

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Capenhurst Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Capenhurst Lane,
Capenhurst,
Cheshire
CH1 6HE

Diocese: Chester

Local authority: Cheshire

Dates of inspection: 5th July, 2007

School's unique reference number: 111271

Headteacher: Miss Claire Spinks

Inspector's name and number: Georgina Lewis 401

School context

Capenhurst Church of England Primary School is a smaller than average primary school in a rural setting. The 94 pupils are taught in three mixed age classes and a reception class. There is a lower than average number of pupils who are entitled to free school meals and an average number of pupils with special educational needs. The head teacher was appointed in September 2004 and, under her leadership, numbers at the school have increased and it is now oversubscribed. In a recent Ofsted inspection the school was judged to make 'outstanding' provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development and the school's curriculum and care and guidance were also judged to be 'outstanding'.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Capenhurst Church of England Primary as a Church of England school are outstanding.

Capenhurst Church of England Primary School is a 'valuable asset to the community'. This comment from parents summarises the very good reputation this school has within its community. The Christian ethos permeates all that happens in the school. Pupils speak very highly of the school; they respect each other and all of the adults working within the school. There is a close relationship with the local church and its vicar which reinforces the school's mission statement and its aims in providing an education founded on Christian principles.

Established strengths

- The leadership and management which provides clear direction for the school.
- The commitment of all the staff and governors in providing a Christian education.
- The way in which Christian values are embedded in planning, monitoring and evaluation of the whole curriculum.
- The links with the local parish church

Focus for development

- Formalise the recording of the evaluation of worship

Capenhurst Church of England Primary School is outstanding in meeting the needs of all learners through its distinctive Christian character.

The school is firmly rooted in its Christian values; the mission statement, aims and the school prospectus all clearly emphasise its status as a Church of England school. The school's self evaluation details the extensive involvement in the community which is confirmed by both pupils and the governors interviewed. Parents speak very positively of their children's progress, and the school's place in the community, in the parental questionnaires and also in person. The lively displays around school; the reward system and celebration assembly show how children are valued and made to feel special. Pupils with special

educational needs are well supported and make good progress. The involvement with the parish church is substantial; foundation governors provide strong links through their promotion of the school. There are regular items in the monthly parish magazine; the latest copy contains several items of poetry and prayers from the children. The vicar leads collective worship once each week, usually in church, and has lunch with the children. Many of the pupils are involved in clubs organised by the church and also serve in the choir. It was obvious during the inspection the respect and affection the pupils have for the vicar. The way in which pupils play and work together shows mutual respect and concern.

Collective worship has an outstanding effect on the school community.

Collective Worship is very well planned and organised. There is a two year cycle set out termly with appropriate topics and close reference to the Anglican church calendar of festivals. Resources are identified and leadership of worship is shared. Staff have attended training with the Diocesan advisor. Collective Worship makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual development. Its impact is demonstrated through pupils' very good relationships with each other and the adults in the school and the very good prayer life of the pupils. The vicar leads worship once each week and also at special services. Pupils leaving church after the collective worship led by the vicar were still singing the songs and talking about the worship. They had joined in with enthusiasm, listened attentively and responded to questions, giving answers which linked to things learned in RE. Worship involves pupils in a variety of ways; through drama, readings, prayers and singing. Care is also taken of pupils who are of other faiths and parents have been consulted about ways in which they can be involved. Pupils leave their prayers in a basket on the display at the entrance; they sing the Lord's Prayer; say grace at lunch time and conclude the day with prayer. The pupils' prayers and work feature regularly in the parish magazine. The head teacher evaluates the quality and impact of worship, and reports back to members of the governing body, but at this time it is not included in the overall planning and preparation for worship. Pupils are involved in evaluating worship, taking photographs to record special Acts of Collective Worship and this is to be further developed. The Year 5/6 presentations showed a well developed understanding of right and wrong and how people in our society ought to care for each other. What had been learned during R.E. lessons on Moses and the 'Commandments' was clear in the choices made. In addition to the expected direct references to the 'Commandments' pupils had included 'Don't cheat on your wife and partner', 'Don't drink and drive', 'Don't kidnap' showing how they related what they have learned to modern life. Many pupils follow a confirmation course with the local church and join in several activities; the 'JCFC', the Jesus Christ Fun Club, the choir and as servers.

Leadership and management of the school as a church school are outstanding.

The leadership of the head is outstanding. This is a school where learning takes place within a strong Christian ethos and every child really does matter. The development of the shared vision, the effective monitoring and evaluation, and the clear direction through effective systems and structure demonstrate outstanding management by the head, the staff and the governing body. There is an experienced Chair of governors with a recently reconstituted governing body. They have been actively involved in the writing of the school's self evaluation and many are involved in the day to day activities of the school. There have been considerable staff changes over the past three years. The head is still relatively new and is developing an effective senior leadership team; Governors are involved in training and staff are encouraged to develop their skills and abilities. All the teaching assistants are higher level teaching assistants, the school cook has a large number of certificates showing her contribution to the school's 'Healthy Eating' project. The progress made by all pupils is good and many are able to express their views in a very mature way even at a very early age. All of this takes place in a calm and happy atmosphere where mutual respect is seen in all the relationships within the school. The example set by the Head and staff, the incumbent and the governors ensures that all of the school improvement takes place with a central focus on the Christian foundation of the school. Staff attend church weekly. Appointments of staff include information to candidates about the Christian ethos; and short listing and interviews

explore candidates' commitment to it. New parents are made aware by the head teacher of the school's Christian ethos; the school's web site also focuses on the importance of the school as a Church of England school.

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