

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

St Chad's Church of England Voluntary Controlled Nursery and Infant School

Gordon Road

Derby

DE23 6WR

Diocese of Derby

City of Derby LEA

Dates of inspection: 13th and 16th February 2006

Date of last inspection: 7th and 9th March 2000

School's Unique reference number:112873

Name of Headteacher: Mrs Maxine Bull

SIAS Inspector NS177: Mr John Horwood

School context

A popular inner city school with 110 infant and 35 nursery pupils. A large proportion of pupils come from families of Pakistani origin and are of the Muslim faith. At least 80% of pupils enter the school with little or no English. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and the number entitled to free school meals are above the national average. The St. Chad's church building was demolished several years ago and the land is now part of the school playing field. Parish services are held in several buildings of which the school is one.

Summary Judgement

St Chad's is a good Church of England School which caters well for the local community as a 'faith' school.

Established strengths

- The creation of a family environment based on Christian beliefs.
- A very caring environment where outstanding relationships are developed.
- The local clergy and governors are very active in supporting the spiritual development of pupils through extra curricular activities.
- All staff work as a team to promote Christian values.

Focus for development

- Review how the distinctive character of the school can be more clearly identified to visitors when they enter the school.
- Continue to develop methods of encouraging parents to understand and be able to support the education of their children.
- Review how partnerships could be established with other Voluntary Controlled schools in the diocese for the benefit of pupils at both schools.

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

The Christian character of the school ensures that the needs of all learners are met. The Christian faith underpins the school's objectives and its success. The school has adapted well to the changes in the local community and provides well for the children in this multi-cultural region of Derby. Parents send their children to the school because it is a 'faith school' even though the majority of them are of the Muslim faith. The school aim of bringing the children and their families together in a Christian environment is clearly appreciated by parents. Although parents have the opportunity to withdraw their children from collective worship and RE lessons, none do so at present. Parents identify that Christianity is explained well to their children and supplements their knowledge of their own faith. The understanding of each other's faith and the relationships developed between children are outstanding. The needs of all pupils are well provided for in an inclusive environment. The personal development of pupils, including spiritual development, is good. The contribution of RE to spiritual development is good – it has the potential to be outstanding but is restricted by the language knowledge of many pupils when they join the school. Pupils are mature and confident and given responsibilities in the school such as helping with assemblies and serving on the school council. Parents and pupils are aware of the school's association with the Church of England and recognise the benefits the pupils gain from being in a 'Church School'. Because of the layout of the school buildings it is difficult to have an immediate focus at the entrance to clearly identify the Christian nature of the school.

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

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good. Collective worship is important in school and pupils participate well with an enthusiastic approach to answering questions and to singing and saying prayers. The pace is sometimes slow but this is essential to allow the many pupils with limited language knowledge to understand the content. Planning of collective worship and the monitoring processes are good. The school ensures that the themes are predominantly Christian but also contribute to the faiths of all children in the school whose religious festivals are always celebrated. A significant strength of the school is the role models of staff who all attend worship. Pupils, in spite of their young ages, can remember the content of some assemblies and they listen and behave well. The impact of the messages delivered during collective worship is reflected in the good attitudes and personal development of pupils. The local clergy play an active role in the school and are well known and liked by the children. Collective worship is regularly led by the local vicar and also by other visitors. The building is used by the local community for worship in the absence of a church building and is clearly an integral part of the local church community. Good visual displays around the school help to stimulate spiritual development.

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 are good. The headteacher, who is a very good role model, provides good leadership of this church school and is well supported by all the staff and by an active governing body. In spite of the need to take into account the needs of the changing local community they have ensured that the distinctive Christian nature of the school is maintained. Governors are very active within the school and extend opportunities for pupils through organising and supporting clubs and activities. The provision of an 'open school' at the start of the day is a very good example of the school's commitment to involving all families and children – it is a significant contributor to building up the high quality relationships within the community and the development of a partnership between the school and parents. All the actions from the previous report have been addressed although a further review should be carried out as to how well the Christian character of the school can be more clearly identified at the entrance of the school. The school is the only voluntary controlled school in the city and has no links with similar schools which would enable the sharing of ideas and practice.

February 2006 St Chad's Church of England Voluntary Controlled Nursery and Infant School
Derby DE23 6WR