

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

All Saints (Marsh) Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Osborne Street,
Newton Abbot
TQ12 2DJ

Diocese: Exeter

Local authority: Devon

Dates of inspection: December 11th 2007

Date of last inspection: September 2002

School's unique reference number: 113466

Headteacher: Mrs Susan Rowe-Jones

Inspector's name and number: Mr Andrew Rickett 201

School context

All Saints (Marsh) is a small primary school with 96 children arranged into four mixed age groups. The school serves a busy urban catchment area which has a varied socio-economic background. Pupil mobility is high. The number of children with learning difficulties or disabilities is in line with the national average. Most children come from a white British heritage.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of All Saints (Marsh) Primary as a Church of England school are good

All Saints (Marsh) is a community in which children learn how to share and help each other based on the Christian values of care and respect. This has created an environment in which children feel confident and where they receive encouragement to reach their potential in both their learning and personal development.

Established strengths

- A high degree of respect in the relationships between all members of the school community.
- A real commitment to enhance the impact of the school's distinctive Christian character
- The leadership of the school which provides a very good model of Christian practice.

Focus for development

- Review the school aims to raise awareness of the school's distinctive character.
- Governors to lead a dialogue to identify the specific Christian values which underpin the school ethos.
- Monitor religious education to identify how learning about religion is used to develop understanding.

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

The school is a haven of peace amidst a busy urban environment. The school has successfully created a family atmosphere which gives the school more the feel of a village community. It has an atmosphere of calm and quietness which originates in the expectation of everyone in the school community that they treat others as they would wish to be treated themselves. It has created a very secure environment in which children feel safe and valued.

In the words of the headteacher, "it is place in which every child matters to God." The children possess the quality of humility which is demonstrated in the high level of respect shown to each individual's views and opinions. The children also have confidence to express their beliefs openly and comfortably in an environment in which they know they will be listened to without judgement. This is a reflection of the very high degree of trust that exists between the children themselves and their teachers. As a result, attitudes towards learning are very positive and with the very good quality of behaviour, this allows teachers to deliver exciting lessons which engage children with stimulating learning activities. The good level of care for children is being reflected in rapidly improving standards. This has been brought about by considerable work being done to raise achievement by looking at the individual progress of each child. The school rightly judges its inclusiveness to be very good. All children and their families from whatever faith background support the school ethos, because they appreciate that although the school is successful at promoting its Christian identity, it also recognises the universality of its values.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Worship is important to the school and has an impact on the entire school day. This can be seen at the start of the day when children informally meet in the hall and are welcomed by the headteacher with a smile and a prayer. It is a quiet and reflective moment which reminds children of what the school's expectations are. It is a very good way of setting the tone for the rest of the school day and is successful in achieving a quiet atmosphere of calm and peace. The school has a strong pattern to its worship through meeting as a whole school every day of the week. This gives the school opportunities to develop themes so that children can acquire a deeper understanding of some difficult issues. Themes follow the Diocesan plan but are then developed further through the use of Christian-based themes which link with the school's programme of social and emotional development. This has created a strong framework through which the school successfully delivers its core Christian messages. Children understand that prayer is a special time to talk to God and they respond with great reverence. For example, on one occasion, a very young child offered a spontaneous prayer during an informal talk and the rest of the group automatically responded because this is a perfectly normal thing for them to do at school. Worship contains clear messages which are related to scripture. The impact on children is good because the content is related to the children's own experiences. The church is used regularly to celebrate festivals and this reinforces the children's understanding of the importance of festivals in the Christian calendar.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

Children enjoy RE because they make good progress. In lessons throughout the school, activities are used which actively engage them in their learning. The planning of religious education reflects the need to stimulate children and to present RE as something that is fresh and alive. Children's attitudes are therefore very good and this, combined with the fact that the teaching shows there is a lot of thought behind the planning, makes RE a subject which children look forward to. The children's knowledge of RE is good and teachers are also expert at identifying gaps or misconceptions in learning and putting them right. Progression is clear throughout the school. This was seen in lessons across different age groups which all focussed on the Christmas story but from different perspectives, which challenged the children's understanding successfully according to their age and development. In this way it is clear to see how the children build up the depth of their knowledge as they go through the school. Lessons contain clear learning objectives and plenary sessions are used effectively to reinforce what children have learned but also to assess quickly how successful this learning has been. The RE Coordinator has already identified the need to monitor planning to ensure that there is a balance between knowledge and giving children opportunities to articulate their

beliefs and opinions, thereby acquiring a vocabulary which can be used to express beliefs and opinions at a deeper level.

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

The headteacher has a very clear vision for the continuing development of the school's Christian character. She is passionate about how the school's Christian ethos gives children opportunities to acquire a spiritual dimension to their lives. She is regarded by the school community as a very good model reflecting the school's values of caring for the individual. She is well supported by foundation governors who have a good understanding of the school through their close involvement in school life. The governing body are united in their appreciation that the school's Christian ethos brings something special to the school. They have a good understanding of how this is demonstrated in the quality of the relationships that exist between the whole community. Foundation governors also provide a good link with the local church community and are keen to see these develop. The rector is chair of governors and recognising that the school is at an exciting time in its development, is ready to work with the headteacher to review the school aims and further raise awareness among the school community of its Christian foundation. The curate is a familiar figure in school and gives the children a visible sign of living Christianity through his pastoral involvement with children and staff, as well as by leading worship regularly. The RE Co-ordinator has a good grasp of the subject and the standards achieved by children across the school. She is realistic about assessment and has implemented a good system that works for the school to record progress reliably. Her philosophy is very good because it reflects the unique place of RE as a discrete subject in the curriculum, offering children opportunities to grow spiritually. Parents are very supportive of the school and agree that the recently appointed headteacher is already taking the school forward. They say that her caring approach has made a big difference because children feel they are treated with more respect and that this is having a marked effect on the way that they see themselves.

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