

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Ellison Boulter's Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Sudbrooke Road,
Scothern,
Lincoln,
LN2 2UZ

Diocese: Lincoln

Local authority: Lincolnshire

Dates of inspection: 22nd.ff. September 2006

Date of last inspection: June 2001

School's unique reference number: 120595

Headteacher: Mrs. J.H.Wheeldon

Inspector's name and number: Rev'd. John Pryor NS 184

School context

This popular larger than average primary school was built 17 years ago to serve three dormitory parishes on the outskirts of Lincoln. The very good, spacious buildings, including the hall, have been enlarged and developed several times since then. There are very few pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds and fewer than average requiring special support or having free meals. The school) is situated in one parish, but 80% of its pupils come from another. The school has twice been awarded Beacon Status and has a Silver Artsmark Award.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Ellison Boulter's as a Church of England Primary School are outstanding.

Its carefully thought-out, broad and inclusive Christian ethos underlies every aspect of the school and its provision. The dynamic vision of the Headteacher which is shared and supported by staff, governors, pupils and parents, has created a school where everyone feels valued, their needs are considered and there is a willingness to try new ideas for further improvement.

Established strengths

- The clarity and consistency of the Christian based educational and pastoral vision of the Headteacher, Governors and staff coupled with the strength of their commitment to discovering and meeting **all** the needs of **all** the pupils.
- The outstanding quality of relationships between all the members of the school community.
- The readiness of the Headteacher and staff, supported by the Governing Body, to try new ideas and their success in promoting new projects.
- The full involvement of staff, pupils and other stakeholders in the decision making process of the school under the guidance of the Headteacher, senior staff and Governing Body.

Focus for development

- Celebrate the link between the Christian ethos and the success of the school so that pupils and parents can fully understand why the school is as good as it is.
- Use existing and future systems of analysis and assessment to help all subject areas to more effectively support the Christian and spiritual aspects of the school's ethos.

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

This is a thoroughly inclusive school where in the overall aim of "providing a high quality education within the challenges and expectations of a Christian community". Pupils and staff know that they are valued by the school and by each other. Outstanding relationships are found at the heart of the school's excellent work, both pastorally and academically. As a staff member and a pupil said separately, "We like each other". The trust created means that there is a rigour with which the behaviour policy is carried out. Everyone knows where they stand and when needed, there is a sense of real forgiveness. This results in a very orderly community where

pupils know what is right and what is wrong. They practice the former and avoid the latter.

The high quality of the religious education together with the very well planned and delivered collective worship supports the pupils as they reflect upon their beliefs and values. As a result, they develop a wide range of Christian based principles. The outcomes of the well planned pastoral care, guidance and support are outstanding. Pupils are secure, happy and hardworking with good or better achievement. This is appreciated by parents and pupils alike.

The pupils and staff are proud of their school because they all have a stake in its progress. The School Council is fully involved in developments at the school such as the Fruit Tuck Shop which they initiated and run. Older pupils can now enjoy fresh fruit snacks as well as the younger ones. All pupils whatever their situation are treated as valued individuals and their needs addressed and met.

The development of the school building, especially the enlarged hall, has resulted in a stronger sense of community as more parents can be readily involved in activities. The professional and personal development of the staff is very effectively managed. This helps to make the school a very good place to work in.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding.

Regular worship is a very significant feature in the life of the school. It promotes the outstanding and successful provision for the pupils' personal, social, spiritual, moral and cultural development. As a result of the brief twice-daily classroom prayers at the end of each school session, the pupils acquire a good understanding of prayer. They talk about worship sensitively and unaffectedly. The style of the whole school acts of worship led by the Headteacher and staff, with occasional visitors such as the Bishop's Visitor or one of the parish priests, is a good model for classroom worship. The pupils enjoy worship and join in with an enthusiasm and understanding of the importance of what they are doing.

Pupils speak approvingly of assemblies as times when they learn more about Jesus and God. The school recently conducted a survey into the pupils' response to collective worship and the findings, which the school now uses for its planning, were all positive. Pupils identified class assemblies when they take a lead, as particularly enjoyable. They judge other acts of worship on the basis of whether they were "fun" or if it made them think.

Music plays a large role in collective worship. There is an enthusiastic school band with recorders, guitars, percussion, string, woodwind and wind instruments with some 35 players who accompany the singing which is also enthusiastic and tuneful. The music adds a great deal to the importance of the occasion and the enjoyment of the pupils.

A significant development, as a result of discussions and the survey into collective worship, is "Thursday Church" which is a voluntary after-school activity that involves the "Confirmation Club". This is an important means by which pupils explore their own spiritual understanding without any sense of compulsion or external pressure. A particular strength of the collective worship in the school is the high degree of staff involvement and support. The whole school assemblies are clearly very effective school community activities which play a very important part in developing and maintaining the school ethos while providing a sound framework within which the pupils' personal development flourishes. Staff and pupils felt a loss when whole-school assemblies could not be held indoors at a time when the hall was being enlarged.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school are outstanding.

The Headteacher and Governing Body share an outstanding, broadly based, Christian vision for the school. They provide excellent leadership based on clear direction and very effective management. The common vision fosters a unity of approach and outlook. All the staff share this vision and follow similar Christian principles to achieve the goals that it promotes. As a result, the pupils are clear about what is expected of them and respond very well so that the school is a very orderly, happy and creative environment in which they can learn and develop.

The unity of approach from all the staff is welcomed by the pupils and the parents. It also makes the school a place where it is safe to try something new even if it might fail. Though the school does not gloss over mistakes, it practises forgiveness where every new day is a fresh start. This is true for both pupils and staff and makes for an exciting and innovative school geared to self improvement.

The leadership and management of the school are secure because the policies and procedures by which the school operates have been carefully thought out and are based on effective research and enquiry involving discussions and questionnaires that seek the views of staff, pupils, parents and other stakeholders. The school leadership is sensitive to current issues and new centrally devised initiatives but is not dominated by them. It is firm enough to withstand pressures which run counter to the good of this school but goes ahead vigorously with those that are in its best interests. The national initiative "Every Child Matters" was adopted with ease and enthusiasm since it was seen as a practical outworking of the school's own Christian character.

Curriculum and school planning is very carefully done and is imaginatively developed using staff strengths wherever available in the school. Changes are introduced when necessary to effect an improvement on current practice. The high quality leadership and management of the school are strongly supportive of staff development as this is part of the care the school exercises over the welfare of every member of its community. One such example of this careful management of the school is the way in which all the issues raised in the previous Section 23 inspection report have been dealt with positively and effectively.

SIAS report September 2006 Ellison Boulters Church of England Primary School, Scothern, Lincoln, Lincolnshire LN2 2UZ