

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

All Saints Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

The Street
Lawshall
Bury St Edmunds
Suffolk
IP29 4QA

Diocese: St Edmundsbury & Ipswich

Local Authority: Suffolk
Dates of inspection: 25th February 2008
Date of last inspection: May 2004
School's unique reference number: 124706
Headteacher: Mrs Clare Kitto
Inspector's name and number: Mrs Marion Betts 220

School context

All Saints School is a smaller than average primary school with part-time nursery provision for pupils aged 3 to 9 years. It is situated in the heart of the village of Lawshall next to the parish church. Children attend from both this village and the many surrounding villages. The socio-economic backgrounds of pupils are generally favourable. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is well below the national average. Most of the pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils identified as having learning difficulties is broadly similar to the national average.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of All Saints School as a Church of England school are good

A distinctive Christian ethos is promoted by the headteacher, staff and governors and understood by the whole school community. This has a strong positive influence on pupils' values and attitudes. A creative and imaginative curriculum has a significant impact on the pupils' spiritual, personal, moral, social and cultural development and a high standard of work is produced. There are excellent links with the church community. Collective Worship makes a significant contribution to the daily lives of the pupils.

Established strengths

- The strong leadership of the headteacher which contributes significantly to the effectiveness of the Christian ethos.
- Very good relationships of respect and care within the school community.
- The pupils' outstanding personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The very strong partnership between the school and the church.

Focus for development

- Communicate more explicitly the Anglican foundation of the school.
- Implement the school plans to provide a permanent Christian focus within the collective worship environment.

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

Pupils at All Saints' School feel valued. They are confident and enjoy their school life, praising the care of the staff and the special enrichment activities provided. Enrichment days take place regularly. Pupils work in family groups exploring different cultures and religions through practical and creative activities. This includes learning about and celebrating Christian festivals. A pupil summed up his view of the school by saying "everyone here is kind

and caring and learning is fun”.

The pupils are proud of the work they do to safeguard the local environment. Children nurture throughout their school life, their own Oak saplings and plant these in the local wood. They are also very aware of global environmental issues and support relevant projects. The children have built personal contacts with children in a school in Papua New Guinea and regularly hear how they are coping with the decrease of the rainforest.

The pastoral care of the school is very good with provision catering for specific needs of individual children such as by the Self Esteem nurture group. Each morning children put a peg on the classroom “Emotion Flower” that best sums up their feelings. This alerts staff daily to individual child’s emotional well-being and negative inputs are dealt with promptly.

Children’s personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. The school’s imaginative curriculum and environment, encourages pupils’ spiritual development very well. Creative arts and practical experiences were for example part of the Papua New Guinea enrichment day when food tasting, dance, artefact exploration and mask making were the activities for promoting learning. Opportunities for spiritual reflection are promoted by the high quality, attractive displays created by the children using a variety of materials. Outside areas of quiet are distinct from activity areas. One incorporates a small garden where children care for and grow vegetables. Christian values are regularly discussed as a weekly theme for collective worship and children understand their part in putting these into practice. They feel safe in school and understand their responsibilities towards each other. The children have a strong sense of community and are extremely considerate towards each other. Success both of achievement and personal development is recognised and celebrated. Children express joy both for their own and for each others’ achievements. The active school council participates in whole school decisions such as deciding which charities to support.

Relationships and respect between all staff and children are very good and demonstrate the school’s Christian context. The whole school is characterised by team work and a sense of positive well-being and inspired creative learning. Pupils behave well and their attitudes to learning are very good. All pupils know and understand the procedures to resolve any problems.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

This is demonstrated by the effective planning, high quality of delivery and regular monitoring and evaluations by teachers and Christian visitors, as well as the children. Suggestions are acted upon. Comments are extremely positive especially concerning the creative delivery the worship offers and the active involvement of the pupils.

Worship is regarded as highly important and central to the school’s daily programme. The headteacher, as worship co-ordinator involves the vicar and other worship leaders with the planning. Worship is greatly enhanced by active pupil involvement both in presentation for example by drama, and by enthusiastic singing and musical accompaniment. The school prayer is led daily by a different child even the youngest being involved in this. The children’s experience is broadened by all the teachers and visitors regularly leading worship. This includes the vicar, members of the local ministry team and a Christian storyteller. The sessions follow the liturgical year and promote and explain Christian values.

Worship promotes well the pupils’ spiritual and moral development. Collective Worship evokes a positive response from the pupils who are stimulated and enthused by their involvement. The school is sensitive to the beliefs and traditions of those of other faiths and of none. Children are given time to reflect on the theme and its application to their lives. They are also given opportunities to contribute their ideas and thoughts.

Grace is said before lunch. The school prayer is displayed around the building. The hall in which worship takes place does not at present display any Christian artefacts or pictures to provide a focus. Christian based hymns are used in worship and the Lord’s prayer is sometimes used. The school celebrates major Christian festivals by the whole school being present at services at the local church. Pupils contribute with poems, artwork and singing. Parents are invited and attendance is good.

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

The headteacher, foundation governors and the vicar, who is a governor, provide effective leadership which contributes significantly to the school's Christian vision. They regularly review the self-evaluation of the school as a church school which is detailed and accurate. The school improvement plan often has an objective linked to the church school community. The Anglican foundation of the school, which is known by all stakeholders, is not explicitly referenced in the school motto and aims; around the building; or prominently communicated through the school logo or prospectus. One of the displays in the entrance hall is a stained glass window with the church represented. Plans have been made to provide curtains depicting bible stories across one side of the hall.

Staff understand and implement the school's expectations for their roles in this Christian community and feel appreciated for their work. This was revealed by the recent well-being exercise which placed the school in the top 10% of the country.

The links with the local church are very strong. The vicar visits regularly. The expertise of parishioners is regularly used within the school. These people often share how their faith has led to action in the local and global communities. Regular reports to the parochial church council give the school a high profile within the Christian community. The church and the local area, including the woodland, are both used as extra resources to enhance learning.

Parents are aware of and support the Christian ethos of the school. They feel welcomed into the school, praise the concern of all the staff for the specific needs of their children and appreciate their views being considered. The school's partnership with the local community is very good. Events in the school, village and church are communicated to all and mutually supported. Pupils participate in the parish show submitting art work for display and the older children are creating a sensory garden for the residents of the local nursing home. The school is a strong participant in projects to promote and sustain the local woodland environment.