

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Davenham Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Charles Avenue,
Davenham,
Northwich,
Cheshire
CW9 8JW

Diocese: Chester

Local authority: Cheshire

Dates of inspection: 06/06/2007

Date of last inspection: 26/06/2003

School's unique reference number: 111387

Headteacher: Mr P Hilditch

Inspector's name and number: Mr Peter Maskery 520

School context

Davenham School, with 263 pupils on roll, is a popular and over subscribed primary school at the heart of the village community. Most pupils are of British origin and all have English as their first language.

The number of children eligible for free school meals is below the national average and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are marginally below the national average. The school's recent achievements include: an outstanding OFSTED Section 5 Inspection (March 2007), listing on the OFSTED database of successful schools, membership of the National Sustaining Success Programme, Active Mark Award for the promotion of healthy lifestyles and the Eco Schools Silver Award for raising awareness of environmental responsibility.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Davenham Church of England Aided Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding.

All learners feel valued and special at Davenham School. The Christian ethos immediately meets you upon arrival. The school functions as an extended Christian family, making a profound impact upon the whole school community. Children and adults are valued within this outstandingly supportive environment. All individuals are encouraged to strive to achieve and give of their best.

Established strengths

- Davenham is a highly effective Church of England School with a Christian ethos permeating the school and wider community.
- This committed school community makes a significant positive impact upon the overall development of its learners to enable them to achieve their full potential.
- Davenham is a highly regarded church school where every child really does matter.

Focus for development

- The school should formalise and develop evaluation and monitoring of religious education (RE), and also review the Response aspect of RE lessons.
- The Foundation Governors should re-introduce formal structures to enable them to effectively monitor and evaluate RE.

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

In this school all share a common Christian vision that 'all people are valued' and the important resource is the 'human resource'. The achievements of individuals are celebrated and rewarded by personal recognition in front of the class and whole school. They wear with pride and readily talk about their achievement awards. Children are effectively included in the daily management of the school and this includes responsibility for playground and audio

equipment and helping lunchtime arrangements. A year five pupil expressed the wish for his own children to attend Davenham School 'if it is still as good as it is now'. Children were unable to think of any improvements they would wish to see; if there are any they are addressed through the School Council and the staff. 'They act upon our ideas,' said one of the children. The school's teaching enables individuals to develop a clear understanding of right and wrong based upon a Christian moral code. Children discuss the views and needs of others respectfully and sensitively which enables them to grow spiritually. This was illustrated by a pupil strongly expressing the view that 'we must treat others as we would wish them to treat us, especially if they need help'. The Christian values evident in this school are witnessed in the words and actions of the children as they actively engage in charitable work.

Collective worship has an outstanding effect on the school community.

Worship is an intrinsic part of this school. It is distinctive and prepares the whole school for its daily work. All staff and visitors are involved in leading worship. On the inspection day the Rector led collective worship and very effectively enabled a better understanding of the Holy Spirit. The children are very attentive, answer questions, contribute ideas, enjoy singing hymns and engage in prayer. This enables them to have a clear understanding of the theme and suggest ways in which they would wish to be a 'Light in the World'. Worship is thoughtfully planned and links the Christian calendar and the school's work. Effective planning, active involvement and participation in worship makes this a very meaningful experience. 'Worship always makes you think', declared one child. Revealing comments made by children when asked what they learn from worship included: 'people are all different', 'we are all God's children', 'love each other', 'help one another', 'look after your neighbour'. They understood what the phrases meant as examples were provided of ways they tried to put them into practice. At the end of the morning and afternoon sessions the school offers a time for prayer. Pupils understood the Lord's Prayer and gave examples of when prayer had helped them. The school worship is predominately Christian but recognises and includes other churches and world faiths. Displays around the school, and conversations with pupils reflected an awareness and sensitivity to the beliefs of others.

The effectiveness of religious education is good.

Religious Education is well organised by a recognised coordinator who has undertaken professional development and used this expertise to enhance subject knowledge within the school. Resources are good and continue to be developed. They provide support with the teaching and learning of the main world religions. Pupil's RE progress is good and in line with their attainment in other core subjects as evidenced by a work scrutiny. Children talk about this subject with knowledge, enthusiasm and understanding showing respect for the beliefs of others. This curriculum area gives learners the opportunity to openly explore and question ideas in a mature way. The children have an exemplary work ethic and attitude towards this subject. Two good lessons were observed during the inspection. Key stage 1 children enthusiastically translated the moral underpinning the story of Noah into ways they could make and keep promises in their own lives. Reflecting upon this story one six year old asked, 'why did God punish the children because of the adults?' It was good to hear the views of children who had listened, understood the literal meaning of the story and are developing a perceptive understanding. A Year 6 lesson explored the relevance of stained glass windows in church buildings. The children talked with knowledge and understanding based upon visits to the Parish Church and Liverpool's Metropolitan Cathedral. They also raised questions for investigation and further study showing maturity of learning. Children were able to recall and discuss with insight stories from the Bible and other other faiths. Each story was interpreted and the relevance explained. The school's open and respectful approach to questioning and discussing ideas is to be seen in the growing understanding and maturity of the children. The school's future developmental plans include formalising the monitoring and evaluation of this subject as well as reviewing the Response aspect of RE lessons.

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

Leadership and management is a strength of Davenham School with the headteacher, staff and governors sharing a common Christian vision to maintain and enhance this Church of England School. The headteacher's trusted leadership is excellent and this was the unqualified view of all stakeholders. The school's self-evaluation and the foundation governors recognise and are preparing to re-introduce formal structures to enable them to effectively monitor and evaluate RE. A distinctive strength of this school is the supportive link with the Church and local community. They work in harmony as an 'extended family' promoting a Christian vision. This vision is very effectively and informally communicated. The school intends to formalise this communication. The Christian ethos of the school effectively enables new staff and families to be inducted into the school's Christian character. A very open door approach employed by the school enables all connected with Davenham School to be included in 'improving our school'. The school always listens to our views said children and parents and then acts accordingly. Davenham pupils not only help to manage the school but are encouraged to develop leadership qualities as they are openly consulted and involved in decision making through the elected school council.

SIAS report June 2007 Davenham Church of England (Aided) Primary School Charles Avenue, Davenham, Northwich, Cheshire CW9 8JW