

Winfrith Church of England Voluntary Aided First School

School Lane
Winfrith Newburgh
Dorchester
Dorset
DT2 8JL

Diocese of Salisbury

Dorset LEA
SIAS inspection: 8 December 2005
Previous S23 inspection: September 2000
URN: 8353036
Headteacher: Mrs. Estelle Smith
SIAS Inspector NS 185: Mrs. Rosemary Davis

School Context

This very small rural First School is situated on the outskirts of the village and five miles from the Jurassic Coast. Pupils attend from the immediate area where there is mix of privately owned and rented housing. The 30 pupils on role are grouped into three mixed age groups. On September 1, 2005 the school federated with West Lulworth, and there now is one Headteacher and Governing body for both schools.

Summary Judgement

This is a good Church of England Voluntary Aided school in which the positive Christian ethos and character provide an effective and distinctive learning environment for spiritual and moral development.

Established strengths

- Distinctive Christian ethos with good pastoral care
- The value placed on each individual in the school community
- Strong and productive relationships with the Church and local community
- New headteacher has clear vision and high expectations

Focus for development

- Develop a system for recording and evaluating collective worship
- Revise the planning, monitoring and recording of religious education in the light of the newly adopted syllabus.
- Monitor and evaluate the teaching and learning of religious education
- Develop more challenging activities for religious education
- Establish strategies for assessment in religious education

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

The school's distinctive Christian character is good and meets the needs of all learners. Pupils feel valued and the good relationships within the school enable pupils to feel secure. Christian values of care and concern for others underpin all areas of school life making the school a welcoming environment for all. The expectations of good behaviour encourage pupils to be kind and considerate. The pupils are happy, confident and communicative. Spiritual development such as personal prayers and time for reflection are good. Parents recognise and value the school's Christian status together with its central role in village life.

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

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good. Worship forms an integral part of school life. Daily worship is clearly inclusive, imaginatively planned and presented. Good use is made of the school's link with the local church and other Christian denominations in the area. All staff and the vicar lead worship during the school year. Pupils talk positively about their experience of worship and respond well to stories and singing. They are familiar with prayers including the Lord's Prayer and demonstrate a reflective attitude to worship. Worship contributes to pupils' understanding of Christian values.

How effective is the Religious Education in the school?

Religious Education is good. It is recognised by governors and staff as being of particular importance by featuring as one of the main objectives in the development plan. The revised Agreed Syllabus has been adopted and a separate budget put aside to implement it. Assessment is currently under review. The programme is broad and balanced and provides pupils with the knowledge and understanding of a number of religions represented in this country including Judaism and Islam. Pupils have a good knowledge of Christianity and can confidently discuss issues of faith. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Drama is very successfully used to convey meaning and understanding of Christianity.

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 newly appointed headteacher is contributing significantly to its success as a church school. She has a good understanding of the local community and has a clear vision and high expectations that are based on Christian values. The quality of relationships between staff and pupils is seen as a cornerstone of the school's work. The school has a strong partnership with the local church, clergy and the congregation. Teachers and support staff are valued as members of the staff team. Parents are regularly consulted on matters of current interest.

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