

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Kirk Langley Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Moor Lane
Kirk Langley
Ashbourne
Derbyshire
DE6 4LQ

Diocese: Derby

Local authority: Derbyshire

Dates of inspection: 22nd & 24th May 2007

Date of last inspection: June 2002

School's unique reference number: 112833

Headteacher: Mr Alan Mitchell

Inspector's name and number: Mrs Zita Roscoe no.292

School context

This is a small village school with 44 pupils on roll. There are two classes, KS1 & KS2. Each morning the KS2 children are divided into smaller groups, according to age/ability, for Literacy and Numeracy lessons. Pupils come from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds. A minority of these pupils come from Kirk Langley, the larger proportion are from neighbouring villages and from the suburbs of Derby. Changes of staffing over the past year has been partly responsible for the fall in behavioural standards in KS2. The headteacher and governors are aware of this and are addressing the problem with the help and support of the LEA Advisory Service. Apart from the headteacher, there has been a completely new teaching staff since January 2007. The headteacher has a high teaching commitment (0.8).

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Kirk Langley as a Church of England school are satisfactory

The school has good links with the church and community. Parents speak highly of the care and consideration shown towards their children and the Christian values it promotes. The school's Christian ethos is highlighted in a wide variety of documents. Pupils are happy in school and feel that their views are valued.

Established strengths

- The school plays a central part in the life of the community. Interaction between school, governors, church and village is good.
- Collective Worship plans follow Christian themes, ideas and festivals. These are often linked to the RE curriculum. Key festivals are celebrated in the church.
- Happy relationships exist between adults and children.
- Pupils of minority faiths are respected, listened to and their parents consulted.

Focus for development

- The Mission Statement should reflect more strongly the school's Christian character and distinctiveness.
- Ensure that there is a separate Collective Worship statement in the school's brochure so that new parents are made more aware of the distinctive nature of the school.
- Include more detailed information in the Collective Worship planning and encourage the children to lead their own worship on a regular basis.
- Include RE & Collective Worship in the SIP so that staff may benefit from training which the Diocese offers.

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

The school's Christian foundation is evident through the displays of crosses in the classrooms, the Mission Statement displayed around the school and the school logo. Pupils are able to explain what the symbols mean and why they have been adopted by the school. A caring and family atmosphere prevails. The behavioural problems in KS2 are now being addressed and the pupils speak positively about the impact that the new Behavioural Improvement Programme has had on the few pupils who have given cause for concern. Most of the children are keen to learn and treat each other with kindness and consideration. Class and playground rules have been written by the children themselves. The school's documentation all points to its Christian foundation. The claim in the school's SEF that "The school is proud to be valued for its caring Christian ethos by the local and wider community" is well founded. Parents speak highly of the care and consideration shown towards their children, who in turn, are happy in school and understand the distinctive nature of this Christian school. Support for various charities, local, world-wide and the church is good. Through the fund-raising, pupils are made aware of the needs of others.

The impact of Collective Worship on the school community is satisfactory

Planning for worship is built around Christian themes, ideas and festivals but no detailed documentation exists at present. A variety of Acts of Worship is provided by the vicar, staff, SCAT team and Foundation Governor. Pupils respond appropriately, are able to discuss morals upon which stories are based, know how to pray for different reasons and circumstances and recognise the contribution that worship makes to their spiritual and moral well-being. The pupils' reverence for the acts of worship was made evident by the way they entered and left quietly to music, sang with enthusiasm and focused on the lighted candle. Prayer is an integral part of the day and is said during worship, at lunch time and at the end of the day. There are links with Derby Cathedral through pupils' admission to its choir and participation in the cathedral's music festival. Services in church are held for special festivals. These are attended by parents, extended families and the local community and help place this church school at the centre of the community. Awards Assemblies celebrate pupils' achievements during the week and are valued greatly by the children.

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

The governors give positive support to the headteacher and school. The vicar and Foundation Governor are particularly involved in its Christian dimension through leading worship and being involved in the writing of the RE and Collective Worship policies. They are keen to maintain the school's links with the church. PCC notices are displayed on the school's notice board and the Foundation Governor reports relevant school issues to the PCC. The headteacher and governors have made a clear and honest appraisal of the school and are keen to move it forward. Now that the teaching staff situation has become more stable, the school is starting the process of improvement. When recruiting new staff, the school makes clear to them the Christian character of the school. Poor behaviour shown by a minority of pupils is now being addressed and monitored carefully. Positive behaviour is promoted through awards (Star Pupil for example) and sanctions (phone call/letter home). The Behaviour Charts in each classroom enable pupils to monitor and celebrate their successes. The school has embraced its Christian foundation by making explicit reference to it in a wide variety of documents, especially in the good policies on RE and Collective Worship. Answers to the parents' and pupils' questionnaires demonstrate that they are happy with the school, are aware of its Christian dimension and value the fact that they are listened to and that their suggestions are acted upon wherever possible. A higher profile could be given to RE and Collective Worship by including them in the SIP and seeking further support from the Diocese. The school has followed recommendations made in the last inspection by introducing Christian symbols in the school and reviewing the Collective Worship and RE policies.