yet is flexible to allow for time to discuss and share events and experiences that concern the pupils. It is valued as a vehicle to facilitate the spiritual and moral development of the pupils through prayer and reflection which the pupils value as a special time. They participate with enthusiasm and enjoyment. A pupil said it was important to talk to God. Regular contributions from the priest in charge help bring the Anglican traditions to the act of worship and staff and visitors, including parents, all take part. Worship contributes to the pupil's moral development and supports their spiritual development well.

How effective is the religious education?

Provision for Religious Education is good.

RE is a strong feature contributing significantly to the spiritual development of the pupils and to the life and work of the school as a church school. It is taught discretely, is well planned with appropriate long and medium terms and a balanced rolling programme of units that are increasingly drawn from the new Diocesan Syllabus and fully includes studies of other faiths. A plan to fully implement the new Syllabus features in the SDP whilst at present, support resource material is also drawn from QCA and LEA documents. The governors are fully involved in subject development and policy revision and are very supportive. The subject leader teaches both classes and monitoring and feedback to the head and governors takes place both formally and informally. RE is assessed termly against the learning objectives. Detailed notes are made on progress in knowledge, understanding and skills in terms of personal aspects, attitudes and feelings and this is used to inform future planning in each of these areas. A wide variety of teaching and learning activities are employed, for example, art, music, drama, visits and visitors and work is recorded formally and informally, with display being a significant feature. Learners are very positive about RE and enjoy their lessons and the rich variety of activities they undertake. The spiritual dimension of RE is strongly promoted and the children were able to articulate their awareness of the links between RE, the church and the Christian faith. One pupil said RE gave her things to think about.

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 outstanding.

The head teachers provide the drive for the school's development as a church school and are strongly supported by a very committed governing body and staff. The Chair, Foundation and Trustee governors monitor and assist the school's development as a church school and all assist with the development of the SEF, SDP and the review of other documentation to reflect this. This team work is a great strength of the school. The pupils and parents are very positive about the school and particularly value the ethos which is conducive to the creation of an excellent learning environment and for the social, moral and spiritual development of the children.

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