

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Hawkesley Church of England -Methodist Voluntary Aided Primary School

376 Shannon Road

Hawkesley

Birmingham

B38 9TR

Diocese: Birmingham

LA: Birmingham

SIAS Inspection: 16th October 2006

Previous Section 23 inspection: March 2001

URN: 131754

Head teacher: Roger Wooldridge

SIAS inspector: NS 135 Robert A. Cooke

Context

Hawkesley CE-Methodist School is situated in an area of high unemployment and considerable social deprivation. Most properties are council owned. The school is of average size with some mixed age classes indicative of falling rolls. Academic standards are below the national average. A Church Centre is attached to the school building, but very few pupils regularly attend any church. There are few pupils from other faiths. Plans are in place for substantial changes to the front of the buildings.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Hawkesley as a Church of England – Methodist school is satisfactory, with a number of good aspects.

Teachers work very hard to achieve high standards of behaviour and attainment in a school where many pupils enter school with poor social and academic skills.

Established strengths

- There are frequent visits and regular support by local clergy
- There is a good Christian ethos in which every pupil is valued and there is an emphasis on respect for others.
- There is some very good teaching of Religious Education
- There is very strong church representation on the governing body

Focus for development

- Using appropriate documentation, examine and evaluate what is implied by the school's church school status and find means of proclaiming this so that what the school stands for is clearly understood by staff, pupils, parents, governors and visitors
- Extend opportunities for pupils to visit different places of worship including study visits to a local church
- Ensure that the frequency of acts of worship throughout the school complies with current requirements
- Ensure that the monitoring of teaching and learning and the assessment of pupils' progress in religious education are given sufficient priority

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

The school provides a safe and secure environment in which all pupils are well cared for. There is a strong emphasis on respect for others. Pupils and parents are happy with the school. There is a good system of rewards. All pupils are encouraged to succeed and there is a weekly achievement assembly. Because of the largely monocultural environment, the school places a strong emphasis on learning about different faiths and showing respect for cultures and beliefs other than the child's own. There are regular prayer times for younger children and opportunities to write and share prayers in class. There are very good opportunities for pupils to

work collaboratively together. Relationships between staff and pupils, amongst learners and between staff are good. Staff pay attention to pupils' views and concerns. The school council has had a positive impact on some school decisions such as improving the outdoor environment. There are some excellent displays around the school that proclaim the school's Christian status and support pupils' spiritual development, especially in the entrance area and school corridors. The school badge was designed by a pupil and contains a Christian symbol. The badge is prominently displayed around the school and on pupils' school uniform.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is satisfactory

Acts of Worship take place on days when there are whole school assemblies, but not always on other days. At mid-morning and at the end of the day there is regular use of daily prayers by younger pupils. Pupils' own prayers are used and are displayed in a class book as well as on the classroom wall. Frequent visits by local clergy give emphasis to the importance of worship. Pupils listen well in assemblies and play an active part by making announcements and reading prayers as well as taking part in assembly activities. As an element of worship, singing by a significant number of pupils lacks enthusiasm. The school is aware of this and has addressed the issue by the recent appointment of a new music coordinator. The school celebrates the major Christian festivals and some festivals from other faiths as part of the religious education syllabus. Older pupils recognise that prayer can help some people when they are sad or in trouble. The pupils are not familiar with the Lord's Prayer, but younger pupils can recite a daily prayer. Older pupils know the Grace which is said together at whole school assemblies. Pupils interviewed had limited understanding of why and how people worship or of the significance of Easter.

The effectiveness of the religious education is satisfactory

There is an effective and detailed scheme for the delivery of religious education. The scheme of work provides good opportunities for reflection and the study of moral issues within a Christian context. The two lessons seen were very well planned, prepared and delivered. Limited written work was seen, but was supported by useful constructive comments related to the content. Pupils listen well in class and participate in lessons with enthusiasm. The school complies with the agreed syllabus for the diocese which provides a focus on the study of Christianity and appropriate coverage of other faiths. However, pupils interviewed had difficulty in recalling what they had studied, especially the younger pupils and were unable to recall what they had seen on a study visit to their local church. Older pupils were able to recall what they had studied recently, but had considerable difficulty recalling any stories from the Bible. There are no opportunities at present for visits to other places of worship. The school recognises this and has identified it as an issue to be addressed. There are some excellent displays of religious education around the school, but a focus on raising standards in Literacy and Numeracy has limited the attention given to religious education. Opportunities to monitor teaching and learning and to assess pupils' progress in religious education are limited at the present time.

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

There is very strong church representation on the governing body and local clergy visit the school regularly to take assemblies and to make informal visits. There are some strong links between some community members and the local parish church, but the effectiveness of the links between the school, the church centre attached to the school and the local community could be improved. With the support of local church representatives, the school is beginning to reconsider and re-evaluate its current position as a church school. With the use of suitable documentation and advice, the governors feel the school is in a good position to move forwards. It is hoped that the replacement of the present church centre with a new church building will have a positive impact on developing church-school-community links in the future. There are good relationships between the school and the parents, who are consulted through an annual questionnaire. Parents are supportive of the school and parents' evenings are well attended. At the present time the school places insufficient emphasis on its church school status in its aims and mission statement and in the display of Christian symbols on documents such as the prospectus and school policies. This is an area for development.