

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Witchampton Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Wimborne

Dorset

BH21 5AP

Diocese: Salisbury

LA: Dorset

Dates of inspection: 4 July 2006

Date of last inspection: February 2000

School's Unique reference number: 113821

Headteacher: Mrs M Bowers

Inspector's name and number: Mr A Page 343

School context

Witchampton Church of England First School is a very small village school of 36 pupils. All pupils are White British and about half are drawn from the school's catchment area. The present head teacher of the school has been in post for about eighteen months.

Summary Judgement

The school's distinctiveness and effectiveness as a Church of England Primary School are good with some outstanding features.

Established strengths

- The head teacher and governing body have a clear Christian vision for the school, which is effectively realised in practice, to the benefit of all the pupils.
- The relationships and behaviour of the pupils are excellent, in a caring and supportive Christian environment, where all are valued as individuals.
- RE and collective worship are well planned, co-ordinated and delivered and strongly encourage the spiritual and moral development of the pupils.

Focus for development

In order to strengthen the Anglican traditions the school should ensure that the pupils have more opportunities to worship in the church and that they are able to participate in appropriate set prayers and responses in collective worship.

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

The school, through its distinctive Christian character, meets the needs of all learners to an outstanding extent. All the pupils in this small, friendly school are known and valued as individuals by all who work there. The pupils derive great benefit from the clear Christian character of the school environment and the commitment and energy of the staff. Parents speak very highly of the ways in which their children are cared for in a personal way. The pupils are readily able to describe the distinctive features of their church school and the enjoyment they experience through attending. Opportunities for prayer and reflection in collective worship, RE and at other times during the day, enable the pupils to grow strongly in their spiritual and moral development. For example, during an act of worship, the pupils were able to reflect on the differences between people around the world and God's love for all. The relationships between all adults and pupils are excellent and demonstrate in practice the explicit Christian values of the school community.

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

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good.

Collective worship, with its clear Christian character, is central to the life of the school and the education of the pupils. The pupils enjoy collective worship, enabling them to learn more about the Christian tradition. For example, the pupils speak eagerly of

enjoying many of the Christian stories and songs. The planning of collective worship gives the pupils a programme which is distinctively Christian and one which also enables them to experience a range of leaders. Teachers speak of how collective worship and other opportunities for prayer are valuable times in their own, and the pupils' lives. The pupils gain some knowledge of the Anglican tradition through the weekly contribution from the local vicar and services in the parish church. Parents are invited to these and such occasions are well attended, valuable community events.

How effective is the religious education?

The effectiveness of religious education is good. The pupils make good progress in RE at both key stages and standards are in line with, and on occasions above, the expectations of the Dorset Agreed Syllabus. Younger pupils are able to use religious vocabulary to describe the people in the church and some of the events and activities that take place. Older pupils are able to develop an understanding of how religious symbols convey beliefs and values to Christians and believers from other faiths. The scheme of work enables the pupils to develop a clear knowledge and understanding of the Christian tradition and other faiths. Lessons are well planned with clear objectives, activities and outcomes for the pupils. Teachers effectively assess the pupils' progress throughout the units of work. The pupils behave excellently and contribute positively to discussions. For example, they are able to discuss issues sensibly and co-operate in groups.

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

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school, as a church school, is good with outstanding features. The head teacher and governors effectively promote a distinctive Christian vision through the prospectus, RE and collective worship policies and school environment. The self evaluation toolkit for church schools has recently been used by teachers and governors, guided by the Diocese, to enable all members of the school community to appreciate the Christian character of the school. The foundation governors actively support the vision of the school as a church school and the school has benefited from recent additions to the governing body. Members of staff work together as a team in supporting the Christian vision for the school, acting as positive role models to the benefit of the pupils' spiritual and moral development. Parents speak very highly of the church links and whole heartedly welcome this characteristic of the school. The pupils in the school derive great benefit from regular links with the local churches.