

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

West Park Church of England Voluntary Controlled First and Middle School

Marlborough Road

Worthing

BN12 4HD

Diocese: Chichester

LA: West Sussex

Dates of inspection: 16 and 19 January 2006

Date of last inspection: 24 27 and 28 November 2000

School's Unique reference number: 126016

Headteacher: John Hofton

Inspector's name and number: Olivia Izzard

School context

West Park First and Middle School is a larger-than-average school compared to other primary phase schools and is organised into 25 classes. It is situated in the village of Goring, to the west of Worthing. The school opened in 1953 as a county primary school and in 1974, after additional accommodation was provided, became a middle school catering for the needs of pupils from the ages of 8 to 12. The school attained its church controlled status in 1977. In 1990 the role of its purpose-built special needs unit, The Willows, was extended to provide places for pupils with severe literacy difficulties together with physically disabled pupils. In September 1995 further building works were completed and first school pupils were admitted once again.

Summary Judgement

West Park First and Middle School is a very caring, well-organised, friendly school. It is reasonably effective as a church school in many ways: good relationships within the school community are characterised by Christian care and concern for others; learners from all groups feel valued and special and opportunities for spiritual, moral and social education are good while opportunities for cultural education are very good. Pupils' and parents' views of the school are carefully considered and acted upon appropriately. Worship occupies a secure place in the life of the school and acts of worship are consistently at least sound in quality. The content of some acts of worship honour the Christian tradition while others convey a moral rather than a clear Christian message, however. The management of the school is good with the quality of the leadership and management contributing significantly to the success of West Park First and Middle School as a church school: its ethos is underpinned by Christian values and pupils are given good opportunities to extend their knowledge of Christianity with the positive links between pupils and members of the local parish church.

Established strengths

- The provision of very good multicultural education;
- The caring, stimulating environment which enhances the ethos of the school and contributes significantly to the pupils' spiritual development;
- The high quality relationships between all adults and children throughout the school, which are underpinned by sound Christian values.

Focus for development

- To provide visual evidence of the school's church controlled status throughout the school and, particularly at the school's entrance and in areas where worship takes place;
- *To provide further guidance and an evaluation system for all staff members on leading and evaluating acts of collective worship to ensure greater consistency and a more explicit Christian focus in all acts of collective worship;
- To encourage closer liaison between staff and the local church community in the planning of acts of collective worship to continue to develop the Christian character of worship within the school.

*Further guidance has been identified by the school as an area for future development.

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

The school makes good provision to meet the needs of all its learners, including those from minority ethnic or faith backgrounds, those who have special educational needs and those who are experiencing difficulties or causing problems for others. The Special Needs Unit, the Willows, makes very good provision for pupils with special needs and the opportunities for outside visits is impressive. Learners from all groups feel valued and special. They enjoy, and are proud of, their school as the neat, tidy well-kept environment, the frequent and appropriate use of litter bins and well-ordered cloakrooms demonstrates.

Whatever their religious faith, the pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good and their cultural development is very good. Spiritual development is encouraged through reflection in acts of worship, general class discussions, 'circle times' and the provision of an attractive, varied and 'child-friendly' environment. Moral development is encouraged through debate and discussion in class lessons including 'circle times', by reflection on issues in acts of collective worship, and The School Council'. Opportunities for cultural development are very good and effective in making pupils aware of different cultures and continents including Africa, India, Australia and Europe. The many fund-raising activities provide further opportunities for multi-cultural development. Relationships within the school community are characterised by Christian care and concern for others and pupils of all ages and abilities continually demonstrate support and care for each other.

Grade 2

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

Worship occupies a secure place in the life of the school and acts of worship are consistently at least sound in quality and, on occasions, are a key element in its Christian witness. They involve regular participation by individuals and groups of learners and evoke a positive response from the learners attending. Teaching staff participate well in leading the acts of worship but the lack of opportunities to plan together leads to some inconsistencies in the Christian content. At times the worship is recognisably Christian and draws on the links with the local Church, mainly through the contribution of its staff. The main events of the Christian Year are celebrated during some of the acts of worship, but others, while containing elements of Christian worship, are based on multi-faith, moral or social teaching and do not contain the key element of Christian witness essential in a church school. However, planned further written guidance for staff and greater liaison between church and school staff would lead to enhanced consistency in providing these Christian links.

The school is very sensitive to the beliefs and traditions of those of other faiths and of none and takes care to ensure that acts of worship provide for all pupils' spiritual and moral development. During the acts of worship pupils demonstrate positive attitudes: listening attentively, contributing thoughtfully, singing tunefully and reflecting and/or praying respectfully. Subsequent discussion with pupils demonstrated their enjoyment of the acts of worship. One pupil commented, 'It makes us think about God'.

Grade 3

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

The quality of leadership and management contributes significantly to the success of the school. Its Christian purpose is clearly expressed in the school aims, within the school prospectus and in written school policies. The leadership, management, staff and governors agree and support the school aim of instilling 'a respect for Christian beliefs and values and a tolerance and understanding of others who may hold differing views', as discussion with two governors and several members of the teaching staff demonstrated. There are strong and fruitful links with the local Church community whose staff provide very good support in the school's Christian character. As well as leading acts of worship on a weekly basis other church staff run 'The Lighthouse Club' and 'The Alpha Course' as popular extra-curricular activities. The leadership and management of the school have made a significant contribution to the high quality of the relationships existing within the school. so that teaching and

non- teaching staff feel involved and appreciated. Within this supportive, caring environment, therefore, further written guidance on the planning of acts of worship, already identified by the worship co-ordinator as an area for development, would be welcomed.

Parents feel that the school has a special quality that enables learners of all backgrounds to flourish as individuals, and are appreciative of both the school's church status and leadership and managements' efforts to seek their views and act upon them accordingly.

Grade 2

SIAS report 16 and 19 January 2006 West Park CE First and Middle School Marlborough Road Worthing BN12 4HD