

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### **Bishop Henderson Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School**

Farley Dell,  
Coleford,  
Bath  
BA3 5PN

#### **Diocese: Bath and Wells**

Local authority: Somerset

Dates of inspection: 25 January 2007

Date of last inspection: 2-4 October 2002

School's unique reference number: 123747

Headteacher: Mrs Tonie Scott

Inspector's name and number: Mrs Daphne Spitzer

#### **School context**

Bishop Henderson C of E Primary School is a village school with 165 children on roll and 30 more attending the nursery class. The accommodation has been recently updated and is bright and colourful. The grounds are attractive and well maintained. Bishop Henderson serves the villages of Coleford and nearby Holcombe as well as neighbouring hamlets.

#### **Bishop Henderson C of E Primary is providing a satisfactory level of distinctiveness and effectiveness as a church school.**

There are some good features. The headteacher has made a strong impact, in a short time, in developing the Christian ethos of the school. The school enjoys the high regard of parents for its warm Christian ethos.

#### **Established strengths**

- Enthusiastic newly appointed headteacher committed to raising the impact of the school's church foundation on all its learners
- RE subject leader who has a passion for RE and a vision to promote its place at the heart of the school's curriculum
- Totally committed team from the local Parish Church who support the school very well and give exceptional pastoral care to the children and whole community. They exemplify the strong partnership between the school, church and local village community.

#### **Focus for development**

- To focus on Collective Worship as central to the daily life of the school and ensure it has a special "meaning" for all staff and learners
- To raise attainment in RE by developing whole school assessment systems and embed monitoring
- To include the development of the school's church school foundation in the long and short term school improvement plan

#### **The school, through its distinctive Christian character, is satisfactory in the way it meets the needs of all learners**

Parents said that they greatly valued the emphasis the school places on the acceptance of individual differences and commented how they knew that there was always someone there to help their child. The school presents itself as a demonstrably Christian environment with strong emphasis on spirituality by its colourful displays of interactive work on RE topics, prayers, its Christian symbols, its small focus table in the hall and the school community tree. Parents greatly appreciated the impact these Christian values were having on their children. The boxes recently made by children in Robin class, "full of love", are evidence of these Christian values in action. Pastoral care is good as seen from the way the children form good

relationships between the age groups and are confident that any difficulties with peers will be speedily overcome. Children are able to talk about their beliefs and draw strength from the school's Christian ethos as suggested by the comment from a Y6 child "deep inside, I know there's a place where I can be quiet and know that God will help me."

The King's Club, an after school Christian club lead by a member of staff is very popular with the children and provides a valuable learning experience.

Standards in attainment in RE are satisfactory and in behaviour are good as exemplified by the responsibilities undertaken so well by the Y6 buddies and the Y5 playground stewards. In RE most learners achieve the expectations of the agreed syllabus for their age, although when questioned, some children did reveal a lack of knowledge of other faiths. Implementing assessment which is now being addressed will start to impact on raising the attainment of pupils across the whole school.

### **The impact of collective worship on the school community is satisfactory**

Well planned collective worship with an appropriate level of participation ensures enjoyment and a learning experience which has relevance to life, as seen by one Y2 child's explanation of the meaning of courage, "being brave was something you found really hard to do but you still do it." Older children too were able to relate issues raised to their own lives for example a Y6 boy had felt scared of a new family puppy when he'd been younger and had needed courage to accept it. However children questioned did not perceive a difference between an act of worship and an assembly so appeared to be unaware that the themes for worship were selected because they were based on Christian values. Worship offered a good contribution to the spiritual development of the learners by the use of children's prayers both in the attractive displays around school and in the acts of worship themselves. However, no other prayers were said at other times throughout the day such as before lunch and at the end of the day. Wednesdays, when the church team visited, were particularly enjoyed by the children as special times for collective worship.

### **The leadership and management of the school as a church school is satisfactory**

The headteacher and Foundation governors ensure that Christian values are central to the life of the school. Parents speak of the Christian "welcome" that new families are given as integral to the school's ethos and teaching and greatly value the way the school provides for the needs of the individual child e.g. by the structured approach to settling in joiners and the "circle of friends" to support a child experiencing difficulties with relationships. Parents also appreciate now being invited to join the school in church for special services. The church team play a pivotal role in the school by supporting and working alongside the headteacher who has a vision for developing the school as a church school. This now needs to be shared and formalised through the development plan. The church team also play a unique pastoral role with the children who have moved on, bridging the gap between the primary and secondary schools. Parish/community links are strong as seen by the annual pantomime provided for the village by the Y5/6 children.

In the short time since her appointment, the headteacher has provided good leadership by raising the profile of the church school's foundation, for example, in the area of RE. Effective leadership of RE has resulted in improved provision of resources, a cohesive whole school development plan which is now starting to be monitored and evaluated. The RE teaching observed stimulated the children's interest. They were engaged by the high quality visual resources and good questioning skills. All this ensured children made good progress in their learning during the lesson. The school has effectively evaluated it's own performance as a church school and has a good capacity to improve.