

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### **Bishop Rawle Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School**

Royal Walk  
Cheadle  
Staffordshire  
ST10 1QA

#### **Diocese: Lichfield**

Local authority: Staffordshire  
Date of inspection: 22.02.08  
Date of last inspection: 9.2.04  
School's unique reference number: 124332  
Headteacher: Mr P Owen  
Inspector's name and number: Mrs E M McWhirter 244

#### **School context**

Bishop Rawle school, endowed by a former Rector of Cheadle, is a popular church school in semi rural Cheadle where '*good education matters.*' There are currently 214 pupils on roll, mainly from white British backgrounds divided into eight classes. The school enjoys good links with its neighbouring schools and is actively engaged as a centre for Community and Learning Partnerships in the Staffordshire moorlands.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Bishop Rawle as a Church of England school are good**

Bishop Rawle school provides a Christian ethos in which '*faith may grow and develop*' within an inclusive environment. One of the school's outstanding features is the celebration of a weekly Eucharist in a purpose built sanctuary which enables pupils to readily identify and enjoy Eucharistic worship.

#### **Established strengths**

- The excellent partnerships that exist with the local community
- High quality collective worship, especially seen in the weekly Eucharist, offered to the whole school community
- Pupil enthusiasm to communicate the Christian values they hold dear

#### **Focus for development**

- Involve the whole school community including pupils and parents in the evaluation of the school as a church school
- Raise standards in Religious Education.

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

Bishop Rawle provides a very positive learning environment where children are treated as individuals. There is a very happy atmosphere between children and staff where pupils feel confident and happy and want to come to school. As one grandmother put it, '*It is a very caring school.*' Pupils enthusiastically articulate Christian values and beliefs and know they are valued. Gospel values are very evident in relationships where all uphold the Christian foundation of the school and everyone is treated with respect. As one pupil commented, '*we all get on very well in my class.*' They speak positively about their involvement in anti – bullying weeks and fund raising events to donate money to charity so their faith based morals are seen in action. The school uses SEAL [social and emotional aspects of learning] materials as part of its PSHE [personal, social and health education] programme and takes its responsibility in terms of welfare and well being for the whole family very seriously.

Distinctiveness is high on the school's agenda where the Anglican foundation of the school *'gives the flavour of what we have to deliver.'* Bishop Rawle values its place in the Community Learning Partnership Programme in the Staffordshire moorlands and sees itself as an inclusive centre for partnership working, the key players being pupils and parents. Pupils value the quiet space for reflection that the school garden provides. They enjoy opportunities for spiritual reflection both in the school building and outside. This enhances their spiritual development and their ability to reflect on God and use prayer in their personal lives. The school council is an effective strategy to take responsibility within the life of the school. Bishop Rawle positively celebrates a wide range of achievement effectively in the school including clubs and extra curricular activities.

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

Collective worship enjoys a special place at the heart of Bishop Rawle school. Mass is celebrated weekly in a purpose built sanctuary where the holy sacrament is reserved, thus indicating the importance of this high point of Anglican worship. The special relationship that exists between church and school is exemplified in this high quality worship integral to the worshipping life of the school and parish community. Pupils take responsibility within the Eucharist, they robe as servers, write and read prayers, read the gospel and utilise the visual liturgy well in a spirit of reverence. Such services are effectively led by the rector. Most pupils receive a blessing and enjoyed *'kneeling'* and *'watching people receive the bread'* with those who have been prepared for first communion receiving the elements so pupils are fully aware of the importance of this central act of worship and value it themselves. Pupils welcomed the opportunity to be more involved in evaluation of worship and had plenty of ideas to contribute, thus enabling worship to continually improve in style, quality and integrity. Worship takes place in a variety of places with different worship leaders, reflecting different styles. As one pupil said, *'We do a lot of worship in the family learning room'* where 'Supa club' takes place; whilst another commented, *'I like the church, it's a bigger space and there are angels there.'* Prayer permeates the school. Indeed, prayer boxes used regularly are found in every class. One pupil summed it up thus, *'the church is like a holy temple where we can go and pray and school is like a holy school where we can go and pray.'* Pupils attend Open Door at Lichfield Cathedral and have experienced worship led by a number of Bishops, thus contributing to their understanding of the Anglican tradition. Important days in the church year, such as Ascension day, are celebrated with a church service which is seen as integral to pupils' worship experience in the life of the school. Daily worship provides outstanding opportunities for spiritual development.

### **The effectiveness of the religious education is good**

Standards are in line with diocesan expectations. Pupils' attitudes are the strength in this subject which enables them to work positively with interest and in a spirit of co-operation. The status of the subject is high. The RE co-ordinator is effective and is currently engaged in research for a Farmington fellowship, which will bring new resources into the school to support teaching and learning. Monitoring of planning and evidence of progress through assessment tasks already takes place. The school now see the importance of developing this to include lesson observations so that achievement in RE can be identified and comparisons made with other core subjects. Teaching and learning is satisfactory. There is weakness in differentiation and in setting challenging tasks. Using the support of diocesan RE advisers in paired lesson observations is an effective strategy for improving teaching. Excellence in Religious Education is celebrated with prominent displays around the school such as the entries in RE Today's annual Spirited Arts competition. One Key Stage One pupil was clearly proud of his work and could clearly articulate his thoughts thus helping his spiritual development, *'God's holy spirit is inside my heart because God looks after me.'* Another believed, *'God's spirit lives in my house under my bed. I can't see God but I know he's there.'* Pupils' reflections on heaven spoke of *'meeting God with all of my family'* where *'my grandpa says hello to you'*. These illustrate how effective spiritual development is throughout the key stages. Bishop Rawle places great emphasis on RE and the creative arts. Indeed, the school is the recipient of a Staffordshire SACRE award. Good use is made of St Giles the Abbot parish church to enhance the RE curriculum. Pupils were enthusiastic about this lesson. There are many positive signs in RE. The subject is well resourced and pupils are already involved in self evaluation of this important subject which they see as exciting.

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

The headteacher, governors and staff are very committed to the school, its Anglican foundation and mission to the local community. They work hard in establishing good relationships, promoting the Christian vision of the school, and above all caring for its pupils. As a result the pupils are very clear that this school is a church school and are equipped with the tools for prayer and worship. The school's profile is high with many examples of positive press releases proudly displayed so that the school's distinctive character is known and upheld by all. Governors take an active role in the life of the school and are open to new ways of taking the school forward, especially in their monitoring role. They seek to involve parents and pupils more fully in this important process so that all are involved in evaluating school progress. The full impact of such procedures is not yet fully realised. The headteacher has a very close relationship with the school and St Giles the Abbot parish church. He has a high degree of integrity in relation to church/school links and this is modelled in the life of the school. Pupils' work is displayed in church and church wardens are actively engaged in the worshipping life of the school. Thus church and school are seen to be working closely together, embodying and enjoying the close ties which exist between the two.

SIAS report February 2008 Bishop Rawle VA Primary, Royal Walk, Cheadle, ST10 1TA