

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Driffield Church of England Voluntary Controlled Infant School

St John's Road,
Driffield
YO25 6RS

Diocese: York

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| Local authority: | East Riding of Yorkshire |
| Dates of inspection: | 27 th November 2006 |
| Date of last inspection: | October 2002 |
| School's unique reference number: | 117974 |
| Headteacher: | Mrs Janet Spencer |
| Inspector's name and number: | Dr David Sellick (148) |

School context

Driffield Infant School is situated in the centre of the town of Driffield and has 224 children between the ages of 4 and 7 on roll all but 5 of whom are 'White British'. The town's parish church is about a quarter of a mile from the school. The original two Victorian buildings were linked by a new hall and entrance foyer in 2002.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Driffield Infant School as a Church of England school are good.

The school logo depicting the church and the Church of England logo are etched on the glass doors that lead from the foyer into the Hall. Information about the Vicar and large poster covered in prayers written by the children is very prominent. Permanent and regularly changed displays in the hall celebrate a variety of Christian concerns. These combine to make it clear that Driffield Infants is a school with a Church of England foundation. The school's effectiveness as an educational institution is outstanding which staff, governors and parents attribute to the Christian ethos that permeates the school.

Established strengths

- An outstanding atmosphere of caring and mutual respect across the whole school community
- Strong personal links with the parish Church
- Excellent sense of teamwork among all staff, parents and governors.
- Outstanding quality of Foundation Stage and National Curriculum education for all its pupils

Focus for development

- Strengthen distinction between Collective Worship and Religious Education in documentation and practice.
- Add to the School Improvement Plan actions to monitor the impact of the school's distinctively Church foundation on its policies, worship and pupils' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development
- Extend of range of Collective Worship themes to include more Christian and other religious concerns
- Review again the policy of having all acts of Collective Worship as whole school occasions

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

The outstanding quality of education offered the pupils is clearly underpinned by a strong Christian ethos as evidenced by parents who, having spent part of a day alongside their child wrote that they were impressed by the atmosphere in the school, the excellent way the pupils behaved and how much they enjoyed their work. Parents also spoke of the "lovely moral grounding" given to their children. Many parents are introduced to the school through attending as guests, one of the school's services in the church around major festivals. The

Investors in People report, without actually mentioning the word 'Christian', wrote that the ethos was the best they had seen - "unbelievable" and also warmly commended the school-wide whole staff collaboration. A training day was devoted to the construction of the most recent Mission Statement where teachers, TAs, governors and ancillary staff worked in mixed groups illustrating an exemplary respect for persons. TAs and Midday Supervisors were also positive about the Christian ethos and the way that impacted upon all the children, including those with any kind of special need. The Christian character does permeate the school but this is more implicit, rather than by people explicitly talking about how their beliefs guide their day to day practice. Several local and national charities are supported during the year and the children are well aware that such activity is a way of "loving their neighbour". The personal relationship aspect of this is reinforced, for example, by the children taking the Harvest gifts to elderly neighbours themselves.

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

The acts of Collective Worship are all whole school activities. They are well planned and good advanced notice of themes is given to all who lead worship to ensure continuity and eliminate duplication, but it is challenging to engage effectively all pupils across the full age range on all occasions. A quarter of the themes are directly related to the church year and another quarter are 'moral' but there is no mention of Christian saints or the major festivals of other faiths, though the latter are covered in R.E. There is obvious potential to contribute to pupils' moral and spiritual development, The Vicar of the parish and a group formed from members of Churches Together in Driffield both lead collective worship once a week. It is very good that all class teachers take a turn in leading worship on Wednesdays and they are very well supported by a valuable file of resources downloaded from two major websites. Pupils sing enthusiastically in the whole school worship, are keen to answer the mainly recall questions and clearly enjoy the worship and respond well to opportunities for silent reflection though there is scope for more active participation by the children in these acts of worship. Teachers told me that they valued the way Collective Worship brings the whole school together. The School Prayer is recited in classes at the end of each day. Sometimes a Religious Education lesson leads on to an act of worship in a classroom. Monitoring of the impact of collective worship comes via staff discussion but written records are not systematically kept.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school is good with several outstanding features.

The Headteacher and foundation governors are highly effective in promoting the quality and core status of the school's Christian character. As a foundation governor the Vicar is also a frequent visitor to the school in a pastoral role for the staff. The Chair regularly attends Diocesan conferences and courses for Church schools. She played a leading role in the design and production with pupils of a banner using a theme from Luke's gospel now displayed in the foyer. The Mission statement was collaboratively produced, though the reference to Christian values and beliefs is rather brief. Very good use is made of the local newspaper and the school's fortnightly Newsletter to publicise the work of the school and its relationship with the Parish Church. The strong links with the church are shown through a school initiated Pre School Praise, for mothers and toddlers, which was set up in the church; a Christian club open to all pupils which is run by the Churches Together group; the School is a standing item on PCC meetings and is regularly mentioned in church intercessions. Pupil work, though not necessarily of a 'religious nature', is sometimes displayed in the church. Governors' meetings always open with prayer. The Christian ethos can be detected in school policies but this is more by implication than by direct reference to Christian ethical and theological principles.