

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Kempsford Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Kempsford,
near Fairford,
Gloucestershire
GL7 4EY

Diocese of Gloucester

Gloucestershire LA

Date of Inspection 14th December 2006

Date of last Inspection 28th March 2001

School's URN: 115629

Headteacher: Mr M Ballard

SIAS Inspector: Revd Brian Torode NS 111.

Context

Kempsford Church of England School is a village primary school of 122 pupils. Several pupils come from the nearby American Air Force Base at Fairford and there is a higher than average movement of pupils in and out of the school. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is higher than average. The school has recently experienced considerable challenges through staff changes, changes within the Governing Body and significant building work.

Summary Judgement

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Kempford School as a CofE school is satisfactory.

This is evident in the strong links that continue to be developed between the school and the village and church community. The children feel comfortable and welcome in church, the church community feels comfortable and welcome in school. All stakeholders speak positively and encouragingly about the relationship between the two communities.

Established strengths

- The happy, caring relationship that exists within the school community.
- The emphasis placed on Christian values
- The enthusiasm to promote and strengthen the existing church-school worship experience.

Focus for development

- Develop a more rigorous pattern for the monitoring and evaluation of RE and Worship
- Give greater prominence in documentation/publicity to the school's Christian-Anglican status
- Give greater emphasis in the SEF to the school's achievements and distinctiveness as a Church school.
- Enhance the profile of the Foundation Governors by encouraging regular reports to full Governing Body meetings and in parent newsletters, of their visits made to the school.

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

There is satisfactory visual evidence of the school's Anglican status, but the distinctive Christian character is predominantly experienced in the ethos of the school itself. Parents and children speak positively about the opportunities for the children to experience and explore the Christian faith '*so that personal commitment can be adopted or rejected later, based on sound input at this early stage*'. Several families travel some distance in order that their children can attend this church school. Pastoral care is a strong feature of the school. The majority of children spoken to felt appreciated and listened to. Evidence for this can be found in the classroom "Reflection and Celebration" boards, and the class worry-boxes. The children felt that any relationship issues that arose were dealt with sympathetically. Parents likewise indicated that any problems they raised were followed up and they were always informed of the eventual outcomes.

Children feel safe and confident in school and good relationships are promoted between all age groups through the effective peer-minding initiative. Children accept responsibility with pride and respect. There is a range of well-attended, extra-curricular activities.

The movement of the children around the school was orderly and at recreation time the majority showed co-operation and respect for one another. Non-teaching staff spoke positively of their role in helping children to 'get on with one another and to realise that we're all different.'

RE features prominently in the annual reports to parents and comments refer not just to content but to attitudes, responses, opinions and involvement.

The observed KS1 RE lesson was well presented and resourced. Differentiated activities were well planned and there was appropriate and effective ICT input.

The standard of work seen on display in classrooms and public areas was on the whole, stimulating and encouraged dialogue, but there is some inconsistency between the level of work set and assessment of work in KS1 and KS2. This has been identified as a point for action in the SIP.

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

The policy, which encompasses spiritual development, is due for review in 2007. Children of all ages, said that they enjoyed worship and saw it as an opportunity to '*welcome new children, say goodbye to leavers and to praise God for all he does for us*.' The children are attentive, respond well to questions and express themselves confidently and imaginatively. One child gave an explanation of 'in God's image' as meaning '*We are trying to be a Holy school where we learn to behave like Christians do*.' Children participate enthusiastically in singing, reading prayers and communal prayer. Reflective silence appeared to be a very meaningful experience for the children. Prayer is an integral part of the school day and includes meal-time and end of day prayers. The use of 'graces' composed by the children is being trialled at lunch times, and some of these prayers are displayed around the school.

Spiritual awareness and development is good. Some children were able to share thoughts on apartheid and the plight of street children. One prayer displayed in the School Hall read: '*Please God, help the street children who have to search in dustbins for things they need*.' The school environment, gardening activities, river walks and visits to the local 'Nature in Art Centre' are all used to develop an awareness of creation and gifts.

The school prayer and the Lord's Prayer feature regularly in Worship time and the focus table is effectively used. A 'Christian Value' provides a structured focus for each week's worship. Visitors are invited to lead worship and some provide an experience of other faiths while others invite the children to consider their personal responsibility to the wider community through charity response. The children are aware of the Christian calendar and fruitful links are being developed with the the Church for major Christian Festivals. Targets from the previous SIP review have been met. New targets need to focus on evaluation of worship; the use of ICT resources to enhance the worship experience and the timetabling of RE and Worship.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a Church School is satisfactory.

The ideals of the school's Instrument of Government are being met through the strong yet developing partnership between the school and the Church at parish and diocesan level. During a recent period of instability, due to some staff changes, the Head has maintained the caring and supportive ethos of the school and the commitment of the staff has been highly praised by parents. The school's anti-bullying policy is adhered to and behaviour management strategies are effective as demonstrated in the way the children conducted themselves in and out of the classroom.

Strong links are being forged between the church in the village and the school, through the work of the Foundation Governors, the new Chair of Governors and the Parochial Church Council (PCC). The Head has introduced a 'Governor of the Month' programme, which involves a governor visiting the school and the Governing Body has sought, among other things, diocesan help in formulating its policy on Sex and Relationships Education. The PCC provides the key people in the church-school link: the church organist plays once a week for Worship. The PCC also funds some resources for the school and helps with financial assistance to ensure all children benefit from the annual residential visit. The Head and clergy have a good working relationship and the priest is frequently to be seen in and about the school. The Church is being increasingly used for worship at major festivals and planning is at the embryonic stage for after school family worship on the school campus to cater for families who 'cannot' get to church on Sundays. The school is also the starting point for the Christmas Posada Holy Family dolls as they make their journey around the village. This all has a positive impact on the village community's perceptions of the school as a C of E foundation.

SPMSC development is good and the school's own Kempford Values are on display in every room and frequently referred to. Children can explain their significance. Worship and RE co-ordinators have recently been on appropriate courses and the school brochure has been updated to clarify the implications of 'Controlled' in the school's designation.

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