

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### **Bishop William Ward Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School**

Coach Road  
Great Horkesley  
Colchester  
C06 4AT

#### **Diocese: Chelmsford**

Local authority: Essex

Date of inspection: Friday November 2<sup>nd</sup> 2007

Date of last inspection: 5<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> July 2005

School's unique reference number: 115144

Headteacher: Mrs Lesley Walder

Inspector's name and number: Revd Richard Maudsley 305

#### **School context**

Bishop William Ward School is a five class village primary school situated on the outskirts of Colchester. The catchment area is mixed with the majority of pupils coming from the village and surrounding locality. Most of the pupils are white British with a very small number from the ethnic community. Attainment on entry is average and the number of pupils with special needs is limited. The school is fully inclusive and presents a warm caring environment.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Bishop William Ward School as a Church of England school are good**

A good school Bishop William Ward is based on and clearly motivated by the values of its Christian foundation and provides a stable and secure environment in which children can flourish in all aspects of their learning and personal development. The school is at the very centre of the local community and the involvement of the Rector and Churchwarden with the Governors has enabled the school to identify clearly to the wider community exactly what a good church school represents. There are high expectations and children, staff, parents and governors are clearly aware, through the schools mission statement, of what these are. Children are very clear in their understanding of the Christian education provided by the school and understood that it is helping them to establish their own values for living.

#### **Established strengths**

- The head teacher displays positive leadership skills and has lead the school through some difficult times in the past with compassion and care whilst expecting high standards from all stake holders The school displays a vision of inclusiveness which is visibly translated when observing what actually takes place through both key stages.
- The school is at the heart of the local community and the well established links between the church and the school are strength. The established Thursday Club (Fun Club) held in the local church helps create an inclusive link. There was an excellent act of worship where pupils and staff understood what makes the assembly a special time for thinking praying and reflecting.
- The use of a prayer during the lunchtime led by an individual child on a rota basis helped create a special time of sharing not only food but offering collective thanks and praise.

#### **Focus for development**

- The school is well equipped to look at reviewing and revising its RE curriculum. Looking towards ways of integrating RE with other curriculum areas in order to create a skill based approach towards learning.
- The school recognises that it needs to develop a wider understanding of other faiths and needs to develop resources in order to help achieve this.
- Both the head teacher and the Rector recognised the importance of making what is already a 'good school' into what could be an 'outstandingly good school' by exploring more fully with staff and Governors what makes it distinctive as a church school and by developing the shared understanding of this distinctiveness.

### **The school, through its distinctive Christian character, is good**

The Christian ethos of the school is strong, and is apparent in all areas of school life. There is a strong commitment from all the staff both teachers and teaching assistants towards meeting the needs of all learners and this is enforced through the passionate involvement of the head teacher in recognising not only strengths but also weakness and areas for future development .

There is strong emphasis on developing the whole child as an individual. Y6 pupils spoke confidently about what made their school distinctive as a church school. Two parents with older pupils having moved to secondary school described the strong Christian teaching as an 'excellent foundation'

The school works hard at being inclusive and all stake holders described the school as a place where all children flourish and feel valued. Children are happy and secure and have a range of strategies for expressing their concerns through the School Council.

The staff work well together implementing the aims of the school and in this way also provides good role models for children.

The involvement on a regular basis of the Rector and a Churchwarden are both highly positive and were appreciated by pupils who stated how much they enjoyed going to the church.

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

The daily act of worship is a central feature of the school community. The children described the Friday assembly as a time to think and pray.

Worship is well planned around Christian themes and aspects of the church year and is led by the head teacher, other members of staff, the Rector and other visitors to the school.

Worship is held occasionally in the church.

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

Learning and teaching in RE is good with some outstanding features. In the lesson observed with Year 6 pupils the teacher took the children through a wide range of difficult real life situations in order to examine a Christian response towards dealing with those who have suffered and still suffer.

The children were highly enthusiastic about RE and the verbal responses and individual group based activities showed not only a great deal of planning on behalf of the teacher but the level of maturity of the class. RE observed in both key stages was seen as part of the whole curriculum plan and the school is well placed to take this area of the curriculum and develop it further.

There was a sense that religious education was very much at the heart of what the school taught and stood for. The children appreciated that they needed to learn about other world faiths in order to help them develop their own understanding.

The school uses the Diocesan and LA scheme of work to support the subject and teachers were also able to adapt provision through effective use of ICT and in Key Stage 1 the interactive white board to help support learning.

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

The head teacher, inspired by her own Christian vision of the school, has moulded a highly responsive and dedicated team of teachers and other stake holders, having successfully overcome problems caused by past staffing difficulties.

Parents approve strongly of the ethos of the school and are pleased that their children receive a good education with strong emphasis on spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The members of the school management team are aware of their responsibility to lead this good school and are constantly looking to improve all aspects of its Christian ethos.