

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

St Barnabas Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Jubilee Terrace,
Leeman Road,
York,
YO 26 4YZ

Diocese: York

LA: City Of York

Dates of inspection: 23 May 2006

Date of last inspection: 20 March 2000

School's Unique reference number: 121473

Headteacher: Mrs Helen Davey

Inspector's name and number: Allan Summers 281

School context

St Barnabas is a small (107 pupil), but expanding primary school close to the centre of York. Occupying recently opened, beautiful, purpose built premises adjacent to St Barnabas Church, the school serves a largely working class but closely knit, village type community and provides an oasis of green open space in a warren of terraced housing.

Summary Judgement

St Barnabas CE VC Primary School is a good and effective church school with a strong Christian ethos and happy, responsive and caring pupils. There is a sense of togetherness and mutual support within the school which enjoys the confidence of its close community. The Governing Body knows the school well and is fully committed to further develop its distinctive Christian ethos.

Established strengths

- Governance from a remarkably unified and supportive governing body.
- The quality and strength of relationships between all members of the school community which are grounded in Christian values and beliefs.
- An ethos of mutual support, growing out of a Christian commitment which permeates the life of the school.

Focus for development

- The school should review its brochure and establish a discrete section for Collective Worship.
- The Governing Body and Church should examine ways to develop the school's place as an effective resource within the community.

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

In this aspect St Barnabas Primary School is good. In an inspirational new building the denominational status is subtly declared in a tasteful cross incorporated into the brickwork above the main entrance and a link between the old and new schools is established in the use of stained glass windows, much of it child inspired in the spacious entrance lobby. Children and the local community have been encouraged to contribute to a permanent Christian symbol for this area which is currently under construction and this clear declaration of Christian faith is echoed in artefacts and prayers on display in the classrooms. Indeed display throughout the school is vibrant plentiful and of good quality. The children are well behaved, appreciative of their new opportunities and are responding appropriately, "In our classroom I cried because it was so amazing". They spoke articulately about what it means to be part of a church school, "children act like a family and all staff care for us and so do other children". .Religious education has a positive impact across all areas of school life. Parents from both Christian and other faith groups are very positive about the school's inclusiveness, supportive of its Christian ethos and keen to work in partnership with the staff to achieve the very best for their children. Children's welfare and pastoral support are seen as crucial elements in this community where staff and clergy work as one. The 'school' knows its children and there is a strong sense of mutual support.

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

The impact of collective worship on this school community is good and is making a significant contribution to the spiritual well being of learners. Worship, which is seen as an important focus for each day is well planned and delivered skilfully by a variety of leaders. This includes regular input from clergy in a way which engages all children and follows themes which are often picked up in cross curricular work. Monitoring is a shared process involving children who can talk in animated fashion about subjects covered and it is obvious that they enjoy participation and active involvement. The use of music to create an ambience, the respectful nature of the children, time for quiet reflection, prayers, many of which are contributed by the learners and the sensitive juxtaposition of fun and reverence make for an uplifting experience and an outstanding feature. The school brochure should now include a discrete section for Collective Worship.

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

This area is judged to be good with some outstanding features. The headteacher leads a mutually supportive, dedicated team all passionately keen to provide excellence for the children of this closely knit community. Parents and children appreciate this effort. Children say it is the staff who make the school a special place, "all staff care for us". They provide positive role models and direction for the high expectations of behaviour, care and respect which characterises the school. Many of the staff are members of St Barnabas church and the headteacher plays a vital role in the community as a PCC member. School and church are integral to one another. Children are often involved in services which are well supported. The governing body gives remarkably unified support to the headteacher and her staff and promotes the Christian purpose of the school very effectively.

SIAS report May 2006 St Barnabas CE VC Primary School, Jubilee Terrace, Leeman Road, York, YO 26 4YZ