

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

All Saints Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Mill Road
Winfarthing
Diss
IP22 2DZ

Diocese of Norwich

LA : Norfolk

Date of inspection : 21 April 2008

Date of last inspection: September 2002

School's unique reference number: 121128

Name of Headteacher: Louise Norgate

Name of Inspector: Simon Windmill

NS number: 182

Context

Winfarthing Church of England VA Primary School serves the villages of Winfarthing, Shelfanger and the surrounding area. It has links with its parish church, which is very close to the school. All pupils come from white British backgrounds. The number of pupils with disabilities or learning difficulties is above average. The school is in the process of recruiting to replace some members of staff who are leaving the school.

Summary Judgement

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Winfarthing as a Church of England school are good.

The school's Christian ethos and values are embedded in school life and have a strong positive influence on pupils' values and attitudes. The supportive and caring relationships within and between pupils and staff are excellent.

Established strengths

- The Christian ethos and values, which permeate throughout the life of the school
- Pupils' excellent behaviour
- Excellent leadership and management from the headteacher and governors

Focus for development

- Recruit new staff members and develop the new staff team to realise and implement the Christian identity of the school.
- Raise the standards of teaching and learning in religious education.
- Extend the visual Christian identity of the school into the classrooms

The school, through its distinctive Christian character, is good in meeting the needs of all pupils.

The school's Christian ethos is regarded by the headteacher, staff and governors as a fundamentally important part of school life. Care and support for pupils and staff are outstanding, and reflect the Christian values on which the school is based. This is seen in the school's warm, welcoming, inclusive and friendly atmosphere, in which pupils feel valued as individuals.

Parents' surveys confirm this, with comments such as 'I'm very pleased my children attend this school', and 'It's the best primary school in the country!' Pupils get on exceptionally well with each other, and with the staff, who provide good role models. These excellent relationships help pupils develop self-confidence and independence. Pupils like coming to school, and enjoy their lessons.

Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. This is because they are involved in setting the rules for their class, and therefore respect them, and understand the consequences if rules are broken. Lapses in good behaviour are minor and extremely rare, and are always dealt with quickly and effectively.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They have a clear understanding of right and wrong. The headteacher, staff and governors see spiritual and moral development as a vital part of pupils' learning, and encourage this by giving pupils opportunities for reflection in Collective Worship and the wider curriculum.

The school environment is used exceptionally well to contribute to pupils' spiritual and moral development, through excellent displays throughout the school. The headteacher is extending the visual Christian identity of the school by creating a focal point in each classroom based on the Christian symbols of the cross and the school's four prayers. This will create a focus for quiet reflection and prayer.

Pupils' awareness and concern for the needs of others is encouraged, and as a result they treat each other with care and respect. They help to raise money for charitable causes, for example they sent £500 to Sports Relief. They are also very aware of the need to recycle as much as possible, and to adopt healthy lifestyles.

The impact of Collective Worship on the school community is good.

Collective Worship is seen as the foundation of school life by the head and staff, and is securely based on the Christian gospel. It always includes good singing, teaching and time for prayer and reflection. A display provides a focal point for worship, with a cross, bible, school prayer, the colours of the church year and a candle, which is lit to mark Collective Worship as a special part of the day. Pupils enjoy worship, especially when they have a part to play in it, such as acting out a story or reading a poem. It always begins with the Anglican 'Peace be with you...and also with you', and the Lord's prayer is used along with the school's own prayers.

Pupils have a highly developed understanding of the range of styles and purposes of prayer, going beyond 'saying thank you' and 'asking for help' to include such things as asking for healing, or forgiveness, or expressing penitence. They would welcome even more involvement in worship, for example by writing or reading their own prayers.

Worship is very well planned around themes that reflect the main festivals of the Church year, such as Christmas, Easter and Harvest, along with a number of other 'special' services such as a service for those leaving the school. Many of these services are held in the Church, with the active support of church members.

Good records of Collective Worship are kept. It is monitored and evaluated by staff and Foundation Governors to assess its impact on pupils.

The effectiveness of Religious Education is satisfactory.

Religious Education is seen as a very important area of learning by teachers, parents and pupils. It is well planned to cover Christianity and other faiths, with long, medium and short term plans. Religious Education fulfils diocesan requirements by teaching key stage 1 pupils for 50 minutes each week, and key stage 2 for an hour. The school complies with the Norfolk Agreed Syllabus. Religious Education is also used to link with the Anglican traditions promoted in Collective Worship.

Pupils enjoy Religious Education, and make satisfactory progress in it. They are able to relate what they learn about Christianity and other faiths to their own lives. Their understanding of different faiths is developed through a widening vocabulary of religious terms, and an encouragement to deepen their understanding by being encouraged to ask questions on such ideas such as belonging, truth, purpose, meaning and commitment.

Lessons are planned with clear learning objectives. Pupils' work is assessed by themselves, their peers and their teachers. A wide range of activities are used to stimulate learning, such as drama, discussion, individual and group work. This helps to keep pupils interested in their lessons, and gives them opportunities to work in different ways.

Standards of teaching and learning in Religious Education range from satisfactory to outstanding. The headteacher has identified a need to raise standards overall, aiming to ensure that all lessons are consistently good or better. Findings from monitoring Religious Education are used to identify objectives and tasks for Religious Education within the school improvement development plan.

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

The Headteacher gives outstanding leadership to the school, and is very well supported by her staff and governors. The headteacher and staff promote a distinctive and active Christian vision for the school, with Christian values underpinning its life and work. For example, she has raised the profile and standard of Collective Worship from a very low base, and is continuing to do so. The school's publications, such as its brochure and website, policies for Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development and Collective Worship, the staff recruitment procedures, and the excellent and stimulating displays all effectively contribute to the strong Christian influence seen in all aspects of the school's life.

The staff feel highly valued and involved in the school's development. They all worked together in creating a shared vision for the school, along with all the governors. This contributes greatly to the happy and supportive atmosphere among staff. The staff have taken advantage of many professional training opportunities to further develop their skills, and have high expectations that this good quality training will have a positive impact on raising standards.

The partnership between the school, the church and the wider community is outstanding, and highly valued by all. Links with the Church are particularly close, and a monthly school service is held there. The incumbent has an effective pastoral role in the school, and a church member leads Collective Worship regularly. Questionnaires, surveys, suggestion boxes and informal conversations confirm that parents and members of the wider community hold the school in very high regard. They show that they are very happy with the school and feel that the successful and purposeful atmosphere is generated through the school's caring Christian relationships.

Parents and the wider community feel well informed about the school's activities, and enjoy the fact that they are positively encouraged to get involved in its life in a number of ways, for

example by contributing to fundraising for charities and the school, and inviting parents to lunch once a week. The school's self assessment is largely accurate, but a bit too modest in grading leadership and management as good rather than outstanding.

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