

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Church Hill Church of England Voluntary Controlled Junior School

Church Hill Road

Thurmaston

Leicester

LE4 8DE

Diocese: Leicester

Local Authority: Leicestershire

Dates of inspection: 3rd & 13th December 2007

Date of last inspection: 8th, 9th & 11th November 2004

School's Unique Ref. No: 120165

Name of Head teacher; Mrs. S A M Kirk

Inspector's name (with N.S. No): Mrs. Diane Wright (No. 169)

Context

This larger than average junior school draws most of its pupils from the Thurmaston area and some by parental choice from the fringes of Leicester city. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is above average. The number of pupils from minority ethnic groups and whose first language is not English is well above average, as is the number of pupils who join or leave the school mid-term as their families move into or out of the local area.

Summary Judgment

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Church Hill CE Junior as a Church of England school are good

Church Hill CE Junior School has a strong commitment to its Christian foundation and its ethos reflects this. It recognises its diverse catchment and meets its aim which states "We will promote Christian values and a respect for different religious beliefs and cultures."

Established strengths

- Strong commitment to the school's Christian foundation and the Christian ethos that underpin all aspects of school life
- Pupils have positive attitudes to school and are well behaved
- Strong links with the church, parents and community

Focus for development

- Formalise the governors monitoring and evaluation of collective worship
- Extend pupil's understanding and experience of Anglican traditions
- Enrich pupil's experiences of other faiths by visits to their places of worship

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

The school has a strong Christian ethos which underpins all its work. Pupils have positive attitudes to school and learn and develop in a safe and secure environment. A parent said her child with special educational needs "is well supported and her efforts in class are

valued." Pupil achievements (behaviour, attitudes, good work) are recognised through reward systems and a weekly celebration assembly. Pupil behaviour is good and there is a clear understanding of school rules. Relationships across the school are very good, a reflection of the ethos. A pupil said "it is important to have chances to put it right if you have done something wrong." Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Parental views are sought through questionnaires and consultation meetings. The school council provides a forum for pupils and they have achieved change, for example in providing playground friendship stops and the installation of hand driers in cloakrooms. Pupils also worked on the logo designs for the new school uniform, letterhead and external sign, which reinforce the links with the local church. The curriculum is enriched by school trips, residential visits, sporting opportunities and clubs (including a Christian one led by the local priest.) Pupils understand the reasons for fundraising to help others and support events such as Comic Relief.

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

There is a clear pattern of well planned collective worship, based on diocesan themes, led by staff and other worship leaders. The coordinator has a focus to extend pupil's knowledge of Anglican traditions and the church year. Pupils take part in whole school and class group worship through song, music, prayer and reflection; and value it. Pupils are eager to contribute ideas and thoughtful comments and can recall some meaningful worship experiences. Pupils enjoy writing and reading prayers and taking part in drama and musical activities. They were enthusiastically preparing for Christmas Celebrations for parents during the inspection. Class reflection times are particularly valuable in enabling pupils who are less confident or with special educational needs to express their thoughts. Reflection time is often enhanced by individual silent prayer or a short closing prayer. Excellent use of ICT gives a strong visual focus during class reflection time. Times of special services and assemblies have been changed so parents can attend before going to work, or before collecting their children. Pupils take part in special services, such as Harvest Festival, at St Michael's and All Angels Church. The recently appointed priest leads worship for staff and pupils, thus maintaining the strong links with the local church. There are sound systems for monitoring and evaluation of collective worship, including pupil interviews, class evaluations and recorded parental comments. Governors monitoring is currently relatively unstructured and needs to be formalised.

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

Following major changes within the management of the school within the last year, the new headteacher and newly formed senior management team have identified their priorities and with the governors have a clear vision for improvement. Strategies are in place but time is needed to bring them to fruition. Governors are well aware of the schools status and actively promote it. This is supported by strong effective links with the local church. Training for staff has been led by the Diocesan RE Adviser and the school's African Drummers have taken part in Education Services in Leicester Cathedral and the Leicester Diocese Celebrate 80 Party in the Park. Parents speak well of the school and value its Christian ethos. They say staff are approachable and communicate well with them. Strong links with the local community and the events organised by the active and committed parents association enhance the life of the school. Some visits to the places of worship of other faiths (a recommendation from the last Section 23 report) have taken place, but more need to be considered so as pupils may experience the rich variety of religious faiths within the area.