

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Hinton St. George Church of England Voluntary Controlled First School

West Street
Hinton St. George
Somerset
TA17 8SA

Diocese: Bath and Wells

Local authority: Somerset

Dates of inspection: 6th July 2007

Date of last inspection: May 2005

School's unique reference number: 123762

Headteacher: Mrs Heather Barraclough

Inspector's name and number: Susan Walker No: 391

School context

Hinton St. George Church of England First school is a small village school of 67 children who come from several small rural communities. The children are all of white British heritage. There are five children with special educational needs.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Hinton St George as a Church School are outstanding.

The distinctive Christian character of the school has a dynamic impact on the lives of the children. This is demonstrated by the loving and caring relationships that have been forged between all members of the school community and by the children's ready use of prayer in their everyday lives.

Established strengths

- The strong links between school and Church that have a positive impact on children's developing spirituality.
- The place of Worship at the centre of school life that is a reflection of the strong Christian values of school leaders.
- The preparation of children for their future lives as members of the community through outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.

Focus for development

- Develop planned strategies for challenging more able pupils in all curriculum areas, including RE
- Provide children with opportunities to learn about other forms of Christian worship.

The school, through its distinctive Christian character, is outstanding in the way it meets the needs of all learners.

The strong Christian ethos in the school is reflected in every aspect of its life, from the school Prospectus and displays through to the care and loving relationships between children and all adults. This is because of the Christian commitment of the headteacher who is very well supported by staff, by Governors and by the Rector. Children are happy in school and are confident that their views are taken seriously by adults during school council meetings and in circle time. Worship and Religious Education are very effective in supporting spiritual development. Children know the Lord's Prayer and write their own prayers. They talk with confidence about private prayer at home. They know the names of Christian festivals and explain what they celebrate. They understand the significance of the cross and that candles are a sign that Jesus is with them. Their cultural awareness is developed through learning about other world religions. Although the needs of children are very well met through an exciting and creative curriculum, there are limited opportunities provided to challenge the more able. Children's achievements are valued and recorded in a Special Book and

certificates celebrate successes in all aspects of their school life. Parents are unanimous in their praise of the school as a Church school and its popularity is reflected by a rising role.

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

Worship is central to the life of the school and is the foundation of the school's Christian character. All teachers and the Rector lead assembly each week. The Chair of Governors, who is a lay reader, also leads worship regularly. Whilst visitors from other Anglican groups are welcomed to the school there are no opportunities for children to experience worship led by other Christian communities. All leaders follow carefully planned themes that reflect the Church year and that have a positive impact on social and emotional as well as spiritual development. Children recognise that Worship is a special time and the school ensures that this is emphasised by lighted candles and a cross. Children learn to praise God in their singing and in prayer. The mutually beneficial links that have been formed between the school and the Church are outstanding. Children experience worship in school and in Church. In their turn, the congregation sometimes hold Sunday worship in school and are joined by parents and children. The Rector sometimes leads Worship on the playground, for example a Sea Sunday Service attended by many members of the community. Children and parents join the congregation to mark Education Sunday. This partnership has a very positive impact on the children's understanding of what it means to be a Christian in the community and is greatly appreciated by parents and by the Church congregation.

The leadership and management of the school as a church school are outstanding.

The headteacher and Governors have established an outstanding sense of Christian community and have a clear vision of how this can be improved still further. Governors and staff work together to evaluate their success as a Church School and all are equal participants in the spiritual leadership of the school. Religious education and Worship are on-going priorities in the School Development Plan. Teaching and learning in Religious Education are monitored and evaluated by the headteacher and areas for improvement are identified. An evaluation of Worship is made by its leaders and children have been consulted about ways in which it can be improved. The school makes excellent use of the support that is offered by the Diocese and Governors and staff attend courses to add to their knowledge and expertise. Parents recognise the strong Christian Character of the school and speak of it as a "big family". They appreciate the strong relationship that has been built between Church and school and speak of their children's enjoyment of worship and growing knowledge that, as one child said to his mother "you know that God is all around".