

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Drayton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Junior School

School Road
Drayton
Norwich
NR8 6EF

Diocese:

Local authority:	Norfolk
Dates of inspection:	31 st March and 2 nd April 2009
Date of last inspection:	22 nd February 2006
School's unique reference number:	131287
Headteacher:	Mr Martin White
Inspector's name and number:	Mr Steve Carter

School context

Drayton CEVC Junior school has on roll three hundred and twenty-nine pupils between the ages of 7 and 11. It is situated centrally within the village of Drayton, which is a commuter settlement on the edge of the City of Norwich. Staffing is stable, although the school was subject to re-organisation from middle to junior school from September 2007. The Head Teacher has been in post for thirteen years.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Drayton Junior School as a Church of England school are satisfactory

From the 'satisfactory' inspected start-point, the school is entering a key period in the development of its distinctively Christian ethos. It has clear plans, some of which are overdue for implementation, to effect this. The dynamism of staff, the passionate commitment of key governors, the openness of pupils and recent appointment of staff all indicate that the school has most impressive capacity to make the improvements it plans.

Established strengths

- A clear and largely accurate identification of its priorities for further development
- Dynamic teaching with excellent opportunities for engaging and collaborative work, promoting the development of each pupil as an individual learner and as a citizen
- A positive learning ethos within which pupils feel safe and secure and within which almost all thrive

Focus for development

- To carry out the intended plan to promote 'Church School distinctiveness' to the highest priority in the School Development Plan 2009-2010
- To revise and to clarify the school's distinctively Christian vision, embedding it in school aims, sharing it with parents, staff and pupils and publishing it in key documents such as the School Prospectus
- To revise, as planned, the school's policy on Collective Worship as a means of developing further the progress made since the previous inspection
- As stated in the School Development Plan 2008-09, to formulate and to share with staff a whole school policy on Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Education

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

There is a formal means to consult pupils through the School Council, which they value greatly. Pupils report that they have very few problems at school and that they are clear about procedures, any problems arising being resolved quickly and effectively. The access needs of two pupils with temporary disablement are sensitively and effectively cared for.

Pupils having social difficulties are effectively managed through the Circle of Friends strategy. Relationships all round are very good and staff are excellent role models, as well as very good professionals. Evidence from an observed Circle Time showed that year 3 pupils have sound understanding of the meaning and application of complex concepts such as 'compassion'. Explicitly Christian values are not made clear in the schools aims, but there are plans to deal with this. Some staff do not show a firm understanding of SMSC, partly because of the lack of a whole school policy, although this is work in progress. This means that staff do not always focus sufficiently on the spiritual development of pupils in Schemes of Work. The school environment is bright and engaging, thanks to some excellent display work throughout the school, but especially noted in poorer accommodation such as mobiles, as well as very good caretaking/cleaning. However, there is a lack of Christian imagery, especially in communal areas of the school and there are plans to improve this in the form of a Cross and Bible in the foyer.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is satisfactory

Two Acts of Worship were observed during the visit and both were of good quality, making good use of music and audio-visual resources and involving pupils through outstandingly good singing, as well as readings, drama and silent prayer. Both were of a distinctively Christian character. Pupils say they enjoy most assemblies, being able to recall best those which provided them with greater opportunities for participation. There is no formal means to gauge learners' attitudes to collective worship. The school is experimenting with the use of a lighted candle as a focus for the Act of Worship and this is beneficial to pupils' understanding of the difference between assembly and worship. Acts of Worship are led by Head and Deputy, as well as visitors, including the Rector, who visits monthly. Staff attend two assemblies per week. Only limited opportunities, such as some SEAL themes, are taken to link assembly themes to the wider curriculum, but there are intentions to address this when the Collective Worship Policy is reviewed, which is overdue. Assemblies have included several 'charity' themes, including 'Grassroots,' Christian Aid, Make Poverty History and Fair Trade. The school traditionally uses the nearby parish church for carol services and pupils speak with understanding and pride about their involvement in these. They are increasingly aware of the distinction between performance and worship. There are plans to hold a Leavers' Service and Easter Service in the church for the first time in 2009.

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

The recent OFSTED report confirms good leadership at all levels of the school and that team-work, focussed on key priorities, is strong. The next key priorities relate to development of Christian ethos. Key Foundation Governors and senior staff are committed to progress this as a matter of urgency. An ethos statement can be found in the Collective Worship Policy, but this is overdue for review and has not recently been shared with staff/governors. As a result, the Christian vision also needs review and clarification, so that staff become familiar with it as a means of informing their planning. There has been little recent staff/governor INSET on this. Church School Self Evaluation has been discussed at staff meetings, but most staff are unfamiliar with its content, although there is a wider willingness amongst staff to contribute. Such opportunities will arise with the review of policies and practices shown in the 'Focus for Development' section of this report. The school has improved its procedures for recruitment of staff, such that paperwork/interviews contain clear identification of the school's Church foundation. A Foundation Governor plays a key role in appointments. Planning of Acts of Worship is also improved through clearer focus on theme and content. Parent views are sought on key issues, such as Sex Education. Strengthened links with the parish church provide additional expertise on Christian ethos, as well as community pastoral care, especially related to crises such as bereavement. The school's capacity to make the proposed improvements is excellent.