

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### **Aiskew, Leeming Bar Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School**

2 Leeming Lane  
Leeming  
Northallerton  
North Yorkshire  
DL7 9AU

#### **Diocese: Ripon and Leeds**

Local authority: North Yorkshire  
Date of inspection: 19<sup>th</sup> March 2007  
Date of last inspection: 11<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> June 2001  
School's unique reference number: 121472  
Headteacher: Mrs J Wells  
Inspector's name and number: Meg Cooper 438

#### **School context**

Aiskew, Leeming Bar Church of England School serves the villages of Aiskew, Leeming Bar and Londonderry, part of Bedale and the RAF Air Base. The majority of pupils are White British and the number of pupils from ethnic minority groups is well below average. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average as is the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and Statements of Special Educational Need.

There have been three acting Headteachers in less than a year with the current acting Headteacher being in post since November 2006. The current Year 6 class has had a number of supply teachers over the previous year due to staffing difficulties.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Aiskew, Leeming Bar as a Church of England school are satisfactory with some good features.**

It has a strong ethos of care and respect embedded in Christian values. The acting Headteacher has a clear vision that has been shared with all stakeholders in order for learners to develop their independence.

#### **Established strengths**

- The Christian ethos of the school is reflected in the relationship between staff and children.
- Good quality provision for Collective Worship.
- Good standard of behaviour, levels of self esteem and maturity.
- Care and respect that is extended to all stakeholders.

#### **Focus for development**

- Develop the monitoring and evaluation system for Collective Worship led by Foundation Governors in consultation with the Collective Worship leader and the Headteacher.
- Extend the range of opportunities for learners to fulfil their full potential.
- Support pupils in their desire to develop their School Council role
- Extend and embed strategies for church school self evaluation to increase governor involvement in sustaining school improvement and providing an appropriate level of challenge

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

The learners share a positive sense of self and are able to relate to the feelings and sensibilities of others. There is strong evidence of staff and learners showing respect to one another underpinning the Mission Statement of 'Growing Together, Learning Together'. Parents like the atmosphere and demonstrate, through the questionnaire, that they feel welcome, value the staff and the provision for extra curricula activities. There is an annual review of the distinctiveness of the school as a church school through self evaluation by governors and a meeting with parents. The school demonstrates its inclusiveness by the newly initiated family group seating in Collective Worship. The understanding of cultures and beliefs are encouraged by global charity fund raising and links with Ripon Cathedral through the 'One World' initiative. Learners have very recently been introduced to personal targets linked to their achievement and to their potential attainment in order to raise academic performance to at least satisfactory. The recent funded partnership with a local primary school is addressing curricular provision. The School Council represents views clearly and is keen to develop its role. There is evidence of the school's Christian character in the entrance hall and throughout the school through symbols and multicultural art work.

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

Worship occupies a place of central importance in the life of the school and underpins its Christian character. The school has done well to sustain this focus through a period of change. St Augustine's Church is no longer operating as a church and the link for the school is now with St John's Church which lies within the parish of St Gregory's at Bedale. The Rector of St Gregory's supported the school through this change and the school is fortunate to have a lay reader or the new curate taking Collective Worship weekly. The curate is a central figure in the life of the school and is keen to be involved with the Collective Worship leader in the planning and the evaluation of Collective Worship. Worship takes place in an atmosphere of calm and respect with exemplary behaviour throughout. Learners sit in family groups and there is willing participation and positive interaction from those present. All staff attend and participate as worshippers alongside learners. There is use of prayer, silence and reflection enhancing the spiritual development. In the hall is a table with a cross, candle and a prayer box where children can place prayers that are used in school and in church by the curate. Prayer plays a significant part in learners' experience with children being invited to offer grace at dinner and end of day prayers. The learners are able to talk about key Christian festivals and the church's year. There is a celebration assembly to nominate superstars and class assemblies to which parents are invited. An Easter Service is planned in St John's. A pilgrimage took place in November when the school processed to the church, met along the way by members of the congregation who provided sweets and drinks for 'the pilgrims'. At church, poppy crosses were laid and daffodils planted under the Millennium Yew. The Foundation Governors are aware of their roles and responsibilities and give support to the school. Although some monitoring of Collective Worship has taken place and children record the theme daily, strategies for monitoring and evaluation need to be developed and embedded.

**The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school is satisfactory.**

The acting Headteacher has communicated the vision for school improvement to staff. There are pastoral and spiritual links between the parish and the school and, although there is a clear view of a church school, improvement of the strategic view is in its early stages. The hardworking Governing Body have drawn up an Action Plan on how to improve their effectiveness but this has no specific dates entered for completion and review. The governors are becoming more aware of the role of critical friend and self evaluators through support from the Local Authority and a neighbouring school. The acting Headteacher has been in post for four months and has achieved much. The excellent lead she has given and her decision to take up a teaching role in Year 6 is proving to be making an improvement in attainment. Staff have received excellent challenge and support from her. All stakeholders speak positively of the way the school has been led through difficult times.

SIAS report March 2007, Aiskew, Leeming Bar, DL7 9AU