

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Bilton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Junior School

Plantagenet Drive,
RUGBY,
Warwickshire
CV22 6LB

Diocese: Coventry

LA: Warwickshire

Dates of inspection: 5 July 2007

Date of last inspection: 15-17 April 2002

School's Unique reference number: 125682

Headteacher: Mr Richard Powell

Inspector's name and number: Robert Miller 357

School context

Bilton is larger than most junior schools, serving the immediate as well as the surrounding areas. The school was opened on its present site in the 1960's, has been extended meanwhile and due to have a new entrance hall and male lavatory built this year. There are 398 pupils on roll 90 per cent of whom are white and British. The school has close links with the local clergy and other faiths and denominations in the town. The head teacher, a practising Christian, took up his post in September 2006.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Bilton Junior as a Church of England school are good

Bilton is a happy and friendly school where the relationships between staff and children are excellent. This makes learning an enjoyable experience. The headteacher has created a Christian-centred ethos in the school that emphasises love and caring for each other. This has a positive effect on the pupils, particularly in the way they behave towards each other. Links between the school and the parish church are good. The capacity to make the necessary improvements is good.

Established strengths

- Relationships between staff and children are excellent.
- The headteacher and foundation governors promote a distinctive Christian vision for the school.
- The school's website introduces a positive Christian ethos to potential pupils and their families.

Focus for development

- Include more Christian symbolism in and around the school particularly in the hall to make it a special place for worship.
- Involve pupils and foundation governors more in the planning and delivery of acts of collective worship.
- Create closer links between the school and Parochial Church Council [PCC].

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

Parents say that Bilton is a very happy, caring school where the staff act as excellent role models, based on Christian principles. Children are secure in the knowledge that they are respected, valued and listened to by adults in the school. Parents say that their children love coming to school and enjoy their learning opportunities, which include bird watching and gardening club. Pupils show concern for those less fortunate than themselves by regular fund raising on both local and international levels. This Christian ethos supports the pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well. Those pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are very well cared for and supported, as they seek to fulfil their

potential. The Christian identity in the school is lacking in the uniform design, symbolism in the hall where worship takes place and religious wall displays. There is, however an excellent school website, that to any would-be parent, gives a very positive Christian message, supplemented by music and the Mission Statement. The school prayer is prominently displayed in the present entrance hall but unfortunately some of the words are in yesterday's language and difficult for children to understand. The atmosphere around the school is orderly and children are very polite and well mannered. Pupils are eager to show visitors their work and they are able to contribute their ideas and concerns through the School Council. They do so in a very sensitive but articulate and mature manner.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Acts of Collective Worship form an important part of school life. Great care is taken to ensure that they take place in a well-organised and peaceful environment. Pupils say that when they sing hymns it makes them feel better and the singing is a strength of the school. They enjoy being able to take part in re-enactments of Bible stories such as the recent school production of "Joseph". They enjoy saying prayers and know and understand the Lord's prayer. Worship makes a valuable contribution to pupils' spiritual and moral development, by making them reflect on the issues of the day and think more deeply about their relationships with each other and the wider world. The outside speakers, such as Rugby Youth for Christ that come into school to lead worship are particularly popular.

The vicar from the parish church leads Worship and this both honours and familiarises pupils with the Anglican tradition. Worship is lacking Christian symbols such as a crucifix and lighted candle as foci and this detracts from the school hall becoming a special place for a short period of each school day. Worship is well planned and co-ordinated, involving all staff in the discussions as to what "Themes" should take place. This is an improvement on the previous Diocesan inspection. There is however a lack of input from pupils and foundation governors in the planning and delivery of acts of worship in an effort to raise the quality still further. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to learn about faiths and cultures other than their own. Speakers from other faiths have recently attended the school to talk about their religion and beliefs. Pupils look forward to this aspect of their cultural education with great enthusiasm and say that it is inspirational. Parents agree and enjoy the opportunity to join their children for worship at school.

The leadership and management of the school as a church school are good

The quality of the leadership of the headteacher, contributes significantly to the success of the school. Together with the staff and governors, he promotes the Christian vision for the school, by treating staff and children alike with mutual love and respect. This is reflected in the good behaviour and attitudes of most children. The school staff work closely as a team and they receive strong support from its leaders. The school's management team and governors are establishing clear systems that inform the school's self-evaluation process. The areas identified for school improvement are accurate. Foundation governors have a monitoring role and are currently developing more formal evaluation procedures for Acts of Collective Worship to ensure the quality of worship is raised further still. School policies express its Christian purpose and school rules are couched in terms of love, forgiveness and mutual respect. The need to have parents contribute their views on the Christian vision for the school has been identified as an area for development. Parents speak very highly of all that the school does to ensure their child flourishes as an individual. Links between the school and the PCC is an area for development in an effort to share the school's vision for the way forward. The school have articles in the Parish magazine to keep the community abreast of events at the school. The local Church is used for some school events and is used as a learning resource.