

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### **Gillamoor Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School**

Near York,  
North Yorkshire.  
YO62 7HX

#### **Diocese: York**

Local authority: North Yorkshire  
Dates of inspection: 8<sup>th</sup> May 2007  
Date of last inspection: 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> December 2001  
School's unique reference number: 121493  
Headteacher: Gareth Bennett  
Inspector's name and number: John M Bushell 156

#### **School context**

Gillamoor is a small Voluntary Controlled Church of England School serving the rural communities of Bransdale, Farndale, Gillamoor and Fadmoor. Pupils attending school are predominantly from farming backgrounds. There have been a number of commendable improvements to the facilities over recent years, including the building of a new classroom and mezzanine floor, which provides a 'worship room'. Children were involved in the design process for the building of new shelters and creation of play equipment for the playground.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of C of E Gillamoor VC School as a Church of England school are good**

There is an inclusive ethos, which permeates school life and its community. This is manifest in the care and support provided for the children and the strong sense of community and mutual respect. The involvement of foundation governors in the daily life of the school is a significant strength, which promotes the distinctive vision through their frequent presence and the links with the Parochial Church Council.

#### **Established strengths**

- The inclusive Christian ethos, which permeates the life of the school and enables children to develop their sense of responsibility towards others.
- The positive and welcoming attitudes and very good behaviour of the pupils.
- The links with the local churches, including the Methodists, and the involvement of the clergy and foundation governors.

#### **Focus for development**

- Establish links with a school in a contrasting context, in order to enhance pupils' understanding of other faiths and cultures.
- Extend opportunities to demonstrate and celebrate the school's distinctive faith foundation, preferably involving children's creative work.
- Involve the wider school community in planning the themes for collective worship and in evaluating its effectiveness.

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

The inclusive ethos, which is expressed in the display in the worship room, "At School I am Safe, Challenged, Happy, Outgoing, Optimistic and Learn," underpins and is tangible in daily school life, being evident in the ways in which the children behave and interact with others. The ethos is also evident in the relationships and attitudes across the whole community, including the support staff. The behaviour of the pupils is very good - they are considerate and courteous and confident in expressing their own views and feelings. Opportunities for personal and social development are effectively planned, including through the use of a carefully structured programme for PSHCE, which effectively addresses such as awareness of drugs and relationships through a rolling programme of specific lessons, participation in

'crucial crew' and life saving lessons. The children have a strong sense of right and wrong and the school council is beginning to provide pupils from across the school with good opportunities through regular meetings and discussions to raise and resolve issues and take responsibility. Older pupils were seen supporting younger children during the school day. Children's social, cultural and spiritual development is enhanced through a wide range of residential visits. They have also visited a range of places of worship, which they can recount and which have a significant impact on spiritual and cultural development. Visitors make a valuable contribution such as the Archbishop of York, dancers and musicians from different cultures and the school has participated in a number of heritage and cultural projects including work with other schools and these experiences, which the children talk about with enthusiasm, have a most positive impact on the children's social, spiritual and cultural development. A love of walking is developed and the school is involved in the Ryedale and Whitby Schools Sports Partnership. The children's awareness of the needs of others is raised through supporting charities and children understand the needs of others from a Christian perspective. There are good links with the wider community, such as the development of the village playing field, (when the children's efforts were praised by the management committee). Links with settings with other cultures and faiths are currently underdeveloped. The foundation governors do not yet play a full role in contributing to the RE curriculum

### **The impact of collective worship on the school community is satisfactory**

Worship plays a central role in the life of the school following the church calendar, and this ensures that the children learn about the Anglican tradition. Collective Worship is planned on a thematic basis. The school has created a 'Worship Room' on the mezzanine floor, with displays of the Lord's Prayer and the Blessing and these are integrated with supportive photographic images. The clergy and the Methodist minister make a valuable contribution leading worship on a weekly basis. The school holds services in the church or the Methodist chapel at key times including, Harvest, Christmas and Easter, and these services are well supported by extended families and children take a part in leading prayers. There is a special service for the leavers in July. The children have a clear understanding of the links with the parish church. A number of children also take part in local church activities such as the annual 'children's pilgrimage' and the 'praise picnic'. The themes also reflect moral and social issues as well as celebration and the sharing of achievements. A candle is lit and, together with a table with a cross, forms the focal point for worship. Music provides an atmosphere of calm and reverence with prayers and hymns/songs being related to the theme. They have good opportunities to reflect and pray and their response is good and positive, and all of the children know the Lord's Prayer. The children are very well behaved showing appropriate reverence and respect, sing with enjoyment and respond with interest. The foundation governors have not yet fully developed their role in planning for and evaluating the effectiveness of worship.

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

The quality of leadership makes a positive contribution. The governing body has undergone many changes recently and work is ongoing to develop their responsibilities including their monitoring and evaluative roles. The involvement of foundation governors in the daily life of the school is a significant strength, which promotes the distinctive vision through their frequent presence and the links with the Parochial Church Council. Relationships between staff were observed to be very good and built upon friendliness and respect and staff act as good, positive role models. Parents are kept well informed through newsletters and day-to-day contact with the head and all staff, and the children produce their own newsletter. Parents recognise and value the quality of provision and care provided. They speak of the welcome they receive when their children join the school and the very good care, which the staff provide for the children, including for those with SEN. Parents and other members of the village community take an active part, such as listening to readers as well as through the activities of the very supportive PTA. Communications with parents are good with questionnaires used to seek their views.