

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Ackworth Howard Church of England Voluntary Controlled Junior and Infant School

Station Road
Low Ackworth
Pontefract
West Yorkshire
WF7 7HH

Diocese: Wakefield

Local authority: Wakefield
Dates of inspection: 07 December 2006
Date of last inspection: 19 and 21 March 2002
School's unique reference number: 130977
Headteacher: Miss S L Jackson
Inspector's name and number: Jeffery Plumb 248

School context

This semi-rural primary school is smaller than most primary schools, nationally. There are 152 pupils on roll. Almost all pupils are from a white British background. The proportion of pupils eligible for a free school meal is well below the national average. In this very inclusive school the proportion of pupils with a statement for their special educational needs is above average.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Ackworth Howard Church of England (VC) Junior and Infant as a Church of England school are good

This is a good church school. Its distinctiveness and effectiveness as a Church of England school are evident in its focus on worship and commitment to promoting pupils' spiritual development. Good links exist between the school and the local parish church.

Established strengths

- The Christian care and support in this very inclusive school is very good.
- Links with the parish church are good.
- Dignity and respect for all pervade this school and contributes to the very good progress made by all pupils.
- Christian forgiveness and love lies at the heart of this Church of England School where every child is valued and respected.

Focus for development

- Increase the involvement of the church in planning the programme of worship.
- Provide more opportunities to engage pupils in worship through Drama activities
- Put a system in place to gather pupils views about worship and ensure that their views are carefully considered when planning to improve worship.

The school, through its distinctive Christian character, is outstanding at meeting the needs of all learners

The head teacher's clear Christian vision, shared by all staff, creates an atmosphere of a family school committed to all pupils being fully included in every aspect of school life. The quality of care, Christian love and support is demonstrated in the way in which pupils with complex learning difficulties settle and achieve so well. This is greatly appreciated by their parents who say, 'We are supported in helping our children to learn'. Pupils are respected and valued for who they are. Consequently they treat each other with dignity. They enjoy learning because their lessons are challenging and fun. A rich curriculum planned to meet

pupils' needs promotes excellence in learning for all. It makes a valuable contribution to pupils' spiritual development. Circle time provides all pupils with opportunities to reflect and think deeply. Festivals important to the few minority ethnic pupils are celebrated in school. There are good programmes to develop the talents of pupils who are gifted and talented. Behaviour is good. Pupils and teachers forgive each other when they do make mistakes and support each other during difficult times.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Worship is central in the life of this school. Pupils say, 'We enjoy reflecting on how God wants us to live our lives'. However, they would value being involved more regularly through role play. The act of worship seen was outstanding. The theme was clear, singing was outstanding and pupils were engaged. It made a very valuable contribution to their spiritual development. Although planning for worship is good the foundation governors are not involved in the process. The link with the parish church is good and the rector regularly conducts worship in school. He has successfully raised pupils' awareness of aspects of Anglicanism. The views pupils have about the acts of worship are not sought regularly. Pupils say, 'We would value the opportunity to express our views about worship'. Lack of a formal structure to listen to what pupils think about worship means that their views about it cannot be taken into consideration when planning for improvement.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school is good

The head teacher has successfully created a school with a strong Christian family atmosphere. Self-evaluation of what it means to be a Christian school is good. Following a recent retreat day the head teacher, co-ordinator for collective worship and foundation governors have taken decisive action to improve opportunities for reflection throughout the school's curriculum. The timing and quality of prayer life in the school has also been improved as a result of this day. The church is actively involved in the religious education curriculum and in the providing worship in the school.

SIAS report December 2006. Ackworth Howard (VC) J&I School. WF7 7HH