

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Ashton Keynes Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Gosditch
Ashton Keynes
Swindon
SN6 6NZ

Diocese: Bristol

Local authority: Wiltshire

Date of inspection: 5 December 2007

Date of last inspection: 6 December 2002

School's unique reference number: 126297

Headteacher: Miss Maggie Carleton

Inspector's name and number: Mrs Rosemary Bartlett NS 120

School context

This average size primary school serves the villages of Ashton Keynes and The Leigh. Two years ago the school increased in numbers to admit the pupils from The Leigh, following the sudden closure of that school. This academic year a seventh class has been created and each class now has one year band. There is a variety of ability on school entry.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Ashton Keynes Church of England School as a Church of England school are good

Christian values are at the heart of the life of this school. A richly inclusive welcome is offered to each pupil. The very good relationships within the school enable pupils to grow in confidence and understanding. The close connections with parents and with the local church and community contribute well to pupils' learning.

Established strengths

- The headteacher and governors' clear Christian vision for the school
- The exceptionally effective management of staff and buildings
- The good links with the local church and community

Focus for development

- Develop further links with other faith communities
- Continue to build on the good links with the local church
- Provide increased opportunities for stillness and reflection within worship

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

The headteacher and governors have a clear Christian vision for the school. This vision is well articulated and underpins the daily life of the school. Each member of the school community is seen as an individual. Respect and consideration for others is modelled by the headteacher and staff. Pupils in turn are kind and thoughtful in their behaviour to others. Their social skills are good, exemplified in their confident, articulate communication and in their ability to listen to one another. Their comments include: "There's something special about us all". The variety of visits to art galleries, museums and many places of interest both local and farther afield, considerably enrich pupils' experience of learning. Visitors also contribute well through their many skills and talents. Residential visits provide further opportunities for pupils to develop confidence and personal skills. Pupils are keenly aware of ecological issues and enthusiastically take part in school and village recycling projects. They keenly support the Walk To School on Wednesdays. The school council has an active role. One of their recent discussions was the creation of the four school "houses". These are having a clear, positive effect in motivating pupils' enthusiasm. In religious education pupils benefit from regular visits to Holy Cross church and the study of bible stories, which are made meaningful to the pupils by relating them to their own experiences. From the story of Martha and Mary they learn the

importance of listening to friends. They learn about the quality of forgiveness through the story of Jacob and Esau. They are very interested in the lives and beliefs of different communities. They remember well the Five Pillars of Islam and the principles these express. Their experience of other cultures is considerably enriched by the school's effective links with the twin town of Grandchamps des Fontaines, in France. Pupils benefit from the diocesan links with Uganda. The school now plans to further develop links with other faith communities to enable pupils to learn first hand from the experiences of others. Visits to the synagogue are planned and a member of the local Muslim community has been invited to contribute to a session of RE. The development of the buildings and grounds contributes very well to pupils' opportunities for academic, physical and social development.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Daily worship expresses well the school's Christian spirit and values. The fine, well designed new hall provides an inspiring space for whole school and for key stage worship. The sense of community is well supported by the presence of the staff, all of whom regularly lead worship. Members of the local church also lead school worship on occasion. Their dramatic presentations of bible stories such as the Prodigal Son are much enjoyed by all who attend. In this way, values such as trust and forgiveness are effectively communicated. The foundation governors make a clear and very positive contribution to planning and leading worship. The school's Anglican tradition is well reflected in its prayers, songs and stories. Pupils particularly enjoy drama and singing in worship. The piano and recorders also enhance the enjoyment of worship. The weekly acts of worship celebrating Good Work are especially appreciated. These are delightful occasions when the school celebrates together the many efforts and achievements of all classes. School worship is held in church on special occasions, which include the forthcoming Christingle service. Pupils' families attend these services in great numbers and the church is filled. The good links between school and church worship are also seen in the numbers of pupils who play a major part each year in the church Harvest festival. The new after school Kross Kids club, run by a church member, is well attended. There are good resources for worship including the diocesan Values for Life, which the school plans to implement further. The school appreciates the support given by the diocesan adviser in exploring aspects of spirituality and leading worship. The school's evaluation of worship has identified that pupils enjoy worship "because it is nice and quiet" and "it is a special time to think." The school now plans to increase opportunities for stillness and reflection. This will build on the good listening skills and the receptive aspect of pupils' communication already in place.

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

The headteacher's good leadership is very effectively supported by the governors. The school's church foundation and its commitment to Christian principles are clearly communicated in its documentation. The Christian spirit underpinning the management of the school is evident in the organisation of its daily life. Individual staff strengths are well recognised and maximised. Pupils clearly benefit from the effective class job shares. The recent management of the school's sudden increase in numbers was exceptionally effective. The new pupils and their families have settled in very well. Staff appointments and the extensive building programme have been very well managed. The headteacher, staff and governors also hold a clear shared vision for the school's future. This includes the identification of needs in terms of the buildings, and ways in which these needs may be met. The school enjoyed a very good connection with the last vicar and very much looks forward to building on its good relationship with the recently appointed vicar. There are many close and fruitful links with the local community. Parents and other members of the local community are very generous in their contribution. The much enjoyed annual Bonfire Nights raise significant funds for the school. The school and village work closely together for a number of projects such as Water Aid and the promotion of Fair Trade products. Organisation of religious education is good. There are good resources. RE is included in the current school development plan and the school plans to increase monitoring of teaching and assessment of learning. The school has worked well in seeking to address the areas identified for development in the last inspection.