

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Rothersthorpe Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Church Street
Rothersthorpe
Northants
NN7 3HS

Diocese of Peterborough

LEA: Northamptonshire

Date of Inspection: 19th June 2006

Date of last Section 23 Inspection: 19-23 June 2000

School's Unique Reference Number; 122014

Name of Headteacher: Mrs Jane Battams

SIAS Inspector: NS 186 Mrs S A Parkinson assisted by Mr D Spenceley

School context

Rothersthorpe CEVC Primary School is a small village school with 94 pupils on role with a higher than average number of pupils identified with learning difficulties. 50 of the 94 pupils live outside the village. The school has an unusual Trust Deed which has caused problems over many years but these have now been resolved. The current building is unique as the school and village hall are combined so school and community share certain facilities.

Summary Judgement

Rothersthorpe School provides a satisfactory Church of England education in a caring and secure environment where everyone works together to establish strong personal relationships.

Established strengths

- Pupils and parents value the ethos of the school and all members of the community respect and support each other, reaching out beyond the immediate locality to embrace a Ugandan school
- There is clearly identified purpose for development in RE and Collective Worship which have already been identified and will be addressed.
- The Headteacher provides strong leadership, direction and commitment

Focus for development

- The regular and effective monitoring and evaluation of Collective Worship and the impact of the Christian tradition within it, on the whole school community.
- The review of policies so that the distinctive Christian nature of a church school is clearly underpinned in all documentation.
- To expand the use of physical signs, symbols and displays which will make a clear statement of the Christian ethos of the school.
- The Governors to effectively monitor and evaluate the distinctive character of the school as a church school.

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

The Christian ethos of the school is satisfactory. The ethos statement makes clear that all pupils are encouraged to develop respect and responsibility for themselves and each other and make a positive contribution to society. Interaction between adults and children through discussions in class, in the playground and during the extensive extra curricular activities provided by staff and parents clearly promote personal development. Older pupils ably assist younger ones and at lunchtimes children sit together in family groups of mixed age. Class councils make suggestions to the School Council which meets once a month and pupils speak confidently about their ideas and decisions. Achievements are celebrated for children of all abilities and good behaviour is rewarded. Of special importance is "Amy's Prize" given in memory of a former pupil who died tragically. The school has links with a town school which has a high multi-cultural intake and the children enjoy and readily question differing environments and cultures

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

Pupils are knowledgeable and enthusiastic about the connection with a school in Uganda which is supported by the church and the school. They exchange letters and gifts which are displayed in the entrance hall. The distinctive character of the school as a church school would be better underpinned if Christian signs and symbols and the school's ethos statement were clearly visible. The children have very good

relationships with all members of teaching and support staff within the school and are confident in their approach to visitors.

How effective is the religious education?

Religious Education is satisfactory. All year groups receive the allocated time and themes are based on the Northamptonshire Agreed Syllabus. Staff have received some training in the delivery of RE but there is scope for further training to improve the quality of teaching and standards of learning. This may be accessed through the Service Level Agreement. The School Development Plan for 2004/2005 included RE and a revised monitoring and evaluation system is currently being trialled but its impact has not been assessed. The RE co-ordinator is developing the curriculum to ensure that RE is intrinsic to whole school teaching and learning. It is recognised that resources are limited and require updating. Valuable visits to places of worship, both Christian and other faiths are made frequently. Pupils demonstrated basic knowledge of other faiths in the lessons observed and links were made in one lesson to similarities with Christian ritual. In another lesson observed, the story formed the basis for PSHE but was not overtly linked to religious concepts.

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

The leadership and management show contrasting qualities is inadequate because the Governors do not demonstrate effective leadership in the development of the school as a church school. The Head Teacher has a clear vision for the future and has worked hard to achieve current standards. She shows strong leadership and commitment. She is well supported by the senior management team. Parents and pupils speak highly of the warm Christian ethos of the school which is evidenced from discussions and the results from parental and pupil surveys. However Governors are insufficiently active in establishing a clear vision for the school as a church school. There is insufficient evidence of the Christian nature of the school in documentation. Following several years of uncertainty, the Governing body was re-constituted on 1st June 2006. With there now being two Foundation Governors and the parish priest on the governing body, it is important that they establish a positive framework for effective church school leadership to work with the Head Teacher in the school's development as a church school.

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