

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Culham Parochial Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

High Street

Culham

Oxfordshire

OX14 4NB

Diocese of Oxford

Local Authority: Oxfordshire

Dates of inspection: 07.05.2008

Date of last inspection: 28.01 2004

School's Unique reference number: 123132

Name of Headteacher: Mrs Susan Knox

Inspector's name and NS inspector's number: Mrs Maggie Moorhouse NS223

Context

Culham is a small school which serves the villages of Culham and Sutton Courtenay and the surrounding area. There are two classes, KS1 with Reception and KS2 but no hall. The majority of the pupils are white British. The current headteacher is due to retire at the end of this academic year.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Culham Parochial School as a Church of England school are good.

Culham School provides a good Christian ethos which permeates school life. The headteacher, staff and Governors are effective in promoting Christian values which are particularly evident in the quality of care for the pupils and for each other. This ensures that positive values and attitudes are promoted within the school community.

Established strengths

- The good Christian ethos of the school in which all pupils and staff are valued and nurtured.
- The Christian principle of taking responsibility for behaviour and facing the consequences of their actions can be seen in the good behaviour displayed by the pupils.
- Well informed and supportive foundation governors who provide good links with the church and community.

Focus for development

- To review the Mission Statement ensuring that all stakeholders have a voice and are included in the review.
- That staff, pupils and governors are involved in the evaluation of Collective Worship and the impact that it has on the school community.

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

Christian values form the basis and underpin school life. Parents speak highly of the care, support, guidance and encouragement that are given by all staff to their children. A parent said "My boy now enjoys coming to school, which he didn't at his previous one" The pupils respond well to the high expectations of the staff, both in their good behaviour and academic progress. Pupils speak of their school as being "full of friendly people and everyone gets on well" They are confident that they can approach any adult if they need help, knowing that issues raised will be resolved one way or another, through circle time, the use of their personal blue diaries, during RE lessons or informal settings. RE lessons are well planned, differentiated to reflect different abilities and age groups and follow the agreed syllabus with a four year rolling programme. This results in lessons that the pupils enjoy and provide them with opportunities for challenge, discussion and debate. One year 5 pupil commented "I like RE because there are no right or wrong answers, not like

maths. RE can be fun because we can say what it means to us.”

The staff and pupils make good provision for pupils with special needs: socially as well as academically, showing care, courtesy and consideration for their needs.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Daily worship is important in the life of the school and is an integral part of the ethos. Despite the lack of a hall, care is taken to ensure that worship takes place in a calm environment with all teaching staff leading worship in turn. The pupils have a good attitude to worship and regard the time that the whole school has together as important. Pupils make links between what is taught in RE, what is covered in collective worship and how it affects them. “If we didn’t have RE or worship we wouldn’t be able to celebrate special days, we’d just forget about them and think that Easter would just be about chocolate eggs and Christmas about presents” The pupils contribute to worship by suggesting hymns to be sung as well as offering their own prayers. Pupils from the school council said that it means a lot to them to have their own prayers included. “Makes us feel that someone is listening.”

Although the church is a distance from the school it is used to celebrate major Christian festivals and is always well attended by the families for these celebrations. The vicar is unable to give as much of her time as she would like to the school but she leads worship in the school each term and so the children have a good understanding of the Anglican tradition.

Currently collective worship is evaluated in an informal way and so this does not always inform future planning.

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

A distinctive Christian vision is well promoted by the headteacher, staff and governors through the school prospectus and the values that are followed. Parents are very clear that this is a church school. The foundation governors are well informed, supportive and have a clear understanding of their role. Together with the incumbent, they ensure that links with the church and the community are positive. There is a designated governor for the well being of the staff, ensuring that all staff have access to further support if needed.

The RE coordinator has recently taken on this post and with her sound subject knowledge and enthusiasm, she enables pupils across both key stages, to have access to a broad and balanced RE curriculum which is both challenging and enjoyable. The school has recently undertaken some excellent work, through art, to express what spirituality means to them. This has an impact on the adults as well as the pupils enabling all to think about what spirituality means to them.

The school has addressed the issues from the Section 23 Inspection in 2004 but the Mission Statement once again needs to be reviewed to ensure that all stakeholders are involved in its creation.