

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Elvington Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Dauby Lane,
Elvington,
York,
YO41 4HP

Diocese : York

Local Authority: City of York

Date of Inspection: 26th June 2007

Date of last inspection: October 2002

School's unique reference number: 121531

Headteacher: Mrs J. Rawling

S.I.A.S. Inspector: NS129 Mr. J.W. Bradley

School Context

Elvington C.E. Primary School has 136 pupils on roll and predominantly serves this socially advantaged village to the south east of York. A small number of pupils attend from neighbouring villages. No pupil speaks English as an additional language. The headteacher has been in post for almost one year. The chair of governors and the incumbent are also relatively new to their posts.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Elvington Primary School as a Church of England School are good.

This is a school which has been 'given a new lease of life', particularly in respect of its church school status. The new headteacher is very clear about how the school should continue to develop, closely linked to its church and village community. She is very well supported in this by a committed governing body and enthusiastic, hard working incumbent. Changes already made relating to how the school works as a church school have been broadly welcomed by parents and village.

Established strengths

- The overt attitude to the fact that this is a church school.
- The effective working relationship between head, staff, governors, church, parents and community.
- The relationships throughout the school, founded upon clear Christian principles.

Focus for development

- To develop the role of the foundation governors to include evaluation of church school status.
- To use the re-written school aims, which now have a clear Christian focus, to lead the school forward in all it does. Training for this will be required from the diocesan adviser.
- To further develop collective worship, particularly the evaluative role of governors, as outlined in the new school development plan.

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

The new vision and aims of the school have a clear Christian focus, having been drawn up by staff and governors, in conjunction with a parental survey which stressed their desire for a stronger Christian emphasis. These Christian values are reflected in the good relationships which are clearly at the heart of this school. Parents, for example wished to see more evidence of the school being a Church of England school and now there is physical evidence around the school in terms of Christian artefacts and displays to reflect Christian ethos and show the close links between school, church and diocese. Religious education teaching is thoroughly planned by a highly committed co-ordinator, who is able to list such factors as 'respect', 'rights and wrongs', 'community', and 'God's creation' as

important elements in the teaching, thereby actively planning for the impact the teaching has on whole school ethos. There is increased use of prayer throughout the school day, clearly indicating to the pupils that theirs is a church school. These factors, plus others, are clearly assessed and evaluated and have a very real impact upon the caring and co-operative relationships so evident. Parents respect the school and its ethos and are very complimentary in their comments, saying for example 'Friday morning assembly is a great way for parents to be involved in the children's achievements'. During the last school year Elvington has made many steps forward in its desire to be a church school and the basis of this work, clearly done for the benefit of all pupils, is Christian co-operation.

The impact of Collective Worship on the school community is good.

Worship at Elvington very important to the life of the school and has a good impact upon the whole school ethos of a Christian community working together. It is well planned, recorded and evaluated. It now forms part of the new school improvement plan to raise the profile of the activity for governors and enable them to offer relevant constructive criticism. The incumbent regularly leads worship, resulting in the pupils increased understanding of Anglican aspects. This is enhanced by a close following of the church's year and the use of appropriate liturgical colours as part of the focal points for acts of worship. Effective use is also made of the church building for worship purposes. The atmosphere during worship is that of a large family being together where all feel involved and valued, plus the fact that all staff attend to confirm its importance. Governors also attend regularly, with the same effect. Parents frequently attend and say 'this is a great way for parents to be involved with the children'. Worship held in church is also well supported by parents. Pupils clearly enjoy the experiences offered to them and are enthusiastic in their responses. 'We all get on at Elvington' was a direct comment to a question about worship as it is the pupil's way of saying that being all together is very important.

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

There is very good co-operation between senior management, governors and clergy, with the aim being very clear; to value each child and nurture them in a Christian environment. There are now good links with both the Parochial Church Council, to which a foundation governor reports on behalf of the school, and the Parish Council Annual Meeting, reported to by the headteacher. The school's local profile as a church school is therefore being steadily enhanced. The church is supportive of its school and members of the congregation are increasingly becoming involved, for example as 'guides' when classes visit the building. Parents and the community are very committed to creating strong school links, so that faith and worship are not seen in isolation from everyday life. The highly effective chair of governors is clear in her purpose that foundation governors should have a higher profile and that their contribution should be understood by both parents and pupils. Work on this has already begun. The headteacher is highly regarded by governors who appreciate the way the school is developing and improving. Governors do not, as yet, formally evaluate church school distinctiveness. This is a happy thriving school where feelings of Christian love and care are transmitted to all pupils. Consequently they are given every chance to succeed.